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DYNAMICS OF PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

An Analysis of the Historicist Reading of Daniel 8
by Martin Luther, Isaac Newton, William Miller, and Ellen White

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

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de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. C.M. van Praag,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van de promotiecommissie
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SUMMARY

This dissertation seeks to analyze the development of one interpretation of Daniel 8, the so-called “historicist” reading. Since the Book of Daniel was written, Jews and subsequently Christians believed that its visions portrayed a sweeping panorama of history from the claimed age of the prophet (6th century BC) until the end of time. Modern critical scholarship dates the book, however, to the reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes in the mid-2nd century BC. In the earliest centuries of the Christian era, a mix of these two perceptions had already emerged. On one hand, Christians acknowledged that Antiochus IV was the main villain in chapters 8 and 11, with the caveat that he played this role as the “type” of the future Antichrist. On the other, they believed that chapter 9 pointed to the earthly ministry of Christ and that chapters 2 and 7 reached to the end of the world. With the rise of biblical criticism in the 17th century, critical scholars increasingly interpreted the whole book in line with chapters 8 and 11. Some Christians, however, went the opposite direction and eventually interpreted chapters 8 and 11 in harmony with the other visions so that Antiochus was no more to find at all in Daniel. In that sense, Daniel 8 can be seen as a significant fork in the road of traditional understanding of prophecies which spelled both its decline and creative renewal.

The significance of the subject matter is also reflected in how intrinsically colorful it is and by the authors who played a role in its development. Some of the main contributors to this reading of Daniel 8, and the ones discussed in this work, are 16th-century Reformer Martin Luther, who used Daniel 8 to justify his rejection of the Papacy as the Antichrist; Isaac Newton, who studied religion as much as he did science, and dismissed any role to Antiochus in Daniel 8; 19th-century William Miller, perhaps the most well-known date-setter of the end of the world who used Daniel 8 to predict that Jesus would return to earth in 1843/4; and Ellen White, one of the 19th-century American prophets, and co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventists, who developed a unique theodicy out of Daniel 8.

The most pertinent reason why the subject is important is that it serves as a good case study of a new proposed methodology to study eschatological beliefs, whether they are past or present. It seeks to combine research foci used by modern scholars of various specialties with the insights of those conservative theologians and historians who believe that the Bible contains genuine predictions. Scholarship in general has contributed significantly to the understanding of eschatological beliefs from the perspectives of psychology, sociology, and history. It has, however, remained relatively aloof from exploring the systems of these beliefs, deeming that they are shaped to a large degree (or even mostly) by external factors. Conservative scholars who believe in “the prophecies,” on the other hand, have command of the insider vocabulary and the detailed system involved in how the visions are interpreted. They are, however, often not too keen on outside contributions, feeling they deconstruct what they see as God’s guidance in discovering what these visions mean.

This present work argues that the combination of these two approaches provides a fuller insight into the theology of eschatological beliefs, without the necessity of validating or

dismissing them. It combines these methods by exploring the historical context (à la general scholarship), the methodology of interpreting the visions (à la confessional scholarship), and the overall theological beliefs, as three crucial dynamics that are at work when believers interpret perceived biblical predictions. It concludes that while personality and historical forces influence such interpretation (called “prophetic interpretation” in the study), there is also a theological system at work which influences the development as well. It proposes such a combined methodology to scholars who study eschatology, apocalypticism, millennialism, and the reception history of Daniel and Revelation and other similar texts.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my grandfather and to the memory of my grandmother,

Jón Hjörleifur Jónsson and Sólveig Árnadóttir Jónsson,

for their love and their encouragement to pursue academia.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------|---|
| a. | after |
| AM | Anno Mundi |
| AN | Anno Nabonassari |
| BC | before Christ |
| c. | circa |
| ch., chs. | chapter, chapters |
| ESV | English Standard Version |
| f., ff. | folio, folios |
| fld., flds. | folder, folders |
| HCSB | Holmes Christian Standard Bible |
| KJV | King James Version |
| lt., ltt. | letter, letters |
| LU17 | Lutherbibel 2017 |
| <i>LW</i> | Martin Luther, <i>Luther's Works: American Edition</i> |
| Ms., Mss. | manuscript, manuscripts |
| n, nn | note, notes |
| NASB | New American Standard Bible |
| NKJV | New King James Version |
| NRSV | New Revised Standard Version |
| p., pp. | page, pages |
| par., pars. | paragraph, paragraphs |
| r. | reigned |
| Schlachter | Schlachter Bible (2000) |
| SE | Seleucid Era |
| <i>s.v.</i> | <i>sub verbo</i> |
| <i>sic</i> | <i>sicut</i> |
| v., vv. | verse, verses |
| <i>WA</i> | Martin Luther, <i>D. Martins Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe</i> (colloquially known as <i>Weimarer Ausgabe</i>) |

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The staff at the Center for Adventist Research and the Adventist Digital Library (both housed in James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan) were always ready to answer my queries and scan material for me when I was not in the United States. The Fondation Martin Bodmer (Cologny, Switzerland) scanned and sent me the long church history manuscript by Isaac Newton that is in their holdings (“Of the Church” or the Bodmer Ms.), which turned out to be a key document for my research. Susan Palmer, curator at the Jenks Memorial Collection, answered my inquiries and assisted in person when I visited the library. Zahra Mohamadnejad made the illustrations for the cover and Drífa Lífþóra designed the cover, both willing to help on short notice.

During my research I lived alternately in the Netherlands, Germany, and the United States, so I moved frequently. Sometimes I was in need of a place to stay between regular rentals and enjoyed the hospitality of Abishek Thavamani, Benjamin Quinger, and Sarah Quinger. When the research dragged on longer than expected, I also enjoyed the hospitality of my parents, Sólveig Hjördís Jónsdóttir and Stefán Stefánsson, and of my aunt and her husband, Kristín Guðrún Jónsdóttir and Jón Thoroddsen.

Financing a long research project without grants can be difficult. First I took Icelandic student loans which covered the first three years. After that I worked part time for a couple of years. When that delayed the research, my parents offered to support me financially for the last leg, so I could work full-time on the dissertation and finish it.

To all the individuals and institutions mentioned, I offer my heartfelt gratitude for their various assistance, encouragement, and support.

DANIEL 8, ESV

Since Daniel 8 will be cited continuously in this dissertation, the whole chapter is presented here as a convenient reference for the reader.

Introduction

1 In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after that which appeared to me at the first. 2 And I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the citadel, which is in the province of Elam. And I saw in the vision, and I was at the Ulai canal.

The Ram

3 I raised my eyes and saw, and behold, a ram standing on the bank of the canal. It had two horns, and both horns were high, but one was higher than the other, and the higher one came up last. 4 I saw the ram charging westward and northward and southward. No beast could stand before him, and there was no one who could rescue from his power. He did as he pleased and became great.

The Goat (with One Horn, then Four Horns)

5 As I was considering, behold, a male goat came from the west across the face of the whole earth, without touching the ground. And the goat had a conspicuous horn between his eyes. 6 He came to the ram with the two horns, which I had seen standing on the bank of the canal, and he ran at him in his powerful wrath. 7 I saw him come close to the ram, and he was enraged against him and struck the ram and broke his two horns. And the ram had no power to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and trampled on him. And there was no one who could rescue the ram from his power. 8 Then the goat became exceedingly great, but when he was strong, the great horn was broken, and instead of it there came up four conspicuous horns toward the four winds of heaven.

The Last Horn (i.e., the Sixth)

9 Out of one of them came a little horn, which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land. 10 It grew great, even to the host of heaven. And some of the host and some of the stars it threw down to the ground and trampled on them. 11 It became great, even as great as the Prince of the host. And the regular burnt offering was taken away from him, and the place of his sanctuary was overthrown. 12 And a host will be given over to it together with the regular burnt offering because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.

Celestial Beings Converse

13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to the one who spoke, "For how long is the vision concerning the regular burnt offering, the transgression that makes

desolate, and the giving over of the sanctuary and host to be trampled underfoot?” 14 And he said to me, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings. Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state.”

Gabriel Explains the Vision:

15 When I, Daniel, had seen the vision, I sought to understand it. And behold, there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. 16 And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, “Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.” 17 So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, “Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.” 18 And when he had spoken to me, I fell into a deep sleep with my face to the ground. But he touched me and made me stand up. 19 He said, “Behold, I will make known to you what shall be at the latter end of the indignation, for it refers to the appointed time of the end.

...the Ram

20 As for the ram that you saw with the two horns, these are the kings of Media and Persia.

...the Goat

21 And the goat is the king of Greece. And the great horn between his eyes is the first king. 22 As for the horn that was broken, in place of which four others arose, four kingdoms shall arise from his nation, but not with his power.

...the Last Horn

23 And at the latter end of their kingdom, when the transgressors have reached their limit, a king of bold face, one who understands riddles, shall arise. 24 His power shall be great—but not by his own power; and he shall cause fearful destruction and shall succeed in what he does, and destroy mighty men and the people who are the saints. 25 By his cunning he shall make deceit prosper under his hand, and in his own mind he shall become great. Without warning he shall destroy many. And he shall even rise up against the Prince of princes, and he shall be broken—but by no human hand.

...the 2300 Evenings and Mornings

26 The vision of the evenings and the mornings that has been told is true, but seal up the vision, for it refers to many days from now.”

Conclusion

27 And I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days. Then I rose and went about the king's business, but I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it.

0 INTRODUCTION

0.1 Introduction

This section (0.1) serves as an introduction to the subsequent sections of this chapter. This is done to provide a quick and broad overview of the topic without explaining all matters in full detail.

When Christianity emerged as a new religion, it was colored by apocalypticism—the belief that the end was imminent. There was also another category at play. Prophecy—in the sense of perceived divinely inspired revelation of the future¹—and its interpretation, were integral to the budding new faith. Christians interpreted Christ’s life and death as a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, and throughout the New Testament they wrote about his return and the consequent end of the world of sin. Thus prophecy—fulfilled and unfulfilled prediction—was inseparable from both the message (the Gospel) and the metanarrative of Christianity (sometimes called salvation history or history of redemption²). The history of how Christians related to the end of history (eschatological varieties) and how they sought to decipher the prophecies they perceived in Scripture (prophetic interpretation) continues to be studied and debated, but scholars generally agree on the main contours of its fervor: The New Testament expectation of an imminent end carried on for a few centuries and waned during the medieval period (with exceptions), only to arise and wane again repeatedly in Protestantism, with fountainheads in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. With the rise of biblical criticism and liberal theology, mainstream scholarship redesignated the perceived prophecies of the Bible as misreading of other genres or, if indeed prophetic in genre, as either expressions of hope or *vaticinium ex eventu*. Prophetic interpretation and eschatological beliefs based on it, however, did not disappear but continued unabated in global Christianity. They are not confined to the fringes of Christendom, but are norm and dogma in giant Christian traditions such as Catholicism and Evangelicalism. Prophetic interpretation has been both influential and controversial, and is sufficiently interwoven with the history of the Bible and its interpretation, with theology, and church history, to make the need for a good understanding of this theological discipline vital to theology.

¹ *Prophecy* is a phenomenon and a literary genre (cf. the Major and Minor Prophets). It also has the secondary meaning of ‘prediction’ or ‘prognostication,’ what could be referred to as *vaticinium ante eventum*, i.e. prophesying before the event (vs. *vaticinium ex eventu*, i.e. prophesying after the event). The terms *interpretation of prophecy* or *prophetic interpretation* are also multivalent. Interpretation of prophecy could mean the analysis of the literary genre. Prophetic interpretation can refer to the quality of the interpretation instead of its object: Interpretation which is prophetic in the first sense of prophecy. However, the terms interpretation of prophecy or prophetic interpretation can also denote the study of prophecy in its secondary sense: The analysis of the perceived predictions in the Bible, regardless of their literary genre. The present study uses both the terms prophecy and prophetic interpretation in this secondary meaning. This is further explained in section 0.2.2.

² The terms ‘history of redemption/salvation’ and ‘redemption/salvation history’ are synonymous terms in some conservative Christian circles past and present for what is seen as the biblical story of human history, from beginning to end. For this understanding of ‘salvation history,’ cf. Friedrich Mildenberger, “Salvation History,” in *Religion Past and Present: Encyclopedia of Theology and Religion*, English ed. based on 4th ed., edited by Hans Dieter Betz, 13 vols. and 1 index vol. (Leiden: Brill, 2007–12), 11:421.

With the rise of biblical criticism and liberal theology, the study of prophetic interpretation as a theological phenomenon evolved in two different directions. Scholars from traditions that continued to engage in prophetic interpretation studied it as such. Scholars in general, however, deconstructed the concept of genuine prediction in the Bible. The category of prophecy as predictive having left biblical studies, it also faded in theology and history. Interest in eschatology-related phenomena shifted towards varieties of eschatological beliefs, such as apocalypticism and millennialism. Since believers in such eschatologies were usually engaged in prophetic interpretation, the study of these eschatologies indirectly studied prophetic interpretation. Interest in these end-time belief varieties began in earnest in general scholarship in the twentieth century. As a consequence, works on apocalyptic literature and apocalypticism and millennialism have proliferated in the recent decades to the point that there are now specialized works on a host of persons, periods, and groups, as well as standard handbooks and an encyclopedia on the topic. This scholarship, however, has emphasized the role of historical context as the cause and dynamics of apocalypticism and millennialism, at the expense of theological causes (such as the system of prophetic interpretation). Consequently, scholarly theological analysis of apocalypticism and millennialism of Christian thinkers after the Bible has been incomplete. This implies also the lack of similar theological analysis of prophetic interpretation in general. Reintroducing prophetic interpretation as a category of study in theology would improve the theological analysis.

The present work seeks to address this desideratum by combining methodological insights from the two academic fields. Thus, the theological analysis of prophetic interpretation (and apocalypticism and millennialism) can be improved. To accomplish this, it proposes a new methodology that analyzes the dynamics of prophetic interpretation, i.e. how and why the interpretation of perceived predictions (regardless of their literary genre) changes over time. Three dimensions of dynamics are investigated: The interaction of the text, theology, and history. Conservative literature usually focuses on the first two dynamics, general scholarship on the third. The present work will explore all three, though it does explore the first two without the orthodox lens of conservative scholarship. The methodology is demonstrated through a case study which centers on one text, the eighth chapter of the Book of Daniel, and one type of prophetic interpretation, so-called “historicism.”

Historicism is one of four traditional approaches to interpreting biblical predictions and is characterized by the belief that prophecy is a sweeping portrayal of world history from the time of the prophets to the close of time.³ (That is to say, historicism presupposes the belief that the Bible contains predictions that extend beyond the historical context of the text, far into the future of post-biblical history.) The work explores how and why the four theological thinkers who contributed most to the development of this reading of Daniel 8 interpreted the passage the way they did. The four authors are Martin Luther, Isaac Newton, William Miller,

³ For a more detailed definition and the other approaches, see sections 0.2 and 0.6.

and Ellen White. The case study is a significant thread in the history of prophetic interpretation, and thus particularly helpful in exploring the topic. Therefore, while the case study details only a single strand in the rich tapestry of prophetic interpretation (and millennialism and apocalypticism), its methodology can be applied to any other part of the fabric, and its results can elucidate a theological tradition too often misunderstood in academic discourse. In a word, the present study seeks to answer the question:

What are the historical, textual, and theological dynamics that led Martin Luther, Isaac Newton, William Miller, and Ellen White to historicize Daniel 8 within Protestant theology, and what do these dynamics mean for the academic study of prophetic interpretation and its intersecting or sub-category fields in general?

The following sections will discuss the material of these introductory paragraphs in more detail to show the context and significance of the topic, the need the present study seeks to address, and by what methodology and design this will be done.

0.2 Context of the Topic

Through history, Daniel has been an important text in the Christian discipline of interpreting what has been seen as scriptural prophecies (in the sense of predictions). When Christianity arose, predictions, both fulfilled and unfulfilled, were integral to the new faith. Christians believed that the Old Testament had predicted the entire career of the Messiah and they saw these predictions as fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus. Christians also believed that some predictions were still to be fulfilled: Both Testaments contained predictions about events that would lead up to the Second Coming of Jesus when he would judge all mankind and reign forever. These predictions were synonymously known as ‘prophecies’ and have been known by believers in them as such since the New Testament. Throughout the Christian era, many Christians have continued to interpret the texts they perceived as prophecies or predictive. The present work is a study into what causes such interpretations to change. Since this usage of the term ‘prophecy’ and the belief associated with it are not universal in Christianity, the subsections of 0.2 will give some definitions and context necessary for these concepts and for the topic of this dissertation.

0.2.1 Apocalypse, Eschatology, Apocalypticism, and Millennialism

When one surveys modern scholarship to assess the role and influence of Daniel in Christianity, there are two fields which one could explore. First, there are biblical studies. Modern critical scholars have defined Daniel (chs. 7–12) as an apocalypse and have studied the emergence and flourishing of this genre in late antiquity. They have also studied what role apocalyptic ideas and texts played in the emergence of Christianity. Their assessment will be mentioned here for context though it lies in another field than the present dissertation. Second,

scholars in various fields have researched the development of ideas over the course of Western history. Here, Daniel most frequently appears in studies regarding certain types of eschatology—apocalypticism and millennialism. This section will thus define apocalypse, eschatology, apocalypticism, and millennialism, and review what influence Daniel has had as an apocalypse.

Apocalypse has been defined as

a genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework, in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial insofar as it involves another supernatural world.⁴

Apocalypses are divided into two main types: “‘Historical’ apocalypses, that survey a broad sweep of history culminating in a final judgment, of the type known from the Book of Daniel, and otherworldly journeys, involving visions of heaven and hell.”⁵ *Apocalyptic literature* is a “broader category of analogous literature”⁶ which emphasizes features and motives of apocalypses or portrays their apocalyptic worldview:

The extension of the adjective ‘apocalyptic’ to other material besides the formal apocalypses presupposes that the genre has a distinctive conceptual structure, in which supernatural revelation, the heavenly world, angels and demons, and eschatological judgment play essential parts. This conceptual structure may reasonably be said to constitute a worldview.⁷

The worldview of the apocalypse can thus be described by the adjective *apocalyptic* or the noun *apocalypticism*. The term *apocalypticism* is used both for such beliefs and also for a social movement that follows it. Its definition remains debated to some degree. One reason is the long history and complex manifestation of apocalyptic beliefs from ancient times to modernity. The definition will be discussed later in this introduction. Going back to the apocalypses, their modern definition was made intentionally terse since it focuses on the common core elements of the genre. Other features of the apocalypses (and an apocalyptic worldview) are dualism, prominence of angels and demons in human affairs,⁸ catastrophic end times followed by the transformation of the world,⁹ and the imminence of these events.¹⁰

⁴ John J. Collins, ed., *Apocalypse: The Morphology of a Genre*, special issue, *Semeia* 14 (Missoula, MT), 22.

⁵ John J. Collins, “What Is Apocalyptic Literature?,” in *Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. John J. Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 2.

⁶ Collins, “What Is Apocalyptic Literature?,” 6.

⁷ Collins, “What Is Apocalyptic Literature?,” 7.

⁸ Collins, “What Is Apocalyptic Literature?,” 7.

⁹ Cf. “eschatological upheavals” (7.1), “destruction” (8.1–3), and “cosmic transformation” (9.1) in Collins’s scheme of common features. Collins, *Apocalypse*, 28.

¹⁰ Interestingly, imminence is not an element featured in Collins’s scheme. The reason is probably that scholars see this feature as more prominent in apocalypticism, i.e. the movements that adopt an apocalyptic worldview, than as a constant in apocalyptic texts.

The apocalypses and their ideas had a significant influence on Christianity as a new religion. While all the precise ways of how apocalyptic thought influenced the origin and content of early Christianity continues to be debated,¹¹ several suggested and more or less obvious contributions will be discussed.

To understand the apocalyptic contribution to Christianity, yet another term must be defined. *Eschatology* is the teaching concerning the last things. It has usually been divided into two aspects: The end of the individual, and the closing events of history. According to critical scholarship, eschatological ideas evolved through the biblical times,¹² so that they do not constitute one coherent system in the Bible, but rather emerging and often conflicting ideas.¹³

What is significant for the present work, is that the apocalypses contributed significantly to the historical and eschatological ideas that were taken up in the New Testament and later systematized as Christian dogma. First, there are the eschatological concepts of the Resurrection and the Last Judgment. According to Collins, a leading authority on the genre of apocalypse, these ideas were first articulated in the apocalypses, beginning with Enoch and Daniel.¹⁴ Another influential apocalyptic concept, inseparable from its eschatology, was the concept of linear, teleological history. According to this philosophy of history, history was linear and thus had a beginning and an end (otherwise it would by definition be cyclical, i.e. repetitive).¹⁵ This linear history further had a goal to which it tended, which was the salvation of God which would be accomplished with the Resurrection, Judgment, and the establishment of God's kingdom. The ideas of linear history and the future purposes of God existed in Judaism before the composition of apocalyptic writings, but according to critical scholarship these ideas took on a more distinct and magnified form in the new genre of literature. Third, the New Testament describes the evils of the last days before the Second Coming and the Judgment. This reflects the apocalyptic idea of "eschatological upheavals," i.e. end-time calamities or cataclysmic changes. Fourth, critical scholars now commonly see the imminence of apocalyptic thought reflected in the urgent tone heard in much of New Testament

¹¹ For the influence of apocalyptic on early Christianity, see e.g. James C. VanderKam and William Adler, eds., *Jewish Traditions in Early Christian Literature: Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity*, Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 3/4 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1996).

¹² Bill T. Arnold, "Old Testament Eschatology and the Rise of Apocalypticism," in Walls, *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, 23–34.

¹³ Raphael J. Z. Werblowsky, "Eschatology," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade, 16 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 5:150.

¹⁴ "There is no doubt that there is continuity between biblical prophecy and apocalypticism, but there are differences too. . . . Most crucially, the apocalypses are distinguished by the belief in the resurrection and judgment of the individual dead, a hope that is first clearly attested in the Hellenistic period, in the books of Enoch and Daniel." Collins, "What Is Apocalyptic Literature?," 7.

¹⁵ One of the ways in which late Judaism and early Christianity differed most strikingly from other surrounding religions was their concept of time as linear. Greek and Roman religions, for instance, saw time as cyclical. This did not mean that they believed history repeated itself literally—though this view, "the eternal return," also existed—but rather that as the seasons of the year follow each other in an endless cycle, so the patterns of human history repeat themselves endlessly, without an end and therefore without an overarching goal.

eschatology (a few even see Jesus as an apocalyptic prophet¹⁶). If the enhanced view of history as linear and teleological, the evils of the last days, and the Resurrection and Judgment, were all part of the apocalyptic contribution to Christianity, its impact was enormous. All these ideas—except imminence, which would fluctuate significantly through history—became normative and foundational to the doctrine and worldview of the new religion. They centered on the temporal and teleological end of history: The Second Coming of Christ and the full salvation of his people.

The most influential apocalyptic text in late Judaism and early Christianity was the Book of Daniel. Daniel was one of the oldest apocalyptic texts¹⁷ and its influence and importance can be seen from the fact that unlike other early apocalyptic literature, it was canonized already in Judaism. As noted above, the apocalypses emphasized the linear, teleological nature of history and its closing events such as the Resurrection and the Judgment. In this fashion, Daniel described remaining history as the path towards the final deliverance of his people. Four kingdoms would rise and fall, the Resurrection and Judgment would take place, and then God's kingdom would be established and reign forever. The influence of Daniel was even broader than contributing towards these concepts in the New Testament.¹⁸ In the

¹⁶ Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Cecilia Wassen and Tobias Hägerland, *Jesus the Apocalyptic Prophet* (T. & T. Clark, 2021).

¹⁷ Critical scholarship gives the following dates. Daniel 7–12 is dated to the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Maccabean Revolt. The only apocalyptic literature dated older or contemporary is the following portions of the Book of Enoch:

1. Book of (Heavenly) Luminaries / Astronomical Book (1 En 72–82). Nickelsburg dates its earliest part to the first part of the 2nd century BC, Collins dates it to the close of the 3rd century BC or start of the 2nd century BC. Both agree this is (probably) the oldest part of Enoch. George W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch*, 2 vols., ed. Klaus Baltzer, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001, 2012), 1:7, 2:342; John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 59.
2. Book of the Watchers (1 En 1–36). Nickelsburg proposes that parts of it “may predate the Hellenist period” and that the book was finished around mid-2nd century BC, Collins dates the book to the first half of the 2nd century BC. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 1:7; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 47.
3. Book of Dreams or Dream Visions (1 En 83–91) / Animal Apocalypse (1 En 85–90). Both scholars date the book to the Maccabean Revolt, though Nickelsburg adds that an earlier form might have been written at the close of the 3rd century or early 2nd century BC. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 1:8; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 67.
4. Epistle of Enoch (1 En 91–105) which includes the Apocalypse of Weeks (1 En 93; 91:91:11–17). Nickelsburg dates the Epistle to the 2nd century BC and both authors date the Apocalypse to the Maccabean Revolt (or, according to Nickelsburg, perhaps slightly before). Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, 1:8, 440–41; Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 62, 66.

The Apocalypse of Isaiah (Is 24–27) is older than Daniel, but it is not regarded as apocalyptic literature by scholars specializing in that genre. Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 24–25.

While critical scholars date some Enochian portions as older than Daniel, none of these are historical apocalypses like Daniel 7–12. The Animal Apocalypse and the Apocalypse of Weeks are historical apocalypses, but they are dated to the same period as the apocalyptic part of Daniel. This means that Daniel and these two Enochian apocalypses are dated by critical scholars as the oldest historical apocalypses. For the apocalypse types of the Enochian portions listed above, see John J. Collins, “The Jewish Apocalypses,” in Collins, *Apocalypse*, 31, 37, 38.

¹⁸ For the influence of Daniel on the New Testament, see Adela Y. Collins, “The Influence of Daniel on the New Testament,” in *Daniel: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993), 97–112; Reimar Vetne, “The Influence and Use of Daniel in the Synoptic Gospels” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2011).

Gospels, for instance, Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man and describes his Second Coming and Judgment, all of which echoes early Christian understanding of Daniel 7. Christ also references Daniel in the synoptic apocalypse, thus forever linking the two in the minds of later expositors. Daniel also influenced the Book of Revelation, the only full apocalypse in Scripture, which contains many Danielic motifs, such as allusion to its beasts and its numbers. Early on Christians interpreted the “seventy weeks” of Daniel 9 as a messianic prophecy which foretold the time of Christ’s ministry and death. Since the ministry and death of the Messiah was seen as an end-time event—with the return of Christ as king being imminent—Daniel 9 was probably understood as an apocalyptic prophecy by early Christians. For these and other reasons, Christians interpreted the visions of Daniel and other apocalyptic passages in the Scriptures as one system, perceiving Daniel as the key to the rest since it was oldest. Thus when one investigates the apocalyptic literature of the Bible, the origins of Christianity, and traditional Christian eschatology, the apocalypse of Daniel plays a significant role. But what is most pertinent to the present study is that ever after its composition, Daniel would be influential in apocalypticism and millennialism whenever these eschatologies have flourished in Christianity.

Apocalyptic literature thus influenced Christianity as the new religion emerged, in particular its eschatology, and became part of the canon. Yet this did not exactly mean that Christianity was necessarily an apocalyptic religion. There was more to Scripture than only apocalyptic literature, and how the apocalyptic texts were interpreted and to what extent they were emphasized has varied through church history. One can say that Christianity has an apocalyptic component and potentiality. Apocalyptic ideas can be foregrounded or backgrounded. When apocalyptic texts and beliefs have been foregrounded or stressed, the eschatology takes particular forms referred to as apocalypticism and millennialism.

Apocalypticism can be defined as “belief in the impending or possible destruction of the world itself or physical global catastrophe, and/or the destruction or radical transformation of the existing social, political, or religious order of human society—often referred to as the apocalypse.”¹⁹ Or, “broadly described,” apocalypticism is “the belief that God has revealed the imminent end of the ongoing struggle between good and evil in history.”²⁰ *Millennialism* expects

salvation that is (a) collective, in the sense that it is to be enjoyed by the faithful as a collectivity; (b) terrestrial, in the sense that it is to be realized on this earth and not in some other-worldly heaven; (c) imminent, in the sense that it is to come both soon and suddenly; (d) total, in the sense that it is utterly to transform life on earth, so that the new dispensation will be no mere improvement on the present but perfection itself; (e)

¹⁹ “Apocalypticism,” *Critical Dictionary of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements*, Centre for the Critical Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements, published January 15, 2021, <https://www.cdamm.org/articles/apocalypticism>.

²⁰ John J. Collins, Bernard McGinn, Stephen J. Stein, general introduction in *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 1, *The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Continuum, 2000), vii.

miraculous, in the sense that it is to be accomplished by, or with the help of, supernatural agencies.²¹

The demarcation between traditional Christian eschatology and apocalypticism and millennialism is not cut and dry and perhaps the difference lies in emphases: Apocalypticism demonstrates more certainty about the timing and nature of the end (imminent, cataclysmic), and millennialism similar certainty about the nature of the afterlife of the saved (perfect and otherworldly yet also terrestrial in some sense).

In both apocalypticism and millennialism, Daniel has usually been very influential. This is because the apocalyptic literature in the Bible—in which Daniel has been seen as a crucial component—is most often prominent in these eschatologies. There have also been instances of both eschatologies that have not (only) derived from Scripture: Christians continued to write extra-canonical apocalypses in late antiquity and into the medieval period, and there were also prophets and visionaries who predicted the future or saw the afterlife.

Apocalypticism and millennialism—and thus Daniel to a large extent—influenced not only the origin of Christianity but continued to impact Christian thought and history. After a strong sense of imminence of the end in early Christianity, that fervor cooled down for the most part in medieval Christendom. Yet end-time fervor would often arise, ebbing and flowing through the centuries. Sometimes it would ripple into movements; sometimes they grew muscle and became their own traditions. Apocalypticism was characteristic of the early Reformation and lasted for considerable time in the various Protestant denominations. Apocalypticism and millennialism were strong in the nineteenth century in many parts, and have remained in some large traditions that are by now means peripheral, such as Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism. The two eschatological varieties (and Daniel as one of their main texts) have also influenced Western thought and history. This influence lies more in the realm of the idea of history as linear and teleological. While such philosophy of history became part of Christian thought, it was emphasized in these two eschatologies, and, according to some scholars, impacted secular philosophy of history and many secular movements in the modern period.²²

But there is another way to engage the influence of Daniel in theology over the course of history that is half-overlooked when surveying the history of apocalypticism and millennialism. There is another category of thought, which, while overlapping in part with these eschatologies, is of somewhat different proportions and focus. Through church history, there has been a common discipline which has for the last several centuries been known by its practitioners as “the interpretation of prophecy” or “prophetic interpretation.”

²¹ Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages*, 3rd ed. (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), [first page of “Introduction,” unpaginated].

²² For the influence of Daniel and Christian apocalypticism and millennialism on secular philosophy of history in the West, cf. e.g. Jacob Taubes, *Abendländische Eschatologie*, 1st ed. (Bern: Francke, 1947); Jacob Taubes, *Occidental Eschatology*, trans. David Ratmoko (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009); John Gray, *Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion and the Death of Utopia*, 1st American ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2008).

0.2.2 Prophecy

In Christianity there have been at least two broad usages of the term *prophecy* which both derived from Scripture. They have different scopes and purposes and overlap to some degree. One definition is that prophecy is a message about God's views and will that he reveals to a chosen spokesperson (a prophet) who is to relate the message to others. Since human life is historical by nature, this message can be about the past, present, and future. This scope of human reality and God's will concerning it means that prophecy has many aspects, such as societal and moral critique and exhortation, future prediction, historical review, and so forth. This usage can be seen by the title prophet (נָבִיא) for those who delivered such messages, the traditional title of their books (the Prophets), and the name '(biblical) prophecy' for their literary genre. The other definition is narrower and hones in on one characteristic in the former definition: Prophecy is a prediction, prognostication, revelation about the future, regardless of the literary form it takes. This narrower definition is part of the former's meaning and therefore probably derived from it: When the prophets spoke to someone concerning God's will, they usually revealed the consequences of following God's will or going against it, i.e. their future predictions were rooted in morality and theology. This narrower meaning is also attested in the Bible. The verb נָבִיא ('prophecy') is repeatedly used in such a sense in the Old Testament.²³ Similarly, in the New Testament one of the meanings of the verb προφητεύω ('prophecy')²⁴ and of the noun προφητεία ('prophecy') is 'to predict, prognosticate' and 'prediction, prognostication.'²⁵ Formulations to the effect that a prophet's words could be or were fulfilled imply the same: Prophets foretell the future which then comes to pass.²⁶

The present work uses the term 'prophecy' in the secondary sense for the purpose of this specific project. There are several reasons to prefer this in-certain-contexts unusual use of the

²³ *Hitpaal*: 1 Kg 22:8; 2 Chr 18:7, 9; 20:37. *Niphal*: 1 Kg 22:12; 2 Chr 18:11; Jer 19:14; 20:1; 23:16, 21, 25–26, 32; 25:13, 30; 26:9, 11–12, 18, 20; 27:10, 14–16; 28:6, 8–9; 29:9, 21, 31; 32:3; 37:19; Ez 11:4, 13; 12:27; 13:16; 20:46; 21:2, 9, 14, 28; 25:2; 28:21; 29:2; 30:2; 34:2; 35:2; 36:1, 3, 6; 37:4, 12; 38:2, 14, 17; 39:1.

²⁴ "1. to proclaim an inspired revelation, *prophecy*. 2. to tell about someth. that is hidden from view, *tell, reveal*. 3. to foretell someth. that lies in the future, *foretell, prophecy*." Walter Bauer and Frederick William Danker, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), s.v. "προφητεύω."

²⁵ For this meaning of προφητεύω, see Mt 26:68; Mk 7:8; 14:65; Lk 1:67; 22:64; Jo 11:51; 1 Pt 1:10; Jude 14. For this meaning of προφητεία, see Mt 13:14; Rv 1:3; 22:10.

²⁶ What was spoken by the prophet(s) (τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ/ὐπὸ τοῦ προφήτου/ων), the Scripture(s) (ἡ γραφή/αἱ γράφαι), etc. can be fulfilled (πληρώω): Mt 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9, [35]; Mk 14:49; Lk 1:20; 4:21; 21:22; 24:44; Jo 12:38; 15:25; 17:12; 19:24, 36; Acts 1:16; 3:18; 13:27. The prophets bear witness to (μαρτυρέω, Acts 10:43), foresaw (προοράω, Acts 2:30–31), proclaimed (καταγγέλλω, Acts 3:24), spoke about (λέγω, Mt 3:3; 24:15; Lk 24:25; Acts 2:16), and wrote about (γράφω, Mt 2:5; Mk 1:2; Lk 3:4; Jo 1:45) [future events], and said what would come to pass (ἐλάλησαν μελλόντων γίνεσθαι, Acts 26:22). God announced (εὐαγγελίζω, Rv 10:7), foretold (εὐαγγελίζω, Acts 3:18), promised (προεπαγγέλλομαι, Rm 1:2), and spoke about (λέγω, Lk 1:70; Acts 3:21) [future events] through the prophets/in the Scriptures. There are [predictions] in the Law or Moses and the Prophets (Lk 24:25; Acts 13:40; 24:14; 28:23), and one should believe the prophets [i.e. their predictions] (Acts 26:27) and the reader of the prophet(s) should understand (ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω, Mk 13:14).

term over other more specific options: (1) Traditional and many conservative Christians have referred to what they perceived as the predictive aspect of the Bible as prophecy, so this usage of the word is already established, and seems appropriate when researching expositors from that tradition; (2) to use a narrower terminology (e.g. ‘predictive prophecy’) has never been conventional among Christians who have believed in “prophecy” in the secondary sense, and could imply that the interpreters focused solely on predictions and stripped them of societal or moral implications, which they did not do; (3) one of the definitions of the noun *prophecy*²⁷ and the verb *prophecy*²⁸ in any given dictionary is ‘prediction/predict’ or ‘prognostication/prognosticate’ or some other synonym to that effect. Thus it is a commonly understood import of the word and there is no reason it should confuse the reader even though the word prophecy has other meanings as well.

Having defined prophecy as the perceived predictive aspect of Scripture with its moral and theological implications and intentions, the definition of *interpretation of prophecy* should be evident. It is not the same as the exegesis of the prophetic books of the Bible, though it can overlap with it, e.g. in a traditional commentary on the Book of Revelation. Interpretation of prophecy is the interpretation of any text (or many together) that the interpreter believed was predictive, regardless of whether they believe the prediction had already come to pass or was still unfulfilled. An important aspect of the interpretation of prophecy is that traditional and conservative Christians believed that the prophecies were all interrelated and so they interpreted them together as one whole, e.g. their interpretation has resulted in building schemes or systems.²⁹ This, along with the changes caused but the passing of time, is why the present work understands the nature of prophetic interpretation as “dynamic.” It should also be noted that many conservative Christians often refer to interpretation of prophecy as *prophetic interpretation*, which is used synonymously. This study will follow this conservative usage by using ‘interpretation of prophecy’ and ‘prophetic interpretation’ as helpful and short synonyms, instead of inventing new terms.³⁰

What is important to note for this view of prophecy and its interpretation is how such believers see Scripture. They have a view that was traditional and remains in many conservative traditions. The Bible is seen as the inspired Word of God. This has interpretative

²⁷ E.g. “**Definition of prophecy**[.] **1** : an inspired utterance of a prophet[.] **2** : the function or vocation of a prophet[.] *specifically* : the inspired declaration of divine will and purpose[.] **3** : a prediction of something to come.” *Merriam-Webster, s.v. “prophecy,”* <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prophecy>.

²⁸ E.g. “**Definition of prophesy**[.] *transitive verb* **1**: to utter by or as if by divine inspiration[.] **2**: to predict with assurance or on the basis of mystic knowledge[.] **3**: PREFIGURE[.] *intransitive verb* **1**: to speak as if divinely inspired[.] **2**: to give instruction in religious matters : PREACH[.] **3**: to make a prediction[.]” *Merriam-Webster, s.v. “prophesy,”* <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prophesy>.

²⁹ Many of these systems can be traced back to the earliest days of Christianity, such as collecting Old Testament passages believed to be messianic prophecies referring to Christ, passages from the Prophets which were seen as an allegory about the Church, or interpreting Daniel, Revelation, and the synoptic apocalypse together.

³⁰ The terms *fulfillment interpretation* or *Erfüllungsinterpretation* do not quite capture the sense of ‘prophetic interpretation.’ These terms are used to describe when an expositor interprets the fulfillment of a prophecy as occurring in their present, whereas prophetic interpretation deals with interpreting prophecies about past, present, and future.

consequences: Since God inspired all the scriptural writers, this common divine origin and purpose transcends the different historical backgrounds and contexts of the various books so that they together form one united and consistent message to mankind. This explains why believers in the prophecies have often gathered them from the various books and interpreted them together as one consistent prophetic scheme. One common example has been that of interpreting Daniel and Revelation together.

0.2.3 Types of Prophecies

To get a better picture of the prophecies which Christians have perceived in the Bible it may be helpful to describe some of the various kinds. The question of actual prognostication or the intentions of the author are not the concern but rather the way in which many Christians through history have perceived and read these texts.

Some prophecies are intended by the author(s) to be seen as such. Many of them are found in historical narratives. Their intended fulfillment may be found in the same text, another text, or no text at all. Here are some examples. The Lord foretold to Abraham that his descendants would sojourn in another land for four hundred years (Gn 15:13). While the time period is slightly different in Exodus 12:40–41 (430 years), the event of the Exodus is implied in Genesis 15. In 1 Kings 13:1–3, a prophet predicted that a king by the name of Josiah would destroy the altar at Bethel. Centuries later, Josiah is depicted as fulfilling this prophecy in 2 Kings 23:4–17. Similar prophecies are found in the genre of prophecy and poetry. There are for instance prophecies about Cyrus the Great in Isaiah 45; the fulfillment is then implied in passages such as Ezra 1. There is also an array of prophecies found in the Prophets and the apocalyptic texts which do not necessarily have a clear intended fulfillment in other Scriptures. Christians would often see them as pertaining to the future.

Another category of prophecies which Christians identified as such already in the New Testament are so-called “messianic prophecies.” This set was defined by its topic: These prophecies described the career of the Messiah. The New Testament authors believed the Old Testament was full of messianic prediction and expectation. In Luke 24:44, all three sections of the Old Testament—“the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms”—are said to contain messianic prophecies. The New Testament authors frequently quoted Old Testament passages of various genres with that understanding.³¹ They believed the career of Jesus was a fulfillment of prophecy, pointing out how messianic predictions were fulfilled: Jesus was born of a virgin as Isaiah had foretold (Mt 1:22–23), in the town of Bethlehem as Micah had predicted (Mt 2:1–6), crucified as Zechariah prophesied (Jn 19:35), resurrected and ascended as David foretold (Acts 2:23–36), and so on. The New Testament authors also believed that the Old Testament spoke about the future of Jesus and added prophecies in that vein as well: Christ would return to the earth in the clouds of heaven (Mt 24:29–31), resurrect the dead (1

³¹ One of the Old Testament “prophecies” most frequently cited in the New Testament is a poetic passage, Psalm 110. Cf. e.g. Mt 22:42–46; Mk 12:35–37; 1 Cor 15:25; Heb 3:13; 5:6, 10; 6:19–20; 7; 10:12–13.

Thes 4:13–18), judge all mankind (2 Tm 4:1), and reign forever (Rv 11:15). Christians would add Old Testament texts to this category as history continued. The visions of Daniel were seen as messianic already in the New Testament (e.g. Christ being the Son of Man) and later Christians would continue to study them in that light. An early example is the calculation of the seventy weeks that was mentioned in the previous section (0.2.1).

Another class of prophecies was typology, also with New Testament roots. Old Testament texts which are not obviously predictions (if at all) were seen as containing a prophetic aspect. This is similar to messianic prophecies, except that some messianic prophecies are indeed predictions, though their original intended “fulfillment” can be debated. But with typology, the prophetic dimension of the text is not explicit (if it is there at all). First, the New Testament authors read (some) of the Israelite and Jewish rite and law as typological. The most notable examples pertained to Christ. The Gospel authors devoted considerable space to Christ’s final days and his death. His death takes place during the Feast of Passover, with the clear implications that the authors believed Christ to be the fulfillment of the sacrificial service, the antitypical Passover Lamb and Sacrifice. Similarly, the author of Hebrews set forth Christ as the antitypical Priest which the Mosaic Law had foreshadowed. Second, the New Testament authors sometimes likened biblical history in the past to the present and the future for educational purposes based on historical similarities, or because they believed the past in fact prefigured later events (Rm 5:14; 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11; 1 Pet 3:21).

Through the centuries, Christians continued to develop these methods. This means that when they studied and interpreted prophecy, their field of inquiry was not limited to prophecy as a literary genre, or even to the passages which modern scholarship sees as prophecy in the sense of prediction. Rather, prophecy in the latter sense of prediction was the entire predictive aspect of the Bible as so perceived by the interpreter. And in this nexus of predictions to be studied, Daniel was a weighty text. Already established by the New Testament as prophecies about Christ’s earthly ministry and his Second Coming, Christians continued their attempt to decipher the numbers and symbols that Daniel used to describe the future.

0.2.4 Redemption History: The Theological Context and Purpose of Prophecy

When Christianity arose, it presented a christological metanarrative. Christ was the origin, purpose, and end of history, as God’s Mediator. Christians read the Old Testament through this lens. Christ was the Creator and the Leader of his people through the ages. They also saw his life, death, and resurrection as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy which they saw across the genre spectrum, encoded in Jewish rite and law, and in the typological meaning of biblical history. Christians also believed the Old Testament contained prophecies about their present and future—Christ’s intercession in heaven, his return, and reign. They also wrote new prophecies about his return and the end of the world in the New Testament.³² History—

³² Some prominent ones are the synoptic apocalypse (Mt 24–25; Mk 13; Lk 21), also known as the Olivet Discourse or the Little Apocalypse; 1 Thes 4; 2 Thes 2; 1 Cor 15, and Revelation.

past, present, and future—was thus seen as the story of Christ the Creator, Redeemer, Judge, and King. Christians believed also that these prophecies spoke about the course of church history.

Prophecy was necessary to telling this overarching story. First, this metanarrative was presented in the first century but stretched beyond its historical past and present to the close of time. To speak of the future with certainty required prophecy. Second, the story presented its own past and present as if they had been predicted: Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior foretold since the beginning of biblical history. This meant that ancient prophecies that had already come to pass were integral to the story.

By combining biblical history and biblical prophecy together, Christians thus presented a scriptural metanarrative of human history: Biblical history reached from Creation to the late first century AD, and biblical prophecy, while dotting the historical record already, spanned beyond the Canon to the close of time. This was the story of God, Christ, and the people of God (and their enemies)—the history of God’s salvation. A simplified diagram would look like the following:

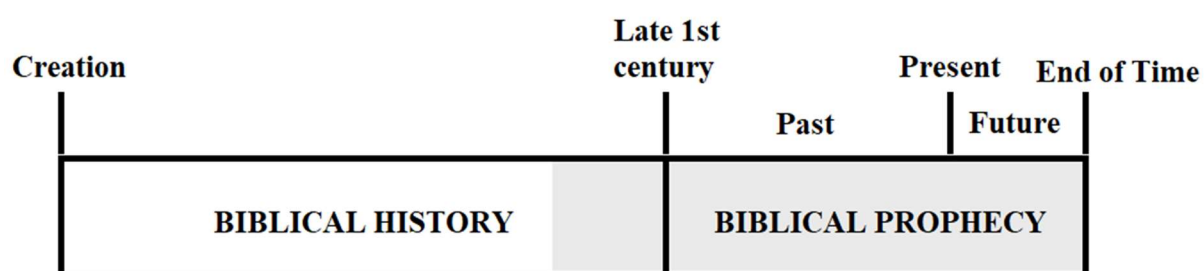


Figure 1. The Christian metanarrative or ‘history of redemption.’

Variations of this Christian metanarrative can still be found in some traditions today, where it is known as the *history of redemption* or *redemption history*.³³ From the origin of Christianity, this narrative became the context in which Christians interpreted and studied history and prophecy. This is important to note for several reasons. First, it shows that for believers the theological purpose of prophecy was ultimately to portray the history of redemption. Redemption history was the backbone of orthodoxy: If one reads the earliest Creeds, they all sound like a summary of that story. Thus prophecy and theology had close affinity, since both were needed to portray that story. Second, this context shows the scope of prophecy and its interpretation was much broader than end-time speculation. Since some prophecies were regarded as already fulfilled, prophetic interpretation could take on the form of historical research. And since the interpretation also hinged on theological choices, prophetic interpretation could take the shape of doing theology. Third, the overlap of prophecy with eschatology was limited and dynamic. Eschatology was the final unfulfilled prophecies. But

³³ The terms ‘history of redemption/salvation’ and ‘redemption/salvation history’ are terms used in some conservative traditions for what is seen as the biblical story of human history, from the beginning (Creation or even the fall of Lucifer) to end (eschatology). Cf. footnote in section 0.1.

over time, what was seen as the final prophecies could change. This can be illustrated by an example. In the early third century, Hippolytus interpreted Daniel³⁴ as foretelling that after the Roman Empire, ten contemporary kingdoms would arise and in their day the Antichrist would rise to power.³⁵ In the sixteenth century, Luther interpreted the same texts as having predicted that the territory of the Roman Empire would be divided between ten new kingdoms and that the Antichrist would rule in their midst.³⁶ While their interpretation was different, to both Hippolytus and Luther the prophecies spoke of ten kingdoms succeeding Rome. But Hippolytus saw this as an unfulfilled prophecy (eschatology); Luther saw it as already fulfilled in European history (and not as eschatology). If one would limit research to their eschatology, the similarities in their prophetic interpretation would be overlooked.

When the concept of redemption history is discussed, the importance of Daniel surfaces again. Since early Christianity, believers saw the visions of Daniel as supporting beams in this historical framework. Daniel's prophecies were mainly about a sequence of successive kingdoms, beginning in the sixth century BC and spanning history to the close of time. This explains the significant overlap of biblical history and prophecy in the schema above (note the gray coloring inside the box of biblical history). Christians soon saw themselves as living in the fourth and last kingdom of Daniel's prophecies, that of Rome. Rome would fall, the Antichrist would reign, and then Christ would return. This historiography remained essentially the same, though the definitions of what constituted Rome and the Antichrist continued to change. This brings the discussion to the history of prophetic interpretation and its various approaches.

0.2.5 The Four Approaches to Interpreting Prophecy

Christian views of prophecy have been different and to explain them necessitates distinguishing between these different dimensions of Christianity. Christianity as a whole through history is enormously complex, and yet for the purposes of discussion and research, some terms must be used to differentiate between its various traditions and dimensions. This study uses the word *traditional*, *conservative*, *liberal*, and *critical*. 'Traditional' refers to Christian theology until the rise of critical scholarship and liberal theology, which is the common heritage of all Christians today. With the rise of biblical criticism and liberal theology, a new spectrum arose in Christianity in addition to the denominational range of traditions. 'Critical' refers to the methodologies and views of biblical criticism, which seeks to read the text without the glasses of dogma. 'Liberal' refers to the theology which seeks to accommodate modern knowledge and the results of biblical criticism and the Christian faith. 'Conservative' refers to the part of Christianity which has resisted such accommodation to a greater or lesser degree. While it has changed, it sees itself as the continuation of traditional

³⁴ I.e. the toes of the statue in ch. 2, and the ten horns and the eleventh horn in ch. 7.

³⁵ Hippolytus, "Treatise on Christ and Antichrist," in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Cleveland Coxe, trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans): 5:209–210 (25, 27).

³⁶ See section 1.4.4.

Christianity and does resemble it in many respects. For the present purposes, these distinctions are mostly important because traditionally Christians believed in prophecies (as defined above), conservative Christians continue to do so, liberal Christians believe in some, albeit fewer, and critical scholarship ranges from liberal views to full secular denial of the phenomenon of prognostication (and all things supernatural or miraculous).

Christians have tended to explain prophecy in four main ways, explicitly or implicitly. In conservative circles that actively engage in prophetic interpretation, these four approaches have been labeled in a specific way to distinguish them more sharply as schools of interpretation.³⁷ As of yet, knowledge of the fourfold classification of prophetic interpretation and its attending nomenclature has not become as standard knowledge in academia as it could be.³⁸ This is comprehensible given how scholarship in general lacks much interest in the specifically theological dynamics of prophetic interpretation. These four schools of prophetic interpretation are called historicism, preterism, futurism, and idealism. Simplified diagrams of the four schools as they have been understood for the last few centuries and as they relate to Daniel and Revelation could look like this:

Daniel

Historicism

| |
|--|
| Successive kingdoms from Babylon through history until the last events |
|--|

Preterism

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Successive kingdoms to Greece/Rome | Subsequent History |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|

Futurism

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Successive kingdoms to Greece/Rome | Interim History | Last Events |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|

Idealism

Since the historical referents are mentioned explicitly by the angel interpreter, idealism is a tendency when it comes to Daniel rather than a full approach.

³⁷ The four schools are readily known in conservative reference works and literature. For Evangelical or Dispensational references, see Thomas D. Ice, "Revelation, Interpretative Views of," in Couch, *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, 368–71; Steve Gregg, ed., *Revelation: Four Views, a Parallel Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2013); C. M. Pate, ed., *Four Views on the Book of Revelation*, Counterpoints (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998). Gregg's *Revelation* contains four parallel columns with historicist, preterist, futurist, and idealist commentaries on Revelation. *Four Views* discusses preterism, idealism, and two types of futurism (classical and progressive Dispensationalism). For Seventh-day Adventist references, see "Daniel, Interpretation of," in Neufeld, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1:1825–29; "Revelation, Interpretation of," in Neufeld, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2:5191; "Historicism," in Neufeld, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2:2818–19.

³⁸ Sometimes they do appear under slightly different names, which is immaterial. Cf. e.g. eschatological/futurist interpretation (futurism), historical/preterite interpretation (preterism), prophetic interpretation (historicism). Jean Robert Armogathe, "Interpretations of the Revelation of John: 1500–1800," in John J. Collins, ed., *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 2 (New York: Continuum, 2000), 188.

Revelation

Historicism

| |
|---|
| Successive powers from Rome through history until the last events |
|---|

Preterism

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| First century | Subsequent History |
|---------------|--------------------|

Futurism

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| (First century) | Interim History | Last Events |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|

Idealism

Idealism will adhere to one of the schools above, but remain much vaguer on the historical application. Since Revelation leaves most of its symbolic imagery unexplained, idealism can refrain from applying most of it to specific events.

Figure 2: The four approaches to interpreting prophecy as they relate to Daniel and Revelation. The gray means the text is seen as covering the respective history. Non-colored area means that the respective history is not seen as being part of the visions.

Historicism is the belief that prophecy covers history contiguously or without significant gaps to the end of time. This tendency was normative in Christianity until the approaches branched more clearly from each other during the last three hundred years or so. The main premise from the start was simple: Since prophecy extends to the close of time, and the end had not yet occurred, this means that the intervening history must be covered by prophecy, and so Christians continued to incorporate it into their prophetic scheme, although with different degrees of attention to specific events and calculating specific dates.

Futurism emphasized that prophecy had to do with the future, and so attributed much of the prophecies to the unfulfilled future, without seeing it as covering all history. In a sense, the traditional interpretation of Daniel was futurist. Futurism became a more comprehensive approach to prophecy in the Counter-Reformation as an alternative to the historicism of Protestantism. Modern-day Dispensationalists and most Evangelicals adhere to yet another type of futurism.

Idealism emphasizes the imagery of prophecy and downplays its correspondence to one set of historical events and the importance of such correspondence. It lays more stress on the perennial truths conveyed through the imagery that are applicable in any historical context. Idealism has remained more of a tendency, though some expositors have interpreted entire texts or books in this fashion. The Book of Revelation was often interpreted in an allegorical fashion during the medieval period, and while such readings have often been labelled idealism, they often do apply some texts to specific events, which shows the necessity of clearer (or richer) terminology.

Preterism as a term is a mixed bag. First, preterism is the tendency to see a given prophecy as already past, rather than as covering all history or delineating the future. For instance, Calvin believed the fourth beast and its eleven horns (Dn 7) depicted Rome and its history to the time of Christ and the Apostles but no further. Compared to Luther, who saw this as Roman history to the end of time still in his future, Calvin's reading was preterist. Sometimes preterism can be closer or nearly identical to a critical reading of the text. For instance, a preterist may believe that Daniel was a sixth-century prophet but also agree with biblical criticism that the visions only extend to Antiochus IV. Thus, a full preterist reading of Daniel sees its prophecies as extending from the time of the prophet (seen as the sixth century) to the times of Antiochus IV in the second century BC and a full preterist reading of Revelation sees its prophecies as fulfilled in the first century AD. Second, the conservative Christians who engage in prophetic interpretation and use the four-school categorization, tend to include critical scholarship under preterism, since it sees the prophecies of these and other books as already past. This lumping-together of the two meanings of preterism is understandable from the believer's perspective, but it makes preterism a broad term: Preterist can refer to someone who believes Daniel was a sixth century prophet (or a second-century pseudonymous author) who outlined the future to Antiochus IV, or further but not to the present, a critical scholar who sees Daniel as mostly written in the second century BC and yet as inspired Scripture, and a critical scholars who sees it as a second-century apocalypse that is neither inspired nor prophetic. The term is still helpful in certain situations to compare approaches of interpretation through history. Preterism, as can be seen from all its examples given here, is really an umbrella term for some of the early interpretations of prophecy as well as for critical views as they developed over time.

In the prophetic interpretation of early Christianity, one cannot fully speak of four distinct approaches. Christians in the first century believed the prophecies of Daniel reached until their time and that of the imminent future. Historicists, futurists, and preterists could point to that interpretation as belonging to their school. This is because these terms are relative to each other and differentiate how prophecy is "spread" across time. As long as the banner of history, on which prophecy was painted, was relatively short, the approaches would have resulted in nearly identical pictures. It was only as the centuries continued to pass that the differences began to emerge or became more evident.

Since Daniel and other prophecies were Scripture, upon which Christians based their faith, and since they were also integral to the Christian message and metanarrative, prophetic interpretation was a normative part of Christian theology from its origin. While it can be said about any branch of theology or any part of biblical interpretation that it changed through time and did not remain absolutely static, prophetic interpretation was particularly dynamic. The changes were inherent in the Christian definition of prophecy as portrayal of history in advance. History would continue to pass and with it prophetic interpretation would continue to change. The changes were not only caused because of necessary updates to predictions

proven wrong. Future expectations and views of the past (and available sources) also changed, and with them prophetic interpretation. And in general, the more history passed, the more historical content prophecy had to account for or comprise, since it supposedly reached to the end of history. While to those unfamiliar with prophetic interpretation, the history or prophetic interpretation may seem sundry and chaotic, there was both continuum as well as rhyme and reason in the development. And thus through the centuries, Christians continued to interpret prophecy, and though their views varied greatly, they tended to apply prophecy to their past, present, and future, seeking to see how the sacred predictions marked the path of history with milestones of prophetic fulfillment, guiding the Church on its pilgrimage through time to its celestial destination. In this development of prophetic interpretation, there were many influential texts, including Daniel 8.

0.3 Significance of the Prophetic Interpretation of Daniel 8

The tradition of prophetic interpretation and the texts upon which it was based greatly influenced not only Christianity but also more broadly Western thought and history. Here it is only possible to broadly sketch the influential history of prophetic interpretation. How prophecy influenced the New Testament and the Christian metanarrative (the redemption history) has already been mentioned. As the initial expectations of early Christians continued to be delayed and history continued, they continued to develop their interpretation of prophecy and four main approaches gradually emerged. In the sixteenth century, prophetic interpretation greatly influenced the Reformation, and was used to justify opposition to the Catholic Church, which was denounced as the prophesied Antichrist and to urge believers to piety in those last days. As Protestant movements grew into established denominations, this emphasis on prophecy would wane, only to reappear in new movements. Another period of great emphasis on prophetic interpretation was the nineteenth century. At that time, a plethora of new religious movements formed and many of them emphasized prophetic interpretation. Just as in the Reformation, these new movements and traditions were influential in Christianity and the world. While some of these movements were small, many were not peripheral to Christendom at large. Some grew to great proportions, such as Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism, both of which have influenced the Christianity of the Global South. Some movements gained political muscle, such as Evangelicalism. Prophetic interpretation has also factored into the political relationship between Western powers (the United States in particular) and Israel.³⁹ Another notable example of the political influence of prophetic

³⁹ Dwight Wilson, *Armageddon Now! The Premillenarian Response to Russia and Israel since 1917* (Grand Rapids, MI: InterVarsity Press, 1977); Gershom Gorenberg, *The End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Timothy P. Weber, *On the Road to Armageddon: How Evangelicals Became Israel's Best Friend* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005); Dan Cohn-Sherbok, *The Politics of Apocalypse: History and the Influence of Christian Zionism* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006); Victoria Clark, *Allies for Armageddon: The Rise of Christian Zionism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); Hans-Lukas Kieser, *Nearest East: American Millennialism and Mission to the*

interpretation can be found in the United States, arguably the most powerful nation in modern times. Through their history, their self-identity (American exceptionalism) and foreign policy bear witness to how prophecy has been used to support and define the nation's destiny and hegemony.⁴⁰ This short sketch shows that prophetic interpretation, with its view of history past, present, and future, has been one of the roots from which Western reality has been nourished and grown into shape. The Book of Revelation is often cited in this regard, as the main fountain of eschatological or apocalyptic influence in the West. What tends to be forgotten is that Christians have traditionally interpreted Revelation to a considerable extent in the light of Daniel,⁴¹ meaning that Daniel has wielded much more influence than the book is usually given credit for.

The significant influence of prophetic interpretation in general and the Book of Daniel in particular through the course of history means that both should be understood and well researched. Mapping out the history of prophetic interpretation would be of great service to theology and church history. But more importantly and feasibly, understanding the way in which prophetic interpretation operates within theology and influences it would open up whole landscapes to the sights of anyone who wants to understand the many theological fields which overlap with the tradition of prophetic interpretation. Since prophetic interpretation continuously develops by aligning past, present, and future to the predictions of Scripture, one good way to understand it as a theological phenomenon is to analyze what the dynamics are that cause these changes. This can be done by choosing any given prophecy and comparing how it has been interpreted over time. And since Daniel has been so influential in prophetic interpretation, its text would serve as a good case study.

The prophetic interpretation of Daniel through Christian history is a large field. A case study would need to be delimited further, e.g. in terms of what interpretative approach ("school of prophetic interpretation") and what part of Daniel. The dominant school of prophetic interpretation in traditional Christianity was historicism and a case study on historicism would therefore be representative for a long period. A particularly crucial text in

Middle East (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2010); Carlo Aldrovandi, *Apocalyptic Movements in Contemporary Politics: Christian and Jewish Zionism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

⁴⁰ Nathan O. Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty: Republican Thought and the Millennium in Revolutionary New England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977); Kerry A. Trask, *In the Pursuit of Shadows: Massachusetts Millennialism and the Seven Years War*, Outstanding Studies in Early American History (New York: Garland, 1989); Robert J. Lifton, *The Superpower Syndrome: America's Apocalyptic Confrontation with the World* (New York: Thunder Mouth Press, 2003); Victor Trimondi and Victoria Trimondi, *Krieg der Religionen: Politik, Glaube und Terror im Zeichen der Apokalypse* (München: Fink, 2006); Angela M. Lahr, *Millennial Dreams and Apocalyptic Nightmares: The Cold War Origins of Political Evangelicalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Jason Dittmer and Tristan Sturm, eds., *Mapping the End Times: American Evangelical Geopolitics and Apocalyptic Visions*, Critical Geopolitics (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010); Jonathan D. Redding, *One Nation under Graham: Apocalyptic Rhetoric and American Exceptionalism* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2021).

⁴¹ Apocalyptic texts in the New Testament borrow phrases and concepts from Daniel. This led Christians to eventually interpret Revelation in the light of Daniel. Critical scholarship sees Revelation as depicting an imminent apocalypse. But very early, Christians had begun to read Revelation as a prophecy that spanned history in similar fashion to Daniel. Though of course Revelation influenced Christian reading of Daniel as well, Revelation was quickly seen as a zoom-in commentary on the final kingdoms of Daniel.

the history of (historicist) prophetic interpretation is Daniel 8. In a way, this chapter or vision served as the sprouting tip or a thermostat of how active and developing prophetic interpretation was as long as historicism remained the norm. New readings of this chapter were at the heart of prophetic interpretation in the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, which were two of the most active and influential periods in Protestant interpretation of prophecy. While the chapter has a long history with such a function,⁴² this study will focus on its historicist Protestant interpretation, from the sixteenth until the nineteenth century.

To understand how Daniel 8 served this function, it is best to briefly sketch the history of Danielic interpretation. In the early centuries, Christians had moved away from what critical scholars now see as the historical referent of Daniel's visions: The rise and fall of kingdoms culminating with the downfall of Antiochus IV in the late second century BC. Instead, Christians believed that Daniel had been a sixth-century prophet and that his visions were a portrayal of history from his age to the close of time. Daniel 2 and 7 were seen as presenting the rise and fall of four kingdoms—the fourth being Rome in one sense or another⁴³—and the establishment of the fifth kingdom, the Kingdom of God at the Second Coming. Chapter 9 did not extend to the close of time but was instead a chronological messianic prophecy. Its seventy weeks dated events connected to Christ's life on earth (such as the Baptism and Crucifixion), and also predicted the destruction of Jerusalem. The interpretation of these chapters remained relatively similar through the centuries. The interpretation of Daniel 8 (and 10–12, which were interpreted to a great extent on the basis of chapter 8), however, was traditionally a mix. It retained what critical scholars see as its original intent: Christians interpreted it as history leading up to Antiochus IV. Additionally, however, Christians believed that this king was a type of the Antichrist who would terrorize the Church in the end times. In short, the interpretation of Daniel 2, 7, and 9 was historicist, whereas the interpretation of Daniel 8 and 10–12 was mostly preterist (and a bit historicist). This could be seen as a hermeneutic tension in the interpretation of Daniel. It was solved in two very different ways. Critical scholars gradually read all the Danielic visions critically, which meant that Antiochus IV and the events surrounding him were the culmination of all the visions.

⁴² E.g. authors who attempted to read the 2300 “evening-mornings” of Daniel 8:14 as a longer period than the literal meaning include Sextus Julius Africanus (c. 160–240), the Joachimite author of *De seminibus scripturarum* (c. 1205), Arnaldus de Villa Nova (c. 1240–1311), the Franciscans Pierre de Jean Olivi (1248–98) and Ubertino of Casale (1259–c. 1329); and Nicholas of Cusa (1401–64). Similar attempts are found in Judaism as well, and include Sa’adiah ben Yosef Gaon Al-Fayyumi (882/92–942), Karaites Sahl ben Matzliah ha-Cohen (10th century) and Yefet ben Ali (10th century); Rashi (1040–1105), Abraham bar Hiyya ha-Nasi (c. 1070–1136/45), Moses ben Nahman (also known as Nahmanides or Ramban) (1194–1270), Bahya ben Asher ibn Halawa (1255–1340), and Simeon ben Zemah Duran (Rashbatz) (1361–1444). LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946–1954), 1:281, 717–725, 747–762, 776, 780, 903; 2:124–137, 200, 202, 206–210, 215–216, 218.

⁴³ In the Syriac tradition, however, critical scholars point out that, in line with Daniel's authorial intent, the fourth kingdom continued to be seen as the Greeks. Willem van Peursen, “Daniel's Four Kingdoms in the Syriac Tradition,” in *Tradition and Innovation in Biblical Interpretation: Studies Presented to Professor Eep Talstra on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, eds. Willem T. van Peursen and Janet W. Dyk, *Studia Semitica Neerlandica* 57 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 189–207.

Traditional and later conservative interpreters, however, went the opposite way. They historicized Daniel 8 until it had nothing to do with Antiochus, and became a vision like chapters 2 and 7, covering history from the time of the prophet to the close of history. This means that the historicizing of Daniel 8 separated the last link between the original reading of the visions (according to biblical criticism) and a prophetic interpretation reading of the book. Thus the increasingly historicized reading of Daniel 8 was the gauge of how prophetic interpretation developed in general. It also mattered theologically. It was crucial to the sixteenth century Reformation and to Protestantism until the nineteenth century. The insistence on its historicized reading in the nineteenth century was also an important step in the decline of historicism in Protestantism as a whole. Thereafter, liberal Christians became settled on the critical evaluation of Daniel, and conservatives turned to futurism, preterism, or critical interpretation. The historicist interpretation of Daniel 8 therefore evinces much greater change compared to the relatively consistent reading of the other chapters. It also was involved in important theological changes through Protestant history. These reasons make Daniel 8 a prime case study to investigate the changing nature of prophetic interpretation and at the same time to highlight the theological significance of prophetic interpretation.

This study therefore aims at an increased understanding of prophetic interpretation from early modernity to the nineteenth century by focusing on the development of the historicist reading of Daniel 8. This is done by condensing this particularly colorful theological progression down to a case study of four of the most significant contributors. They were Martin Luther, Isaac Newton, William Miller, and Ellen White. They are said to be among the most important contributors because building on each other's previous interpretation, they provided four crucial interpretative changes which took Daniel 8 from its traditional interpretation and, step by step, historicized it in full. The contributions can be briefly summarized as follows. The traditional reading was preterist with a futurist second meaning (the Antichrist as the antitype of Antiochus). Luther changed this reading towards historicism, when he famously identified the Pope (i.e. the Papacy) as the Antichrist. What is less known, is that he did this originally through a new reading of Daniel 8. Newton rejected the double interpretation of Daniel 8 based on a more systematic approach to prophecy and applied the chapter solely to the Antichrist (and not to Antiochus). What has barely been mentioned in the literature is that Newton wrote a lengthy church history manuscript structured on the vision and intended it for publication. (He never published the manuscript, probably to hide his antitrinitarian views.) Miller, probably the most famous date-setter in history, took the third step. He calculated the enumerated period in the vision and predicted that it would end with the Second Coming, in 1843/44. Of the many who engaged in similar calculations during the nineteenth century, he was by far the most influential. In his day, his preaching led to the Millerite Movement which became a nationwide sensation in the United States. While the movement petered out, it gave rise to a new Christian tradition or family of denominations, Adventism. It was also only within the tradition he unwittingly launched that a historicist

reading of Daniel 8 continued. Of these, White is the most significant person. Starting out as a Millerite, she later became a co-founder of one of the new religious movements in the nineteenth century, Seventh-day Adventism, the largest Adventist denomination. The movement arose from her and others's further reinterpretation of Daniel 8. According to it, the close of the chapter's enumerated period was but the commencement of another indeterminate period, which played a significant role in White's unique "great controversy" theodicy. The present study will seek to uncover the dynamics involved in how these four authors read Daniel 8. In so doing, the study will address a certain shortcoming that hampers research into prophetic interpretation in general. To appreciate the desideratum the present study addresses, the scholarship will now be reviewed, then the desideratum will be explained before the methodology that addresses it will be laid out.

0.4 Review of Scholarship in Pertinent Fields

The previous section (0.3) explained how there are two lenses through which to view the influence and role of Daniel in Christian thought. First, Daniel has been an important apocalyptic text in Scripture which has played a role in the eschatological varieties and movements called apocalypticism and millennialism. Second, Daniel has been viewed as a predictive text which has been interpreted in tandem with other scriptural predictions. This has been seen as an integral part of reading and explaining the Bible—interpreting its prophecies. These two conceptual categories of particular eschatologies and scriptural prophecies in general overlap to some degree but are also somewhat different perspectives. This section will sketch out the contours of scholarship of both perspectives to see what has been done in general in the field(s) of inquiry to which the present study belongs.

0.4.1 Scholarship on Prophetic Interpretation

Scholarship on prophetic interpretation has its roots in biblical commentaries, particularly those on books such as Daniel and Revelation. The commentator would sometimes note the various interpretative alternatives for a given passage, or they would give a short historical summary of what people had thought concerning it. This in time developed into scholarship on prophetic interpretation and its history.

After the rise of biblical criticism, conservative discourse and scholarship has continued to see prophetic interpretation as a clearly demarcated discipline and therefore to produce literature on the topic. Conservative scholars have focused on explaining and defending what they see as the true interpretation of prophecy, i.e. their own tradition. Since prophetic interpretation is integral to their theology, the discussion about the topic is found across their literature, and only some prominent types of work will be mentioned here, each illustrated with an example. First, conservative theologians have defended their prophetic interpretation over against "neighboring" competing interpretations. E.g. in the United States, where Evangelical prophetic interpretation is prominent (and thus their eschatology), other

denominations have written against their views to defend and promote their own tradition.⁴⁴ Second, sometimes eschatological disagreements cross denominational or group boundaries, so theologians in a given tradition discuss what the right answer is. E.g., Evangelicals mostly adhere to a specific view on the millennium, whereas some of them share views that have been more prominent in other groups. Within Evangelicalism there is therefore a vibrant discussion on the millennium. The question revolves around the nature of the millennium (Rv 20) and its relation to the Second Coming. *Amillennialism* sees the millennium as a symbol of the church era, *premillennialism* teaches that Christ will return and reign in person during the millennium, and *postmillennialism* is the belief that Christ will reign in spirit during the millennium and return after it. Premillennialism, in turn, comes in at least two sorts, *historic* or *dispensational*, depending on the eschatological events leading up to the Second Coming. The most common millennial belief among Evangelicals has so far been dispensational premillennialism.⁴⁵ Third, within any tradition that believes in prophetic interpretation, there are in-house varieties. A current example comes again from the Evangelical world. Evangelicals teach that before the Second Coming, there will be a seven-year Tribulation, and that Christian believers will be temporarily removed from the earth (the [Secret] Rapture). There are different views on the relational chronology of these two events, and hence there is *pretribulationism*, *midtribulationism*, *posttribulationism*, and *pre-wrath rapturism*, depending on when the Rapture is seen as taking place.⁴⁶ Fourth, conservative scholars have traced the history of the prophetic interpretation of their tradition from earliest Christianity to the present

⁴⁴ E.g. Shawn Boonstra and Henry Feyerabend, *The Return* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2002); Carl E. Olson, *Will Catholics Be “Left Behind”? A Catholic Critique of the Rapture and Today’s Prophecy Preachers*, Modern Apologetics Library (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2003).

⁴⁵ For definitions of the three main strands of millennialism, see Rick Bowman and Russell L. Penney, “Amillennialism,” in Couch, *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, 37–39; Thomas D. Ice, “Postmillennialism,” in Couch, *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, 307–10; Bobby Hayes, “Premillennialism,” in Couch, *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology*, 310–11; Timothy P. Weber, “Millennialism,” in Walls, *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, 367–69.

For discussion on the millennium, cf. e.g. Robert G. Clouse, ed., *The Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1977); Millard J. Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology: A Study of the Millennium* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1977); Charles L. Feinberg, *Millennialism: The Two Major Views. The Premillennial and Amillennial Systems of Biblical Interpretation Analyzed & Compared*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980); Donald K. Campbell and Jeffrey L. Townsend, eds., *A Case for Premillennialism: A New Consensus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992); Stanley J. Grenz, *The Millennial Maze: Sorting Out Evangelical Options* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992); Robert G. Clouse, *The New Millennium Manual: A Once and Future Guide* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999); Craig L. Blomberg and Sung Wook Chung, *A Case for Historic Premillennialism: An Alternative to “Left Behind” Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2009); C. Samuel Storms, *Kingdom Come: The Amillennial Alternative*, rev. ed. (Fearn: Mentor, 2015); Kim Riddlebarger, *A Case for Amillennialism: Understanding the End Times* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003; rev. ed. 2013).

⁴⁶ A substantial literature has been written on the relation between the Rapture and the Tribulation. Cf. e.g. Marvin Rosenthal, *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church: A New Understanding of the Rapture, the Tribulation, and the Second Coming* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1990); Archer, Jr., Gleason Leonard et al., *Three Views on the Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Post-Tribulation?*, Counterpoints: Bible and Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996); Craig A. Blaising, Alan Hultberg and Douglas J. Moo, *Three Views on the Rapture: Pretribulation, Prewrath, or Posttribulation*, 2nd ed., Counterpoints: Bible and Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2010); John F. Hart, ed., *Evidence for the Rapture: A Biblical Case for Pretribulationism* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2015).

day to demonstrate their interpretation of prophecy as the original and true one.⁴⁷ Looking past the confessional (or apologetic or believer's-perspective) tone of such literature, it contains much of value. In delineating, often in painstaking detail, the finer points of difference in prophetic interpretation, as well as the contours of the various schools of prophetic interpretation, it has come up with or used terminology for all these variations. It has also contributed to the history of prophetic interpretation. There are also conservative reference works on prophetic interpretation, though they seem to be few and far between.⁴⁸

What can be quickly seen is that this scholarship is strongly influenced by the interests and perspectives of the given tradition. It is often written through the lens of orthodoxy, with the concern of tracing its rise, defending it against contenders, and evaluating the orthodox choice among interpretative options. The interest in how external influences shaped the prophetic interpretation is not great, since divine providence is seen as the guiding factor of historical dynamics.

0.4.2 Scholarship on the History of Interpretation of Specific Books and Topics

In general scholarship, the literature which comes closest to studying prophetic interpretation is the history of the interpretation of biblical apocalyptic texts, such as Daniel and Revelation. Though such literature confines itself to a given text, out of necessity it usually must interweave its analysis with how commentators on the text connected it to other prophetic texts.

This literature, when one surveys monographs, has not been very sizeable. Research on Revelation⁴⁹ and the topic of the Antichrist⁵⁰ have been the most prominent and have

⁴⁷ For a Dispensationalist example, see William C. Watson, *Dispensationalism before Darby: Seventeenth-Century and Eighteenth-Century English Apocalypticism*. For Seventh-day Adventist examples, see Ludwig Richard Conradi, *Das goldene Zeitalter* (Hamburg: Advent-Verlag, 1923); Ludwig Richard Conradi, *The Impelling Force of Prophetic Truth* (London: Thynne and Co. Ltd. and Daily Prayer Union, 1935); Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*. This type of works can probably be found in other traditions as well. It is also found in nascent form in literature overviews in prophetic commentaries and discussions about competing ideas in eschatology. It would be valuable to have a bibliography over this type of literature.

⁴⁸ Joshua W. Brooks, ed., *A Dictionary on Writers on the Prophecies, with the Titles and Occasional Description of Their Works* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., 1835); Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*; Mal Couch, ed., *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology: A Practical Guide to the People, Viewpoints, and History of Prophetic Studies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1996).

⁴⁹ Wilhelm Kamlah, *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie: Die mittelalterliche Auslegung der Apokalypse vor Joachim von Fiore*, *Historische Studien* 285 (Berlin: Ebering, 1935); Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn, eds., *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); Irena Backus, *Reformation Readings of the Apocalypse: Geneva, Zurich, and Wittenberg*, *Oxford Studies in Historical Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Kenneth G. C. Newport, *Apocalypse and Millennium: Studies in Biblical Eisegesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jonathan Kirsch, *A History of the End of the World: How the Most Controversial Book in the Bible Changed the Course of Western Civilization* (New York: HarperOne, 2007); Warren Johnston, *Revelation Restored: The Apocalypse in Later Seventeenth-Century England*, *Studies in Modern British Religious History* 27 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011); Bruce Chilton, *Visions of the Apocalypse: Reception of John's Revelation in Western Imagination* (Baylor University Press, 2013); James T. Palmer, *The Apocalypse in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Michael A. Ryan, *A Companion to the Premodern Apocalypse* (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Timothy Beal, *The Book of Revelation: A Biography*, *Lives of Great Religious Books*

overshadowed interest in the development of the interpretation of Daniel. There are still several works on this underresearched topic, presented here roughly in the order of the chapters in Daniel which they treat. Froom traced the history of the historicist reading of Daniel and Revelation (1946–54).⁵¹ Koch edited a volume on Daniel’s reception history (1997),⁵² and Delgado, Koch, and Marsch edited another such work (2003).⁵³ Zier discussed Andrew of St. Victor’s interpretation of Daniel (1983).⁵⁴ Rowley catalogued the various failed solutions to the problem of the historicity of Darius the Mede, a figure mentioned in chapters 5–6, 9, and 11 (1935).⁵⁵ Podskalsky wrote on the four kingdoms of chapters 2 and 7 in Byzantine eschatology (1972),⁵⁶ Melnyk on how several authors interpreted these kingdoms (2001),⁵⁷ Valdez traced how the fifth kingdom had been interpreted (2010),⁵⁸ and Perrin and

(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018); Craig Koester, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the Book of Revelation*, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

⁵⁰ Wilhelm Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des Neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1895); E. R. Chamberlin, *Antichrist and the Millennium* (New York: Saturday Review Press, 1975); Richard K. Emerson, *The Coming of Anti-Christ: An Apocalyptic Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976); Robert C. Fuller, *Naming the Antichrist: The History of an American Obsession* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); José Guadalajara Medina, *Las profecías del Anticristo en la edad media*, Manuales (Madrid: Gredos, 1996); L. J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *The Antecedents of Antichrist: A Traditio-Historical Study of the Earliest Christian Views on Eschatological Opponents*, Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement Series 49 (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Curtis V. Bostick, *The Antichrist and the Lollards: Apocalypticism in Late Medieval and Reformation England* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); Volker Leppin, *Antichrist und Jüngster Tag: das Profil apokalyptischer Flugschriftenpublizistik im deutschen Luthertum 1548–1618*, Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationsgeschichte (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1999); Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); Stephen J. Vicchio, *The Legend of the Antichrist: A History* (Wipf & Stock, 2009); Nelly Ficzel, *Der Papst als Antichrist: Kirchenkritik und Apokalyptik im 13. und frühen 14. Jahrhundert*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Tradition 214 (Leiden: Brill, 2018); Philip C. Almond, *The Antichrist: A New Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

⁵¹ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*.

⁵² Klaus Koch, *Europa, Rom und der Kaiser vor dem Hintergrund von zwei Jahrtausenden Rezeption des Buches Daniel*, Berichte aus den Sitzungen der Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften e. v., Hamburg 15.1 (Hamburg & Göttingen: Joachim Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997).

⁵³ Mariano Delgado, Klaus Koch and Edgar Marsch, eds., *Europa, Tausendjähriges Reich und Neue Welt: Zwei Jahrtausende Geschichte und Utopie in der Rezeption des Danielbuches*, Studien zur christlichen Religions- und Kulturgeschichte 1 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 2003).

⁵⁴ Mark Allen Zier, “The Expositio super Daniele of Andrew of St. Victor: A Critical Edition Together with a Survey of the Medieval Latin Interpretation of Daniel” (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 1983).

⁵⁵ H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel: A Historical Study of Contemporary Theories* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press Board, 1935).

⁵⁶ Gerhard Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie: Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in den vier Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apok. 20). Eine motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Münchener Universitäts-Schriften 9 (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1972).

⁵⁷ The authors are Porphyry, Jerome, Joachim of Fiore, Hugh Broughton, and Edward Bouverie Pusey. Janet L. R. Melnyk, “The Four Kingdoms in Daniel 2 and 7: Chapters in the History of Interpretation” (PhD dissertation, Emory University, 2001).

⁵⁸ Maria Ana Travassos Valdez, *Historical Interpretations of the “Fifth Empire”: The Dynamics of Periodization from Daniel to António Vieira, S.J.*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 149 (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

Stuckenbruck traced the four-kingdom-motif before and after Daniel (2021).⁵⁹ Nuñez covered how Daniel 8 was interpreted from 1700 to 1900 (1987).⁶⁰ Fraidl traced the history of the interpretation of the seventy weeks in chapter 9 (1883)⁶¹ and Kalafian compared three contemporary interpretations of the same (1991).⁶² DiTommaso (2005) collected and analyzed Danielic apocrypha.⁶³

As can be seen from the scope and topics, this literature does not present a comprehensive mapping out of the history of the prophetic interpretation of Daniel (or other apocalyptic texts), or a theological analysis of why the interpretation changes.

0.4.3 Scholarship on Apocalypticism and Millennialism

In general, scholarship has focused on eschatological varieties such as apocalypticism and millennialism rather than the category of prophetic interpretation. Though these concepts overlap, they are not synonymous or exactly the same. To explain why scholarship in general prefers these lines of investigation, a short historical summary is helpful.

With the rise of biblical criticism and liberal theology, scholars (excepting some conservative circles) came to a different understanding of most of what had been perceived as prophecy of the Bible (according to the second definition as previously discussed). Some of the “prophecy” was limited to other genres, such as the rituals, laws, and history of the Old Testament, and deemed to have no prophetic intentions. This meant that the second meaning of prophecy as the predictive aspect of the Bible was regarded as a mistaken construct based on outdated hermeneutics and theology. With the rediscovery of extra-canonical apocalypses and apocalyptic literature, combined with further historical research, scholars also came to differentiate between the apocalyptic genre and that of prophecy. The word *prophecy* came to be more restricted to the genre of prophecy. Scholarship still acknowledged the presence of predictions in the Bible, though these were in general not seen as genuine prognostication or revelation of the future. There were several reasons for this reevaluation. First, scholarship evaluated—and consequently often abandoned—scriptural descriptions of history and traditional dogmas in the light of modern knowledge. Accordingly, the authorship and dating of the biblical books was revised significantly. This meant that predictions, whether found in a historical account, a prophetic book, or apocalyptic text, were seen as contemporary to the writer or written after the events they forecast. The predictions could therefore not be seen as

⁵⁹ Andrew Perrin and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, eds., *Four Kingdom Motifs before and beyond the Book of Daniel*, Themes in Biblical Narrative 28 (Leiden: Brill, 2021).

⁶⁰ Samuel Nuñez, “The Vision of Daniel 8: Interpretations from 1700 to 1900” (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 1987).

⁶¹ Franz Fraidl, *Die Exegese der siebenzig Wochen Daniels in der alten und mittleren Zeit: Festschrift der K. K. Universität Graz aus Anlass der Jahresfeier am XV. November MDCCCLXXXIII* (Graz: Verlag von Leuschner & Lubensky, 1883).

⁶² Michael Kalafian, *The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks of the Book of Daniel: A Critical Review of the Prophecy as Viewed by Three Major Theological Interpretations and the Impact of the Book of Daniel on Christology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991).

⁶³ Lorenzo DiTommaso, ed., *The Book of Daniel and the Apocryphal Danielic Literature*, Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha 20 (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

genuine prognostication detailing future events, but rather as either the expressions of contemporary expectations or *vaticinia ex eventu*. For instance, Daniel was redated to the earlier half of the second century BC and the main intention of the visions concerned the persecution of the Jews at the hands of Antiochus IV. The imagery of Revelation portrayed how Christians were persecuted by Jews and Romans in the first century. The synoptic apocalypse described events in the first century. This naturally meant that attempts to read the books differently were deemed an outdated tradition. Just as “prophecy” as it was understood in traditional—and in conservative—Christianity was discarded as a category, so “prophetic interpretation” was dismissed as a method to engage with the predictions found in the various genres of history, prophecy, and apocalypse.

Eschatology continued in liberal theology, though it too changed in many circles. Traditionally, eschatology was the last part of the history of redemption, the tail-end of what the prophecies revealed about the future. But liberal theology did not have the category of “prophecy” which, once interpreted or decoded, depicted history up to and including the final eschatological events. Instead, eschatology was the teaching about the end of history, which was more loosely connected to previous history (or not at all) via prophecy tracing history to the end, since the Bible gave no indication about when the end would occur. Some liberal theologians (usually Protestant) tried to modernize eschatology by reading the eschatological events in new (and less literal) ways.⁶⁴ The sum result was that whether eschatology was reinterpreted or pointed to the unknown future, the future end of the world diminished significantly as a topic of interest or concern or even belief in liberal theology.

While biblical criticism and liberal theology were developing as new schools of thought, it is understandable that their scholars did not have much interest in studying traditional and conservative prophetic interpretation. Scholars were indeed engaging with the category of “prophecy” indirectly as they reevaluated the composition of the canonical books, their meaning, and the foundations of each traditional doctrine. Yet as biblical criticism and liberal theology became a power of their own and the academic norm in much of Western Christendom, their scholars were slow towards making prophetic interpretation a topic of study in the field of theology, historical theology, and church history. One plausible reason is that scholars had little inclination towards studying the theology and history of a discipline they saw as outdated and misguided, even fanatical. The same distaste was probably the reason why, once scholars had differentiated between prophecy and apocalyptic literature, they shied away from researching what the role of the latter was in the Bible itself, particularly in the New Testament. Perhaps they were dismayed at the idea that the traditional

⁶⁴ Some of the notable figures were Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834), Karl Barth (1886–1968), Paul Tillich (1886–1965), Rudolf Karl Bultmann (1884–1976), and Jürgen Moltmann (1926–), to name a few. For a brief overview of liberal Protestant eschatology from Schleiermacher to the early twenty-first century, see Gerhard Sauter, “Protestant Theology,” in Walls, *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, 248–62; Richard Bauckham, “Conclusion: Emerging Issues in Eschatology in the Twenty-First Century,” in Walls, *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, 671–89.

and conservative views of prophecy, which had been an embarrassment with their repeated predictions of the end of the world through history, and which they had worked so hard at dismantling from theology, could be found taught in the New Testament, even from the lips of Jesus Christ. This was at least the criticism which Old Testament scholar Klaus Koch had for biblical criticism and liberal theology in his seminal study *Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*, first published in 1970.⁶⁵ In no way was he interested in introducing apocalyptic speculation of biblical apocalyptic texts into modern theology. But he was concerned that modern scholars were shying away from properly assessing the role apocalyptic thought had played in late Judaism and early Christianity.

Such research reservations disappeared throughout the course of the twentieth century as scholars across many disciplines became increasingly more interested in eschatological topics and apocalyptic literature. Conservative scholarship, which was interested in prophetic interpretation itself, likely contributed to this interest. For instance, Seventh-day Adventist church historian LeRoy Edwin Froom traced the history of prophetic interpretation (with a focus on Daniel and Revelation) in his monumental albeit strongly believer's-perspective *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (1946–54).⁶⁶ Though it was criticized for its apologetic bias and insufficient historical analysis, it was also hailed as an impressive and massive resource of a neglected field.⁶⁷ In general, however, scholars, did not study prophetic interpretation as such. They focused on certain strands of eschatology frequent in traditional and conservative Christianity (and outside of it). While these eschatologies had previously either been neglected or labelled as chiliasm, fancy, or fanaticism,⁶⁸ two of them now came to be termed more neutrally and specifically as *apocalypticism* and *millennialism*. (The latter term has generally taken precedence over *millennarianism* and *millenarianism*, though *Chiliasmus*

⁶⁵ Klaus Koch, *Ratlos vor der Apokalypik: Eine Streitschrift über ein vernachlässigtes Gebiet der Bibelwissenschaft und die schädlichen Auswirkungen auf Theologie und Philosophie* (Gütersloh: Mohn, 1970). See in particular the chapter “The Agonised Attempts to Save Jesus from Apocalyptic,” Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic: A Polemical Work on a Neglected Area of Biblical Studies and Its Damaging Effects on Theology and Philosophy*, Studies in Biblical Theology, Second Series 22 (Naperville, IL: Alec R. Allenson, 1972), 57–97 (= ch. 6).

⁶⁶ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*.

⁶⁷ In his discussion (1965) of scholarship on millenarianism, Smith suggested that Froom's work was one of the “three impressive bibliographies” that “stimulated American interest in the idea.” David E. Smith, “Millenarian Scholarship in America,” *American Quarterly* 17, no. 3 (August 1965): 536. For some reviews on Froom, see Frank H. Yost, review of *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, by LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Church History* 16, no. 4 (December 1947): 256–57; E. Harris Harbison, review of *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 2, by LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Church History* 17, no. 3 (Sep 1948): 256–57; Robert T. Handy, review of *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 1, by LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Church History* 21, no. 2 (June 1952): 154–55; Ernest Trice Thompson, review of *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 4, by LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Church History* 25, no. 2 (June 1956): 184–85.

⁶⁸ This more negative terminology reflected underlying aversion. Notice, for instance, Koch's description of critical scholarship's attitude towards apocalypticism: Until Käsemann, “apocalyptic had been for biblical scholarship something on the periphery of the Old and New Testaments—something bordering on heresy.” “The apocalyptic writings in the selection offered by the canon of the Protestant churches (largely, that is to say, limited to Revelation and the Book of Daniel) were centuries solely the arena of sects, which were looked down upon by academic theology with contemptuous superiority.” Koch, *Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*, 14, 15.

continues to be used in German.⁶⁹) Both terms are older than the twentieth century. Yet it was in the twentieth century that they both replaced older terminology and thus became more commonly used, and that their present-day definitions were further refined. Historian Norman Cohn offered a refined definition of millennialism in his influential work *Pursuit of the Millennium* (1957) which was cited in section 0.2.1. The definition has become common.⁷⁰ The definition of the other type of eschatology, apocalypticism, was related to the development of research on the literary genre of apocalypse and apocalyptic texts. While there were waves of scholarly attempts to foreground apocalypticism in biblical studies since the late nineteenth century, they did not gain much ground until the mid-twentieth century.⁷¹ New Testament scholar Ernst Käsemann sparked a decades-long debate about its role in Christian theology with his claim that “apocalyptic was the mother of all Christian theology” in 1962.⁷² In his work mentioned above, Koch pointed apocalyptic out as a neglected research field in biblical studies in 1970.⁷³ In response to his call for clearer definitions, Old Testament scholar John J. Collins proposed a definition (as previously quoted)⁷⁴ for the genre apocalypse (and apocalyptic literature) in a groundbreaking issue of *Semeia* in 1979.⁷⁵ The definition has since been widely accepted.⁷⁶ Around the same time, apocalypticism was defined. Its precise definition continues to be debated, in part because of the long history and rich variety of the phenomenon. In general, however, it is seen as the worldview presented in the apocalyptic literary genre, whether expressed in further texts, theology, or a religious community or movement. The definitions provided by the *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* and the *Critical Encyclopedia of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements* were cited in section 0.2.1.

With academic interest and definitions in place, scholars could study the origin, nature, history, and theology of apocalypticism and millennialism in earnest, as well as that of the ancient apocalyptic literature. The literature on these topics—particularly the two eschatology types—increased significantly over the last few decades to the present day. To give some picture of the field: There are now several series dedicated to apocalypticism and

⁶⁹ Two German standard works can be mentioned as examples. *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* has no entry on “Millenarismus” or “Millennialismus” (cf. 22:752) but does have a set of entries on “Chiliasmus” (7:723–45). Likewise, *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (4th ed.), under “Millenarismus” has no entry and refers to the entry “Chiliasmus” (5:1235; 2:136–44).

⁷⁰ It is, for instance, used in standard works. Catherine Wessinger, “Millennialism in Cross-Cultural Perspective,” in Wessinger, *Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*, 4.

⁷¹ “The first violent discussion about the meaning of apocalyptic was provoked by Hilgenfeld, round about 1850. But towards the end of the nineteenth century concern with the problem subsided again.” In the early twentieth century, Ludwig Philipp Albert Schweitzer (1875–1965) set forth an apocalyptic Jesus, but his proposal “attracted little attention at the time.” Koch, *Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*, 57, 58.

⁷² Ernst Käsemann, “Zum Thema der urchristlichen Apokalyptik,” *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 59, no. 3 (1962): 257–84. Koch notes that “although Käsemann’s thesis had its forerunners and although other exegetes besides supported similar ideas, it was Käsemann’s exposition which first roused attention, and indeed excitement.” Koch, *Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*, 14.

⁷³ Koch, *Rediscovery of Apocalyptic*.

⁷⁴ Cf. section 0.3.

⁷⁵ John J. Collins, “Introduction: Towards the Morphology of a Genre,” in Collins, *Apocalypse*, 9.

⁷⁶ Collins, “What Is Apocalyptic Literature?,” 2.

millennialism.⁷⁷ Monographs on these eschatologies are probably a few hundred all in all. They are spread across many disciplines and not confined to theology and religious studies. Most of these studies are historical—focusing on persons, groups, periods, and places, and too numerous to reference—though other analytical approaches have been used as well, such as psychoanalysis,⁷⁸ psychology with focus on failed predictions,⁷⁹ theo-linguistics,⁸⁰ and theology.⁸¹ Some works focus on the role of certain factors and features in these eschatologies, such as catastrophe,⁸² charisma,⁸³ disaster preparation,⁸⁴ hiddenness,⁸⁵ rhetoric,⁸⁶ time,⁸⁷ Utopianism,⁸⁸ violence,⁸⁹ and revolution.⁹⁰ In addition to the monographs,

⁷⁷ *Millennialism and Society*, 3 vols (London: Equinox, 2005–2006); *Cultural History of Apocalyptic Thought*, 4 vols. (Oldenbourg: De Gruyter, 2013–); *I.B.Tauris Studies in Prophecy, Apocalypse and Millennialism*, 2 vols. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2015–)

⁷⁸ W. W. Meissner, *Thy Kingdom Come: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on the Messiah and the Millennium* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1995).

⁷⁹ Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken and Stanley Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails: When Prophecy Fails: A Social and Psychological Study of a Modern Group That Predicted the Destruction of the World* (New York: Harper TorchBooks, 1956); Jon R. Stone, ed., *Expecting Armageddon: Essential Readings in Failed Prophecy* (New York & London: Routledge, 2000); Diana G. Tumminia and William H. Swatos, eds., *How Prophecy Lives, Religion and the Social Order* 21 (Brill: Leiden, 2011); Carsten Dutt and Martial Staub, eds., “Apokalypse gestern,” special issue, *Zeitschrift für Ideengeschichte* 8 (spring 2014).

⁸⁰ Warren A. Kappeler III, *Catholics and Millennialism: A Theo-Linguistic Guide*, American University Studies 350 (New York: Peter Lang, 2016).

⁸¹ Ulrich H. J. Körtner, *The End of the World: A Theological Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995); Andrew J. Weigert, *Religious and Secular Views of Endtime*, Mellen Studies in Sociology 42 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004).

⁸² Michael Barkun, *Disaster and the Millennium* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974); Karsten Petersen, *Die Apokalypse im Hinterkopf: Denken, Glauben und Handeln in katastrophalen Zeiten*, Werte und Normen, Ethik, Religion 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990); Duncan B. Forrester, *Apocalypse Now? Reflections on Faith in a Time of Terror* (New York: Routledge, 2017); Robert E. Bjork, ed., *Catastrophes and the Apocalyptic in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance 43 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2019).

⁸³ Roy Wallis, ed., *Millennialism and Charisma* (Belfast: Queen’s University, 1982).

⁸⁴ Mark O’Connell, *Notes from an Apocalypse: A Personal Journey to the End of the World and Back* (New York: Doubleday, 2020).

⁸⁵ Malcolm Bull, *Seeing Things Hidden: Apocalypse, Vision and Totality* (London and New York: Verso, 2000).

⁸⁶ Frank L. Borchardt, *Doomsday Speculation as a Strategy of Persuasion: A Study of Apocalypticism as Rhetoric*, Studies in Comparative Religion 4 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990); Barry Brummett, ed., *Contemporary Apocalyptic Rhetoric*, Praeger Series in Political Communication (New York: Praeger, 1991); Stephen D. O’Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

⁸⁷ N. Champion, *The Great Year: Astrology, Millenarianism and History in the Western Tradition* (London: Arkana, 1994); Festinger, Riecken and Schachter, *When Prophecy Fails*; Albert I. Baumgarten, ed., *Apocalyptic Time*, Numen Book Series: Studies in the History of Religion 86 (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Stone, *Expecting Armageddon*.

⁸⁸ Krishan Kumar and Stephen Bann, *Utopias and the Millennium*, Critical Views (London: Reaktion Books, 1993).

⁸⁹ Arthur P. Mendel, *Vision and Violence* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1992); John R. Hall, Philip D. Schuyler and Sylvaine Trinh, *Apocalypse Observed: Religious Movements and Violence in North America, Europe and Japan* (London: Routledge, 2000); Catherine Wessinger, *How the Millennium Comes Violently* (New York: Seven Bridges Press, 2000); Catherine Wessinger, *Millennialism, Persecution, and Violence: Historical Cases*, Religion and Politics (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000); Jeffrey Kaplan, ed., *Millennial Violence: Past, Present and Future*, Political Violence 13 (London: Routledge, 2002); Abbas Amanat and John J. Collins, eds., *Apocalypse and Violence* (New Haven, CT: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 2004); John Wallis, *Apocalyptic Trajectories: Millenarianism and Violence*

there is even a growing body of dictionaries, bibliographies, handbooks, and encyclopedias. These reference works cover (ancient)⁹¹ apocalyptic literature,⁹² eschatology,⁹³ apocalypticism,⁹⁴ millennialism,⁹⁵ and commentaries on Daniel⁹⁶ and Revelation.⁹⁷ Organizational enterprises have also emerged: The Center for Millennial Studies at Boston University, which is now apparently defunct,⁹⁸ the Centre for the Critical Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements (CenSAMM), which began holding conferences in 2018⁹⁹ and launched an encyclopedia on apocalypticism and millennialism in 2021,¹⁰⁰ and the Centre for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies (CAPAS) which opened in 2021¹⁰¹ and

in the Contemporary World (Oxford, Bern, Berlin: Peter Lang, 2004); Richard K. Fenn, *Dreams of Glory: The Sources of the Apocalyptic Terror* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006).

- ⁹⁰ Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Messianism in Medieval and Reformation Europe and Its Bearing on Modern Totalitarian Movements*, 1st ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957); Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium*; Sylvia L. Thrupp, *Millennial Dreams in Action: Studies in Revolutionary Religious Movements* (Schocken, 1970); Michael Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion: Millenarian Protest Movements against the European Colonial Order*, Studies in Comparative World History (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979).
- ⁹¹ Apocalyptic literature has continued to be written through the millennia. When referring to the apocalyptic literature, however, one speaks more specifically of the most ancient texts of the genre that originated and shaped it.
- ⁹² John J. Collins, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Colin McAllister, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Apocalyptic Literature*, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020) Much of the ancient apocalyptic literature is also now available in critical editions and with commentaries.
- ⁹³ Walter Beltz, ed., *Lexikon der letzten Dinge* (Augsburg: Pattloch, 1993); Tom McIver, ed., *The End of the World: An Annotated Bibliography* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 1999); Jerry L. Walls, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- ⁹⁴ *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, vol. 1, *The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity*, ed. John C. Collins (New York: Continuum, 2000); vol. 2, *Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture*, ed. Bernard McGinn (New York: Continuum, 2000); vol. 3, *Apocalypticism in the Modern Period and the Contemporary Age*, ed. Stephen J. Stein (New York: Continuum, 2000); Wendell G. Johnson, ed., *End of Days: An Encyclopedia of the Apocalypse in World Religions* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC CLIO, 2017); László-Attila Hubbes, "Select Bibliography for the Study of Apocalypticism," in *The Apocalyptic Complex: Perspectives, Histories, Persistence*, ed. Nadia Al-Bagdadi, David Marno and Matthias Riedl (Central European University Press, 2018), 339–92.
- ⁹⁵ Richard A. Landes, ed., *Encyclopedia of Millennialism and Millennial Movements*, Routledge Encyclopedias of Religion and Society (New York & London: Routledge, 2000); Catherine Wessinger, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
- ⁹⁶ Henry O. Thompson, ed., *The Book of Daniel: An Annotated Bibliography*, Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 1310 (New York & London: Garland, 1993).
- ⁹⁷ Joseph Wittreich, "The Apocalypse: A Bibliography," in *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature: Patterns, Antecedents, and Repercussions*, ed. C. A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 369–440; Richard Tresley, "Annotated Bibliography of Commentaries on the Book of Revelation to 1700," in *The Book of Revelation and Its Interpreters: Short Studies and an Annotated Bibliography*, ed. Ian Boxall and Richard Tresley (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016), 125–272.
- ⁹⁸ Center for Millennial Studies at Boston University, site last updated 2005, <http://www.mille.org/>.
- ⁹⁹ Conferences on Apocalypticism and Millenarianism, section of the website of Centre for the Critical Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements, <https://censamm.org/conferences>.
- ¹⁰⁰ "Critical Dictionary of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements (CDAMM)," Centre for the Critical Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements, published January 26, 2021, <https://censamm.org/blog/critical-dictionary-of-apocalyptic-and-millenarian-movements-cdamm>; see Critical Dictionary of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements, Centre for the Critical Study of Apocalyptic and Millenarian Movements, <https://www.cdamm.org/>.
- ¹⁰¹ "Opening of the Käte Hamburger Centre for Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Studies," Universität Heidelberg, press release no. 96/2021, October 11, 2021, <https://www.uni->

started a journal dedicated to apocalypticism that same year.¹⁰² All in all, this means that academic knowledge of the history and nature of eschatology, apocalypticism, and millennialism, has greatly increased.

There still remains room for improvement and additional insights. Some of the underlying research premises can be debated (as will be discussed in section 0.5). While there is much biblical scholarship on the eschatologies of the biblical text itself, when one moves beyond the New Testament to subsequent Christian thinkers, the emphasis on the historical context of apocalypticism and millennialism is prominent. Analytical works on the textual and theological factors in these eschatologies are considerably fewer.

This review of scholarship on prophetic interpretation or overlapping fields shows the following. Prophetic interpretation as a category is mostly used by scholars from traditions that adhere to prophetic interpretation. Their focus is usually limited to the interests of their respective tradition. There is literature in general scholarship on the history of the interpretation of apocalyptic texts in the Bible, such as Daniel and Revelation, but this is relatively sparse. General scholarship focuses more on eschatological varieties such as apocalypticism and millennialism. When one leaves the realm of biblical studies and studies such eschatologies in the thought and history of Christians after the first century AD, the emphasis of the research is usually historical. All in all, this means that academic theological analysis of the ever-changing nature of prophetic interpretation—including that of Daniel—could be strengthened, as will be explained further in the next section.

0.5 Desideratum in the Scholarship

The main lack in scholarship on prophetic interpretation is that there are two streams of contribution in the field that run through different landscapes and are usually not integrated. These two streams are conservative theological and historical scholarship on one hand and scholarship in general on the other (liberal theology, history, sociology, etc.) To a degree, this is understandable, since the “landscapes” through which these streams run are different worldviews. While these worldviews will not merge anytime soon, it is possible to combine their contributions which their “in-group” and “out-group” insight has provided, to strengthen the academic analysis of prophetic interpretation. The conservative literature on prophetic interpretation has focused on textual and theological dynamics to some extent, and been interested in history mostly as the unfolding of orthodoxy. It has not been particularly interested in the role of external factors on shaping prophetic interpretation. General scholarship on apocalypticism and millennialism—the closest it comes to study prophetic interpretation—on the other hand has emphasized external factors and the historical context,

heidelberg.de/en/newsroom/opening-of-the-kate-hamburger-centre-for-apocalyptic-and-post-apocalyptic-studies.

¹⁰² “Call for Papers” [for *Apocalypica*], Universität Heidelberg, last modified August 8, 2021, <https://www.capas.uni-heidelberg.de/cfp-apocalypica-2021.html>.

with much less interest in the intricacies of the underlying theology and the role the text has played in the interpretative schemes.

The contribution of the conservative study of prophetic interpretation is the category itself, the terminology which such scholars have developed over time, and their insights into the textual and theological wheels that are whirring inside the discipline of interpreting prophecy. This is a contribution which the present dissertation seeks to utilize in part.

The limits of this scholarship are its orthodox lens: Each confession or group usually focuses on its own tradition, much to the exclusion of others, and so covers but little part of the field and emphasizes its own prominence. Conservative scholars tend to focus on theological and historical analysis of prophetic interpretation. Both types of analysis are used to explore “the true interpretation” and how God revealed this “truth” to his people over time. This means that conservative scholarship is usually less interested in the external factors that influenced the interpretative system or the many aspects of the phenomenon. Thus, they tend not to utilize the many methods of study that scholars in general use when studying matters related to prophetic interpretation. While this theological and historical analysis is surely a contribution, the believer’s approach is obviously also limited. In general, therefore, conservative theological and historical analysis of prophetic interpretation lacks “an outsider’s view” that detects what believers often do not see, such as inconsistencies, or patterns or phenomena that are not limited to the respective group but extend across confessions. These limitations are all rather self-evident and not in need of much discussion.

Outside conservative theological and historical studies, scholarship on matters relating to prophetic interpretation—on apocalypticism and millennialism—has contributed to the topic of study as well. The first main contribution is the analysis of macro-historical influences, how the large currents of thought and reality have colored eschatological varieties. The second is the variegated approach. Scholars from many fields have analyzed the topic from an array of perspectives and with various methodologies.

General scholarship also has different desiderata. These are subtler and describing them is somewhat more ambitious. The main note to strike, however, is clear: Scholarship has not benefited as it could have from conservative insights on the nature and boundaries of the phenomenon of prophetic interpretation. Such an appropriation would be *à propos*, since using “insider” categories and concepts, while not constituting the full extent of researching any phenomenon or discipline, is nevertheless invaluable and strengthens any study. This room for improvement will now be explained in this section.

First to be mentioned is the fact that in general, prophetic interpretation is not a named category and phenomenon in scholarship. Instead, it is studied under other rubrics, such as the interpretation of a particular biblical book, eschatology, or particular varieties of eschatology such as apocalypticism and millennialism. These terms, however, overlap only partially with prophetic interpretation. Traditional and conservative authors have taken a “canonical” approach to biblical interpretation, meaning they interpreted the Bible as a whole. Their

interpretation of one book—such as Daniel or Revelation—is therefore only a part of their prophetic interpretation. Eschatology is the teaching about the future, about the end, and hence overlaps with prophecy. It is, however, about the future (and perhaps the present, if the interpreter believes they live in the end times), and not the past. Therefore, eschatology is the final part of prophetic interpretation, but not the entire system. Apocalypticism and millennialism are specific types of eschatology and therefore also do not overlap fully with prophetic interpretation. (Their relationship with traditional and conservative eschatology, and consequently with prophetic interpretation, is somewhat unclear in the literature, and will therefore be discussed further below.) The lack of prophetic interpretation as a category in scholarship is further seen by the fact that other conservative terms are used to little extent and sometimes not at all. A conspicuous example is how the names of the different approaches towards interpreting prophecy are commonly unknown. These terms do not have entries in the *Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, being but briefly explained in one of the articles.¹⁰³ The terms are not discussed in the *Oxford Handbook of Millennialism* and do not appear in its glossary.¹⁰⁴ Since prophetic interpretation is missing as a studied category in the literature, it naturally follows that the theological analysis of this important, normative category is missing to some extent. Furthermore, using the category and analysing it theologically, would in turn cast light on the other overlapping categories and their theology.

Apocalypticism and millennialism are the theological categories used in the literature that probably come closest to being equivalent to prophetic interpretation in the way they are used. That is, when the literature describes how texts such as Daniel and Revelation are applied to the last days, it most likely is discussing apocalypticism or millennialism. These two eschatologies certainly overlap with prophetic interpretation, since Christian apocalypticists and millennialists usually interpret biblical prophecies for their eschatology. It is usually unclear, however, whether these two eschatologies are synonymous with traditional and conservative eschatology and prophetic interpretation or whether they only partly overlap with them. This ambiguity is illustrated in Figure 3:

¹⁰³ Weber, “Millennialism,” 366–69.

¹⁰⁴ Catherine Wessinger, “Millennial Glossary,” in Wessinger, *Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*, 717–23.

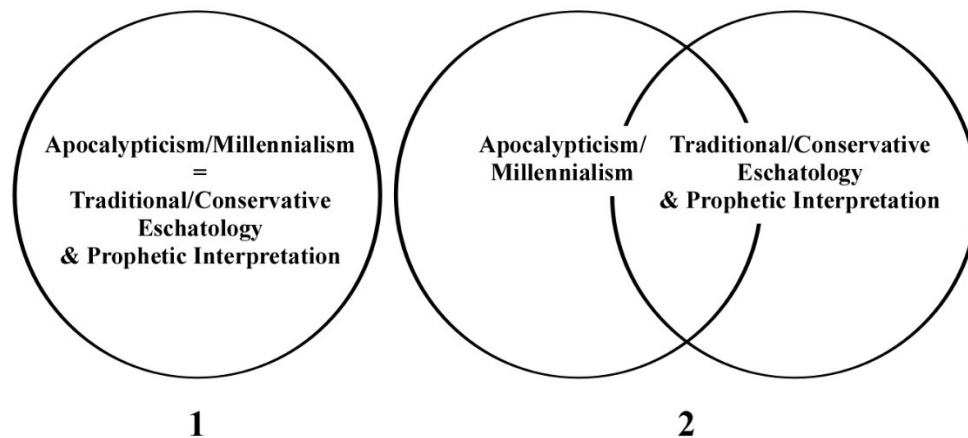


Figure 3: The ambiguity in scholarship on the relationship between traditional and conservative eschatology and prophetic interpretation on one hand, and apocalypticism and millennialism on the other. The impression that the literature may give can range from (1) to (2).

Because of the various perceptions the scholars provide of the relationship between the two sets, the reader may reach differing conclusions. They may read that ideas that belong to traditional eschatology and prophetic interpretation—categories which were conventional—are apocalyptic and millennialist—categories which are seen as either peripheral or conventional with temporal or denominational limitations—and hence be unsure about what has been and is mainstream and marginal in Christianity. If prophetic interpretation was a used category, the relationship between the two sets could be more easily explained to clarify such difficulties. This is an important point which bears further elucidation.

Apocalypticism is the eschatological belief that the end is imminent and disastrous. Traditionally, Christianity saw the end coming sooner rather than later. While the belief that the end could be dated or was imminent was not a norm, neither was it a norm to place it into the vastly distant future. Where should the line, then, be drawn between traditional Christian eschatology and apocalypticism? Imminence itself has many components. It can derive from different texts, circumstances, and beliefs. Two believers may believe the end is near, and yet adhere to different eschatologies. Imminence can vary in seriousness or heartfeltness. To some expositors, dating an imminent end seems to have been little more than prophetic arithmetic, whereas to others, even a vague sense of soon-ness was a serious call for piety and spiritual preparation. Imminence is indeed a dynamic in eschatology, but needs further descriptions to be useful in analysis.¹⁰⁵ Using it as a defining component to distinguish between eschatologies seems unhelpful on its own. The same could be said about a disastrous end, the other main component in the definition of apocalypticism. In traditional and conservative Christianity, eschatology has included evils of the last days (usually with the Antichrist appearing), with the fiery return of Christ, the Resurrection of all the dead from

¹⁰⁵ Here the recent terminology of “cool,” “hot,” and “managed” millennialism is helpful. See Wessinger, “Millennial Glossary,” 719, 720.

their graves, the salvation of his people from their enemies, the Last Judgment and the destruction of the wicked. This scenario is not a fringe view but the summary of traditional eschatology. It reads as a momentous, cataclysmic and catastrophic end of the present age which will transform the world (i.e., an apocalypse). Does this mean that traditional eschatology (and thus all of Christianity to early modernity) was apocalyptic? Here analysing the rubrics of prophetic interpretation in tandem with those of apocalypticism could more clearly articulate the latter, whether it be imminence, the apocalypse, etc.: What ideas are set forth and with what prophecies and to what extent do these ideas and usage of texts differ from the contemporaneous mainstream eschatology?

Whereas the narrower definition of millennialism is easily demarcated in Christianity, this is not the case with the broader meaning, which is just as common as the narrower one. In this wider sense, millennialism is the belief that the end is imminent, when God's people will be saved and the present age will give way to a perfect, terrestrial world. In traditional and conservative eschatology, the present age will conclude with the bodily resurrection of all flesh, which implies that, though altered and perfected, in some sense the physical universe continues into eternity. Does that mean that all of Christianity was until recently millennial by definition? It is true that emphasis on the spiritual and physical aspects of the afterlife has varied according to the theologian, but the physical aspect has always been included in the afterlife belief across the confessional spectrum.¹⁰⁶ Even Catholicism—so averse to overly earthly descriptions of the afterlife that it has condemned such excesses officially¹⁰⁷—affirms that “the visible universe” “is itself destined to be transformed”¹⁰⁸ and thus to continue to exist, and that in a perfect state. As with apocalypticism, analysing prophetic interpretation in tandem with millennialism would clarify the latter: Of what nature is the “imminent and better age”? What prophecies are used to depict it? How does this future age and its textual support differ from contemporaneous mainstream eschatology?

Because the relationship and overlap that apocalypticism and millennialism have with traditional and conservative prophetic interpretation and eschatology is not entirely clear, other characteristics of the academic discourse on these two eschatologies cause further misconceptions about prophetic interpretation. First, scholarship on the two eschatologies

¹⁰⁶ “Different aspects of heaven have been emphasized during various periods of Christian thought. In their historical account of the doctrine, Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang have identified two broadly distinctive conceptions of heaven, the anthropocentric and the theocentric. The anthropocentric view sees heaven as very much like an idealized version of life as we presently know it. . . . By contrast, theocentric views see heaven as very different from life on this earth.” Jerry L. Walls, “Heaven,” in Walls, *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, 402. See Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History*, 2nd ed. (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1988).

¹⁰⁷ “In recent times on several occasions this Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office has been asked what must be thought of the system of mitigated Millenarianism, which teaches, for example, that Christ the Lord before the final judgment, whether or not preceded by the resurrection of the many just, will come visibly to rule over this world. The answer is: The system of mitigated Millenarianism cannot be taught safely.” Decree of the Holy Office, July 21, 1944, in *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, ed. Heinrich Denzinger and Adolf Schönmetzer, 43rd ed. (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2012), no. 2269/3839.

¹⁰⁸ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, rev. ed. (London and New York: Burns and Oates, 1999), no. 1047.

leans towards otherness. Otherness is a sociological term that is used for the tendency to describe and define something as the (strange) “other” which is in opposition to the (normal) “self.” Otherness is seen as problematic because the strangeness is usually the beholder’s construct, a skewed representation, and thus is a hindrance to understanding the observed phenomenon.¹⁰⁹ Otherness in the study of apocalypticism and millennialism is seen in several ways. The visions and symbols of the prophecies are presented as bizarre and strange, as if the believers themselves were in a mystified awe of them, whereas they have on the contrary been familiar with the imagery and treated it simply as a code for the future. The interpretation of these symbols is often described as (nearly) irrational and without method, an unconscious, subjective projection of the historical vicissitudes surrounding the expositor onto the text. The result is, as has been mentioned, an overemphasis on historical, societal, and psychological factors—the only explorable aspects of irrational and unreasonable behaviors and beliefs without a system. Otherness is also seen in the insistence that apocalypticism and millennialism are minority or fringe views. While some scholars have come to see how widespread prophetic interpretation was in traditional Christianity, and still is in conservative circles, some still fail to see how prevalent it is today: “Today few people accept the notion that the world is about to end through a prophesied supernatural act. . . . The Judeo-Christian apocalypse, at least literally understood, is normally discounted as a creed for cranks.”¹¹⁰ Since conservative Christians believe in prophetic interpretation and hence in the apocalypse, this statement involves those communities, such as Evangelicals and to some extent Catholics, who do believe in a literal Second Coming and Judgment Day and so forth. Otherness is also seen in the tendency to depict these eschatologies as heterodox and strange. This is often reflected in the very titles, such as *Christian Millennialism: From the Early Church to Waco*¹¹¹ or the French title of Cohn, *Les fanatiques de l’Apocalypse*,¹¹² and plenty of descriptions such as the following:

To think apocalypse is to think of very *particular* (idiosyncratic) signatures and very specific addresses: Savonarola, the Solar Temple, Suzette Labrousse, Waco, David Icke, Hal Lindsey, John of Patmos, Joanna Southcott, Gerrad Winstanley, Thomas Müntzer, J. A. Bengel, the Muggletonians, the Levellers, Diggers, and Ranters, the Fifth Monarchy Men, Jamestown, Heaven’s Gate, John Nelson Darby, Aum Shinrikyo; books with strange old names and numbers attached (such as 1st Enoch or 2nd Baruch—Enoch and Baruch being appropriately marginal characters in the Bible); old apocalypses written in exotic specialist languages such as Old Slavonic, Ethiopic or Coptic; UFO

¹⁰⁹ A well-known case of Otherness is Orientalism, i.e. Western conceptualization of the “Eastern world.” These were famously critiqued by American-Palestinian literature professor Edward Wadie Said in his work *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

¹¹⁰ Arthur Williamson, *Apocalypse Then: Prophecy and the Making of the Modern World*, Praeger Series on the Early Modern World (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 1.

¹¹¹ Stephen Hunt, ed., *Christian Millenarianism: From the Early Church to Waco* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2001).

¹¹² Norman Cohn, *Les fanatiques de l’Apocalypse: Courants millénaristes révolutionnaires du 11e au 16e siècle; avec un postface sur le 20e siècle*, trans. Simone Clémendot, Michel Fuchs, and Paul Rosenberg (Paris: Julliard, 1962).

‘subcultures’ for believers in spaceships as modern heavenly chariots and aliens as ‘angels’ for a cyber-age. These groups and names are not just particular/peculiar. They are *desperately* particular/peculiar.¹¹³

The list above depicts apocalypticism as a fringe view, whether in Christianity or elsewhere. When another work on apocalypticism—the *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*—is consulted, the list contains not only marginal names but also myriad mainstream figures and tradition founders, such as Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, Jerome, Augustine, Gregory VII, Bernard of Clairvaux, Martin Luther, Heinrich Bullinger, John Foxe, the Huguenots, the Pietists, John Wesley, John Cotton, Increase Mather, Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards, “mainstream Protestantism” in the United States to the mid-nineteenth century, Fundamentalists like Dispensationalists and Pentecostals, and Billy Graham.¹¹⁴ Such varying listings of what constitutes apocalypticism make it unclear what the phenomenon is precisely, and consequently whether it is mainstream or fringe in Christianity. By portraying the interpretation of prophecies as a stage occupied only by the strange, such discourse also obscures the fact that prophetic interpretation is a norm in traditional and conservative Christianity, regardless of how imminent or distant the end was seen to be. Here again, analysis of prophetic interpretation would help to explain fringe and mainstream, common and uncommon.¹¹⁵

The second characteristic in scholarship on the two eschatologies is the tendency to describe them as not only strange, but downright dangerous, even violent and criminal. In the introduction to a recent standard work, the editors write that “apocalyptic beliefs (at least of the literal variety) may be judged not only outmoded but also dangerous, because of their innate power to foster self-righteousness among the elect and at times violent opposition to, even persecution of, those identified as belonging to Satan’s party.”¹¹⁶ If apocalypticism and millennialism were inherently dangerous or criminal, or showed a strong correlation to crime, these descriptions would not be problematic. But only a fraction of millennialists and apocalypticists have been guided by their eschatology into violence and crime. And since the relationship these eschatologies have to traditional and conservative prophetic interpretation and eschatology, the shadow of such descriptions falls on the undeserving as well. Readers easily get the impression that it is eschatological beliefs themselves that lead to atrocities,

¹¹³ Yvonne Sherwood, “‘Napalm Falling like Prostitutes’: Occidental Apocalypse as Managed Volatility,” in *Abendländische Apokalyptik: Kompendium zur Genealogie der Endzeit*, ed. Veronika Wieser et al., Cultural History of Apocalyptic Thought 1 (De Gruyter, 2013), 40.

¹¹⁴ *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, 2:7–16, 27–28, 30–34, 82, 151–54, 157, 161–62, 173–74, 297–98, 3:41–44, 48–61, 72–87, 140–76.

¹¹⁵ E.g. the prophetic interpretation of the Fifth Monarchy Men differed mostly in *how* the fifth kingdom of Daniel (i.e. the Kingdom of God) was to be established—by revolution. Heaven’s Gate leaders Marshall Applewhite and Bonnie Nettles were not Christian and their prophetic interpretation was very selective. They believed the Bible was mostly corrupted and that only few of its prophecies were valid, such as Revelation 11 which spoke of the two witnesses who would preach, die, and resurrect—which they applied to themselves—and Scriptures stating that there will be no marriage in heaven.

¹¹⁶ John J. Collins, Bernard McGinn, and Stephen J. Stein, general introduction in *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, 1:x.

whereas any and every religious belief has been used to legitimize crime. Take for instance a recent work, in which the author states that prophecy believers are compelled to violence by the very texts themselves: “If for no other reason than that apocalyptic beliefs have nourished the fascist hatreds [*sic*] of the Christian right, the Christian community should divest them of their orthodox status and their place in the canon, once and for all.”¹¹⁷ Church history has indeed been violent, but the wars of and violence of Christianity can hardly simply be lain at the feet of Daniel and the Revelator. It must come as a surprise to Christendom that religious wars can be avoided by excising such texts from the Canon. Nor are such sentiments exceptional. In a recent standard work, the *Oxford Handbook of Millennialism*, the belief in one Truth is included in the definition of fanaticism in the glossary on millennialism.¹¹⁸ Such a definition seems to encompass most Christians through history as fanatics, for traditional and conservative Christians have believed in Truth capitalized. By associating millennialism with fanaticism, it implicates prophetic interpretation as fanatical too: Not only is millennialism based on a certain prophetic interpretation, capitalized Truth in Christianity or orthodoxy involves the grand narrative of Christianity or the history of redemption, of which prophetic interpretation is an essential part. Apocalypticism is also described as dangerous in another recent standard work, the *Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*.¹¹⁹

Such description of the two eschatologies—and the effects of that description—seem to be more akin to subjective value judgment than helpful academic analysis. In a world where many Christians believe in prophecies, skewed academic discourse that gives the impression that such views are dangerous (or even evil) is no ivory tower matter. A recent case of the consequences of this association is what has happened to Jehovah’s Witnesses in Russia. Because of their belief that Christendom has become apostate—Babylon of Revelation—and that they are the true end-time church, their faith has been banned in accordance with the anti-extremism laws from 2002 that also condemn militant religious groups like ISIS. The property of Witnesses has been confiscated and state authorities have tortured and imprisoned believers.¹²⁰ Western scholars may think the example is irrelevant, but there is no guarantee that Western governments will never again turn illiberal or use similar tactics, and it is an academic responsibility to define and describe beliefs as accurately as possible so academia will not provide as much as the shadow of excuse for illiberal suppression of ideas and restrictions of religious liberty. Here again a theological analysis of prophetic interpretation would be helpful. Jehovah’s Witnesses are historicists and see themselves as the (persecuted) remnant facing apostate and even persecuting powers and they wait for the Second Coming to

¹¹⁷ Fenn, *Dreams of Glory*, 95.

¹¹⁸ “Fanaticism: . . . absolute confidence that one has the ‘Truth’ and that others are wrong and evil.” Later in the definition, martyrdom is included as well. Wessinger, “Millennial Glossary,” 719. While conservative Christians have a more nuanced view of others than here described, it is hard to save general pre-critical and conservative Christianity from fanaticism if this is the definition.

¹¹⁹ Collins, “What is Apocalyptic Literature?,” 11–12.

¹²⁰ “Russia: Court Bans Jehovah’s Witnesses: Withdraw Lawsuit, Protect Religious Freedom,” Human Rights Watch, April 20, 2017, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/04/20/russia-court-bans-jehovahs-witnesses>.

be delivered. They are a peaceful community and, barring great unforeseen historical and interpretative changes, there is no reason to believe that their prophetic interpretation makes them dangerous to national security.

A third characteristic of scholarship on apocalypticism and millennialism is the impressive array of perspectives and methodologies that are used for analysis. Scholarship has analyzed apocalypticism and millennialism in terms of history, sociology, psychology, linguistics, philosophy, etc., as previously mentioned. While this has shed much light on the two eschatologies, theological analysis of the prophetic interpretative system within those beliefs has been lacking. Sometimes the prophetic interpretation of apocalypticists and millennialists is described, but scholarship has had little interest in analyzing the system on its own terms and what theological decisions propel it. When it comes to explain the dynamics of these eschatologies, recourse is more often had to external factors. The reason for this tendency may be the following. Outside of conservative circles, prophetic interpretation is not seen as a valid method of studying biblical texts. Scholars often point to the fact that Christians that interpret perceived predictions in the Bible (i.e. engage in prophetic interpretation) have changed their interpretation continuously through history. Since scholars see prophetic interpretation as a misguided approach to Scripture, and believe that its own fruit of continuously changing interpretation demonstrates its invalidity, they also conclude that the biblical text and the system of prophetic interpretation play little or no causative role. The dynamics that drive this continuous change in eschatological beliefs must therefore be external factors, such as political suppression, catastrophes, and societal fears and expectations. The text itself plays a limited role, except that of the clay in the hands of the interpretative potter, malleable to take any form, which, like a Rorschach test, the reader unknowingly shapes into his fears and desires. But upon closer inspection, this is not the case. Historical context is definitely one of the moving wheels in the two eschatologies but it does not account for the entire machinery: At any given time, there have been several interpretations, and often there have been wars and catastrophes with no corresponding reaction in prophetic interpretation. While one may disagree with its fundamental premises, prophetic interpretation can be divided into but a handful of interpretative systems. The readings may seem to constitute an endless variety, but they turn out to be variations on a limited set of themes. This means that the text and its theological framework have limited and shaped the contours of prophetic interpretation and eschatological beliefs of all strands. A theological analysis of prophetic interpretation—and its overlapping fields such as apocalypticism and millennialism—would therefore be highly beneficial to understand the dynamics of these phenomena more fully.

This is where the present study comes in. It seeks to take a step towards combining general scholarship's interest in the historical and sociological context of apocalypticism and millennialism with an inquiry, gleaned from conservative methodology, into the textual and theological context of the interpretation.

There are many forms which the theological analysis of prophetic interpretation can take. The prophetic interpretation of an individual, a certain community, or a period, or a configuration of some of these. Each has its pros and cons. Monograph on individuals require extensive work since an author's prophetic interpretation is usually based on multiple books of the Bible, and while such studies provide deep insight into the individual's prophetic beliefs, they often do not evaluate these beliefs in the context of the author's predecessors, contemporaries, and successors. Studies of groups, periods, and territories, tend to be historical in nature and must summarize prophetic interpretation because of how many individuals they cover. Works that trace the history of the interpretation of a given biblical text or topic are more helpful, though the more history and thinkers are covered, the more the works must turn into summaries. The present study seeks to balance some of these pros and cons by delimiting the analysis to only few key individuals and one text. Thus the study offers a theological comparison which illustrates by what means prophetic interpretation operates and changes. This methodology, which seeks to improve scholarly theological analysis of prophetic interpretation, will be explained in the next section.

0.6 Purpose, Methodology, and Design

The present work is a theological study that aims to assess the dynamics of prophetic interpretation in a novel way by looking at the textual, historical, and theological contexts in which theological thinkers take a contemporary or a previous interpretation of prophecy and change it. The primary aim of this research is to combine methodological insights from conservative scholarship—its emphasis on how the text and theology are vital in prophetic interpretation—with those of scholarship in general, i.e. an emphasis on the historical context.

This is done with the following delimitations. First, the study is confined to one school of prophetic interpretation, i.e. historicism. Secondly, the study analyzes the interpretation of one text—the eighth chapter of Daniel. Third, the study is limited to only four commentators: Martin Luther, Isaac Newton, William Miller, and Ellen White. Due to these delimitations, the present work is not a historical survey of the historicist interpretation of Daniel 8. The four authors were chosen because their contributions sum up the development of the historicist reading of Daniel 8 and thus gives the case study a sense of completeness: A theological analysis of these four authors explains how a specific reading (historicist) of a certain prophecy (Daniel 8) came about. Each author, in a certain sense, builds or modifies the interpretation of the previous one, and thus they can be compared and contrasted to flesh out the dynamics in their changing prophetic interpretation.

The present methodology looks at prophetic interpretation from three perspectives. First, the study analyzes how the authors interpreted the text of Daniel 8 and how they explained its fulfillment in history, i.e. “applied” it to history. This dynamic is referred to as “textual.” Calling it hermeneutic would be too broad, and calling it exegetical would not capture the traditional and pre-critical lines along which the text was read. Second, the study looks at the

historical context during which the author arrived at his or her interpretation. This section is limited to the ways in which the immediate historical context—personal experiences, contemporaneous events and prophetic interpretation, as well as authors read—influenced the reading of the text. A more comprehensive assessment of the larger historical context of each author was left outside the scope of the present work. Third, the study looks at each author’s interpretation in the light of their overall theology. The section focuses on three elements: (1) How did the prophetic interpretation interact with the author’s general view of redemption history—the canvass of prophetic interpretation—, (2) how did it interact with the praxis of Christianity, and (3) why did the author choose this interpretation over others known to him or her (and at what theological cost)? By approaching prophetic interpretation from these three perspectives, the present work seeks to join the best from both worlds of conservative scholarship and general scholarship and to avoid their limitations. It will do so by paying attention to the historical context as is done in general scholarship, as well as assessing the theological and textual methods of the authors, as is done in conservative scholarship, though *how* each of these three dimensions is treated does not necessarily follow any previous academic layout.

The purpose of the study is set forth in the main research question (cf. section 0.1): To analyze the dynamics which led the four authors to historicize Daniel, and thereby to understand this part of prophetic interpretation—historicism from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century—better. The purpose looks beyond the immediate research topic. Despite its necessary delimitations, the study sheds light on the theology and dynamics of prophetic interpretation in general. This in turn will contribute to a better understanding to its overlapping and dependent fields as well, such as eschatology, apocalypticism, and millennialism.

The design of the study follows the methodology that has been outlined in this section. After the introductory chapter, one chapter is devoted to each of the four theological thinkers. In each chapter, the author is introduced, and then the historical, textual, and theological dynamics in his or her interpretation of Daniel 8 are investigated. The work finishes with a chapter that reiterates and compares the findings of the four main chapters, and draws some more general conclusions for the studies of eschatological beliefs and prophetic interpretation.

The style guide followed is *Chicago Manual of Style*. The shorter scriptural abbreviation are followed (10.45–47) and the capitalization of some religious terms (8.108).

0.7 Definitions of Terms

Adventism 1. A branch of Protestantism which emphasizes the imminence of the Second Coming. There are several denominations, and the name can apply to all of them combined, or to any one in particular. 2. Premillennial movement of many disconnected groups in the earlier half of the nineteenth century that, based on calculating prophecies, predicted that the Second Coming would occur in their lifetime. 3. More specifically, the North-American part

of that movement, i.e. *Millerism*. Miller dated the Second Coming to 1843/4. When the date passed, his followers eventually divided into several Adventist groups. These were called by several names, usually to distinguish between them doctrinally. *Mainline* or *Albany Adventists* abandoned the date for later ones or none. *Radical Adventists* were a minority that believed fulfillment had taken place in one form or another. Most radical Adventists believed the fulfillment occurred in heaven and, because of the texts they used, they have been called *Shut-Door Adventists* and *Bridegroom Adventists*. Radical Adventists then began to differ in their interpretation. Some adhered to the literal, celestial fulfillment. They differed on whether the fulfillment was a one-day event or an ongoing process. Other radical Adventists believed Christ had come spiritually and have been termed *spiritualizers* (called Spiritualists at the time). Another doctrinal split across Adventism concerned the Sabbath, the stances being termed *First-Day Adventists* and *Sabbatarian Adventists*, and this split eventually aligned with the mainline and radical division (i.e. those radicals who believed the fulfillment was a process). 4. The Sabbatarian Adventists went on to organize as an official church in 1863 with the name *Seventh-day Adventists*.

For a visual presentation of the Adventist groups discussed in the present work, see appendix 7.

amillennialism The belief that the millennium of Revelation 20 symbolizes the Christian Era and Christ's spiritual reign over his Church. The final events will close the millennium and conclude the history of redemption.

apocalypticism The eschatological belief that the end of the world is imminent and that it will be catastrophic, usually leading to a better or a perfect world. The term is not consistently used, and has been criticized for being vague.

conservative Christianity The spectrum of Christianity which sees itself as the continuation of traditional Christianity and adheres to some of the latter's theology which has been challenged by modernity. Conservative Christianity is characterized by a canonical approach to the Bible, a resistance or ambivalence towards changing religious views in light of biblical criticism and modern knowledge and science, and a dogmatic or doctrinal approach to theology. Where conservatism ends and liberal Christianity begins is subjective and varies depending on the context, since this is a scale rather than two clear categories. Some Christians, for instance, call themselves conservative and do not align with the characteristics described above. They would call that part of Christianity fundamentalism or biblicism, i.e. a more conservative group than themselves.

end times The period before the Second Coming, during which the prophecies leading up to the Lord's return are fulfilled. How long the period is and what occurs during it varies with the expositor. The term can also include the Second Coming and its subsequent events, such as the Judgment, the millennium, etc.

end of the world 1. 'World' usually refers to the present, evil age, as well as the present, evil state of the physical world. The 'end' of the world thus means the close of the history of sin, and the dawn of a perfect and eternal world. 2. The annihilation of the planet or the universe. This is not the meaning in traditional and conservative theology.

eschatology The belief or doctrine concerning the end of the world. How much of the future (and prophecies about the future) belongs to eschatology depends on the tradition. The climax of eschatology is the Second Coming, the Resurrection, Judgment, and heaven and hell, though usually more previous events are also included.

futurism A school of prophetic interpretation: The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation focus on the last events and do not stretch across the centuries. Thus, the Antichrist in Daniel has yet to appear, and most of Revelation has not occurred. Many unfulfilled prophecies have to do with Israel. Evangelicals and Dispensationalists adhere to futurism, though it has an older history.

historicism A school of prophetic interpretation: The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation trace history from the time of these two prophets to the eschaton. Thus, most of Daniel and Revelation has been fulfilled already. Historicism developed as history lengthened and the end did not arrive and this history was accommodated for in prophecy. It was thus the mainstream school until the Reformation, when Catholicism began to turn to preterism and futurism. Historicism remained the norm in Protestantism, but gave way to preterism in late orthodoxy and in liberal circles and to futurism in conservative circles in the late nineteenth century. It is now almost exclusively followed by some of the nineteenth century traditions, such as the Church of the Latter-day Saints of Jesus Christ (Mormons), Seventh-day Adventists, and the Jehovah's Witnesses.

history of redemption/salvation Synonymous with *redemption history*.

idealism A school of prophetic interpretation: The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are timeless truths about the conflict between good and evil expressed in poetic imagery. These truths are reflected in historical happenings, but the prophecies either have no specific historical fulfillment, or it is of less significance than their true meaning.

last days Synonymous with *end times*.

liberal Christianity The spectrum of Christianity which seeks to continue the true essence of Christianity and avoid (outdated) dogma on one side and unbelief on the other, by allowing faith to be informed by modern knowledge in such a way that both faith and knowledge are kept. Liberal Christianity has in general accepted (some) conclusions of biblical criticism. What is liberal or conservative, however, is relative to the believer and the tradition.

millennialism 1. The belief that Christ will reign over his saints for one thousand years, based on Revelation 20. *Millenarianism* is an interchangeable term (sometimes spelled *millennarianism*, though this is dated). There are several main variations: Amillennialism, postmillennialism, and premillennialism. An older term for both pre- and postmillennialism is *chiliasm*. 2. The eschatological belief that history will transition from the present age to a better or perfect age and that this change is imminent. This term is more general and is not confined to Christianity, or even religion, since it has been applied to corresponding secular ideas.

postmillennialism The belief that Christ will reign spiritually over his people on earth during the millennium mentioned in Revelation 20. He will then return to earth after the millennium. The millennium will be an era of physical and spiritual prosperity for both the Church and the world. There will be an (almost) universal conversion to God. After the millennium, the final events take place and the history of redemption is completed.

premillennialism The belief that Christ will return to earth before the millennium mentioned in Revelation 20. Most premillennialists believe Christ will reign on earth over his people during the millennium, with the exception of Seventh-day Adventists, who believe Christ will reign in person over his people in heaven during the millennium. After the thousand years, the final events take place and the history of redemption is completed.

preterism A school of prophetic interpretation. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation describe events that occurred during the lifetime of the prophets or shortly thereafter. The interpretation gained ground during the Counter-Reformation and later in liberal Protestantism and can be seen as budding biblical criticism. Critical scholars do not seem to use this term, though conservative literature includes critical interpretation of the prophecies in it. The following distinction, however, should be kept in mind: Some preterists believe these prophecies are actual prophecies, and that they extended beyond the time of the prophets though they did not reach to the end, whereas critical scholars see these prophecies as *vaticinia ex eventu* or hopeful prognostications, that did not extend beyond the time of the writers, and, if they depicted the end, saw it as occurring in their lifetime.

prophecy 1. A message which God communicates to his spokesperson, a prophet, who delivers it to others. 2. The literary genre of such messages. In the Bible, this genre includes the Minor and Major Prophets (Daniel excepted). 3. A divine prediction about the future, regardless of its literary genre. This is the sense in which the term is used in the present work.

prophetic interpretation The interpretation of those texts in the Bible which the expositor regards as prophecy and their application to historical events which are seen as their fulfillment.

prophetic (time) period A time period foretold in a prophecy. Notable examples are the time, times, and half a time (Dn 7:25; 12:7; Rv 12:14), the 2300 evening-mornings (Dn 8:14); the seventy weeks (Dn 9:24–27), the 1290 days (Dn 12:11), the 1335 days (Dn 12:12), the 42 months (Rv 11:2; 13:5), the 1260 days (Rv 11:3; 12:6); the five months (Rv 9:5, 10), the hour, day, month, and year (Rv 9:15, usually not translated as a period in modern translations), and the 1000 years (Rv 20). Prophecy-believing scholars have sought to find the date for the commencement and close of these periods (*starting point* and *terminus date*) and what events mark those dates (*starting event* and *terminus event*).

redemption history Christian metanarrative woven together from what is seen as biblical history and biblical prophecy. It tells the grand narrative of Scripture or salvation, from the commencement of human history to the last days.

remnantism The belief that there remains a small group or scattered believers, i.e. a remnant, that holds to the true Christian religion within apostate Christendom. This was, for instance, the belief of the early Protestant denominations (and many later ones). They regarded the Roman-Catholic Church as the “great apostasy” of Christianity and believed that only small groups and few individuals had kept the true faith through the centuries, blossoming in the Reformation. Later on, Protestant groups and movements included other Protestants in the apostasy and regarded themselves as the remnant of true believers.

salvation history Synonymous with *redemption history*.

school of prophetic interpretation An interpretative approach to biblical prophecy. Four main approaches have developed: Futurism, historicism, idealism, and preterism. They have all changed through time and all have their roots in the early history of the Church. Futurism, historicism, and one kind of preterism are extant in conservative Christianity. Another kind of preterism is synonymous with critical interpretation.

time prophecy Synonymous with *prophetic (time) period*.

traditional Christianity Christianity until the gradual division into conservatives and liberals which began with the rise of critical scholarship and liberal theology.

1 DYNAMICS OF MARTIN LUTHER'S INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 8

1.1 Introduction

On October 31 1517, Martin Luther (1483–1546) requested a public academic debate with fellow theologians on the topic of indulgences. While Luther was undoubtedly expecting a push back, the fierceness of the opposition caught him by surprise. Over the next years Luther articulated his new theology, partly in polemics against his adversaries, while at the same time his pending case as a heretic was processed at Rome. When Luther was faced with the choice to recant or be excommunicated, he found himself unable and unwilling to abandon what he saw as the restored Gospel, and chose rather to be excommunicated. The case became one of the most consequential excommunications in history, for the denounced heretic gained such a following that it became an entire new stream of Christianity called Protestantism. The denouncement was also mutual: The heretic declared that the Church had become apostate and that the Pope was none other than the predicted Antichrist, who had now been reigning for centuries undetected. These events are well-known in church history. What is often less known is that when Luther had reached the conclusion of the Church's apostasy, the first prophecy he interpreted in favor of this view was Daniel 8. On April 1, 1521, the day before he left for Worms to defend his views before the Emperor, Luther finished *Responsio*, a short exegetical treatise on Daniel 8:23–25. In the work he claimed that the Antichrist, foreshadowed in the vision by the goat's last horn, was none other than the Pope. The treaty was the sequel to the *Babylonian Captivity*, but Luther had hinted at such a second part already in the *Captivity* itself;¹ this is probably the reason why that work was called a *Prelude*.

The choice of passage was also not a random selection. Since the Books of Maccabees, Jewish (and later Christian) expositors understood the last goat horn as a symbol of Antiochus IV, the Seleucid ruler who persecuted the Jews in the late second century BC. From the earliest centuries, Christian expositors had believed that this prophecy about Antiochus foreshadowed the greater future threat of the coming Antichrist. Indeed, "Antiochus Epiphanes [was] the most widely discussed type of Antichrist in the Middle Ages" and this explains in part why Daniel was "the most important Old Testament source of the Antichrist tradition" in the medieval period.² When Luther wanted to prove that the Pope was the expected Antichrist, he chose Daniel 8 intentionally since he regarded it as the oldest and therefore the most foundational prophecy about the Man of Sin.³

With this interpretation of Daniel 8 in particular and the Antichrist in general, Luther made Protestant theology, historiography, and prophetic interpretation interlocked, and, to a great

¹ Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian* (1520), LW 36:125–26; Martin Luther, *The Pope Confounded and His Kingdom Exposed, in a Divine Opening of Daniel VIII.23–25* (N.p.: James Nisbet, 1836), 177.

² Richard Kenneth Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), 28, 43.

³ This can be deduced from the fact that he saw chapter 8 (and not chapters 2 or 7) as the first prediction about the Antichrist, and Daniel as the oldest main prophecy about the Antichrist, upon which the New Testament predictions built.

degree, inseparable for centuries to come. Protestants saw the development of Catholic doctrine and authority in the early centuries as apostasy, which in prophetic terms was seen as the fulfillment of the prophecies about the Antichrist. Protestantism was seen as the restoration of the biblical Gospel which the Antichrist had obscured and distorted during most of church history. And since the Antichrist played such a significant role in Daniel and other apocalyptic texts of the Bible, this meant that Protestant and Catholic interpretations of these scriptures diverged greatly. Generally speaking, Protestantism would continue to develop historicist views⁴ and Catholicism preterist and futurist ones. Historicism would eventually give way as the norm for Protestant prophetic interpretation with the rise of biblical criticism (and its preterism), Protestant futurism, and ecumenism.

It is of theological interest to know what caused such a consequential change in prophetic interpretation. To identify the dynamics at work in Luther's reading of the vision at Ulai,⁵ this chapter will first evaluate the current state of scholarly research into the question (*status quæstionis*), then analyze the historical context of the development of his interpretation, the interpretation itself, and finally the interaction between the interpretation and his theology.

1.2 Literature Review

At first sight, it is difficult to gain a good overview of secondary literature on Luther's interpretation of Daniel. So much is written on Luther that the journal *Lutherjahrbuch* publishes an annual bibliography devoted to primary and secondary Luther literature. Every year the list runs close to, if not over, one thousand entries. What makes the search somewhat easier is that the bibliography is organized into categories. Daniel, prophecy, eschatology,⁶ and apocalypticism are not among them. This is a clear indication that this theme never gained great attention in the secondary literature. Secondary literature on many other Luther-related topics—such as his views of the Papacy, Islam, the Jews, or treatment of some of his specific works—naturally touch on his interpretation of Daniel. It would, however, be an endless quest to glean mentions of his prophetic interpretation from that literature since it is so extensive, and was not done for the present research.

Secondary literature on Luther's prophetic interpretation is relatively new, for "Luther's eschatology was until the first half of the twentieth century a mute locus in the treatment of Luther's dogmatics."⁷ This has changed with scholars throughout the twentieth century and onward. Hans Henning-Pflanz (1939) discussed Luther's understanding of "history and

⁴ For the continuation of Luther's prophetic interpretation in Protestantism, see, for instance, Robin Bruce Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis: Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988).

⁵ I.e., Dn 8. Daniel states that in the vision he saw himself "by the river of Ulai" (Dn 8:2, KJV).

⁶ *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology* (2014) and *Oxford Research Encyclopedias* (2016) give a very brief overview of the literature on Luther's eschatology. See Jane E. Strohl, "Luther's Eschatology," in *Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 353–62; Vitor Westhelle, "Martin Luther's Perspectival Eschatology," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion*, published August 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199340378.013.330>.

⁷ Vitor Westhelle, "Martin Luther's Perspectival Eschatology."

eschatology” but did not treat Luther’s interpretation of the prophecies besides a short summary on “the last things” in the end of the book.⁸ Paul Althaus (1941) focused on the individual aspect of Luther’s eschatology.⁹ Ulrich Asendorf (1967) discussed each group that appears in Luther’s prophetic interpretation and eschatology at length as well as “the last things”.¹⁰ He did this not without error and only mentioned Daniel 8 in passing while discussing Luther’s Antichrist.¹¹ John Richard Loeschen (1968) looked into “eschatological themes” in Luther’s theology but prophetic interpretation was not among them.¹² Heiko A. Oberman (1982) emphasized the importance of eschatology in Luther’s theology. He did not discuss Luther’s views on prophecy in detail, however, though he did explain what the Reformer taught on the millennium and the Antichrist.¹³ Oberman’s work will be analyzed below.¹⁴ Jane E. Strohl (1989) looked at Luther’s eschatology from 1529 onward, and yet prophetic interpretation played a minor role in her dissertation.¹⁵ Thomas A. Dughi (1990) explored the connection between Luther’s views of reform and apocalypse (“reformation as apocalypse”).¹⁶ The prophecy he focused on was 2 Thessalonians 2:8.¹⁷ Kirsi Stjerna and Deanna A. Thompson (2014) edited a volume on apocalyptic and agency in Augustine and Luther, containing articles on some aspects of Luther’s prophetic interpretation: “The Turk,” 1 Corinthians 15, the eschaton, death, and an overview of Luther’s apocalyptic.¹⁸ Hans Heinz (2017) considered Luther’s views on the Second Coming, and the similarities between his eschatology and that of Seventh-day Adventists.¹⁹ Since his chapters dealt with themes and not specific texts, there is no treatment of Luther’s interpretation of Daniel. In addition to

⁸ Hans Henning-Pflanz, *Geschichte und Eschatologie bei Martin Luther* (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1939), 44–49.

⁹ Paul Althaus, “Luthers Gedanke über die letzten Dinge,” *Luther-Jahrbuch*, 1941, 9–34. “In the 1920s and 1930s the German scholars Paul Althaus and Carl Stange debated Luther’s understanding of the afterlife.” Jane E. Strohl, “Luther’s Eschatology,” in eds. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and L’Ubonmír Batka, *Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther’s Theology*, Oxford Handbooks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 353.

¹⁰ Ulrich Asendorf, *Eschatologie bei Luther* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 129–207, 280–93.

¹¹ Daniel 8:9 (on the little horn) was mistakenly connected to the *Army Sermon* on the Turks, which was, however, on the little horn of Daniel 7, not 8. When it came to Luther’s interpretation of Daniel 8 in connection to the Antichrist, Asendorf simply listed the text among other scripture references and left it at that. Asendorf, *Eschatologie bei Luther*, 176–77, 206.

¹² John R. Loeschen, “Eschatological Themes in Luther’s Theology” (PhD dissertation, Graduate Theological Union and the Pacific School of Religion, 1968), see “Contents” (unpaginated).

¹³ Heiko Oberman, “Luther against the Devil,” *Christian Century* 107, no. 3 (January 24, 1990): 57–61, 67–74.

¹⁴ See section 1.3.3.

¹⁵ Jane E. Strohl, “Luther’s Eschatology: The Last Times and the Last Things” (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1989). See also Strohl, “Luther’s Eschatology,” 353–62.

¹⁶ Dughi argued that Luther’s apocalypticism was not passive resignation or “conservative theology of persecution” but rather “a vision of reformation as apocalypse” “fostered faith in historical change and longing to become its agent.” Two chapters “examine Luther’s emergent conviction that reformers’ scriptural attacks on Rome were fulfilling Paul’s prophecy (2 Thes 2:8): They were slaying Antichrist ‘with the breath of [Christ’s] mouth.’” Thomas A. Dughi, “The Breath of Christ’s Mouth: Apocalypse and Prophecy in Early Reformation Theology” (PhD dissertation, John Hopkins University, 1999), ii–iii.

¹⁷ Dughi, “Breath of Christ’s Mouth,” 1–239.

¹⁸ Kirsi Stjerna and Deanna A. Thompson, eds., *On the Apocalyptic and Human Agency: Conversations with Augustine of Hippo and Martin Luther* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014).

¹⁹ Hans Heinz, *Zukunft als Erlösung—Martin Luther und das Weltende: Eine adventistische Deutung*, *Adventistica* 12 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2017).

these larger works, many articles or book sections have been written on Luther's eschatology and apocalypticism,²⁰ or on some facets of or factors in his end-time beliefs, such as astrology,²¹ metaphor,²² historiography,²³ the two foci on the individual and the world,²⁴ Luther's self-perceived end-time role,²⁵ the comparison and contrast of his views with those of his contemporary "radicals,"²⁶ and the modern relevance of his prophetic interpretation.²⁷ There are also articles on Luther's interpretation of particular prophecies, such as Luke 21²⁸ and Revelation.²⁹ While this change in the secondary literature has established the importance

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- ²⁰ Warren A. Quanbeck, "Luther and Apocalyptic," in *Luther und Melanchthon: Referate des zweiten internationalen Lutherforscherkongress*, ed. Vilmos Vajta (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961), 119–28; Gordon Rupp, "Luther against 'the Turk, the Pope, and the Devil,'" in *Seven-Headed Luther: Essays in Commemoration of a Quincentenary 1483–1983*, ed. Peter N. Brooks (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 255–73; Thomas F. Torrance, "The Eschatology of Faith: Martin Luther," in *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants*, ed. George Yule (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1985), 145–213; Winfried Vogel, "The Eschatological Theology of Martin Luther. Part I: Luther's Basic Concepts," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24, no. 3 (1986): 249–64; James A. Nestingen, "The End of the End: The Role of the Apocalyptic in the Lutheran Reform," *Word & World* 15, no. 2 (spring 1995): 195–205; Ken S. Jones, "The Apocalyptic Luther," *Word & World* 25 (summer 2005): 308–16; Johannes Hartlapp, "Luthers Verständnis der Wiederkunft Christi in seiner Zeit," in Heinz, *So komm noch diese Stunde!*, 189–201; Hans Heinz, "So komm noch diese Stunde!—Luthers Sehnsucht nach dem Jüngsten Tag," in Heinz, *So komm noch diese Stunde!*, 339–43; Winfried Vogel, "Hoffnung auf Vollendung—Luther und die Endzeit," in Heinz, *So komm noch diese Stunde!*, 203–28; Daniel Heinz, "The 'Adventist' Luther: Signs of the Times, Apocalyptic Hope, and the Future Kingdom," in *Here We Stand: Luther, the Reformation, and Seventh-day Adventism*, eds. Michael W. Campbell and Nikolaus Satelmajer (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2017), 203–20.
- ²¹ Heike Talkenberger, "Die Bewegung der himmlischen schar . . . : Endzeitliches Denken und astrologische Zukunftsdeutung zur Zeit Martin Luthers," in Peter Freybe, ed., „*Wach auf, wach auf, du deutsches Land!*“: *Martin Luther. Angst und Zuversicht in der Zeitenwende*, Wittenberger Sonntagsvorlesungen 2000 (Wittenberg: Drei Kastanien Verlag, 2000), 25–47.
- ²² Joachim Ringleben, "Metapher und Eschatologie bei Luther," *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 100, no. 2 (June 2003): 223–40.
- ²³ John M. Headley, *Luther's View of Church History*, Yale Publications in Religion 6 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 181–265; Martin Brecht, "„Die Historie Ist Nichts Anderes Denn Eine Anzeigung Göttlicher Werke“: Martin Luther Und Das Ende Der Geschichte," in Freybe, „*Wach auf*," 10–24; Wieland Kastning, *Morgenröte künftigen Lebens: Das reformatorische Evangelium als Neubestimmung der Geschichte. Untersuchungen zu Martin Luthers Geschichts- und Wirklichkeitsverständnis*, Forschungen zur systematischen und ökumenischen Theologie 117 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 272–309, 349–90.
- ²⁴ Westhelle, "Luther's Perspectival Eschatology."
- ²⁵ Hans Preuß, *Martin Luther: der Prophet* (Gütersloh: V. Bertelsmann, 1933); Wolfgang Sommer, "Luther—Prophet der Deutschen und der Endzeit," in *Zeitenwende—Zeitenende: Beiträge zur Apokalyptik und Eschatologie*, ed. Wolfgang Sommer, Theologische Akzente 2 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1997), 109–28; Michael Parson, "The Apocalyptic Luther: His Noahic Self-Understanding," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44, no. 4 (December 2001): 627–45.
- ²⁶ Darrel R. Reid, "Luther, Müntzer and the Last Day: Eschatological Hope, Apocalyptic Expectations," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 69, no. 1 (January 1995): 53–74; Carter Lindberg, "Eschatology and Fanaticism in the Reformation Era: Luther and the Anabaptists," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 64, no. 4 (October 2000): 259–78; Marius T. Mjaaland, "Apocalypse and the Spirit of Revolution," *Political Theology* 14, no. 2 (2013): 155–73.
- ²⁷ Oswald Bayer, "Rupture of Times: Luther's Relevance for Today," *Lutheran Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (spring 1999): 35–50.
- ²⁸ Johann Heinz, "„The Summer That Will Never End’: Luther's Longing for the 'Dear Last Day' in His Sermon on Luke 21 (1531)," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 23, no. 2 (summer 1985): 181–86.
- ²⁹ Hans-Ulrich Hofman, *Luther und die Johannes-Apokalypse: Dargestellt im Rahmen der Auslegungsgeschichte des letzten Buches der Bibel und im Zusammenhang der Theologischen Entwicklung des Reformators*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese 24 (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul

of eschatology or apocalypticism in Luther's theology, the material spends little time on the details of Luther's prophetic interpretation.

The main topic in Luther's prophetic interpretation that has gotten its own attention is the Antichrist. This is to be expected, since the history of Luther cannot be told without his views on the Papacy and hence on the Antichrist, and the history of Antichrist cannot be traced without discussing Luther's interpretation of him. Authors who have written on the history of the interpretation of the Antichrist have either given a considerable attention to Luther, for instance Hans Preuß (1906)³⁰ and Leif Kr. Tobiassen (1948),³¹ or a summary, such as Bernard McGinn (2000)³² and Mariano Delgado and Volker Leppin (2011),³³ depending on the scope of their work. Works on Luther's developing attitudes towards the Papacy tell the same story from a historical perspective.³⁴ Several articles have also been written on Luther's Antichrist.³⁵ But in these works on Luther's eschatology in general or on his views on the Antichrist in particular, Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 is barely mentioned.³⁶

But a few articles or book sections have been written on Luther's interpretation of the book of Daniel as a whole.³⁷ His interpretation of a given chapter of Daniel is usually treated in

Siebeck), 1982); Dick Akerboom, "'Er zullen grote tekenen zijn': Een verkenning van Luthers verstaan van de Apocalyps in de context van zijn tijd," *Luther-Bulletin* 7 (November 1998): 62–75.

³⁰ Hans Preuß, *Die Vorstellungen vom Antichrist im späteren Mittelalter, bei Luther und in der konfessionellen Polemik: ein Beitrag zur Theologie Luthers und zur Geschichte der christlichen Frömmigkeit* (Leipzig: J. ? Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1906), 83–182.

³¹ Leif K. Tobiassen, "An Investigation into the Evolution of Martin Luther's Views concerning Antichrist" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 1948).

³² Bernard McGinn, *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 200–208.

³³ Mariano Delgado and Volker Leppin, eds., *Der Antichrist: Historische und systematische Zugänge*, Studien zur christlichen Religions- und Kulturgeschichte 14 (Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg), 269–79.

³⁴ Wenzel Lohff, "Would the Pope Still Have Been the Antichrist for Luther Today?," *Concilium* 4 (1971): 68–74; Remigius Bäumer, *Martin Luther und der Papst*, 5th ed., *Katholisches Leben und Kirchenreform der Glaubensspaltung* 30 (Aschendorff, 1986); Scott H. Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy: Stages in a Reformation Conflict* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1981); Walter Mostert, "Die theologische Bedeutung von Luthers antirömischer Polemik," *Luther-Jahrbuch* 57 (1990): 72–113.

³⁵ Hans J. Hillerbrand, "The Antichrist in the Early German Reformation: Reflections on Theology and Propaganda," in *Germania Illustrata: Essays on Early Modern Germany Presented to Gerald Strauss*, eds. Andrew C. Fix and Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies* 18 (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992), 3–17; William R. Russell, "Martin Luther's Understanding of the Pope as the Antichrist," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 85 (1994): 32–44; Dennis Pettibone, "Martin Luther's Views on the Antichrist," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 18, no. 1 (spring 2007): 81–100; Dick Akerboom, "Luthers houding ten opzichte van de paus als spiegelbeeld van zijn houding ten opzichte van de Joden," *Luther-Bulletin* 17 (November 2008): 86–95. See also David M. Whitford, "The Papal Antichrist: Martin Luther and the Underappreciated Influence of Lorenzo Valla," *Renaissance Quarterly* 61, no. 1 (spring 2008): 26–52.

³⁶ All that Preuß wrote on Luther's treatment of Daniel 8 in *Responsio* was: "Besonderen Nachdruck aber legt er hier auf Daniel 8." Preuß, 135. Tobiassen devoted a few pages to it. Tobiassen, "Luther's Views concerning Antichrist," 62–67. McGinn did not even mention the work. Richardsen wrote: "Er bot hier eine „Beiweisführung“ aus der Schrift, indem er eine umfangreiche Exegese von Dan 8 auf das Papsttum durchführte; dabei sollte nur der buchstäbliche Sinn Geltung haben und insbesondere die „Erfahrung“ und der „Augenschein“ als Beweismittel zählen." Ingvild Richardsen, "Die protestantische und die römische Idee des Antichristen in der Konfessionspolemik," in Delgado and Leppin, *Der Antichrist*, 276.

³⁷ Hans Volz, "Neue Beiträge zu Luthers Bibelübersetzung: Luthers Werke am Propheten Daniel," *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 77, no. 5 (1955): 393–423; Maurice E. Schild, "Luther's Interpretation of Daniel and Revelation," in *Theologia Crusis: Studies in Honour of Hermann Sasse*, ed.

literature that deals with the group or religion which Luther saw that certain vision as pointing to. His interpretation of chapter 7 is, for instance, usually mentioned in literature on Luther and Islam.³⁸ When it comes to Daniel 8 in particular only one article and a term paper were found on the subject.³⁹

Despite an astounding amount of secondary literature on Martin Luther, next to nothing has been written on his interpretation of the Book of Daniel as an independent topic, and while his interpretation of the visions of Daniel is often mentioned when the subject at hand is what Luther believed to be the fulfillment of the prophecy, this is incidental and never in depth. The same can be said about Luther's views on Daniel 8 in particular. While much about the dynamics of Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 and prophecy in general could be gleaned from the massive amount of secondary literature, the literature does not treat the topics of the dynamics of Luther's prophetic interpretation and his interpretation of Daniel 8. This chapter seeks to do just that by combining the two.

1.3 Historical Dynamics

1.3.1 Introduction

Luther lived during a time of momentous changes. The Holy Roman Empire, in which he lived, a complex conglomeration of powers under one Emperor, was fighting its slow decline with attempts to reform its administration and structure (*Reichsreform*). In the East, the Ottoman Empire was on the ascendancy (*Klasik Çağ*) and thereby terrifying Christendom. The Turks had conquered Constantinople only few decades before Luther was born and would continue to grow and encircle European space throughout his lifetime, conquering vast territories in the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe to the gates of Vienna. It was also the early Age of Discovery, with Spain emerging as the conqueror-to-be of the New World, which turned the Emperor's attention overseas to a considerable extent, causing further tension in the Empire. Gutenberg had introduced the printing press in the early fifteenth

Henry P. Hamann (Austin: Lutheran Publishing House, 1975), 107–18; Winfried Vogel, “The Eschatological Theology of Martin Luther. Part II: Luther's Exposition of Daniel and Revelation,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 25, no. 2 (1987): 183–99; Ernst W. Zeeden, “...denn Daniel lügt nicht. ‘Daniels Prophetie über den Gang der Geschichte in der Exegese des Kirchenvaters Hieronymus und Martin Luthers. Von der Dominanz der Tradition über das Bibelwort,’” in *Recht und Reich im Zeitalter der Reformation: Festschrift für Horst Rabe*, ed. Christine Roll (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 357–85; Jörg Armbruster, *Luthers Bibelvorreden: Studien zu ihrer Theologie, Arbeiten zur Geschichte und Wirkung der Bibel* 5 (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2005), 54–56, 128, 270–77.

³⁸ John T. Baldwin, “Luther's Eschatological Appraisal of the Turkish Threat in *Eine Heerpredigt Wider Den Türken*,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 33, no. 2 (1995): 185–202; Adam S. Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam: A Study in Sixteenth-Century Polemics and Apologetics*, History of Christian-Muslim Relations 8 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 79–84; Johannes Ehmann, *Luther, Türken und Islam: Eine Untersuchung zum Türken- und Islambild Martin Luthers (1515–1546)*, Quellen und Forschungen zur Reformationgeschichte 80 (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2008), 311–31, 335–37; Adam S. Francisco, “Martin Luther,” in *Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America (1500–1600)*, ed. David Thomas and John Chesworth, Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History 7 (Brill, 2015), 225–34.

³⁹ Patrick Preston, “Catharinus versus Luther, 1521,” *History* 88, no. 291 (2003): 364–78; Denis Kaiser, “*Offenbarung des Endchrists aus dem Propheten Daniel* (1524): Martin Luther and Seventh-day Adventists on Daniel 8: Approach and Interpretation” (term paper, Andrews University, 2008).

century and books were becoming more common. But most importantly, early sixteenth century Western Europe—Germany in particular—was rife with dissatisfaction with the Church. The Renaissance Popes had been notoriously decadent and corrupt, and there was a general outcry for a reform in ecclesiastic matters. The times, so full of political and theological tension, were a stage waiting for a voice of loud and strong dissent.

The late fourteenth and pre-Reformation fifteenth century, were, however, not particularly apocalyptic. One scans the history of the period and biographies of Luther in vain to find authors on the prophecies which served as direct influences on the prophetic interpretation of his reformed theology.⁴⁰ When Luther finally got acquainted with earlier prophetic expositors, such as Jan Hus, who had reached similar conclusions in theology and prophecy (and on Daniel 8) before him, Luther was already in the thick of things of his own doing.⁴¹

The period to be investigated as the historical context for Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 can be demarcated by two developments that underpinned his reading of the chapter: His conversion experience (which resulted in reformed theology) and the official rejection of this theology by the Church. While Luther's religious struggles probably date further back, the analysis begins with his studies in 1502. The main focus will be on Luther's reform breakthrough, which can be seen as happening during the years 1517–21. In October 1517, the publication of his ninety-five theses against the sale of indulgences set in motion a controversy that ended with his excommunication in 1521. During these years it became clear that Luther's theology, which he believed was the rediscovered Gospel, was irreconcilable with the teachings of the Church, which condemned Luther's views as heresy. In tandem with that legal process, Luther slowly reached the conclusion that this state of theological and ecclesiastic affairs was due to the fact that the Church was not only corrupt but apostate. When he was excommunicated it confirmed in his mind the fact that the Pope was the Antichrist. Shortly after his excommunication, just before his departure to the Diet of Worms, Luther published a treatise on Daniel 8 to show that the Pope was the Antichrist. As long as he lived Luther did not swerve from this interpretation, so the analysis closes with 1521.

The story of these years has been told many times before, but must be included here as well for the thesis's sake. As we travel down the well-trod path of these events, this section will seek to highlight how they changed Luther's understanding of Daniel 8 and the Antichrist.

⁴⁰ In any case, Luther did not quote any such direct influence in his writings. In his earliest works through 1521 he quoted at least nearly one hundred authors, but apparently never in any relation to Daniel 8 or Luther's interpretation of the Antichrist.

⁴¹ Luther must have been aware of the generally known fact that infamous heretic Hus had declared the Pope to be the Antichrist. However, he had apparently not read even the Church's official verdict against Hus's teachings until during a break in the Leipzig debate in 1519. Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 87. After this, if not before, Luther's views of Hus became positive. The first book he probably read by Hus was *De Ecclesia*, which he read "by mid-February" of 1520. Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 97. Even after he got acquainted with Hus's interpretation, Luther still pointed out the different theological reasons they had for identifying the Antichrist as the Pope. Martin Luther, table talk no. 22, *Tischreden* (1531–46), *WA TR* 1:9.

1.3.2 Religious Experience and Reform Efforts (1502–17)

Though Luther became one of history's most famous dissident theologians, he did not always think that the Church was apostate. He had probably always thought the Church was far from perfect and corrupt in many things. Such an opinion was not limited to Luther. The late medieval period in Germany was one of seething dissatisfaction with the Church. But at first Luther was not much interested in the general state of ecclesiastical affairs. He was figuring out how to be a Christian himself. His early religious life was darkened by *Anfechtungen*, the distress of being unable to grasp the hand of God. This anxiety was already present in his youth, and when Luther's master studies in philosophy at Erfurt (1502–1505) were drawing to a close, it "must have reached a critical point."⁴² Luther intensified his existential search. He had scarcely begun his law studies when he abruptly quit and decided to enter a monastery. There he was ordained a priest (1507) and studied theology (1507–1509).⁴³ But though Luther immersed himself in religious service and theological studies, the sense of condemnation did not lift from his soul and the absurd paradox nearly left him in despair.

Over these same difficult years, the dawn of a new experience and theology was nevertheless already arising. At the end of Luther's master's studies in Erfurt he had begun reading the Bible and he studied it vociferously during his theology studies.⁴⁴ The pastoral care of his superintendent Johann Staupitz, who tried to point Luther from his own unworthiness to the love of Christ, influenced him deeply. The scenes he saw during his travel to Rome in 1510 left their impressions about the dismal conditions at the heart of Christendom. In his studies, Luther's questioning of current orthodoxy and practice grew more critical. He critiqued philosophy,⁴⁵ scholasticism,⁴⁶ and the status of Christianity already in his earliest lectures (1512–16). The clergy—whose corruption "even the children in the streets know"—was hungry for riches and power⁴⁷ and the religion they taught to the laity focused on externals⁴⁸ at the expense of the Word of God.⁴⁹ In contrast to such corruption and formalism, the Augustinian professor emphasized the study of the Scriptures and the work of Christ in ever increasing clarity, until he had (by early 1518⁵⁰) articulated the concept of salvation as God's gift to be received by justifying faith alone.

⁴² Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 3 vols. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985–1993), 1:47.

⁴³ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:91.

⁴⁴ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:85.

⁴⁵ Martin Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms* (1513–16), *LW* 10:322, 359; 11:75; Martin Luther, *Lectures on Romans* (1515–16), *LW* 25:338–39, 361–62.

⁴⁶ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, *LW* 10:33–34, 313, 322–23; Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, *LW* 25:260–63, 343, 360–61.

⁴⁷ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, *LW* 10:22, 300, 303, 331, 356, 378, 385, 454; 11:281; Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, *LW* 25:142, 171–72, 173, 404, 450, 454, 465, 468–72.

⁴⁸ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, *LW* 10:275; Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, *LW* 25:324, 444–45, 487–88, 490–491, 493–94.

⁴⁹ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, *LW* 10:22, 179–180; Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, *LW* 25:263, 415, 447.

⁵⁰ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:229–37.

There were several developments that opened up a continent-wide arena for Luther to enter upon with the discourse of his theology. First, Luther entered the academic world. In 1512 Luther earned his doctorate from Wittenberg and was transferred from Erfurt to become a new theology professor there. He began lecturing in late October 1512. Secondly, though Luther was still suffering from *Anfechtungen* intermittently during his first years at the university, it was not the defining essence of his experience anymore. Third, Luther actively sought to share his theology and to act on his reform suggestions as a monk, priest, and professor. At Wittenberg his emphasis on the Scriptures and Christ made him a popular professor and a preacher. Academic disputations that Luther participated in played a significant role in winning the faculty over to the new theology. A reform of the theology curriculum followed.⁵¹ Luther's 1517 disputation on the indulgences (or the invitation to dispute, since it never took place) was but a step in addressing current abuses and theological problems.

Indulgence was when the Church, by papal prerogative and authority, released the confessing sinner from the third part of the sacrament of penance (works of satisfaction) in exchange for monetary payment. It was also possible to buy a life-time indulgence called full or plenary indulgence; they covered forgiveness as well. What complicated the issue further was that besides the various kinds of indulgences, there was no official decree that systematized or clarified the doctrine as a whole. Thus it was a teaching easy to abuse. Luther had already criticized indulgences from lectern and pulpit before 1517. To him indulgences taught the public that salvation could be bought and thus they short-circuited true salvation from the very start. Instead of becoming truly penitent, people bought false security. When a Dominican seller of indulgences traveled to Ducal Saxony and Luther's parishioners crossed the border to buy indulgences, he decided to address the abuse and open a dialogue about it in academic circles. On October 31, 1517 he published a set of ninety-five theses on indulgences and offered to debate them. The news of this spread across Europe and gained the attention of all. Tetzel and then Erfurt theologian Johann Eck wrote against Luther with many other writers joining the fray over the next years. Far more serious was the official response. In December, the archbishop of Mainz forwarded the theses and a denouncement of Luther to Rome. While "the details surrounding the beginning of Luther's case at the curia are cloudy," by June 1518 "legal proceeding against Luther was already underway."⁵²

It is important to stop here in Luther's life for a paragraph or two before moving on so that we can understand what was to follow. Luther was a new theology professor at Wittenberg and had by now been lecturing for several years. His Christian experience had changed and was changing, and so was his theology. To Luther his new religious experience was simply true conversion, and his reformed theology was sifting the husk of ignorance and error from the kernel of true Catholic doctrine. He was probably happy that he could get the theology

⁵¹ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:161–74, 275–97.

⁵² Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 46.

program at Wittenberg to be overhauled, and used his sphere of influence to seek ever better theology. Indulgences were a doctrine that had technically not been settled by the Church, and it was widely acknowledged that it was abused. And though Luther wanted to discuss the teaching publicly and academically, he was oblivious to the developments this demand and his critique would lead to.

As “the chair of biblical studies,”⁵³ Luther could choose which books he lectured on. During the first years of his tenure he lectured on Psalms, Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. His selection indicates what books he favored and which themes he wanted to highlight. As a monk, the Psalter was dear to his heart, and the three epistles would all be important for Luther’s theology of salvation. The schedule hardly evinces great interest in end-time prophecy. Nor did Luther dwell on the eschatological texts found in these books.⁵⁴ That he mentioned end-time events on a few occasions is to be expected during years of biblical lectures that contained an ocean of scriptural references. Yet even these instances were usually citations to explain words, terms, or quote axioms.

There was, however, one topic of interest to Luther that was connected to prophecy, and that was the spiritual condition of the Church. This connection was orthodox theology: Heresy and corruption were associated with the Antichrist. But even this concern of Luther’s had a somewhat different tone to what it would become during and after his break with Rome. At this time, what concerned Luther was that the Christendom was worldly, lacking in piety, and yet satisfied and proud of itself. In his early lectures Luther expressed this concern on occasion in connection to end-time prophecies. The clearest example is his exposition of Psalm 69. Luther used the occasion of the text to comment on the present apathy of Christians.⁵⁵ Bernard of Clairvaux had divided history into the era of the Roman persecutions, the Councils and Fathers, and then a third period of indifference and lack of spirituality.⁵⁶ Luther agreed that Scripture depicted the last age of the Church as one of gray spiritual skies.⁵⁷ What made that fact ominous was that the present temptations of abundance and apathy were the very temptations the Antichrist would use according to Daniel 8:25.⁵⁸ This was why Luther agreed with Bernard that this third era in the Church would lead to the fourth

⁵³ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 12.

⁵⁴ His comments on Day of Judgment (Romans 2:1–16) did not reflect particular interest the event, and he did not comment on the Second Coming (Rom 13:12; Heb 9:28; 10:37). See Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, LW 25:171–89.

⁵⁵ The Psalm was at this time regarded to be about Christ’s sufferings during his earthly ministry. Luther believed its lessons were applicable to the sufferings of the believers in all times, and used it to discuss the spiritual climate of his time: The Church in the past had lamented the ills of its time—persecution during the age of the martyrs and heresies in the time of the councils. But the present third age of worldliness and apathy did not lament. Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:351, 357–58, 359, 367, 373.

⁵⁶ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:352, 356.

⁵⁷ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:352, 373–74, 387–88.

⁵⁸ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:353. Luther here used the Vulgate, which renders שְׂקוֹן as ‘abundance’ (*copia*).

and the last one, that of the Antichrist.⁵⁹ Among the contemporary unspiritual things that Luther lamented in particular were “the endless tradition of decretals, decrees, statutes, etc.” of canon law that had “multiplied us work-righteous hypocrites like locusts out of the smoke” (Rv 9).⁶⁰ Another evil was the sale of indulgences, which Luther said was a trial to the Church of the very kind which Christ had warned about (Mt 24:15), though Luther qualified the statement by adding that he “would not dare to assert that this [sale of indulgences] is what the Lord chiefly had in mind.”⁶¹ Luther’s exposition of Psalm 69 was obviously the precursor of what was to come. He would use all those very texts in their full force when he would later identify the Pope as the Antichrist.⁶² However, Luther had no such intention at this time. The text shows this: Luther’s most prophetic exposition is found not on a prophecy, but in an application of a Psalm’s lesson to the present time. The tenor shows it: Instead of describing an apostate Church raging against true Christians, Luther complained that the current self-satisfaction and apathy was dangerous, not only in itself, but also because it would prepare the way for the apostasy of the Antichrist eventually. The literature shows this: Luther’s discussion of Psalm 69 was just that, one discussion of a text in years of teaching. It cannot be equated with the views Luther had of prophecy when he broke with the Church some years later any more than an acorn is a tree. Unfortunately, such an equation was precisely what the Dutch Luther scholar Heiko Oberman attempted to do. And since his work was influential, some time will still be spent on this issue before moving on with the story.

1.3.3 Excursus 1: Oberman’s Analysis of Luther’s Early Apocalypticism

In his Luther biography, Oberman concentrated on a few texts in Luther’s early writings, primarily the exposition of Psalm 69, to show that Luther had become apocalyptic already in 1514 when he derived the apostasy of the Church from the practice of indulgences. Oberman further concluded that the sources quoted in that exposition were the sources of Luther’s apocalypticism, which developed from 1514 to 1519, when Luther identified the Pope as the Antichrist.

Oberman emphasized the formative role three sources played in Luther’s apocalypticism: The Gospel of Matthew and the Church Fathers Augustine of Hippo and Bernard of Clairvaux. He also admitted that the medieval *Zeitgeist* might have played some role. He began his analysis by noting that Luther’s concept of the Antichrist was “usually . . . explained in terms of ‘angst’ and widely felt insecurity, so typical of the waning of the Middle Ages” but that it could not be dismissed simply as a superstition of the time, for “it has much

⁵⁹ On Bernard’s periodization of church history, see James G. Kroemer, “The Eschatology of Bernard of Clairvaux” (PhD dissertation, Marquette University, 2000), 147–67.

⁶⁰ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 2:232, on Heb 11:4.

⁶¹ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:362.

⁶² Daniel 8, Matthew 24, and Revelation 9 were all used by Luther in his longest and clearest exposition on the Antichrist, his 1521 reply to Ambrosius Catharinus. For the two latter passages, See Luther, *Daniel VIII*.23–25, 45, 77–84. Daniel 8 is the topic of the entire treatise.

deeper roots in the Christian tradition.”⁶³ Admittedly, “Luther was certainly not untouched by the fears of his age” but “the decisive factor in his way of coping with this mood was its use as an incentive for the intensive study” of Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, and the Gospel of Matthew.⁶⁴ In the two church fathers Luther “found a true rendering of the New Testament evidence of what would happen in the Last Days, as well as an adequate interpretation of these events.”⁶⁵ Oberman explained how these three authors influenced Luther’s views in the following way.

Oberman claimed Luther used Augustine’s “interpretation of history and vision of the Last Days” “in deciphering the events of his own time.” Oberman then explained Augustine’s interpretation of Revelation 20.⁶⁶ The African Church Father used this chapter as a framework for Christian history. Its “thousand years” were the Christian era, during which Satan was bound (vv. 1–3), and comprised the period between Christ’s first and second advents. In the last days, when the millennium would draw to a close, Satan would be loosened. He would attack the Church one more time by raising the Antichrist against it, and that attack would be cut short by the Last Day. By reading Augustine, Luther realized that “the unleashing of the Devil, which Augustine had expected in the distant future” had already begun.⁶⁷

According to Oberman, the next source of Luther’s apocalypticism was Bernard, from whom Luther borrowed his particular periodization of church history. According to Bernard, history was divided into (1) the age of the martyrs, (2) the age of the heretics, (3) current age of apathy and worldliness, which in turn would soon usher in (4) the reign of the Antichrist. Bernard warned that the Antichrist would arise from within the Church. Luther applied the waning third period to his own day, and believed the fourth was soon to come. The urgency of the shortness of time motivated him to action. When he first spoke out against indulgences in 1514, “the sense of urgency in his attack was derived from St. Bernard’s periodization of world history.”⁶⁸

Thirdly, Oberman claimed that in studying the Gospel of Matthew, Luther “found the signs of the Last Days spelled out with precision” (Mt 24:2–14). Oberman affirmed that “from the very start it was clear to Luther that Jesus’ prophecy of the Last Days applied to the situation of the Church in his time. . . . He concluded already in 1514: ‘The way I see it, the Gospel of St. Matthew counts such perversions as the sale of indulgences among the signs of the Last Days.’”⁶⁹

Oberman concluded:

⁶³ Heiko Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil* (New York: Image Books, 1992), 67.

⁶⁴ Oberman, *Luther*, 68–71.

⁶⁵ Oberman, *Luther*, 66.

⁶⁶ Oberman, *Luther*, 66–67.

⁶⁷ Oberman, *Luther*, 71.

⁶⁸ Oberman, *Luther*, 68.

⁶⁹ Oberman, *Luther*, 70–71.

In the following five years—from 1514 to 1519—Luther found his fears increasingly confirmed, and out of concern grew consternation. This insight into the tradition preceding Luther—St. Matthew, St. Augustine, St. Bernard—allows us to grasp his sense of urgency in preaching the Gospel. This urgency breeds impatience, and impatience and uncompromising stance against all opposition. We should not expect from him a cool and dispassionate analysis of the persons and events of his day. For him, time was not just running—it was running out. The unleashing of the Devil, which Augustine had expected in the distant future and which had drawn close in the days of St. Bernard, has now come about. Once the Church invokes canon law and papal might to put its full authority behind indulgences, there can no longer be any doubt: the Antichrist is begotten,⁷⁰ the Last Days have begun.⁷¹

Augustine's views of Revelation 20 were part of orthodox eschatology during the Middle Ages. When a medieval theologian adhered to orthodox eschatology, it does not necessarily follow that he was influenced directly by Augustine. What will be more informative is to see whether Luther quoted Augustine specifically on prophecy, or whether Luther used Revelation 20 during said years. It is known that Luther was aware of Augustine's eschatology. During his study years he had preached on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (which have a section on eschatology that follows Augustine), and he had read Augustine's *City of God*. Luther's early copy of the later book has even been preserved, though his sparse marginalia regrettably break off in Book 19, before the eschatological Books 20–22.⁷² Interestingly Luther apparently never quoted Augustine on eschatology, contrary to what Oberman claimed.⁷³ And during the Reformation breakthrough Luther did not quote Revelation 20 in connection to the Antichrist. It is not hard to gage why. At that time Luther still eyed Revelation with suspicion, a distrust which he expressed in his first preface to the book in 1522,⁷⁴ so it would have been strange if he would have derived his views of the Antichrist from there. Furthermore, Luther's views of church history did not align so easily with those of Augustine. Augustine placed the trial of the Antichrist at the end of the age,

⁷⁰ This wording is unfortunate. According to one of the most common interpretations of the Antichrist in Luther's time, he would be a future single ruler, whose entire life was laid out in the prophecies from his birth. But Luther believed the Antichrist was not an individual ruler but a dynasty. It was the Pope as the Pope who was the Antichrist, not a specific individual who filled the office of the Papacy. Talk of the birth of the Antichrist is therefore misleading.

⁷¹ Oberman, *Luther*, 71.

⁷² Martin Luther, *Randbemerkungen Luthers zu Augustins Schriften de trinitate und de civitate dei*, *WA* 9:27.

⁷³ The problems with Oberman's claim that Augustine influenced Luther's early apocalypticism is found already in Oberman's notes and what is missing in them. Oberman did not refer to any source that shows that Luther, touched by the fears of his age, channeled them constructively into a study of Augustine's writings and his apocalyptic. Oberman's citation for Luther identifying the end of the millennium when the devil is unleashed and Antichrist arrived, is from Luther's commentary on Psalm 10:12 in his second Lectures on the Psalms (Martin Luther, *Operationes in Psalmos*, 2 vols., Archiv zur Weimarer Ausgabe der Werke Martin Luthers 1–2 (Köln, 1981, 1991), 2:606,2–4 = *WA* 5:345). The Psalm describes the success of the wicked, and then the Psalmist calls upon the Lord to arise. In his commentary on v. 12, Luther stated that this applied to all ages, from the persecutors of the early church down to the time of the Antichrist. The wicked would become increasingly strong. Because of that he had lost hope in a general Reformation of the Church, and applied the Psalmist's appeal to God to the calling for the Last Judgment, the only time when all wrongs would be truly set right. But Luther here said nothing about Augustine's eschatology or it being fulfilled in his own time.

⁷⁴ Martin Luther, *Preface to the Revelation of St. John [I]* (1522), *LW* 35:398–99.

after the age of the Church (the millennium of Christ's reign over his saints). This is a positive view of the Christian era. Luther on the other hand came to believe that the Antichrist had been reigning over the Church for centuries—and while he at first thought it had only been several centuries by his time, he eventually believed this reign had begun already in the seventh century, it was nevertheless already showing a departure from Augustine. The only common denominator which can be found between the prophetic interpretation of Augustine and early Luther is that the Antichrist would come in the end of the age.⁷⁵ That belief, however, did not originate with Augustine and had been orthodox eschatology since the earliest centuries. Oberman's affirmation that Luther used Augustine's philosophy of history and prophecy "in deciphering the events of his own time"⁷⁶ is therefore unfounded.

It is true that Luther used Bernard's fourfold scheme of church history. But both the periodization of church history and the periods of the martyrs and Councils were generally accepted historiographical conventions. What made Bernard's schematization original was how and where he situated his own time: It was a time of worldly corruption within the Church, and the penultimate age, since it would soon usher in the time of the Antichrist, the final brief period of history. Luther felt that the Church in his time was characterized by the same ills specified by Bernard—it was half-hearted, apathetic, languishing in formality—and thus believed Bernard's age had continued to his time. Furthermore, Bernard's anatomy of this apathetic condition as being worse than open persecution resonated with Luther, as well as the thought of connecting this kind of atmosphere to the time ushering in the Antichrist. Yet Oberman overstated Bernard's influence on Luther when he affirmed that in Bernard Luther found "a true rendering of the New Testament evidence of what would happen in the Last Days, as well as an adequate interpretation of these events" and that Luther "learned to employ" Bernard's "interpretation of history and vision of the Last Days" "in deciphering the events of his own time."⁷⁷ Luther agreed with Bernard that lethargy and self-satisfaction were terrible evils and that they characterized the age preceding the Antichrist. Seeing apathy as conducive to apathy seems to be general wisdom. It is hardly a detailed interpretation of the last days or of New Testament prophecies.

And what about the Gospel of Matthew? In his early writings, Luther mentioned merely a few of the signs found in Matthew⁷⁸ and discussed only one, the abomination of desolation.

⁷⁵ Later, when Luther wrote his chronology of the world, he placed the millennium in the period 1–1000, noting at the year of its close: "Finito isto Millenario solvitur nunc Satan, Et fit Episcopus Romanus Antichristus, etiam vi gladij." Martin Luther, *Supputatio annorum mundi* (1541; 1545), *WA* 53:152. Thus he agreed with Augustine in the sense that the millennium equated the earthly church era before the arrival of the Antichrist. This does not harmonize well with Luther's understanding, written elsewhere, that the Antichrist had begun to reign already in the seventh century. Martin Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy an Institute of the Devil* (1545), *LW* 41:291–92.

⁷⁶ Oberman, *Luther*, 68.

⁷⁷ Oberman, *Luther*, 68.

⁷⁸ Once he referred to Christ's warning against false, miracle-working prophets in connection to heretics and Turks, another time to the wars of his age as fulfilling kingdom rising against kingdom, and thirdly he likened ritualism to saying that Christ is "here" or "there." Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, *LW* 10:361–62, 437–38; Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, *LW* 25:464, 486.

This phrase was traditionally understood as predicting the rule of Antichrist in the Church, and often expanded to include the apostasy that would precede him. Luther first discussed two possible anagogical senses of the phrase,⁷⁹ and then interpreted it literally in the qualified manner already noted: The indulgence traffic was *an* abomination of desolation set up in the holy place (the Church), and it was “of this kind of tribulation for the church” that Christ spoke when he uttered his warning, though Luther added immediately that indulgences were at most a partial fulfillment.⁸⁰ It is therefore incorrect when Oberman stated that in Matthew Luther “found the signs of the Last Days spelled out with precision” and that “from the very start [1514!] it was clear to Luther that Jesus’s prophecy of the Last Days [Mt 24] fully applied to the situation of the Church in his time.”⁸¹

Oberman’s identification of the roots of Luther’s apocalypticism is therefore unconvincing. He may be right that Luther was impacted by the fears of his age, though he did not explain what those fears were or offer proof of this impact. More importantly, he did not convincingly show that Matthew, Augustine, and Bernard handed the torch of apocalypticism to Luther. These are names so large in theology that in a sense they influenced Christianity as a whole. What needs to be shown when saying these were somehow directly influential is to show just that. But in this case it cannot be done. Luther was not deeply influenced by Matthew’s catalogue of signs. He only quoted the sign of the Antichrist—the abomination of desolation (Mt 24:15). While it is true that Luther was deeply influenced by Augustine, he notably did not derive his interpretation of prophecy from him. Bernard’s denunciation of apathy as an end-time situation did strike a chord with Luther. But all in all the traceable influence of the three authors on Luther does not amount to much: A prediction of the coming Antichrist, and apathy as a sign of his soon arrival. The former was part of standard orthodoxy, so what remains is Luther’s concern for the spiritual condition of the Church in his time. Luther’s belief that the condition of the Church was greatly wanting, was the core reason why he believed he lived in the last days, and this he did not learn directly or specifically from Matthew, Augustine, or Bernard. He learned it from Christianity’s age-old view of history that saw history primarily as history of the Church, and correlated the Church’s predicted decline or corruption with the last days. Luther did not go into the years following 1517 with apocalyptic zeal against an apostate Church, but rather with astonishment and consternation at

⁷⁹ The defiant attitude of a religious towards a superior was, anagogically speaking, an abominable idol in the temple of his heart. The same could be said of the self-willed “ungodly unbelief and disobedience” of idolizing one’s own opinion, as the Jews, heretics, and proud Christians did. Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 11:522.

⁸⁰ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:15–16; 11:522–23.

⁸¹ For this conclusion, Oberman quoted Luther’s first *Lectures on the Psalms* (summer 1514), where the latter concluded: “The way I see it, the Gospel of St. Matthew counts such perversions as the sale of indulgences among the signs of the Last Days.” Oberman, *Luther*, 70. This is actually a paraphrase and not a quote. After Luther described the indulgence traffic of indulgences, he said: “It is therefore of this kind of tribulation for the church that I understand Matt. 24:15 to be speaking: ‘When you shall see the abomination.’ For with a wonderful fitness the words harmonize with this, though I would not dare to assert that this is what the Lord chiefly had in mind.” Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:361–62.

the reaction against his ninety-five theses, and with the growing fear that what was wrong with the Church was of proportions he had not dreamt of.

Oberman's diagnosis of Luther's apocalyptic mindset is also problematic. Luther's "analysis of the persons and events of his day" and his "uncompromising stance against all opposition" were not the *consequences* but rather the *causes* of his apocalypticism. Luther did not grow incaltrant because he was apocalyptic; he became apocalyptic as the Church demanded that he abandon his theology, which he—and he was a forceful character—found himself unable to do with integrity. In fact, at first Luther resisted apocalyptic applications; he refused to come to the conclusion that the Church was apostate. He held onto the belief that it was corrupt yet redeemable. It was not until it became clear to him that the Church would not countenance his theology—which to him was the truth of the Bible—that Luther denounced the Papacy as the Antichrist. Luther's behavior during the years of 1514 until 1519 and later do not show a man who was impatient because "time [was] running out"—he had not reached any such conclusion in those years. Nor do his writings or actions during those years show him devoid of rational analysis of his surroundings. Such an idea reflects a common bias against those who believe in prophecy: That they must be of an unsound mind. But Luther's evaluation of persons and his time will best be illustrated and evaluated by now continuing the story.

1.3.4 Canonical Trial Opens (1518)

Summons to Rome

"The details surrounding the beginning of Luther's case at the curia are cloudy" but by June the proceedings had already been initiated.⁸² At the behest of Pope Leo, Girolamo Ghinucci, auditor (supreme justice) of the Apostolic Chamber, prepared a citation⁸³ summoning Luther to Rome within sixty days or face excommunication, and Sylvester Mazzolini da Prieri (lat. Sylvester Prierias), the master of the sacred palace (official theologian of the Curia) wrote a refutation of Luther's theses.⁸⁴ At this time the Imperial Diet of the Empire was in session at Augsburg. In July the two documents were sent to the papal Legate at the assembly, Tomasso de Vio (lat. Thomas Cajetan), to be forwarded to Luther. Luther received them in Wittenberg August 7. The summons to Rome and Prierias' confutation demonstrated that the Curia viewed Luther's questioning of the indulgences not only as heresy but as an assault on papal authority. Luther was shaken by the summons. Immediately he sent off a letter to George Spalatin, secretary and counselor to Luther's protector, Frederick III the Elector of Saxony. Luther suspected his enemies wanted to destroy him and urged Spalatin to see to it that the hearing would take place in Germany rather than in Rome. Moreover, the honor of the University of Wittenberg was at stake. As to the arguments against him, Luther was not

⁸² For Luther's summons to Rome, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:240–50; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 46–56.

⁸³ This document has not been preserved. Brecht, *Luther*, 1:242.

⁸⁴ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 46. Prierias's refutation was entitled *Dialogue concerning the Power of the Pope against the Presumptuous Positions of Martin Luther*. See Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 44, 46.

impressed. Prierias affirmed that indulgences were a practice of the Church and therefore legitimate. In his reply⁸⁵ Luther argued that tradition was not unanimous. By which parameters should truth then be established? And since the doctrine of indulgences was not settled, why was it heresy to critique or question them?

The politics made it possible for Luther to be heard in Germany, but probably ensured at the same time that the hearing would be tense. August 23 Cajetan received a papal breve (*Postquam ad aures*) instructing him to take Luther prisoner, with the assistance of secular authorities if needed, “and to hold him until further orders arrived from Rome.” “In terms of his legal standing, Luther was no longer merely under suspicion of heresy with the right to have his case heard. He was now declared a heretic whose options were narrowed down to recantation or excommunication.”⁸⁶ But anti-Roman feelings ran deep at the Diet and the Pope needed the Elector’s political support to see some major issues through, such as the Turkish tax and determining the imperial successor. So when Frederick appeared before Cajetan early September and requested that Luther’s case be transferred to Germany, the Cardinal agreed to hear Luther and treat him kindly. September 11 Cajetan received another brief (*Cum nuper*) in which he was endowed with the authority to judge Luther in the Pope’s stead. Cajetan was in a bind—he had promised to hear Luther with the implicit understanding he would not arrest him; but he had not been authorized to release Luther. It was therefore imperative that Luther recant. Luther, however, believed he was simply going to a hearing. A clash was nearly inevitable.

Hearing before Cajetan in Augsburg

Luther appeared before Cajetan October 12–14, 1518.⁸⁷ The Cardinal told him in a friendly tone that he did not wish to debate him but settle the affair peacefully. Luther needed only to recant his wrong teachings. Luther thought to himself he could have done that in Wittenberg; he had traveled to Augsburg for his case to be heard. He asked to be shown wherein his errors lay. Inadvertently Cajetan got drawn into discussion with Luther. One of the errors he pointed out was the idea of assurance of forgiveness. This pained Luther; he had “misdoubted nothing less than that this matter would be called into question.” The discussion jumped from point to point without reaching conclusions; it ended with the Cardinal shouting. Luther asked for time for consideration and left. The next day, in response to Cajetan’s initial demands, Luther restated that he had always been a faithful son of the Church, that he was not conscious of any error, and that “he could not be forced to recant without being heard and refuted.” At this moment Staupitz suggested that Luther be permitted to give a written answer to Cajetan’s demands and this was granted. On the third day of the hearings Luther read his reply that upheld Scripture as an authority that even the Pope must submit to. It ended with an appeal to

⁸⁵ Martin Luther, *Ad dialogum Silvestri Prieritatis de potestate papae responsio* (1518), *WA* 1:(644)647–86.

⁸⁶ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 53, 54.

⁸⁷ On the hearing before Cajetan, and the participants’s subsequent actions, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:252–64; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 59–70.

Cajetan “not to force him to recant those things to which his conscience compelled him to consent” and to intercede with Pope Leo on his behalf. Cajetan again demanded that Luther recant and started shouting. In the end Luther was dismissed with the warning not to come again unless he wanted to recant. October 16, at the advice of friends, Luther used a “permissible legal action” and appealed “from the Cardinal and the pope poorly informed to the pope to-be-better-informed” and left Augsburg few days later by night.

Both sides took action immediately after the hearing. Cajetan, having done his duty as best as he could, wrote to the Elector and told him to deliver Luther over to Rome or expel him from Saxony. Early December Frederick sent him Luther’s reply and explained his own grounds for not complying with the ultimatum at this time. It had not been proven that Luther was a heretic and he should therefore be heard. By then Luther had appealed from the Pope to a Church Council in case Leo would reject his appeal. In fact, Luther now expected “anathemas from Rome any day.”⁸⁸ In mid-January 1519 he read their approach in the bull *Cum postquam*, which had been published the month before. The bull defined the dogma of indulgences and placed opposition to it under the penalty of excommunication. To Luther’s chagrin the bull neither “resolved contradictions between past and present decrees” nor did it “cite any saying of Scripture.”⁸⁹ In Luther’s opinion his critique of indulgences had not been disputed by the Church, nor had it been disproven by the Bible. Nevertheless it had been declared heresy and worthy of excommunication. Then something happened that delayed the proceedings against Luther for almost a year: The Emperor died.⁹⁰

1.3.5 The Proceedings Halted (1519)

When Emperor Maximilian I died on January 12, 1519, Luther’s protector, Elector Frederick, became interim imperial vicegerent. The new emperor would be elected in the summer and the Pope still needed the Elector’s support to ensure that the scepter would pass to France rather than to Spain. At the Diet the Elector would actually side with Charles, but for the time being Rome’s proceedings against Luther came to a halt and were not resumed until at the commencement of 1520. In the meantime Luther’s publications had steadily multiplied. In them the dimensions of his theological differences with the Church continued to unfold, especially regarding the sacraments, though his statements on papal authority at the Leipzig debate were what caused the greatest uproar.

The Leipzig Debate

Originally Luther was not intended to be a part of the Leipzig debate. But in February Luther got involved in the preparation of the upcoming debate between his colleague Karlstadt and

⁸⁸ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 70.

⁸⁹ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 77.

⁹⁰ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:271–73.

Johann Maier von Eck, theology professor at the University of Ingolstadt.⁹¹ When Eck published the theses he would debate, they were unmistakably aimed at Luther and consequently he decided he would like to debate Eck. Eck had singled out Luther's explanation of the twenty-second of the ninety-five theses, which touched on the Pope's authority. Eck made this topic the focus of debate, so even though Luther had consistently said papal authority was not a contested point for him, he would have to discuss it in greater detail than before. So he prepared. In the following month of March Luther embarked on an intense study of canon law and church history. The study left him appalled and perplexed. In a letter to Spalatin he wrote: "I know not whether the pope is the Antichrist himself or whether he is his apostle, so miserably is Christ (that is, the truth) corrupted and crucified by the pope in the decretals."⁹² This was a tonal change from his former comments on the Antichrist as imminent, even present, but unknown.⁹³ Luther's comment cannot be construed into a solid interpretation of the papal Antichrist, but his words definitely showed that studying the Papacy's past had been a considerable shock. He wondered out loud about just how great the dimensions of doctrinal and ecclesiastic corruption were and (potentially) what the prophetic implications were.

Luther and Eck debated at the University of Leipzig July 4–13.⁹⁴ During the debate Luther denied the Pope's divine right to rule and reduced the Holy See to a human institution, one allowed but not ordained by God, a hierarchy which Luther claimed had only reached its present heights of supremacy during the last four centuries. For this Eck accused Luther of being a Hussite. During the break Luther read some of Hus's statements. When the debate resumed Luther affirmed that not everything that Hus had believed was heresy. After the debate the polemical din surrounding Luther continued but the universities of Erfurt and Paris who had been assigned judges of the debate stayed silent and refused to render their verdict.⁹⁵ The suspense did not last long. On August 30 Luther's teachings were condemned instead by the Universities of Cologne and Louvain. The academia had sided against the Wittenberg professor as a heretic.⁹⁶ Luther still saw himself as a faithful Catholic though and precisely because he had curtailed the Pope's authority to a scripturally allowable sphere. This change in his views on papal authority was, however, but another stepping stone towards what would become his new interpretation of the Antichrist, though Luther still did not foresee that outcome.

⁹¹ On how Luther got involved in the Leipzig debate, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:302; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 80–81.

⁹² Martin Luther to George Spalatin, March 18, 1519, *LW* 48:114, lt. 36.

⁹³ The latest such comment Luther had written late the year before, in 1518: "Trials keep a man alert, perfect him in humility and patience, and make him acceptable to God as his dearest child. Blessed are they who take this to heart, for unfortunately, everyone today seeks tranquillity and peace, pleasure and comfort, in his life. Therefore the rule of the Antichrist is coming closer, if it is not already here." Martin Luther, *An Exposition of the Lord's Prayer for Simple Laymen* (1519), *LW* 42:75.

⁹⁴ On the Leipzig debate, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:306, 316–22; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 81–88.

⁹⁵ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:337–38.

⁹⁶ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:338–39; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 72.

The clouds were also growing darker south of the Alps. On June 28 Charles V was elected Emperor and Rome's political reasons for halting the proceedings against Luther had lapsed.⁹⁷ In early November the papal Legate Girolamo Aleandro commanded Frederick to imprison Luther or hand him over.⁹⁸ Eck, convinced that Luther was an incorrigible heretic, decided soon thereafter to travel to Rome to lend his aid in the case against Luther.⁹⁹ When he reached Rome in late March 1520,¹⁰⁰ the canonical trial against Luther was already in session.

1.3.6 Canonical Trial Resumed (1520)

The Case Reopens

On January 9 Luther's trial was finally resumed in Rome and this time it would be carried to its close. Pope Leo appointed two commissions (February 1 and 11) to prepare the case. With the arrival of Eck in late March the Curia was brought up to date on Luther's teachings and a third commission was appointed at the end of April to draft a bull against Luther. The bull was then finalized in four cardinal consistories. It was promulgated on June 15 and proclaimed a month later on July 24.¹⁰¹ Luther must have been expecting renewed measures ever after the election of the new Emperor. In February Luther received the universities' published condemnation of his teachings.¹⁰² On May 20, while the bull was being finalized, the Curia sent the Elector another ultimatum demanding that he hand Luther over.¹⁰³ In May Luther must also have learned that Eck, his most diligent adversary, had set off to Rome with the express purpose of incriminating him to the Curia.¹⁰⁴ In the ensuing months these grim omens changed to certain forecast as the winds blew the news of the case's progress north over the Alps. Some time after, Luther knew that a bull was on its way, and in October he had a copy in hand.¹⁰⁵

The Reformation Tracts

As the year progressed and Luther's knowledge of the procedures against him became clearer, Luther's hope of any positive reaction or understanding from the Curia burned lower. Two books that he read early in the year can be mentioned as some of the gathering influences that directed Luther's thought in this time. The first one was a newly published edition of the Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla's essay on the "Donation of Constantine."¹⁰⁶ On the basis of historical logic and philological analysis Valla showed in a masterful way that the Donation

⁹⁷ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:389.

⁹⁸ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:416–17.

⁹⁹ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:348.

¹⁰⁰ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 95.

¹⁰¹ On the preparation of the bull, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:389–91; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 95, 97.

¹⁰² Brecht, *Luther*, 1:337–41.

¹⁰³ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 95; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:397.

¹⁰⁴ He knew it at least in July. Brecht, *Luther*, 1:348.

¹⁰⁵ On the wait for and the reception of the bull, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:397–403.

¹⁰⁶ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 98. The original title is *De falso credita et ementita Constantini Donatione declamation*. See Lorenzo Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*, I Tatti Renaissance Library 24 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 2.

was nothing but a documentary fraud. Luther had deplored the worldliness of the Papacy with arguments similar to the speech Valla put in the mouth of Pope Sylvester.¹⁰⁷ But that one of the measures by which the Papacy had legitimized its claim to earthly rule had been by incorporating falsified history into canon law came as a reeling surprise. One can feel Luther tremble as he confided in a letter to Spalatin: “I am so tormented, I scarcely doubt that the pope is properly that Antichrist which by common consent the world expects; everything he lives, does, speaks and establishes fits so well.”¹⁰⁸ The second book which Luther read was *The Church* by Jan Hus, which Prague Utraquists had sent him in October the year before. Luther had read it at the latest in March.¹⁰⁹ What astonished Luther was how similar he felt his teachings were to those of Hus.¹¹⁰ (Incidentally, in this work Hus taught that *if* a priest or a Pope was disobedient to Christ, they were an antichrist—citing 1 John 2, Matthew 24:15, 2 Thessalonians 2, and Daniel 11—while still upholding the Papacy as a divine institution.¹¹¹) Luther wondered: If the Gospel had already been declared a heresy a century ago, what did that say about the possibility of present reform of the Curia? Yet the Church must still be reformed. While the Church was preparing its case against Luther, Luther raised his call for reformation in a louder and clearer voice.

In the summer and fall of 1520 Luther outlined the proposed reformatory measures in an array of tracts. Since the Curia was so set in its way that it was preparing his condemnation, it was in vain to continue pleading with them for a hearing. So in the *Address to the Christian Nobility of Germany* (published August 18)¹¹² Luther appealed to the secular rulers of the Empire to reform the Church. The Papacy had insulated itself from reform by exalting its authority above secular rule, Scripture, and Council, blocking these three roads to reformation. It must therefore devolve on the secular rulers to take action against this unjust tyranny, and Luther listed proposed items that were in need of reform. In the *Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity* (October 6)¹¹³ Luther described how the hierarchy had obscured the path of salvation with its erroneous teaching of the sacraments. Addressing the rumor that a bull was being prepared “in which I am urged to recant or be declared a heretic.” Luther wrote sarcastically:

If that is true, I desire this little book to be part of the recantation that I shall make; so that the arrogant despots might not complain of having acted in vain. The remainder I

¹⁰⁷ Valla, *Donation of Constantine*, 31–43.

¹⁰⁸ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 98.

¹⁰⁹ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 97–98.

¹¹⁰ “Up to now I have unwittingly taught and held all the teachings of John Hus. . . . I am so shocked that I do not know what to think when I see such terrible judgments of God over mankind: the most evident evangelical truth was burned in public and was already considered condemned more than one hundred years ago.” Martin Luther to George Spalatin, about February 14, 1520, *LW* 48:153, lt. 52.

¹¹¹ Jan Hus, *The Church* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1915), 21–22, 43, 87, 90, 107, 126, 128–29, 140–41, 153, 154, 159–60, 177, 184, 196, 209–211, 252–53, 259–60, 262, 278, 284–85, 291–92.

¹¹² Martin Luther, *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate* (1520), *LW* 44:(115)123–217; Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 104–6; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:369–79.

¹¹³ Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), *LW* 36:(3)11–126; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:380–85.

will publish very soon; please Christ, it will be such as the Roman See has never seen or heard before. I shall give ample proof of my obedience.¹¹⁴

That Luther was already conceiving of a fuller “recantation” is evident from the title itself, which begins with the word *Prelude*. Luther would soon make good on this promise, with the publication of a reply to one of his adversaries, in April 1521. In the next month came the reformation’s clarion call, *On the Freedom of the Christian* (November),¹¹⁵ in which Luther set forth the essence of Christianity as the freedom found in Christ when he justifies the sinner by faith alone.

In this array of publications, Luther’s denunciations of the Papacy took an ever darker hue, for he now described the Pope—conditionally, potentially—as the Antichrist.¹¹⁶ Luther’s reasoning was as follows. According to prophecy, the Antichrist would reign over and deceive the Church, and thus not teach the true Gospel. And if matters really came to it that the Pope would anathematize Luther’s teachings, such a verdict would constitute the rejection of the Gospel by the highest authority in the Church. The Pope would thereby reveal and affirm himself to be the Antichrist. Then, while Luther was still writing the reformation treatises, on October 11 the bull threatening Luther’s excommunication arrived to Wittenberg.

The Reception of *Exsurge Domine*

When Luther received *Exsurge Domine* the waiting uncertainty for Rome’s response to his teaching was at an end. As representative of Luther’s teachings, the bull listed and rejected forty-one statements found in his writings. All Christians, institutions, and groups were to renounce these teachings under pain of excommunication; Luther’s writings containing these sentiments were not to be read or circulated but to be ceremonially gathered and burned. As to Luther and his followers, from his reception of the bull he would be given a period of sixty days to recant. Upon refusal, he and his adherents would be excommunicated. If that came to pass, any place that harbored him would be put under an interdict and all Christendom was “exhorted to seize him and send him to Rome”—and though the bull did not mention what would occur next, everyone knew what fate awaited declared heretics.¹¹⁷

To Luther, the bull verified his darkest fears concerning the Papacy. While that was not good news per se, it relieved Luther’s cognitive dilemma of being in direct opposition to the highest authority of the Church. He breathed a sigh of relief: “Already I am much freer, certain at last that the pope is the antichrist.”¹¹⁸ Yet it took some time to sink in that the bull’s condemnation was indeed the official response of the Pope. At first Luther wanted to treat the

¹¹⁴ Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, LW 36:125–26.

¹¹⁵ Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, LW 31:(327)333–77; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:385, 405–10.

¹¹⁶ Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, LW 44:133, 138–41, 149, 153, 165, 169, 193, 195; Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, LW 36:72, 83, 98, 102; Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, LW 31:342.

¹¹⁷ On the bull’s content, see Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 107–9; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:391–395.

¹¹⁸ Brecht, 1:404.

bull as Eck's concoction, but he also knew that the bull was valid. Karl von Miltitz, a papal nuncio who had attempted to broker an agreement between Luther and the Pope twice before, had not yet given up the hope of a possible mediation, and met with Luther the third time October 11–12. He got Luther to agree reluctantly to write a letter to the Pope seeking reconciliation.¹¹⁹ In the personal letter to Leo¹²⁰ Luther tried to explain his case. He had not wished for controversy; he had not attacked the Pope personally. As a proof of the soundness of his doctrine, he sent a copy of *On the Freedom of a Christian* with his letter.¹²¹ Even now he was willing to address Leo as a Daniel in the lions's den, a Christian in dire straits because of his position who might yet escape the Babylonian Captivity of the Church!

This was Luther's final attempt to put the Pope in positive light, to avoid the inevitable conclusion that the reform theology and the Papacy's resistance had been driving him towards. But the attempt could not bear the strain of the actual realities. At the same time that Luther was writing the open letter to Leo, he was also opposing the Papacy in *Against the (Execrable) Bull of the Antichrist*, published both in Latin and German.¹²² On November 17 Luther renewed his appeal to a church council.¹²³ He wrote a defense of all the condemned articles.¹²⁴ But a council was not going to convene, and Luther had explained his position as clearly as he could and in return he was still facing excommunication. The sigh of relief was true; the cognitive dissonance of preaching the Gospel and being condemned by the Church for doing so was resolved. Luther chose to make a public announcement. On December 10, the day when the sixty days for recantation stipulated in the bull expired, Luther burned it publicly along with the canon law and several other writings. He explained the act in *Why the Books Were Burned*.¹²⁵ It were the teachings of the Papacy, and not his, which should be rejected and burned. The prophetic language was no longer polemical invective or conditional application but free of reservations and qualifications. As Luther was officially declared an apostate, he denounced the Pope as the apostate, as the very Antichrist himself.

¹¹⁹ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 96, 112–13; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:404–5.

¹²⁰ Martin Luther, *Ein Sendbrief an den Papst Leo X* (1520), *WA* 7:1–11; Martin Luther, *Epistola Lutheriana ad Leonem Decimum summum pontificem* (1520), *WA* 7:39–73 = “An Open Letter to Pope Leo,” in Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, *LW* 31:327–77.

¹²¹ Martin Luther, *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen* (1520), *WA* 7:12–38 = Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, *LW* 31:327–77; Martin Luther, *Tractatus de libertate christiana* (1520), *WA* 7:39–73.

¹²² Martin Luther, *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi bullam* (1520), *WA* 6:595–612; Martin Luther, *Wider die Bulle des Endchrists* (1520), *WA* 6:613–29.

¹²³ Martin Luther, *Appellatio D. Martini Lutheri ad Concilium a Leone X. denuo repetita et innovata* (1520), *WA* 7:74–82; Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Appellation oder Berufung an ein christlich frei Concilium von dem Papst Leo und seinem unrechten Frevel verneuert und repetirt* (1520), *WA* 7:83–90.

¹²⁴ Martin Luther, *Assertio omnium articulorum M. Lutheri per bullam Leonis X. novissimam damnatorum* (1520), *WA* 7:91–151; Martin Luther, *Grund und Ursach aller Artikel D. Martin Luthers, so durch römische Bulle unrechtlich verdaunt sind* (1521), *WA* 7:299–457 = Martin Luther, *Defense and Explanation of All the Articles* (1521), *LW* 32:3–99.

¹²⁵ Martin Luther, *Warum des Papstes und seiner Jünger Bücher von D. Martin Luther verbrannt sind* (1520), *WA* 7:152–86 = Martin Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope and His Disciples Were Burned* (1520), *LW* 31:379–395.

1.3.7 Excommunication (1521)

Decet Romanum Pontificem, Summons to the Diet, and the Response to Catharinus

On January 3 Pope Leo excommunicated Luther in a bull entitled *Decet Romanum Pontificem*.¹²⁶ It now devolved on secular authorities to extradite him or face the interdict. But since Luther's direct secular authority, the Elector of Saxony, remained his protector, no immediate action occurred. The case was taken up at the higher government level of the Imperial Diet at Worms, which opened January 27.¹²⁷ The papal delegate, Aleandro, urged the emperor to follow the bull and put Luther under the ban: No further hearing was necessary since Luther had expressed himself clearly enough in his writings and had refused the Pope's offer of a hearing in Rome. The German princes opposed this demand. That the emperor would act against Luther unilaterally without consulting them was out of the question. Luther was generally "considered to be a critic of ecclesiastical abuses" and on that point the imperial states shared much of Luther's grievances against the Curia. His cause had also become a popular movement: To ban him without a hearing might cause an uproar. After weeks of negotiations a compromise was worked out: Luther was summoned to appear before the Diet but no disputation would be allowed. He had stated clearly to the Elector that he saw no reason for him being summoned to recant, for this he could in theory do from Wittenberg. Knowing Luther's views on the issue, the reason for the summons was therefore given as "an inquiry concerning his books." As Brecht states, "this could have meant a debate as well as a demand for a recantation."¹²⁸ Luther received the summons on March 27 and departed from Wittenberg on April 2.

On April 1,¹²⁹ the day before Luther left for Worms, he finished his newest work, a reply to his adversary Lancelotto Polti (lat. Ambrose Catharinus), entitled *A Response to Our Excellent Master Ambrosius Catharinus, Most Zealous Defender of Sylvester Prierias*.¹³⁰ It was an exegetical treatise of Daniel 8:23–25, a well-known prophecy of the Antichrist. In the letter, Luther applied the passage to the Pope. This was one of the first Bible texts which Luther translated and bears the marks of inexperience and talent. The timing of the piece is noteworthy. Only few months after Luther had become fully convinced that the Pope was the Antichrist, and at the critical time when his excommunication was being assessed by the State, he wrote his first detailed interpretation of a prophecy about the final foe. The idea for this work had been on his mind since the fall of 1520. Luther stated that this was the second part which had been promised in the *Prelude to the Babylonian Captivity*. After the exposition, Luther addressed his words to Vincelaus, whom he had addressed in the Introduction, and wrote:

¹²⁶ Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 123; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:426–27.

¹²⁷ For the politics of the summons, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:433–48.

¹²⁸ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:445.

¹²⁹ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:430.

¹³⁰ Martin Luther, *Ad librum eximii Magistri Nostri Magistri Ambrosii Catharini, defensoris Silvestri Prieratis acerrimi, responsio* (1521), *WA* 7:(698)705–78.

I do not deny that there are very many things said about their King and head, the Pope, in the Scriptures. And I have the more willingly performed this task, because I remember that I promised, in my ‘Babylonish captivity,’ that I would give the world at some time or other, another part of my recantation; a part which these invincibles and disquieted exactors of recantation, the papists, have never yet heard. This promise therefore I think I have now fully performed, by the present exposition of Daniel.¹³¹

In the work, Luther also considered two other referents for the Antichrist as portrayed in Daniel 8, i.e. a future single ruler, or the Muslim power. He summarily rejected both alternatives.¹³² It had become absolutely clear to Luther who the Antichrist was and this work was an exposé of the Antichrist based on biblical prophecy. Luther had not the slightest thought of recanting. He was going to Worms to defend the Gospel before the Emperor.

The Diet of Worms

On April 17, the day after his arrival to Worms, Luther appeared before the Diet.¹³³ Before the meeting Luther was told to answer only the questions addressed to him. In the room Luther’s books had been compiled on a table. An officer of the archbishop of Trier asked Luther to answer the following questions: (1) Do you recognize these books as your own? and (2) will you confess them or recant something in them? Luther acknowledged the books as his writings. As to the second question, Luther said that many of his works dealt with the great matters of faith, salvation, and the Word of God and “it would be presumptuous and dangerous to say something in haste” as to confessing or recanting them. “Luther therefore humbly requested from the emperor time for thought.” Luther had probably expected questions regarding certain views in his works, not a wholesale confession or recantation. The request was granted.

The next meeting was held the day after with a great crowd in attendance. The questions from the day before were repeated. Again Luther acknowledged the books as his. As to confessing or recanting them, Luther pointed out that his books were diverse. Some concerned the fundamentals of the Christian faith, which even his enemies agreed with, and which the bull also admitted. The second class criticized the Papacy and its evil influence. “These he also could not deny or retract, since they bore witness to general experiences” of the soul-harming influence of the Papacy’s “evil teachings and examples.” Recanting these would be to support the corruption of the Church. The third group of books were polemical writings against individuals and here Luther confessed he had been harsher than what was becoming for a professor and a monk. However, he could not retract these writings either for by doing so he would be accepting the current tyranny and corruption. After Luther’s speech, the official replied. Luther’s distinction between his books was irrelevant. What mattered was whether he would recant his errors. His appeal for hearing was “nothing but the usual excuse

¹³¹ Luther, *Responsio*, 177.

¹³² Luther, *Daniel VIII*.23–25, 41–42, 46–47, 56–57.

¹³³ On Luther’s hearing before the Diet, see Hendrix, *Luther and the Papacy*, 130–34; Brecht, *Luther*, 1:452–64.

of all heretics” who in the end refused to be taught. His errors were old and already refuted and needed not to be heard or discussed. Concluding, the officer asked Luther to give a straight and simple answer to the question whether he would or would not recant. Luther then gave the famous answer:

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason—for I do not trust either in the Pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves—I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen.¹³⁴

The Edict of Worms

After Luther’s hearings before the Diet, attempted negotiations with him to compromise (April 24–25) proved fruitless, and on April 26 he left Worms for Wittenberg.¹³⁵ The State had requested that Luther be summoned instead of enforcing the papal excommunication right away. He had been heard; he had not recanted. Now the State needed to act. In harmony with the wish of the imperial states, Charles informed them on April 30 that “as the church’s protector” he “was going to proceed against Luther, and he asked for their advice.”¹³⁶ The princes agreed that a mandate be written against him. Aleandro wrote it and on May 8 the draft was ready. The edict was then revised in conjunction with the imperial states and published on May 26, the day after the Diet closed. Luther’s excommunication by the Church had now been ratified by the Empire. To both Church and State, Luther was a declared heretic, out of communion with the Church. And to Luther, the Pope was the Antichrist of Daniel 8 and other prophecies, the tyrant of the Church, who opposed the restored Gospel.

1.3.8 Conclusion

The time during which Luther arrived at his new interpretation of Daniel 8 can be summarized as follows. Throughout the medieval period, the last part of Daniel 8 was regarded as a prophecy about the dreaded Antichrist. Luther’s first mentions of the chapter, found in his early Lectures, reflected this traditional interpretation. During Luther’s opening years as a Reformer (1517–21), his treatment of the Antichrist changed to what would be his lifelong interpretation after that. This interpretative change happened in tandem with his darkening views of the Papacy, which seemed impervious to his reformed theology. He worried in private whether the Pope could be the Antichrist, but tried to dismiss such worries. But as his controversy with the Church unfolded, Luther warned that if the Pope would go to such an extreme as to condemn the Gospel as heresy he would but prove himself to be the Antichrist, for was the Antichrist not supposed to reign over the Church and lead it away from

¹³⁴ Quoted in Brecht, *Luther*, 1:460.

¹³⁵ Brecht, *Luther*, 1:464–71.

¹³⁶ On the Edict of Worms, see Brecht, *Luther*, 1:473–75.

the Gospel? When Luther received the bull threatening his own excommunication, his suspicion was confirmed, and he denounced the Pope as the Antichrist, first by burning the bull and rejecting it in writing, then several months later by a treatise in 1521 that expounded on Daniel 8 to argue that the Papacy was the seat of the Antichrist.

There do not seem to have been any particular expositors on Daniel that influenced Luther strongly. The picture is somewhat clearer when it comes to previous expositors on the Antichrist in particular. As a well-read theologian, Luther must have been early aware of the traditional views of the Antichrist as a (1) future tyrant, who would even pose as the Pope, (2) as Mohammad, or (3) as a grotesque monster of popular tales. He must have been at least vaguely aware of the fact that heretics, such as Hus, had declared the Pope to be the Antichrist. If he was not already, he was once he had read Hus in 1520. By then, however, Luther had already started pondering a conditional identification of the Pope as Antichrist, in 1519, so it seems he had begun down that line of thought without being under the direct influence of former expositors. In any case he did not quote any prophetic expositor during the formative years of his own interpretation, or mention them as a factor in his recollections. Reading Hus must nevertheless have strengthened Luther in his exploration of the papal identity of the Antichrist. There were still differences. Luther believed the Papacy was intrinsically the Antichrist, and Hus did not go into much detail on how the Antichrist prophecies fit the Pope. The direct influential sources can thus be summed up as general knowledge of the various strands of Antichrist interpretation, including Hus's conditional identification of the Pope as the Antichrist.

There were several interlocked historical factors or developments that influenced Luther's new interpretation of Daniel 8. First there was Luther's new soteriology. Luther was convinced of his reformed theology not only based on his study of the Scriptures, but also because of his own personal experience. He had suffered from a religious crisis for years, and as he worked his way out of spirituality dominated by *Anfechtungen* and into the light of a brighter life, he believed he had re-discovered the Gospel. One does not easily abandon beliefs that are rooted in understanding, belief, and experience. It would have been hard to convince Luther that his experience was heretical or unscriptural. Second, Luther's new soteriology brought him into and co-evolved with a conflict between him and the Church. This caused Luther great cognitive dissonance and agony for a while. He believed there was but one true Church and one true Gospel; so if he was teaching the truth, why did the Church oppose him? Third, Luther had limited options to make sense of his clash with the Church. Explaining the controversy on the grounds that the Church was corrupt proved a fleeting solution, for as the Church's opposition to Luther increased, and Luther's studies continued and his disagreements with the Church deepened, he realized that the opposition was not rooted in contemporary corruption or doctrinal winds, but in the orthodoxy of the Church—Luther found himself in direct disagreement with the heart of orthodoxy. To Luther, who believed there was but one true Church and one Gospel, this brought on a painful

contradiction. If he adhered to the Gospel, he would be pronounced a heretic, and he could not see how he was a deluded heretic; if he adhered to the Church, which he should, he would abandon the Gospel, which he could not. The only possible solution to this cognitive dilemma was provided by the traditional redemption history that foretold that the Church would be deceived in the end-times by the Antichrist and thus, for a while, become apostate. While the Church processed Luther's trial and eventually excommunicated him—thus verifying its rejection of Luther's Gospel—Luther at the same time reached the conclusion that the Church was apostate. This condition made it impossible to obey both the Church and the Gospel, for the official Church was under the rule of the Antichrist. Fourth, while Luther's theology had such an appeal that it unleashed a new Christian movement—Protestantism—and thus cannot be explained simply in terms of Luther's personality and psychology, its initial promotion was deeply influenced by Luther's person. Luther believed his interpretation of the Antichrist of Daniel 8 and other prophecies was certain, important, and urgent. It called for action, and Luther acted—he dedicated his life to the promulgation of the restored Gospel and opposition to the papal Antichrist. Had Luther not had such assurance and strength of character—whether courage or stubbornness, or both—it is unlikely that events would have unfolded as they did, or that Luther would have reached or stuck with his interpretation of Daniel 8 and the Antichrist.

1.4 Textual Dynamics

1.4.1 Introduction

As far back as records go, prophetic expositors had interpreted Daniel 8 in a fairly similar way. After a ram and a goat signifying the kingdoms of Medo-Persia and Greece (vv. 3–8, 20–22), the vision focused on the last horn of the goat and its actions (vv. 9–14, 23–26). All agreed that this horn symbolized Antiochus IV, the Seleucid ruler who persecuted the Jews in the second century BC. This king disrupted the Temple services (took away “the daily sacrifice,” vv. 11–13) and erected a pagan altar or idol there (“the abomination of desolation,” Dn 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, see also Dn 8:13). The ordeal lasted for several years (“2300 days”, v. 14) until the Jewish resistance, or the Maccabees, pushed the aggressors back and “cleansed” the Temple (v. 14). Antiochus himself died suddenly of sickness and was thus providentially “broken without hand” (v. 25). Commentators also agreed that the prophecy about the king symbolized by the last horn would meet with a greater fulfillment in the Antichrist. The reasons why interpreters expected a greater fulfillment of this text were probably at least two. The words of the angelic interpreter who said this prophecy had to do with the end (vv. 19, 26), which had not come in Antiochus's day. Daniel 8 was also similar to the other prophecies about the Antichrist found in other Danielic visions and other texts, so by correlation Daniel 8 was believed to be about the Antichrist too. The expectation of a coming Antichrist, based on prophecies (Daniel 8 among them), was orthodox eschatology throughout the medieval ages.

Luther followed this interpretation, but took it one new and cataclysmic step further: He identified the Antichrist, foreshadowed by the last horn, as the Pope. The textual ramifications were that Antiochus was not a type of a future single Antichrist ruler, for the antitype was the entire reign of the Pope from its initial rise to the end. This lengthened foreshadowing harmonized the Danielic visions to a certain extent, and also changed the historical span of Daniel 8. This further development of the historicist reading of the chapter was so drastic that it caused the interpretation of prophecy to branch into different schools or approaches. Prophetic interpretation branched out not only because of hermeneutical differences but also theological ones: The Pope could only be seen as the ruthless, apostate Antichrist if his authority was seen as tyranny and Catholic dogma as apostasy. Catholics would in time advance the schools of futurism and preterism. Protestants, however, would develop Luther's historicism further.

What textual dynamics were at work in this new reading of the prophecy? To answer that question, this section will first give an overview of Luther's writings on the book of Daniel. It will then survey how he interpreted chapter 8, step by step, and how he interpreted it within the context of the other visions of Daniel.

1.4.2 Writings on Daniel

Most of Luther's works on biblical books were first given as a series of lectures or sermons. But though Luther did not write lectures or sermons on Daniel, he expounded on Daniel's prophecies in several works. The first in time (and in importance for his interpretation of Daniel 8) was Luther's public reply to his adversary Ambrosius Catharinus (1521).¹³⁷ It was the sequel to the *Prelude to the Babylonian Captivity* and was a detailed exegesis of Daniel 8:23–25, intended to prove that the Antichrist of these verses was none other than the Pope. This was the first work in which Luther dealt with a passage of Daniel in particular; Luther even offered a new Latin translation of the Hebrew text, one of his earliest translations. Two years later *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew* (1523) was published.¹³⁸ The treatise set forth the birth of Christ as a Jew, the right Christian approach towards the Jews, and biblical and historical arguments to convince the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. One of the messianic prophecies put forth towards this end was the seventy weeks of Daniel 9.¹³⁹ In the later but much harsher *On the Jews and Their Lies* (1543)¹⁴⁰ Luther lined up messianic prophecies again, this time not to convince but to refute the Jews. The seventy weeks were again one of his texts.¹⁴¹ In 1529 Luther published *An Army Sermon against the Turk (Eine Heerpredigt wider den Türcken)*.¹⁴² The first half of the sermon was an exposition of Daniel 7 (with

¹³⁷ Luther, *Responsio*, WA 7:(698)705–78.

¹³⁸ Martin Luther, *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew* (1523), LW 45:(195)199–229.

¹³⁹ Luther, *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew*, LW 45:221–28.

¹⁴⁰ Martin Luther, *On the Jews and Their Lies* (1543), LW 47:(121)137–306.

¹⁴¹ Luther, *The Jews and Their Lies*, LW 47:238–53.

¹⁴² Martin Luther, *Eine Heerpredigt wider den Türcken* (1529), WA 30^{II}:(149)160–97 = Martin Luther, *On War Against the Turk* (1529), LW 46:156–205.

Luther's new translation of the chapter) that demonstrated that the Turk was the little horn (i.e. the eleventh and last horn on the fourth beast)¹⁴³ and the second half of the sermon outlined the proper Christian response to the imminent Turkish threat.

Luther's most important work on Daniel was his translation of and preface to the book. These were published together with a dedication letter to Prince Johann Frederick in 1530 (*Der Prophet Daniel Deudsch*),¹⁴⁴ then again with the Prophets in 1532 (*Die Propheten alle Deudsch*)¹⁴⁵ and in the complete Bible in 1534.¹⁴⁶ The preface to Daniel was by far the longest preface Luther wrote to any biblical book. It was in fact a commentary, written "in order that the simple people and those who do not know and cannot read the histories may nevertheless get the gist of its meaning."¹⁴⁷ It was augmented in the Bible edition of 1541.¹⁴⁸

Luther's final work to incorporate the visions of Daniel was *Supputatio annorum mundi* (1541; 1545), Luther's timeline of history or world chronology. It dated the Babylonian Captivity, the historical dates given in Daniel, as well as the seventy weeks (Dn 9) and the 1290 days (Dn 12).¹⁴⁹ An updated explanation of the seventy weeks was given as an appendix.¹⁵⁰ In addition to these major treatments, Luther's remarks on Daniel's prophecies can be found scattered in his other works, letters, sermons, and table talks.

The historical circumstances of many of Luther's writings on Daniel's prophecies show that he sometimes reached for the pen when he believed their imminent or present fulfillment was unfolding in current events. His work on chapter 8 (1521) appeared few months after the bull condemning his teachings settled his conviction that the Pope was the Antichrist. It was when Turks were at the gates of Vienna (1529) that the *Heerpredigt* (late 1529) explained Islam's place in prophecy as the little horn of chapter 7. In the sermon Luther asserted that the fact that these two enemies of the Church—the little horn in chapter 7 and the little horn in chapter 8—were at the height of their power betokened the imminence of the next event described in Daniel: In both chapters the description of the little horn was followed by the Last Day (Dn 7:9–14; 8:25). That this urgency might be brought before the attention of the public Luther skipped ahead in his Bible translation to translate Daniel (late February to March 1530)¹⁵¹ and Ezekiel 38–39 (end of April to early May 1530)¹⁵² before going back to

¹⁴³ Luther, *Eine Heerpredigt widder den Türcken*, *WA* 30^{II}:160–72.

¹⁴⁴ Hans Volz, "Luthers Übersetzung des Prophetenteils des Alten Testaments", in *WA DB* 11^{II}, liii. The three items of the original publication are found in *WA* and *LW* as follows: Martin Luther, *Luthers Widmungsbrief zu seiner Danielübersetzung an dem sächsischen Kurprinzen Herzog Johann Friedrich vom Frühjahr 1530* (1530), *WA DB* 11^{II}:376–387; Martin Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel* (1530), *LW* 35:294–316 = Martin Luther, *Vorrhede* (1530), *WA DB* 11^{II}:2–48, 124–130 (left pp.); Martin Luther, *Der Prophet Daniel* (1530), *WA DB* 11^{II}:132–80 (left pp.).

¹⁴⁵ Hans Volz, "Vorwort," *WA DB* 11^I:vii (1960).

¹⁴⁶ Brecht, *Luther*, 3:98.

¹⁴⁷ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:294.

¹⁴⁸ Martin Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel* (1541), *WA DB* 11^{II}:22–31, 50–125.

¹⁴⁹ Luther, *Supputatio*, *WA* 53:102–8, 125–26, 163.

¹⁵⁰ Luther, *Supputatio*, *WA* 53:173–77.

¹⁵¹ Volz, "Neue Beiträge zu Luthers Bibelübersetzung," 410.

finish Jeremiah. During this time, Luther was so convinced of the nearness of the Last Day that he wondered whether the end would come before he could finish translating the Bible.¹⁵³ (It was also in 1530 that Luther rewrote the preface to Revelation in which he accepted the book wholeheartedly as canonical and prophetic.)¹⁵⁴

The analysis of the Reformer's exposition of chapter 8 will be grounded in his main treatments of the passage (the *Responsio* and the *Preface*) but will also draw on other remarks.

1.4.3 Exposition of Daniel 8

Introduction to the Vision (vv. 1–2)

In *Supputatio annorum mundi*, Luther included all the dates of the Book of Daniel. He dated the vision of chapter 8 to 507 BC,¹⁵⁵ when Daniel was an old man.¹⁵⁶ Besides dating the vision, Luther did not comment more on the historical setting of the vision.

The Ram (vv. 3–7, 20)

Luther spent little time on the ram. It represented the Medo-Persian kingdom, which Luther referred to as “the kingdom of the Persians”¹⁵⁷ or “the king of Media and Persia.”¹⁵⁸

The Goat (vv. 5–9, 21–23)

The goat stood for the Macedonian Empire.¹⁵⁹ Luther believed the goat symbol reflected the licentious and meddlesome nature of the Greeks.¹⁶⁰ The goat attacked and trampled on the

¹⁵² Martin Luther, *Vorrede Martini Luthers auff das XXXVIII. und XXXIX. Capitel Hesechiel vom Gog* (1530), *WA* 30^{II}:220–223–36. For month dating, see Brecht, *Luther*, 2:367; Karl Drescher, “Vorwort”, *WA* 30^{II}:220 (1909).

¹⁵³ “Die welt leufft vnd eilet so trefflich seer zu yhrem ende, das mir oft starcke gedancken einfallen, als solte der iungste tag, ehe daher brechen, den wir die heiligen schrifft gar aus verdeutschen kundten.” Luther, *Luthers Widmungsbrief*, *WA* DB 11II:376. Luther's apocalyptic reason for breaking from canonical order to translate Daniel is often noted in the literature, but it should not be exaggerated. The extent of his skipping is clear in the larger context of the translation project as a whole. Luther translated the Bible from 1521 to 1534. After finishing the New Testament within a year, he translated the Old Testament in canonical order until he reached the Song of Solomon in 1524. The rowing got rough when he entered the poetic waters of the Prophets due to the linguistic complexity and the interruptions of manifold other duties. Once in the Prophets, Luther did not follow strict book order but worked on the Minor Prophets before, during and after his work on the Major Prophets. Luther was working on Jeremiah when the work was once again interrupted. And by the time he took up his pen anew, the Turkish threat loomed so great before him that he jumped from Jeremiah and translated Daniel and Ezekiel 38–39. Brecht, *Luther*, 3:95–96. So Luther had not adhered strictly to canonical order when translating the Prophets, nor was the break of the order a leap, for Daniel and Ezekiel 38–39 are not far from the Weeping Prophet in the Canon.

¹⁵⁴ Martin Luther, *Preface to the Revelation of St. John [III]* (1530; 1546), *LW* 35:399–411.

¹⁵⁵ AM 3453 = 507 BC. Luther, *Supputatio*, *WA* 53:105.

¹⁵⁶ Taking all the dates together, Daniel became a very old man according to Luther. He was taken captive in 585 BC (AM 3375) and received his last vision (chapters 10–12) in 488 BC (AM 3468), 97 years later. Depending on how young he was when was taken captive, he became over one hundred years old. Luther, *Supputatio*, *WA* 53:102, 106.

¹⁵⁷ Luther, *Daniel VIII*.23–25, 42.

¹⁵⁸ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300.

¹⁵⁹ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300. Luther referred to the goat as Alexander the Great but the context makes clear that he saw the horn as Alexander the Great and the goat as the Greeks under his rule.

ram (vv. 5–7) when Alexander the Great “defeated Darius [III], the last king of Persia, and took away his kingdom.”¹⁶¹ The goat’s flight (vv. 5–7) symbolized the rapidity with which the Greek empire expanded during Alexander’s campaigns: “For Alexander went so fast that in twelve years he conquered the world; he had begun at the age of twenty and died at the age of thirty-two. Indeed, humanly speaking, no greater person than Alexander has come or will come on this earth.”¹⁶² But “whatever rises rapidly also falls rapidly”:¹⁶³ The horn that the goat had stabbed the ram with was broken (v. 7), signifying that “Alexander’s empire crumbled as soon as he died”.¹⁶⁴

After “the great horn” of the goat was broken, four horns arose in its place (v. 8). This the text explains as “four kingdoms” that arose “out of the nation” (v. 22). In *Responsio* Luther wrote as if these four kingdoms were the same four kingdoms as in chapters 2 and 7, stating that “the last” “of the four kingdoms” “is the Roman, the iron kingdom.”¹⁶⁵ This he corrected in the *Preface* where he wrote that after the fall of Alexander “these four kingdoms came in its place: Syria, Egypt, Asia [Minor], Greece.”¹⁶⁶ The division of Alexander’s kingdom was important because it led to a great suffering of the Jews. Two kingdoms emerged as the strongest, Seleucia in the north and Ptolemaic Egypt in the south, and Judea had the ill fortune to border both. The two powers clashed in a series of wars “so [the Jews] had to pay dearly” for their strategic location between them, being subdued by either one of the kingdoms which

This is also clarified by other instances. On one occasion, Luther referred to the goat as “King Alexander” and as “the Greeks” in the same sentence: “Also thett er vorzeytten auch, Da er Danielis .viij. den grossen konig Alexander durch ein zygen bock ließ bedeuten, damit er anzeigt uber die prophetische deutung des zukunfftige fals, was die Kriechen fur ein volck weren.” Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon, *Deutung der zwo greulichen Figuren, Bapstesels zu Rom und Mönchkalbs zu Freiberg in Meissen funden* (1532), *WA* 11:380. In another text, Luther situated the goat’s attack and victory in history writing that “the he-goat is Alexander the Great, who defeated Darius [III], the last king of Persia, and took away his kingdom.” But shortly before these words Luther had spoken of “the third empire” of Daniel as “that of Alexander the Great,” and shortly after them he wrote of the breaking of the horn: “Alexander’s empire crumbled as soon as he died, and these four kingdoms came in its place.” This demonstrates that the goat, now four-horned, continued after Alexander’s death and thus more specifically represented the Greeks, whereas Alexander was “the first king” of Greece, as the angel explained (v. 21). Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300, 301.

¹⁶⁰ “Also thett er vorzeytten auch, Da er Danielis .viij. den grossen konig Alexander durch ein zygen bock ließ bedeuten, damit er anzeigt uber die prophetische deutung des zukunfftige fals, was die Kriechen fur ein volck weren, nemlich geylle und furwitzige leutt, wie die geysen sind, die sich mit yrer vernunft hoch zusteigen und allerley vermessen.” Luther and Melanchthon, *Deutung der zwo greulichen Figuren*, *WA* 11:380. “That nation was given over to carousing; Daniel called them goats.” Martin Luther, *Lectures on Titus* (1527), *LW* 29:27.

¹⁶¹ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300.

¹⁶² Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300–301.

¹⁶³ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:301.

¹⁶⁴ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300–301.

¹⁶⁵ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 42. His reason for this is unclear. Perhaps he wrote in haste or read in ignorance and erroneously equated the four kingdoms in chapter 8 with the four kingdoms of the former chapters. Or perhaps he believed that the four kingdoms in chapter 8 had a double meaning, signifying both the four Greek kingdoms and the four kingdoms sequenced in chapters 2 and 7—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome—, just as the last horn in the chapter had a double meaning as both Antiochus and the Antichrist.

¹⁶⁶ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:300–301.

happened to be stronger.¹⁶⁷ “This was especially true when that wanton man, whom the histories call Antiochus the Noble, was king of Syria”¹⁶⁸—symbolized by the last horn of the goat (v. 9).

The Last Horn (vv. 9–14, 23–26)

Antiochus the Type

Once the four horns had grown on the goat’s head, “a small horn would be coming out of one of the four big horns” (v. 9).¹⁶⁹ This last horn of the goat grew “grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the glorious land” (v. 9). The vision imagery then took a new direction: The little horn grew upwards, into the starry night and against the Prince of host; it threw some of the heavenly host and the stars down to the ground and trampled them under foot; it removed the daily sacrifice and threw down the Temple and the truth (vv. 10–11). The duration of this war against heaven was given as 2300 days (vv. 13–14). The angelic interpreter explained the last horn and its attack in vv. 23–25:

²³After these kingdoms, when the transgression has become great, an insolent and treacherous king will arise. ²⁴He will be mighty, but not through his own power. He will destroy wonderfully, and will succeed in doing so. He will confound the strong as well as the holy people, ²⁵and through his cunning his deceit will be successful. And he will exalt himself in his heart, and corrupt much through his prosperity, and will rebel against the Prince of all princes, but he will be broken without hand.¹⁷⁰

This “insolent and treacherous king”, symbolized by a horn, Luther identified as “Antiochus the Noble, coming out of the horn of Syria.”¹⁷¹ These predicted characteristics Luther saw in Antiochus’s character, who was “an impudent and insolent monarch” who “led an immoral and disgraceful life, being a completely lewd person.”¹⁷² The vertical growth of the horn (v. 9) was fulfilled in the military expeditions of Antiochus: “He was mighty against the south and the east, and against the glorious land, that is, the land of the Jews.”¹⁷³ The angel had explained that this king would use “cunning” and “deceit” to further his plans (v. 25). These

¹⁶⁷ “Now Daniel skips over two of them, Asia and Greece, and centers attention on the two others, Syria and Egypt. For it is between these latter two that the land of the Jews is located. Syria lies to the north and Egypt to the south, and the two stood in perpetual conflict against each other. This is why the Jews were bedeviled from both sides, being caught between two fires. Now they fell to the Egyptians, now to the Syrians, depending on which of these kingdoms was the stronger. So they had to pay dearly for their location, just as always happens in the course of war.” Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301.

¹⁶⁸ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301.

¹⁶⁹ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301.

¹⁷⁰ My translation of Luther’s 1530 Bible translation. The final version of Luther’s translation (1545) reads: “²³Nach diesem Königreichen, wenn die Vbertreter vber hand nemen, wird auffkomen ein frecher vnd tückischer König. ²⁴Der wird mechtig sein, doch nicht durch seine Krafft, Er wirds wunderlich verwüsten, Vnd wird jm gelingen, das ers ausrichte. Er wird die Starcken, sampt dem heiligen Volck, verstören, ²⁵vnd durch seine klugheit wird jm der betrug geraten, Vnd wird sich in seinem herzen erheben, vnd durch wolfart wird er viel verderben, Vnd wird sich aufflehen, wider den Fürsten aller Fürsten, Aber er wird on hand zubrochen werden.” Martin Luther, *Bibel* (1545), WA DB 11^{II}:165.

¹⁷¹ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301.

¹⁷² Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302.

¹⁷³ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301.

strategies were seen in Antiochus' Egyptian invasions, for "by means of treachery and deceit this Antiochus snatched much land and many cities from the king of Egypt."¹⁷⁴ But these vile tactics were on even clearer display in the horn's vertical attack, which symbolized the king's wrath against the Jews: It was "thus"—with treachery and deceit—that Antiochus "also cast many stars to the ground, so that many saintly people among the Jews were put to death."¹⁷⁵

Luther also interpreted the other symbols in the passage on the last horn, though not always in the same way. He always interpreted the Prince of princes (v. 25, see also v. 11) as Christ,¹⁷⁶ but his interpretation of the host (vv. 10–13), heaven (v. 10), and the stars (v. 10) had shades of variation. In one instance the heavenly host and the stars both represented the people of Christ (see v. 24);¹⁷⁷ in another text the host and the heaven synonymously represented "the people of God" and the stars "the godly teachers."¹⁷⁸ At other times, the host and the stars had different referents: The stars were God's people but the host the worship of God.¹⁷⁹ Heaven was either the realm in which God's people live (i.e. the kingdom of God)¹⁸⁰ or God's people themselves.¹⁸¹ Luther also commented on the starry heavens as an imagery to be admired, a beautiful metaphor he believed the prophets had learned from passages in Genesis (15:5; 28:17) and that "this usage must be carefully noted by students of the Sacred Scriptures."¹⁸²

Luther also interpreted the actions of the last horn. The removal of the daily sacrifice and the casting down of the Temple (vv. 11–13) were fulfilled when Antiochus stopped the Temple services and desecrated the Sanctuary. Luther summarized the entire terrible episode in the *Preface*:

He manhandled the Jews gruesomely, and raved and raged in their midst like a demon. He abolished the worship of God in Jerusalem, desecrated the temple, plundered its treasures, set up idols and idolatry in it, and chased out and murdered the priests and everyone else whose will was opposed to his own. He was bent on mixing all kinds of faith into a single faith, and this was to be the faith of the Greeks. . . . Many saintly

¹⁷⁴ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301–2.

¹⁷⁵ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302. See also: "Thus Daniel (8:10) states that Antiochus would cast down stars from heaven to earth." Martin Luther, *Lectures on Genesis* (1535–45), LW 2:359.

¹⁷⁶ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:282; Luther, *Responsio*, WA 7:176; Martin Luther, *Matthäus Kapitel 18–24 in Predigten ausgelegt* (1537–40), WA 47:576.

¹⁷⁷ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:282.

¹⁷⁸ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:359. For this more specific meaning of stars Luther might have had texts like Daniel 12:4 in mind: "And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever." ESV.

¹⁷⁹ "(Himelsheer) Ist der Gottesdienst zu Jerusalem, weil Gott von Himel damit gedienet ward, vnd er solchs Heeres Fürst war. Die Sterne, sind die Heiligen in solchem Heer." margin, Dan 8:10, Martin Luther, *Die Deutsche Bibel* (1534), WA DB 11¹¹:162.

¹⁸⁰ Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 5:244–45.

¹⁸¹ Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 2:359.

¹⁸² Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 2:359; 5:244–45.

people among the Jews were put to death. He devastated and desecrated the worship of the God in heaven in the temple and placed idols in it.¹⁸³

Finally, Luther interpreted the 2300 days, the cleansing of the sanctuary, and the breaking of the horn. The persecution of the Jews was to be limited: “Antiochus, of course, could not carry on this way for long.”¹⁸⁴ “After twenty-three hundred days—which makes six and one-quarter years—the temple would be cleansed” (v. 14). The tyrant’s downfall was also foretold, for he would be “broken without hand” (v. 25). God raised up the Maccabees who fought bravely against the tyrant. “They cleansed the land and the temple, and made everything right again.”¹⁸⁵ But no human hand brought Antiochus down. During a failed raid into Persia, he received the news that the Jews had not been eliminated, but had successfully routed the army of his commander Lysias. At this turn of events, “he became ill with rage and impatience because things had not turned out for him as he had planned, and died after intense suffering and misery in a strange land.”¹⁸⁶ So “for this length of time [2300 days, or little over six years] Antiochus vented his fury on the Jews, but he died in the seventh year. These figures agree, as the book of Maccabees proves.”¹⁸⁷ It is not clear from this whether Luther saw both the rededication of the Temple and Antiochus’s death as the terminus event for the 2300 day period, for these two events did not occur at the same time. The Maccabees rededicated the cleansed Temple on Kislev 25, 148 SE but Antiochus died the next year, in 149 SE (1 Mc 4:52; 6:16).¹⁸⁸ Luther did not calculate the 2300 day period in *Supputatio annorum mundi*.¹⁸⁹

Antichrist the Antitype

Following traditional exegesis, Luther believed that the prophecy of the king symbolized by the last horn of the goat was only partially fulfilled in the career of Antiochus. He was a type; Antichrist was the antitype,¹⁹⁰ the greater and final fulfillment:

¹⁸³ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301–2. See also Luther, *Matthäus Kapitel 18–24*, WA 47:576, 579.

¹⁸⁴ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:301.

¹⁸⁵ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302.

¹⁸⁶ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302.

¹⁸⁷ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302.

¹⁸⁸ It is not clear in what BC years Luther saw these events to have happened, as he did not include them in his world chronology, and hence only the Seleucid Era dates are given, which are found in the 1 Maccabees verses cited.

¹⁸⁹ Luther, *Supputatio*, WA 53:118–19. Luther never indicated that he believed that the 2300 evenings and mornings foreshadowed another longer period in conjunction with the Antichrist. He probably believed that the 2300 days were one of the details of the prophecy that was limited to the type and thus did not find a fulfillment in the antitype.

¹⁹⁰ In his first lectures on the Psalms, Luther had already applied vv. 10–11 to the Antichrist. “The church is the strength of Christ, because it is through its multiplying that He reigns in the midst of His enemies (Ps. 110:2). So Dan. 8:10–11 speaks of the Antichrist: ‘And it threw down some of the host. And it was magnified even unto the host of heaven. And it was magnified even unto the prince of the host,’ that is, even to Christ, the Head of the church.” Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:282.

For Antiochus is here set up as an example of all evil kings and princes, especially those who rage against God and his Word. It is for this reason that the earlier teachers have designated and interpreted Antiochus as a figure of the Antichrist, and rightly so. For such a wild and filthy fellow, such a raving tyrant, is supposed to be chosen to represent and portray the ultimate abomination, as several words in this chapter [8] and in chapter 12¹⁹¹ suggest and secretly disclose.¹⁹²

Luther here noted that “several words” in the text of chapter 8 (and of chapters 11–12 as will be seen) hinted at this greater fulfillment. He no doubt had in mind the verses where the angel interpreter explained that the vision had to do with the end, after a long time (vv. 19, 26). But Antiochus reigned only three and a half centuries after the vision, and not in the last days. There was therefore more to the fulfillment than only Antiochus.¹⁹³ This was the same logic as behind the traditional Christian reading of many prophecies in the Old Testament: Certain aspects of these prophecies seemed to address something concerning Israel, while other details seemed to point beyond to something greater—to Christ. This type/antitype interpretation of messianic prophecies, Christians also applied to Daniel 8, a text which was, so to say, an antimessianic prophecy: Antiochus, the evil king who raged “against God and His Word” and persecuted his people, was “chosen to represent and portray the ultimate abomination.”¹⁹⁴

In *Responsio*, Luther applied antitypical reading not only to the last horn but also to the circumstances of its rise and to the four horns preceding it. This is seen in his translation and comments. Luther translated the first clause of verse 23 as “and after their kingdom.” This phrase was about the four horns. If they represented the four kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, then this meant that the last horn which arose “after” them arose after Rome. The last horn also rose “out of” one of the preceding horns (v. 9). These specifications Luther saw as fitting the papal Antichrist, who rose both after Rome and in Rome: The last king was to “stand up at the end of the four kingdoms, of which the last is the Roman, the iron kingdom [metal referring to Daniel 2] . . . The tyranny of the Pope began in the decline of the Roman empire. And it actually arose from out the Roman Empire, and in the Roman Empire, and grew up in its place; as is evident from all history, as present experience demonstrates.”¹⁹⁵ Verse 23 also located the Antichrist not only in the Roman Empire, but more specifically in the Church with the phrase: “When transgressions shall have darkened them.” Luther limited the meaning of ‘transgression’ here to the sins of God’s people against the Gospel. The darkening therefore implied previous Gospel enlightenment, an illumination which “the kingdoms that were before Christ” did not receive. This phrase in

¹⁹¹ In Luther’s chapter division, the last portion of chapter 11 was included in chapter 12.

¹⁹² Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302–3.

¹⁹³ Luther’s marginal readings for these verses read: “(Des endes) Das zeigt er an, Das Epiphanes nicht allein gemeinet wird in diesem Gesichte, sondern auch der Endechrist.” “(Lange zeit dahin) Abermal zeigt er, Das er etwas mehr den Antiochum meine, Denn Antiochus ist nicht vber viert halb hundert jar nach diesem Gesicht komen.” margin, Dn 8:17, 26, Luther, *Die Deutsche Bibel*, WA DB 11^{II}:164.

¹⁹⁴ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302–3.

¹⁹⁵ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 42.

verse 23 therefore spoke of a kingdom that once enjoyed the Gospel, but sinned against it, which was nothing less than a prediction of the apostasy of the Church.¹⁹⁶

Luther went so far in his antitypical interpretation in the *Responsio* that he argued that the predicted king could not be a single individual ruler:

No regard is to be paid to those who would understand this and similar places in the prophets as having reference to one person only; for such know not, that the manner of the prophets is to signify or represent, under one person, any whole kingdom in a body. Hence, they would mistakingly make ANTICHRIST whom Paul calls “the man of sin,” and “the son of perdition,” to be one person; whereas, the apostle would have the whole body and chaos of those impious men, and the whole succession of those that reign, to be understood as ANTICHRIST. Thus, in Daniel viii. the “ram” signifies the kingdom of the Persians, the “goat” the kingdom of the Grecians.¹⁹⁷

Thus the last horn symbolized a king not in the sense of an individual king, but king in the sense of a dynasty or a kingdom. The text indicated this in several ways. The verb “arise” (v. 23) pointed to the rise of a kingdom and not a single king.¹⁹⁸ The text stated “that the king here spoken of was to be very great [vv. 9–10];—as great as either the king of Persia or of Greece, or of Rome.”¹⁹⁹ This antitypical reading in the *Responsio* put a strain on the primary interpretation, for if these arguments were valid against a single individual Antichrist, were they not valid against the individual Antiochus, who was the typical referent of the last horn?

In the *Responsio*, the main thrust of Luther’s exegesis and application of Daniel 8 were the three phrases in vv. 23–24:²⁰⁰ The king was to be “powerful in faces” (v. 23),²⁰¹ “intelligent of propositions” (v. 23),²⁰² and “strong but not in his own efficacy” (v. 24).²⁰³ (The first and

¹⁹⁶ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 42–47.

¹⁹⁷ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 41–42.

¹⁹⁸ “The expression, “*shall stand*,” denotes a standing, not of one person, nor for a short time; but a standing of a whole kingdom, and that a successive kingdom. And so Christ saith, “the abomination *standing* in the holy place:” that is, remaining firm, stable, and strengthened by many adherents. And Paul makes that “son of perdition,” not passing through, but “sitting in,” the temple of God.” Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 56.

¹⁹⁹ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 47.

²⁰⁰ These three phrases take up the bulk of Luther’s exposition of Daniel 8 in *Responsio*: Seventy-five pages out of one hundred eighty pages in Cole’s translation (pp. 56–131). See Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 56, 86, 101.

²⁰¹ Luther translated עֹז־פָּנִים as “potens faciebus.” Around the same time Luther rendered the phrase as “fortis faciebus.” Martin Luther, *Operationes in Psalmos* (1519–21), *WA* 5:595. Here Luther followed Jerome to some extent, who had translated the phrase as ‘impudent in faces’ (*impudens facie*). Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 56. Luther was correct when he noted that עֹז on its own means ‘powerful’ and not ‘impudent.’ Yet neither Jerome nor Luther were correct in translating פָּנִים as “faces,” for the noun פָּנִים is a plural word with the singular meaning ‘face.’ In modern Bible translations, the phrase עֹז־פָּנִים is usually rendered either as (1) an idiom for ‘insolent’ or (2) as a description of appearance (‘with a fierce face’): (1) “frecher,” Schlachter, LU17; “insolent,” NASB, HCSB; (2) “of fierce countenance,” KJV; “of bold face,” NRSV, ESV; “having fierce features,” NKJV.

²⁰² Luther translated the participle מְבִיֵּן as ‘intelligent’ rather than the Vulgate’s ‘understanding.’ (In both cases the word is *intelligens*, but its different meaning is determined by the case of the word that follows. Vulgate reads *intelligens propositiones* (acc.) but Luther translated *intelligens propositionum* (gen.). Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 91.) Both the senses are possible: (1) “Listiger,” Schlachter; “verschlagerener,” LU17; “skilled in intrigue,” NASB, NRSV, HCSB; (2) “understanding dark sentences,” KJV; “one who understands riddles,” ESV; “who understands sinister schemes,” NKJV. Luther pointed to the sense of the participle in Daniel 11:37 in support of his choice. Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 96–97.

third of these renderings were peculiarities which vanished alongside other translation imperfections in Luther's 1530 translation of Daniel.²⁰⁴) In *Responsio*, Luther explained these three phrases as follows. The power of the Antichrist would consist not in military strength of earthly kingdoms or in spirit and truth as the Kingdom of God, but in "faces." "Faces" meant outward appearances, show without substance, and pointed to the religious formalism of the Papacy. External appearance was no empty power, for assuming the form of sacredness could "captivate and deceive the most powerful, the most holy, the most wise, among men" for thus the Papacy made "a pretense to that which is divine, and appearing to be connected with the interests of eternity."²⁰⁵ Luther then critiqued twelve aspects ("faces") of the Catholic Church which he saw as manifesting its externalism and religious hubris.²⁰⁶ In the second phrase of

²⁰³ Luther translated פָּז as "efficacy" (*efficacia*) instead of 'strength' (*fortitudo*, *vis*, Vulgate). Around the same time, however, Luther rendered the word correctly as 'strength': "Et roborabitur virtus eius non in virtute eius." Luther, *Operationes in Psalmos*, WA 5:597.

²⁰⁴ The 1521 translation reads: "²³And after their kingdom, when transgressions shall have darkened them, there shall stand up a king powerful in faces, and intelligent of propositions; ²⁴and his efficacy shall be strengthened, but not by his own efficacy. And he shall corrupt wonderful things; and shall prosper and practice; and shall corrupt the mighty, and the people of the saints. ²⁵And it shall be according to his mind; and his craft shall prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and in his success he shall corrupt many. And he shall stand up against the Prince of princes, but he shall be broken to pieces without hand." My emendation of Cole's translation. Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 41. For the Latin original and the 1530 translations, see Appendix 1. After the publication of the full Bible in 1534, Luther continued to refine the translation in subsequent editions, but the changes in Daniel were minor. Luther's revisions of Daniel are given in Hans Volz, ed., *Vom Spätmittelhochdeutschen zum Frühneuhochdeutschen: Synoptischer Text des Propheten Daniel in sechs deutschen Übersetzungen des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1963), appendix, 33–35. See also Appendix 1.

²⁰⁵ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 57.

²⁰⁶ These twelve "faces" were (1) ecclesiastic personages; (2) wealth of the Church; (3) the homes of ecclesiasts; (4) religious vestments; (5) money-collecting schemes such as indulgences and dispensations; (6) the endless canon law; (7) the distorted mass; (8) the supposed good works of fasts and feasts; (9) the countless religious holidays; (10) celibacy; (11) relics; (12) the universities. Luther believed Revelation 9 was a prophecy about this last face. Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 56–86.

Luther had already put forth this translation and interpretation of the king of faces in December 1520: "Nam et Daniel. viii. praedixit, Antichristum fore regem impudentem facie, hoc est, sicut Hebreus habet, Potentem speciebus, pompis et cerimoniis externorum operum, extineto interim spiritu fidei, sicut videmus impletum tot religionibus, ordinibus, collegiis, ritibus, vestibus, gestibus, edificiis, statuis, regulis, observantiis, ut numerum nominum eorum vix recites, quorum nullus Euangelium curat, done irrita faeta sint omnia mandata dei, praesertim iusticie fides Christi propter traditiones has hominum impiorum. Et haec quidem milites fecerunt, Et haec regno Antichristi conveniebant." Luther, *Assertio omnium articulorum*, WA 7:132–33. About the same time, Luther used the Vulgate reading in a sermon: "Das ist der Bapst mit seynem hauffen, als von im prophezeyet hat der Prophet Daniel ca. 8. 'Consurget rex impudens facie &c.'" Martin Luther, sermon, December 2, 1520, in *Predigten Luthers gesammelt von Joh. Poliander. 1519–1521*, WA 9:528. After the *Responsio* several mentions of the new interpretation can be found shortly after. "Rursus Daniel. 8. de Antichristo 'stabit rex fortis faciebus,' idest cuius virtus et totum (quod aiunt) posse erit in faciebus, non in armis nec verbo, sed in specie, pompa et externa conversatione et superstition, quod Hieronymus vertit 'rex impudens facie.'" Luther, *Operationes in Psalmos*, WA 5:595. "And in Daniel 7 [actually 8:23–25] [we read], "At the end of the Roman Empire, a king will arise. His strength will consist of externals and appearance" (that is, of human teachings which teach only external ways and habits, as, for example, the lives of bishops, priests, and monks with their vestments and external works and ways). . . . This is the king whose strength consists only of externals and not of armor, word, or word of God, Daniel 8[23–25]." Martin Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian, Hyperspiritual, and Hyperlearned Book by Goat Emser in Leipzig—Including Some Thoughts Regarding His Companion, the Fool Murner* (1521), LW 39:191. A much later and isolated instant of this interpretation shows that Luther had not entirely forgotten it: "Daniel heyst den Antichrist Rex facierum, Er sol kheine warheit haben, allein Eusserlich schone geberde und geprenge der heiligkeyt haben, Jm grund sol eß nichts sein, wie Paulus spricht: Ore fatentur Christum,

verse 23, ‘proposition’ meant “‘a problem,’ ‘an enigma,’ ‘an obscure or dark saying.’”²⁰⁷ To be intelligent in such matters was negative, for it meant “one that is powerful in, or an adept at, deceiving his hearers with dark or obscure sayings: So that they hear one thing, but understand another.”²⁰⁸ The purposes to which Antichrist would use his skillful intrigue could be seen by the office into which his deception brought him. According to the prophecies he would elevate himself into God’s place (Mt 24:15; 2 Thes 2:1–4). And “like king, like laws.”²⁰⁹ This kingdom was administered neither by clear human law nor by the plain word of Scripture, but by deception. The Pope’s mastery of propositions was demonstrated in how he had achieved legislating apostate formalism (“faces”)—that acknowledged him supreme—as Christian orthodoxy through canon law.²¹⁰ Antichrist’s “third signal mark” was that he would be effectual not through his own but another’s efficacy. “Who ever heard anything like this in any other kingdom whatever?”²¹¹ This prediction referred to the fact that the deceptive reign of the Antichrist was upheld “with all power and false signs and wonders” (2 Thes 2:9, ESV). The devil did this by convincing people of the Pope’s deceptions and led them to support him. Thus people accepted total fabrications—such as papal supremacy over all the churches, the state, and the dead, and the creation of the Holy Roman Empire—as realities, and dreaded the Pope’s displeasure. Laity, clergy, the universities, and the secular arm of the state all united in upholding the rule of one who had no claims to authority and who, without the assistance of all, would have none.²¹² Luther’s later translation was professional and free from these curiosities, and apart from the rare mention of the first phrase, Luther never used these three points again.

The text mentions several times that the king would be a destroyer (vv. 23–25). Luther believed that, given the nature of Antichrist’s rule, he would destroy spiritual things, that is, the kingdom of God.²¹³ Luther applied this prediction of destructive force to the Papacy in

factis negant.” Martin Luther, *Viel fast nutzlicher punct ausgezogen aus etzlichen Predigen deß Gottes gelahrtn Doctoris Martini Lutheri* (1537), WA 45:381.

²⁰⁷ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 91.

²⁰⁸ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 91.

²⁰⁹ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 86.

²¹⁰ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 86–101. The propositions were therefore the canon law of the Church, “her laws, decrees, and censures, and mere lusts.” Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 103.

²¹¹ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 101.

²¹² Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 101–118, 171. In connection to this point, Luther continued the exposition of 2 Pt 2 (vv. 4–22). See Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 118–31. Luther had already spoken about the Antichrist being powerful but not in his own might in the Psalm Lectures. Commenting on Psalm 126:4, Luther wrote that Christ “is called a “stream” in his humanity, because he proceeded prosperously (Ps. 45:4) and ran his way swiftly. But “in the south” means in the Holy Spirit and spiritual goods. But the Antichrist will be a stream in the north, for he will prosper and act, but not with his own strength, according to Dan. 12:8. The north signifies the devil, the spirit of the night.” Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 11:551–52. Luther’s reference (Dn 12:8) was incorrect. He was referring to Daniel 8:12, 24. See also Luther, *Lectures on Romans*, LW 25:124n23.

²¹³ “It follows, therefore, that it is not cities, nor provinces, that he is to destroy, but those things which can be destroyed, and are destroyed, by ‘faces’ and ‘propositions,’ and craft; and which things, consequently, are contrary and opposed to ‘faces,’ to ‘propositions,’ and to ‘idols,’—namely, truth, and the word of truth; the Spirit and simplicity; that is, faith in Christ, and the kingdom of good consciences; which Christ calls the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom of truth.” Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 133. After

several ways. Christ delivered from the law and gave the freedom to obey from the heart and to be righteous. But the Antichrist compelled men to obey—not God’s law, but his formalist laws. This caused men to sin whether they went against their conscience and disobeyed, obeyed with an unwilling mind or trusting in their works, were exempted from true obedience by papal privileges, or disobeyed God’s law directly by obeying the papal laws. The sacraments of the Eucharist and penance had also obscured the sacrament of forgiveness and the meaning of repentance and good works, leading mankind to sin through the very means that were offered to lead them to righteousness. “Nothing that is good” was left “undestroyed.”²¹⁴ The corruption of the Word of God was pointed out in particular (in v. 24)²¹⁵ and the soul ruin of “the many” (v. 25) who adhered to the Papacy.²¹⁶ The destruction of things spiritual was also predicted by the phrases “he shall remove the daily sacrifice” (vv. 11–13) and “he shall cast truth to the ground” (v. 12). As the removal of the daily sacrifice (v. 11) had been to the Jews the abolition of the outward signs of God’s presence and grace, so the Antichrist had in his exaltation removed the significance of the Gospel, baptism, the sacraments, and the keys from Christians, even though the outward forms remained.²¹⁷ And the Papacy had “cast truth to the ground” (v. 12) with its successful suppression of the Gospel (the truth of God).²¹⁸

describing the Pope’s career in general in another place, Luther wrote: “Aber jnn des predigt er nichts, thut kein Apostolisch noch Bisschofflich ampt, zu trost den seelen, ist gleich wol Servus servorum Dei, Und ist wahr, wenn Dei hie heisst Deus mundi, Denn er ist der rechte und Oberster diener des Teufels und verstoeret alles, wie Daniel sagt: Mirabiliter omnia vastabit, Er wird alles gewlich verderben. Martin Luther, *Einer aus den hohen Artikeln des päpstlichen Glaubens, genannt Donatio Constantini* (1537), WA 50:83.

²¹⁴ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 131–58.

²¹⁵ In *Responsio*, Luther interpreted the phrase “and he shall destroy the strength and the people of the saints” in the following way: The Bible was “the strength” of the Church and the “the people of the saints” were “the Apostles and Evangelists,” i.e. the Bible. Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 161. Later he gave the translation as “the mighty” and not as “the strength.” Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 170. This clause in v. 24 is the angel’s interpretation of the horn casting down stars and trampling on them (v. 10) and later Luther referred to that verse in the same meaning: “This ‘craft’ has an especial reference to his corrupting of the Scriptures. Here it is that he casts down the stars from heaven, and tramples them under his feet.” Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 172.

²¹⁶ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 174–75.

²¹⁷ Luther, *Matthäus Kapitel 18–24*, WA 47:576, 579.

²¹⁸ “Alßo ist, das warheyt endlich obligt, aber gar oft unterdrückt wirt. Denn sie muß tzu weylen gleych wie Christus sterben, aber doch widderauferstehen. Alßo ist unter dem Bapstum die Christliche warheyt unterdrückt geweßen, Wie Daniel am .8. verkuendigt hatt, das tzu des Endchrists tseytten die warheytt solle oeffentlich nydder geschlagen werden, aber des underdrueckens ist nu eyn ende. Also ist unter dem Bapstum die Christliche warheyt unterdrückt geweßen, Wie Daniel am .8. verkuendigt hatt, das tzu des Endchrists tseytten die warheyt solle oeffentlich nydder geschlagen werden, aber des underdrueckens ist nu eyn ende.” Martin Luther, *Ein Bapstlich Breve dem Rath zu Bamberg gesandt wider den Luther* (1523), WA 11:355. Commenting on a similar phrase (Is 59:14), Luther wrote: “We read in Daniel (Dan. 8:12): ‘Truth was cast down to the ground.’ This happens when the preachers of the truth are condemned and killed, and when they say that you must believe what the church decrees. This is to condemn public truth. Truth falls into ruin in the streets, and correct teaching can make no progress. This is what we experienced under the papists. They do not want the truth but condemn it in public and prefer their own fabrications.” Martin Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah* (1527–30), LW 17:304. Luther used the same language when others besides the Papacy suppressed the Gospel. At the arise of the Zwickau prophets, Luther sighed: “God will visit our ingratitude and permit the truth to be cast down, as Daniel says (Dan 8:[12]). Because we persecute and do not accept the truth, we must again have vain error and false spirits and prophets.” Martin Luther, *Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments* (1525), LW 40:79.

Another characteristic of the Antichrist that was mentioned as frequently as his destructiveness was his prosperity: He would “practice and prosper” (v. 24), “craft shall prosper in his hand” (v. 25), “and in his success²¹⁹ he shall corrupt many” (v. 25). According to Luther this prediction was fulfilled in the successful reign of the Papacy. Through the centuries it had always had some opponents, but no one had been able to withstand the Pope.²²⁰ The main reason for this success was that “he has imposed upon the very elect” (Mt 24:24). His “craft” must therefore mainly refer to the distorting of what the elect relied on—the Scriptures. So successful had the Pope been that good Christians had not seen through his deception, “otherwise they would have risen up against him; but the time was not yet come.”²²¹ This prosperity, however, had only been possible because God’s wrath allowed it in a world ungrateful for the Gospel.²²²

In verse 25 there were several phrases in the description of the king that Luther believed implied the king’s supremacy: All things would be “according to his will,” “he shall magnify himself in his heart,” “and he shall stand up against the Prince of princes” (v. 25). These predictions pointed out the Pope’s supreme jurisdiction—“where the Pope, making himself superior to all others, will not submit to the judgment of any other. He will himself judge all, and be judged by no one”²²³—, his subjugation of all under himself, and his usurpation of Christ’s place and ambition to ascend above God (2 Thes 2:4). Since the Antichrist’s supremacy was the climax of the end-time apostasy predicted in the prophecies, nothing remained in the prophecies to be fulfilled but the end, when “the Pope and his kingdom” would be destroyed by Christ himself.²²⁴

Luther also interpreted the timing and means of the last king’s fall. The Antichrist would eventually be “broken without hand” (v. 25). How this would happen was portrayed in the Apostle’s flaming description of the Second Coming, when Christ would destroy the Antichrist (2 Thes 2), a text that Luther combined often with Daniel 8:25. But it was Daniel and not Paul who explicitly excluded human agency. In Gabriel’s prediction—“he shall be broken without hand”—Luther read a warning against taking up earthly arms against the

²¹⁹ In *Responsio*, Luther acknowledged the Vulgate rendering ‘abundance’ (*copia*) as well. This was still another reference to the Papacy’s prosperity: Its wealth as the master of the world. Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 174–75.

²²⁰ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 158–60. See also: “Was thut er zu unsern zeiten? Weil es jm nicht allerdinge wil gelingen, wie wol es jm allzu wol gelungen ist, als Daniel sagt, so kan er doch nicht rügen noch feyren noch keinen anstos leiden. . . . Summa, es sind alle zeit gelerte, weise leute gnug gewest, wie die Historien zeigen, beide jnn Weltlichen und Geistlichem stenden, sonderlich die des Bapsts schalckheit und Tyranny wol gemerckt und da wider gered und gethan haben. Aber des Bapsts stuendlin ist nicht da gewest, darumb haben sie nichts geschafft. . . . Und abermal: Es wird dem schalck gelingen, bis der zorn aus sey [Dn 11:36].” Luther, *Donatio Constantini*, WA 50:81, 83.

²²¹ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 169–72.

²²² “Daniel sagt am neunenden Capittel von dem Endechrift: Dolus prosperabitur in manu eius, Es wird dem schalck all seine schalckheit gelingen. Sonst were es nicht mueglich gewest, wo Gottes zorn der welt unde nicht so hette straffen wollen, das jm also solt gelingen.” Luther, *Donatio Constantini*, WA 50:79. Here Luther mistakenly referred to Daniel 9 instead of 8:24. He cites “dolus prosperabitur in manu eius” and refers loosely to “Vnd [es] wird jm gelingen.”

²²³ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 162.

²²⁴ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 162–69, 172–74, 176–77.

Antichrist. This was the verse in Daniel 8 that Luther referred to most frequently. He did so in his admonitions that as it had been revealed that no human hand would bring Antichrist down from his throne, so the weapons of the opposition must be the Gospel alone.²²⁵

Close of the Vision (v. 27)

Luther stated that “doing the king’s business” (v. 27) was a Hebraism for working *for* the king, not in his stead. Yet it also showed the dignity of those who work for authorities, for they do in fact execute the work of their superiors.²²⁶ Apart from this remark Luther did not comment on the conclusion of the vision.

1.4.4 Harmonizing Daniel 8 and the Other Danielic Visions

Apart from his interpretation of the Antichrist, Luther’s interpretation of Daniel was fairly traditional. The four metals in the statue of chapter 2—gold, silver, brass, and iron—represented the four kingdoms of Assyria or Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.²²⁷ The statue’s toes were the ten kingdoms which arose out of the Roman Empire.²²⁸ The iron in the toes showed that the fourth kingdom would continue to the end—in Luther’s day as the Holy Roman Empire.²²⁹ The stone which crushed the statue and grew into a mountain was

²²⁵ Martin Luther, *Against the Spiritual Estate of the Pope and the Bishops Falsely So Called* (1522), *LW* 39:279; Martin Luther to John von Staupitz, June 27, 1520, *LW* 49:12, lt. 124; Martin Luther, *Sincere Admonition by Martin Luther to All Christians to Guard Against Insurrection and Rebellion* (1522), *LW* 45:59, 67; Martin Luther, *Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament* (1522), *LW* 36:263; Luther, *Ein Bäpstlich Breve*, *WA* 11:355; Martin Luther, *Letter to the Princes of Saxony concerning the Rebellious Spirit* (1524), *LW* 40:58; Martin Luther, *Psalm 110* ([1535] 1539), *LW* 13:258; Martin Luther, *Vorrede zur Antonius Corvinus’ Epistelauslegung* (1537), *WA* 50:110; sermon, February 18, 1537, Martin Luther, in *Predigten des Jahres 1537*, *WA* 45:42b.

²²⁶ “Chancellors, city clerks, jurists, and the people who hold such offices also sit in high places and help to counsel and rule, as has been said. They are in actual fact lords upon earth, even though they are not that by virtue of their own person, birth, or estate. For Daniel says that he had to do the king’s [245] work [Dan. 8:27]. And that is true: A chancellor must go about the work or business of the emperor, king, or prince; a city clerk must do the work of the council or the town.” Martin Luther, *A Sermon on Keeping Children in School* (1530), *LW* 46:245. Commenting on Christ’s words in Jn 6:29—“This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he has sent”—Luther used Daniel to explain the wording: “Im Propheten Daniel wirdt gesaget: Ich war betruht und that das wreck meines königes, undt ist also ein Hebraismus so viel geredet: Ich thue die geschefft, die mir der könig beholen hat undt die ihnen angehören undt angehen. Aber Deutsche reden nicht also, das der knecht spreche: Ich wil hin undt meines herrn undt frauen werck thun, Sondern sagen: Ich wil thun, was ehr mich geheissen hat, was ihn angehet undt was ich schuldig bin, das zu seinem frommen dienet. Aber die Hebreische sprache redet also. Das sag ich drumb, das nicht einer jrgendts an den finstern wortten anlauffe.” sermon on John 6:27–29, November 19, 1530, Martin Luther, *Auslegung D. Martin Luthers uber das Sechste, Siebende, und Achte Capitel des Euangelisten Joannis, gepredigt zu Wittemberg, Anno 1530. 1531. und 1532*, *WA* 33:27a; see also 27b.

²²⁷ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:295.

²²⁸ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, *LW* 35:295–96.

²²⁹ Luther was aware that “there is no doubt that the true Roman Empire,” which comprised both the Western half and the Byzantine, “has long since been overthrown and come to an end.” “That happened under the Goths, but more particularly when the Muslim empire arose almost a thousand years ago. Then eventually Asia and Africa fell away, and in time France and Spain. Finally, Venice arose, and nothing was left to Rome of its former power.” Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, *LW* 44:207–208. See also Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 42. Luther dismissed the Pope’s transfer of the imperium from the Roman Emperor in the East to the Holy Roman Emperor in the West as illegal, but still acknowledged that, while illegal, the Empire continued: “The name of the Roman empire was translated to the Germans, when no part of the Roman empire any longer

Christ and his kingdom. Luther sometimes spoke of it as the kingdom of grace beginning at Christ's first coming, and sometimes as the kingdom of glory commencing at his return.²³⁰

Luther interpreted chapter 7 as following a similar trajectory as chapter 2, which was traditional. The four beasts were the same four kingdoms as the statue,²³¹ and the ten horns of the fourth beast were the same ten kingdoms as the ten toes.²³² The eleventh horn which rose among the ten and uprooted three was the Muslim power—which in Luther's day was "the Turk"—which had conquered Egypt, Asia Minor and Greece.²³³ The length of the Turk's reign, which would end at the Last Day, was put in "obscure words"—"time, times, and the dividing of time"—so that no one could calculate the time of Christ's return.²³⁴ After the Turk's conquest of the three horns, the next scene was that of the Last Day:²³⁵ The Second Coming, the Judgment, the destruction of the fourth beast with its horns, and the establishment of the kingdom of God.²³⁶

In *Responsio* Luther's antitypical interpretation of chapter 8 focused on the same historical developments as chapters 2 and 7: The four empires, the late history of the fourth empire, and the final events. The four horns of the goat were the four kingdoms, its last horn was the Antichrist, and the breaking of the horn Antichrist's destruction at the Second Coming of Christ. This antitypical interpretation harmonized Daniel 8 with chapters 2 and 7. In his early lectures, Luther also equated the last horn in chapter 7 with the last horn in chapter 8 as two symbols of the same Antichrist, and Luther kept this harmonization when he identified the

remained." Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 42. "Whether the pope transferred the Roman Empire from the Greeks to us Germans—this is quite plainly a crude, obvious lie, which everyone can see and grasp. First, where would the pope get such an empire? And how could he give what he did not himself have?" "The Germans have the Roman Empire not by your grace, but from Charles the Great and from the emperors in Constantinople—you have not given a hairsbreadth of it." Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, LW 41:371, 376. The legality of the bestowal of empire had been the Donation of Constantine, which then turned out to be forgery. See Luther, *Donatio Constantini*, WA 50:(65)69–89. So though the ancient Roman Empire had crumbled to the dust, there was still a continuum, for the transfer from Byzantine to the Germans "occurred in such a way that its nature as iron was retained, for the empire still has its estates, offices, laws, and statues as of old. Therefore Daniel says here that even though it will be a divided kingdom the root, plant, or trunk of iron will nevertheless be in it" and so "the Roman empire is to be the last" and "must remain until the Last Day." Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:295–96.

²³⁰ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:296–97; Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah*, LW 16:241; Martin Luther, *Psalms* 2 (1532), LW 12:35–36; Luther, *Psalms* 110, LW 13:342.

²³¹ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:299–300.

²³² In the marginal note to Daniel 7:24, Luther listed the ten kingdoms as "Syria, Egypt, Asia [Minor], Greece, Italy, Gallia, Spain, [North] Africa, Germany, England." In his comments on chapter 7 in the *Preface*, he gave the same list and ended it with "etc." In his comments on chapter 2, he named only "Spain, France, England, and other parts." In the *Heerpredigt* he listed all ten except England. Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:295, 300; Luther, *Eine Heerpredigt wider den Türcken*, WA 30^{II}:166; margin, Dn 7:24, Luther, *Der Prophet Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:160.

²³³ Luther, *Eine Heerpredigt wider den Türcken*, WA 30^{II}:160–172; Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:299–300.

²³⁴ Luther, *Eine Heerpredigt wider den Türcken*, WA 30^{II}:170–171; see also Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:118. Luther neither mentioned the 1260 period in his comments on chapter 7 in any edition of the *Preface*, nor in his comments on chapter 12 in the *Preface to the Revelation*, nor in *Supputatio annorum mundi*.

²³⁵ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:300.

²³⁶ Luther, *Eine Heerpredigt wider den Türcken*, WA 30^{II}:171.

Antichrist as the Pope in *Responsio*.²³⁷ This harmonization of the two last horns was lost when Luther interpreted the little horn in chapter 7 as the Muslim power in the *Army Sermon*. Further harmonization was lost in the *Preface to Daniel* when Luther dropped the antitypical interpretation of the four horns of the goat and limited his antitypical reading to the traditional twofold interpretation of the last horn. There Luther noted that the scope of the vision of chapter 8 was different from the preceding visions of chapters 2 and 7:

Unlike the former, this one pertains not to the whole world but to his own people, the Jews; it shows how they were to fare prior to the Roman Empire and before the coming of Christ, namely under the third empire, that of Alexander the Great. Once again the purpose is to console the Jews, that they may not despair amid the wretchedness that is to engulf them, as if Christ would leave them again and not come.²³⁸

Luther had nevertheless harmonized Daniel 8 with the other visions to a greater extent than was traditional. Since Luther interpreted the Antichrist as being the Papacy rather than a final individual adversary of the Church, this meant that the little horn and Antiochus foreshadowed nothing less than the entire history of the Holy See from its rise to its ultimate destruction in the end. Thus while chapter 8 did not cover the same extensive history of the four kingdoms as did the previous chapters, it was one step closer to doing so. The last horn in chapter 8 foreshadowed not one short individual reign but the entire history of the Papacy down to the Second Coming, and thus via the papal antitype chapter 8 now reached down to the last days like the previous visions.

Luther's interpretation of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 as a messianic prophecy was traditional as well. It was the time prophecy Luther studied the most. Luther first dated the period from Zerubbabel's command to restore Jerusalem to the crucifixion of Christ (456/3 BC–AD 34), but later adjusted the period to be from the same command to the giving of the Gospel to the Gentiles (450 BC–AD 40).²³⁹ The prophecy ended with the establishment of the kingdom of grace, which was a connection to the stone of chapter 2, which Luther saw somewhat as the first coming of Christ. But this prophecy was not connected in any direct sense to chapter 8.

Luther believed that the last vision of chapters 10–12 followed the same trajectory as chapter 8, only with much greater detail.²⁴⁰ This was also traditional approach. The prophecy began with several Persian monarchs (Dn 11:2)²⁴¹ and so began with Medo-Persia like chapter 8. Alexander the Great was next and the fragmentation of his reign into four

²³⁷ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:114; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 94–95.

²³⁸ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:300.

²³⁹ Luther, *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew*, LW 45:221–28; Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:303–5; Luther, *The Jews and Their Lies*, LW 47:238–53; Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:22–30; Luther, *Supputatio*, WA 53:106–8, 125–26, 173–77.

²⁴⁰ “In the eleventh chapter Daniel prophesies to his people, the Jews—almost exactly as he does in the eighth chapter—concerning Alexander the Great and the two kingdoms, Syria and Egypt, chiefly on account of Antiochus (called the Noble) who is to plague the Jews.” Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:306.

²⁴¹ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:306.

kingdoms (vv. 3–4),²⁴² just like the goat in chapter 8 first had one horn and then four. The vision then narrowed in on the mightiest of these four kingdoms, Seleucia in the north, and Ptolemaic Egypt in the south, reviewing their clashes down to the reign of Antiochus IV (vv. 5–35).²⁴³ The text continued to describe “the king of the north” in vv. 36 onward, but despite the same terminology Luther believed it no longer concerned Antiochus but his antitype, the Antichrist. Seeing such a switch from type to antitype somewhere late in Daniel 11 was also conventional. Luther noted that the switch could be detected in several ways. As in chapter 8, mentions of the lateness of time (vv. 35, 40) showed the referent could not be Antiochus anymore.²⁴⁴ This was made crystal clear when the vision ended with the Resurrection and the kingdom of God (12:2–3). And since this last vision followed the same trajectory as chapter 8, and chapter 8 ended with Antichrist, the same was to be expected of the last vision as well.²⁴⁵ The description of the power in the last portion of chapter 11 was also similar to other prophecies about the Antichrist, while it did not fit the career of Antiochus.²⁴⁶ And that the angel said that the prophecy would be sealed till the end (12:4, 9–10) also showed that there was a deeper meaning to it that would be understood later.²⁴⁷ Verses 36–39 therefore described the false religion of the Antichrist²⁴⁸ in greater detail than the short description of his deception and self-exaltation mentioned in chapter 8. Verses 11:40–12:4 expounded on the demise of the Antichrist²⁴⁹ which had been described concisely in chapter 8 as “but he shall be broken without hand.” This prophecy had been sealed until the end times (12:4) and would be hard to understand until the time of fulfillment, but since the last days had begun Luther decided to make an attempt. In short, the last section of chapter 11 depicted the resistance against the Papacy which began in the days of Hus, swelled in the time of Luther, and was the great tribulation (12:1) to come before Christ’s return and the Last Day. Luther speculated on two of the time prophecies in chapter 12, the 1290 days and the 1335 days (12:11–12), but was not completely sure whether to interpret them as years or days. If these

²⁴² Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:306, 307.

²⁴³ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:307–13.

²⁴⁴ Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:50, 80.

²⁴⁵ “In the eleventh chapter Daniel prophesies to his people, the Jews—almost exactly as he does in the eighth chapter—concerning Alexander the Great and the two kingdoms, Syria and Egypt, chiefly on account of Antiochus (called the Noble) who is to plague the Jews. But he describes Antiochus in such a way that his words ultimately tend under the figure of Antiochus to portray the very Antichrist. And so Daniel is actually referring here to these last times of ours just before the Last Day. For all teachers are unanimously agreed that these prophecies about Antiochus point to the Antichrist. Daniel’s words too show compellingly that he does not mean exclusively Antiochus but is actually mixing together Antiochus and the Antichrist, and thus purposely scrambling his otherwise clear and transparent words.” “The twelfth chapter of Daniel—as all teachers unanimously interpret it—under the name of Antiochus has to do wholly with the Antichrist and with these last times in which we are living. . . . [and] the resurrection of the dead and the true redemption shall follow immediately thereafter.” Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:306, 313.

²⁴⁶ Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:96–98.

²⁴⁷ Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:78–80, 112.

²⁴⁸ Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:309; Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:50–78.

²⁴⁹ Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:78–124.

periods were literal days, that again showed the end at the door, for nothing was left unfulfilled but these short periods and the Resurrection.²⁵⁰

1.4.5 Conclusion

Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 can be summarized as follows. The first part was standard. The ram and the goat were Medo-Persia and Greece. The first horn of the goat was Alexander the Great. The four horns which grew after the first horn broke off were the four Greek kingdoms that arose after Alexander's death. The last horn that grew out of one of the four horns was Antiochus IV, who was a king in Seleucia, one of the four kingdoms. The horn's acts against the sanctuary and the stars symbolized his persecution of the Jews. His career was cut short when he died suddenly of sickness, or was "broken without hand" (v. 25). The vision of the last horn foreshadowed the Antichrist; Antiochus was the type and the Antichrist was the antitype. It was only in his identification of Antichrist that Luther moved from the conventional interpretation. Instead of identifying the Antichrist as Mohammad, or leaving his identity unknown, believing him to be an individual tyrant yet to come in the future, Luther identified the Antichrist as the Pope, whose reign would end when Christ would return.

The textual conventions Luther used to interpret Daniel 8 were several. First, Luther extended the conventional typology: Antiochus was the "immediate" fulfillment of the last horn, but its more complete fulfilment or antitypical fulfilment was the Papacy. Whereas the correspondence between Antiochus and a future king was equal, the idea that a single king did not foreshadow one king but a whole kingdom or dynasty was strenuous. This uneven type/antitype was an indirect use of the convention of extension. Luther seems to have sensed that in *Responsio*, where he attempted to historicize part of Daniel 8 beyond the traditional reading, free from the constraints of type/antitype: The four horns of the goat were the four kingdoms of chapters 2 and 7, and the last goat horn was therefore more naturally symbolized an entire kingdom as well. This was the second textual strategy, harmonization of the visions. Thirdly, Luther attempted to systematize the symbolic referents, when he argued in *Responsio* that a horn always symbolized a kingdom, not an individual king, and consistency required that the last goat horn therefore be interpreted as a kingdom. Fourth, Luther offered a new translation of vv. 23–25 that seemed to support his interpretation of the last horn better than the Vulgate. After the *Responsio*, Luther abandoned all these arguments except the foreshadowing convention. One reason for this was that his arguments contradicted his own

²⁵⁰ Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:118–24; Luther, *Supputatio*, WA 53:125, 163. The 1290 days would then be the last period during which the world would become so wicked that public preaching would completely be snuffed out (removal of the daily worship) and the Gospel would only be spoken secretly in private houses. And these conditions could only last a short time, for the Church could only exist silent for a short time. This interpretation did not mean it would be possible to calculate the prophetic periods, for in the chaos of the final days it would be impossible to know their starting point, since the public forbidding of the Gospel would not occur simultaneously in all places, and adding the fact that the 1335 days lasted longer would increase the difficulty of computing. Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:124.

interpretation: He himself claimed that the primary meaning of the last goat horn was a single king, and thus he could not at the same time claim it had to mean a kingdom. Lending the four goat horns a secondary meaning or rejecting their conventional meaning went against the words of the angelic interpreter. And as Luther became versed in Hebrew and an experienced translator, his later translation of the Book of Daniel was free of the peculiar readings he offered in *Responsio*. The second reason why Luther dropped these arguments was that the foreshadowing one was apparently a sufficient argument for his interpretation.

1.5 Theological Dynamics

1.5.1 Introduction

Throughout the Christian era, the theological interest in Daniel 8 had mostly been focused on the prediction of the Antichrist. It is easy to see a continuum within the traditional interpretation of the Antichrist to Luther's interpretation. For centuries, orthodoxy had associated the Antichrist with the Holy See. It was believed that 'the antichrists,' his heretical forerunners, would corrupt the Church and thus pave his way to ecclesiastical power. And since he would eventually reign over the Church, it seemed probable that this meant that he would usurp the papal chair. In practice this meant that ecclesiastical corruption was viewed through the lens of the expectation of the coming Antichrist, ranging from invectives to actual worry that the Curia had become corrupt enough for the Antichrist to take over. Some theologians, like Hus, even claimed that a Pope was or could be the Antichrist.

Luther continued and transformed this theological use of Daniel 8 by identifying the Pope *per se* as the Antichrist. Once he had reached this conclusion in late 1520, his first work on the topic was an exegetical treatise on Daniel 8. Thus Luther continued to see the theological focus of Daniel 8 as the Antichrist, except that Luther's theological perspective was drastically different. Instead of predicting the brief career of a future ruler, Luther saw Daniel 8 (and other prophecies about the Antichrist) as portraying the entire history of the Papacy. Instead of warning Christians to hold fast to the true faith of Catholicism lest they fall under the spell of a future Antichrist, the prophecies about the foe revealed that people were presently being deceived by him by those very doctrines. And, finally, instead of showing that corruption in the Church might point to the soon arrival of the Antichrist, the prophecies showed that the Last Day was imminent, for the Antichrist was already reigning and had now been exposed.

Luther's main theological interest in Daniel 8 was therefore the prophecy about the Antichrist. Luther cited the chapter relatively seldom, but that was not because the chapter was marginal to him. For Luther, Daniel 8 was the groundwork of all the Antichrist prophecies since it was the oldest one. It would be an incomplete picture of the theological dynamics of Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 to simply string together his quotations of the chapter. A better approach would be to sketch out Luther's view of the prophesied Antichrist, of which Daniel 8 was the foundational draft. That raises another potential methodological

problem, however, for the Pope as the Antichrist is such a pervasive theme in Luther's theology that the material is of an insurmountable quantity for this research. To discover the theological dynamics in Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 I will attempt the medium by focusing on two streams in Luther's writings: His prophetic treatment of the Pope (texts where Luther associated the Pope with prophecy about the Antichrist), and his church history (since the history of the Papacy was nearly synonymous to church history). An overview of these two sources, and how they relate to Daniel 8, is in order.

The first of the two kinds of texts this section will draw on is Luther's interpretation of prophecies about the Antichrist. Since Luther emphasized the literal sense of Scripture, he saw much fewer biblical passages as prophecies about the Antichrist than his predecessors and contemporaries, open to many-layered allegorical readings of Scripture, did. The prophecies which remained to Luther about the Antichrist were still plentiful. First there was Daniel 8, upon which later prophecies built. Daniel's last vision (chs. 10–12) explained Daniel 8 in further detail and Matthew 24:15 spoke about the coming "abomination of desolation," mentioned in both Daniel 8 and 11–12. In 2 Thessalonians 2 Paul predicted the coming of the Man of Sin and used language that hearkened back to Daniel 8 and 11–12. Other New Testament prophecies about the Antichrist, found in 2 Peter 2, Jude, 1 John, and Revelation, also spoke of the coming enemy and often referred back to Daniel. Luther wrote about many of these passages in detail: Daniel 8;²⁵¹ 10–12;²⁵² Matthew 24;²⁵³ 2 Thessalonians 2;²⁵⁴ 2 Peter 2;²⁵⁵ Jude;²⁵⁶ 1 John;²⁵⁷ Revelation.²⁵⁸ The passages which Luther cited most often when discussing the Antichrist was 1 John (where the term 'antichrist' is found) and 2 Thessalonians 2, both of which Luther believed referred back to Daniel 8.²⁵⁹

The other well for this section is Luther's writings on church history. It was in fact the question of the Papacy that drove Luther to study church history in earnest (in preparation for the Leipzig debate), and he continued to study the topic throughout his career. Luther did not write one contiguous church history, but his views can be gathered from the sermons and commentaries he wrote on biblical history, his world history chronology, and the parts of

²⁵¹ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*.

²⁵² Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:305–13; Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:30–124.

²⁵³ Luther, *Matthäus Kapitel 18–24*, WA 47:545–627.

²⁵⁴ Luther only wrote a preface to 2 Thessalonians, but referred continuously to its second chapter. Martin Luther, *Preface to the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians* (1522; 1546), LW 35:387–388.

²⁵⁵ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 45–55, 86, 96, 118–31, 156, 162–63; Martin Luther, *Sermons on the Second Epistle of St. Peter* (1523–24), LW 30:168–91.

²⁵⁶ Martin Luther, *Sermons on the Epistle of St. Jude* (1523–1524), LW 30:201–15.

²⁵⁷ Martin Luther, *Lectures on the First Epistle of St. John* (1527), LW 30:217–327.

²⁵⁸ Luther, *Preface to the Revelation [I]*, LW 35:398–99; Luther, *Preface to the Revelation [III]*, LW 35:399–411; Martin Luther, *Vorrede zu Commentarius in Apocalypsin ante Centum annos æditus* (1528), WA 26:(121)123–24. For Luther's usage of Revelation, see Hofman, *Luther und die Johannes-Apokalypse*.

²⁵⁹ "Antiochus is here [in Dn 8] set up . . . as a figure of the Antichrist." Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:302, brackets supplied. Antichrist is only named so in the Epistles of John.

"In the eleventh chapter Daniel prophesies . . . almost exactly as he does in the eighth chapter." Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:306. "Also hat S. Paulus .ii. Thess. ii. diesen Text Danielis [11:36] geführt." Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:56.

church history he gave attention to in particular. In addition to these works he wrote three treatises specifically on church history: on the Donation of Constantine,²⁶⁰ on the early Church Councils,²⁶¹ and on the Papacy's history as an ecclesiastical institution.²⁶²

This section will first use these two sources of Luther's writings (his interpretation of antichrist prophecies and his church history) to illustrate how he interpreted Daniel 8 and redemption history together. It will then evaluate how Luther decided between the interpretative alternatives at his disposal. Finally, it will look what bearing Luther believed Daniel 8 had on Christian practice.

1.5.2 Daniel 8 in Redemption History

To understand Luther's depiction of the Apostate in redemption history, it is helpful to first touch on what he saw as the primitive Christianity from which the Antichrist had apostatized. According to Luther, the Bible presented the Church and the faith in an altogether different light than what was taught by the Roman Catholic Church. The Scriptures—which were given by Christ and were about him—presented the Savior as the only head of the Church, and themselves as his teaching, and hence the supreme authority in religious matters. In doctrine they taught the Gospel of Christ, to be received by justifying faith. In church administration they taught that all bishops were equal, and only administrators of the believers, who all had direct access to God through Christ. And in liturgy they prescribed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, orderliness in worship services, but left details free. This was therefore how Luther viewed the history of the apostolic Church: Christ had been the head of the Church, all bishops had been equal, and doctrine and liturgy had been scriptural and simple. Luther saw all subsequent church history as fulfillment of the prophecy about the Antichrist who would rise, reign, and be destroyed at the Second Coming.

The Rise of the Antichrist

According to the traditional reading of the prophecies, the Antichrist was to seize power over the Church right after the fall of the Roman Empire. This timing of the Antichrist was derived from Daniel and Paul. Daniel had predicted that four kingdoms would rule one after the other, then finally the Antichrist, and after his rule the Kingdom of God would be established. And Paul warned cryptically: "You know what [Rome] restrains him [Antichrist] now so that he may be revealed in his time. . . Only he [Rome] who now restrains will do so until he [Rome] is taken out of the way. Then that lawless one will be revealed" (2 Thes 2:6–8).²⁶³ The

²⁶⁰ Luther, *Donatio Constantini*, WA 50:65–89.

²⁶¹ Martin Luther, *On the Councils and the Church* (1539), LW 41:(3)9–178.

²⁶² Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, LW 41:257–376.

²⁶³ Luther summarized the prediction of 2 Thes 2 in the following words: "In chapter 2 he teaches that before the Last Day, the Roman Empire must first pass away, and Antichrist set himself up as God in Christendom and seduce the unbelieving world with false doctrines and signs—until Christ shall come and destroy him by his glorious coming, first slaying him with spiritual preaching." Luther, *Preface to the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*, LW 35:387. See also Martin Luther, *Lectures on Zechariah* (1527), LW 20:192.

question was, of course, what constituted the Roman Empire, and hence the timing of its fall. Here Luther abandoned the expectation of an Antichrist appearing at the fall of the present Holy Roman Empire. After reading Valla's *On the Donation of Constantine*, he was convinced that Constantine had not transferred his imperium to the Pope. Consequently, Luther saw the further transfer of the imperium from the Pope to Charlemagne as illegitimate. True, the Holy Roman Empire was indeed an Empire, but to call it the continuation of the Roman Empire was legal fiction. The true Roman Empire had fallen centuries ago with the crumbling of Western Rome. Thus Luther could hold to the belief of the Antichrist's rise succeeding the fall of Rome even though he identified him as the Pope because he placed both events in the distant past.

Luther also reread the New Testament prophecies about the coming apostasy in two decisive ways. First, as to the timing. The apostles warned that the apostasy had already commenced in their day. John wrote that "the spirit of the antichrist" "is already in the world" (1 Jn 4:3, HCSB) and Paul stated that "the mystery of lawlessness is already at work" (2 Thes 2, ESV). These scriptures were understood as saying that ever since the early Church, heresies and corruption had been preparing the way for the Antichrist. Luther believed these warnings spoke of a more specific process than the history of heresy in general. These scriptures were a warning of the apostasy that germinated in the apostolic church and culminated in the supremacy of the Papacy several centuries later.²⁶⁴ Second, concerning the nature of the apostasy. Expositors had always suggested at least two possibilities: The Antichrist could be an outsider, a non-Christian, who would seize power over the Church and lead it into apostasy. Or he could be an insider, a Christian, who would rise to power, even or probably become a Pope, and lead it into apostasy. (Luther's earliest lectures reflected these possibilities, where he associated the Antichrist with ecclesiastical corruption on the one hand, and to Islam, a menacing non-Christian power, on the other.) Luther became convinced that these warnings clearly foretold that the enemy would rise from within the Church. Thus the exaltation of the last horn of Daniel 8 was not as an attack from the outside but by an insider. This insider nature of the Antichrist was spelled out in more clarity in Daniel 11 and the New Testament prophecies. Both Christ and Paul warned that he would be inside the Church: The abomination of desolation would stand "in the holy place" (Mt 24:15) and the enemy would take "his seat in the temple of God" (2 Thes 2:4).²⁶⁵ The self-exaltation of the Antichrist above God, spoken of in so many places (Dn 8:11, 25; 11:36–37; 2Thess 2:4), meant that he would place himself ecclesiastically above God. The only way such a blasphemer could deceive the Church into acknowledging himself as its rightful ruler was that a great apostasy (2 Thes 2:3), culminating in his leadership, would pave the way. Luther believed Paul's warning to the Ephesian bishops (Acts 20:29–30) predicted that the apostasy

²⁶⁴ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 102; Luther, *Second Epistle of St. Peter*, LW 30:149; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, LW 30:252, 288; Martin Luther, *Preface to the Three Epistles of St. John* (1522; 1546), LW 35:393.

²⁶⁵ Luther, *War against the Turk*, LW 46:180–81.

would arise from among the leadership of the Church.²⁶⁶ It was these texts, rather than the Petrine texts used in orthodoxy as scriptural proof for papal supremacy, that Luther saw as the scriptures about the early development of the Papacy.

A changed historiography of the early ages went in tandem with Luther's interpretation of the Pope as the Antichrist. The history of the first few centuries after the apostolic church were traditionally viewed as two eras. First was the period of persecutions and martyrdom under the Roman Empire. This was followed by the era of Constantine, the ecumenical Councils and the church fathers. During the second era Christianity was accepted by the Empire and orthodoxy confirmed in the Church. Miracles and increased doctrinal elaboration were seen as characteristics of these two eras, especially of the last one. Luther followed the periodization but saw these centuries not as the outworking and establishment of Christian orthodoxy but as the history of the rise of the Antichrist in the Church. Luther believed the two eras explained why it had taken the apostasy, which began in the days of the apostles, so long time to mature. The extreme adversity of persecution had kept the Church relatively pure. But then Constantine arose and the Empire accepted Christianity. A time of peace and prosperity for the Church followed—and as the Church got filled with the half-hearted and hypocrites, the apostasy accelerated. Luther believed the historical change from one era to the next also revealed the war between good and evil: The devil had sought to persecute the Church to extinction; when this method proved unfruitful, he tempted the Church with the world instead, and the Church yielded to the temptation.²⁶⁷ This *Zeitgeist* of the second era Luther saw as the reason for the increase of doctrinal errors and false miracles, for Paul had associated these elements together when he warned: “Because they refused to love the truth and so be saved,” God, in his permitting wrath, sent “a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thes 2:10–12).²⁶⁸ As the Church became comfortable in the world, and the Gospel was neglected and unappreciated, the simplicity of Christian faith and practice was obscured by an ever-increasingly complex human religion. Thus Peter's words were fulfilled but he had warned that in the Apostasy works would take the place of faith as the cornerstone of theology (2 Pt 2).²⁶⁹ Thus reliance on and the exaltation of self were the essence of all the heresies that contributed to the deepening stream of apostasy.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁶ Martin Luther, *The Sermon on the Mount* (1530–32), *LW* 21:63.

²⁶⁷ Luther, *Concerning the Rebellious Spirit*, *LW* 40:49.

²⁶⁸ Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, *LW* 44:189; Martin Luther, *The Judgment of Martin Luther on Monastic Vows* (1521), *LW* 44:136; Luther, *Against Insurrection and Rebellion*, *LW* 45:66; Luther, *Second Epistle of St. Peter*, *LW* 30:191; Martin Luther, *Lectures on Deuteronomy* (1523–24), *LW* 9:130; Luther, *Sermon on the Mount*, *LW* 21:274–75; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 2:354; Martin Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John: Chapters 14–16* (1537–38), *LW* 24:75–76; Martin Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John: Chapters 1–4* (1537–40), *LW* 22:35; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 4:127, 141; 5:171; Martin Luther, *Preface to the Wittenberg Edition of Luther's German Writings* (1539), *LW* 34:285; Martin Luther, table talk no. 4487 (1539) *Table Talk* (1531–44), *LW* 54:346–47; Martin Luther, *Against Hanswurst* (1541), *LW* 54:210–11.

²⁶⁹ Luther, *Second Epistle of St. Peter*, *LW* 30:149; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, *LW* 30:288; Martin Luther, *The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests* (1533), *LW* 38:174–75.

²⁷⁰ Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, *LW* 30:252–53.

There were many other texts that warned against false teachings and false miracles (Mt 24:4–5, 11; 2 Thes 2:9)—and with these Luther dismissed the many miracles recorded in early church history as deception the devil had used to fasten people in apostasy.²⁷¹

Having said this, Luther himself did not disagree with all the tenets of faith established by the early Church Councils. How then could he view this time as establishing not orthodoxy but apostasy? While Luther acknowledged that some essential doctrines had been affirmed by the early Councils, he spoke with chagrin of the bishops' competing ambitions during this time.²⁷² In fact, the bishop who won this contest of power—the Roman Bishop—gained power over the Church and thus became the Antichrist. This meant that during the same era that the Church was apparently establishing orthodoxy through the first Councils, it was simultaneously, unconsciously sliding into apostasy by giving supreme power to one of its bishops. This error eclipsed all the points rightly defended in the early Councils. For while all the former heretics had rejected but a point or part of the truth, the Pope, while still retaining the apparent adoration and acceptance of Christ, rejected Christ not in part but completely.²⁷³

Luther also pinpointed when it was that the Bishop of Rome had exalted himself so much as to become the Antichrist. At first Luther thought that the Papacy had only enjoyed its present power for the previous four centuries.²⁷⁴ After further study of history, Luther came to the more accurate conclusion that the Papacy had gained its authority over the Church in the sixth century. Luther believed Gregory I could still be counted a bishop rather than a Pope, for he had been content with his local bishopric and had refused the title “universal bishop.” After him came Sabinian—whom Luther regarded as the first Pope for having wanted to burn Gregory's books—and then Boniface III, who persuaded the emperor to make him “pope, or chief of all the bishops in the whole world.”²⁷⁵ Thus Luther concluded that the apostasy had become official in the early sixth century when the Pope, i.e. the Antichrist, gained power over the Church.

The traditional expectation of a near universal reign of an apostate tyrant in the future was terrible enough. But Luther's proposition that Christendom had been ruled by its enemy for most of its entire history without knowing it bordered on the inconceivable. Luther pointed out that unless the dimensions of the Apostasy had been incredible the Scriptures would not have used so strong warnings against it. Christ himself foretold that the net would be meshed so finely that if it were possible the elect would be deceived (Mt 24:24). This explained why many persons in the past, renowned for their piety, had at the same time inadvertently

²⁷¹ Luther interpreted the delusion mentioned in 2 Thes 2 as referring to both false teachings and false miracles. Martin Luther, *Concerning the Answer of the Goat in Leipzig* (1521), LW 39:134; Luther, *Deuteronomy*, LW 9:130, 188; Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah*, LW 17:118; Luther, *Sermon on the Mount*, LW 21:271–72; Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1531; 1535), LW 26:257–58; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, LW 24:75–76, 368–69; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 7:296–97.

²⁷² Luther, *On the Councils*, LW 41:119–20.

²⁷³ Martin Luther, [*Christmas Postil*] (1522), LW 52:21, 81; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, LW 30:287.

²⁷⁴ See “Leipzig Debate” in section 1.3.5.

²⁷⁵ Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, LW 41:291–92.

contributed to the Apostasy. The only reason why they did not perish is that they did not depart from the fundamental trust in Christ. This reading of history divested many ecclesiastical figures of doctrinal authority to a considerable extent, for their theology could not be accepted wholesale without scrutiny.²⁷⁶ The prophecies stated that not only would the reign of Antichrist be almost imperceptible, it would be such a perilous time (Dn 12:1; 2 Tim 3:1) that if Christ would not have shortened it, the Church and the Gospel would have perished altogether.²⁷⁷ This tremendous scope of the Apostasy was seen in the incomprehensible reality that the official administration of the Church was nothing less than the seat of the Antichrist, and that what the highest ecclesiastic authority taught as Christianity was not Christianity.

The Reign of the Antichrist

Luther denounced the Pope²⁷⁸ as the Antichrist because he believed he usurped the place of Christ (2 Thes 2:4, based on Dn 8:11, 25) and that under his rule the Church was taught false Christianity. “False Christianity” may sound very general, but it is in harmony with Luther’s pervasive denunciation of the Papacy and Catholicism. In the following two sections Luther’s portrayal of the Antichrist (the papal office and its claims to authority) and his apostate teachings (Catholicism) will be discussed separately, though they blend together in Luther’s writings. The sections draw on the instances where Luther explained the Papacy in terms of the prophecies about the Antichrist.

Papal Supremacy

Luther clashed with the Papacy over who and what should be authority in the Church. Luther believed that the Church had only Christ as its head, and that all human positions were administrative and not necessary to the individual’s salvation, since all believers were priests and could approach God directly. But the Antichrist claimed to fill much more than an administrative position; he was the head of the Church, the Vicar of Christ,²⁷⁹ vested with supreme authority. To Luther this was nothing less than claiming the position of Christ, who alone was the head of the Church. By exalting himself to supreme authority in the Church, the

²⁷⁶ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 169–70; Martin Luther, *The Misuse of the Mass* (1521), *LW* 36:191–92, 193; Luther, *Deuteronomy*, *LW* 9:130.

²⁷⁷ Martin Luther, table talks no. 439, 574 (1533), *Table Talk*, *LW* 54:76–77, 101; Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, *WA DB* 11^{II}:108.

²⁷⁸ From the beginning, Luther’s identification of the Pope as the Antichrist was directed against the office of the Apostolic See, and not against any individual pope, but the pope as the Pope, for his supreme position was evil. “It is not the prince, therefore, but his principality, his laws and authority, that are here proved to be iniquitous; which laws and authority are such, that they cannot be administered by a good prince, but by an adversary of Christ only.” Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 117. For Luther’s view of Pope Leo X during the formative years of the application, see Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 122; Preuß, *Vorstellungen vom Antichrist*, 122–23.

²⁷⁹ Some of the titles that Luther complained about were “most holy,” “vicar of God,” and “head of the church.” See Martin Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian* (1521), *LW* 39:194; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 2:38; Luther, *Against Hanswurst*, *LW* 41:203.

bishop of Rome had virtually replaced Christ as the ruler of the Church and was therefore usurping the throne of Christ, sitting in the Temple as God. This replacement of Christ extended to all his offices. Christ was the Judge of all, the supreme and infallible authority, but the Pope claimed to judge all and be judged by none,²⁸⁰ and thus to be above the Councils of the Church and above Christ.²⁸¹ Christ was the Savior, but the Pope claimed he held the keys of St. Peter, i.e., the authority to bestow or withhold forgiveness.²⁸² One must obey Christ and his law, but the Pope claimed that obedience to *him* was a matter of salvation.²⁸³ Christ was the Priest, the intercessor between God and humanity, but the Antichrist thrust himself in between Christ and sinners, creating a priesthood based on the apostolic succession from Peter out of thin air.²⁸⁴ The Bible was the Word of God, the rule of faith and fountain of salvation, but the Antichrist had asserted himself to be the supreme interpreter of the Bible, his authority above it, and had hidden or misrepresented the truths of the Bible in order to validate his own claims, and had given the Church the canon law as an authority even higher than the Bible.²⁸⁵

The Antichrist also claimed to have as extensive jurisdiction as Christ, again showing himself to be sitting in Christ's place. Bearing the keys of Peter, the Pope held authority over the afterlife: He decided how long the soul had to stay in Purgatory (and could change the duration through indulgences), and, by giving or withholding forgiveness, whether the departed would ascend to heaven or descend to hell.²⁸⁶ With his authority to excommunicate the Pope claimed this determining power even over the living.²⁸⁷ The Pope also asserted authority over the State, even styling himself "the king of kings."²⁸⁸ Such earthly ambition

²⁸⁰ Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians* (1519), *LW* 27:342; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 112; Luther, *Psalms 110*, *LW* 13:282; Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, *LW* 41:363–64.

²⁸¹ Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, *LW* 44:139; Luther, *Misuse of the Mass*, *LW* 36:151; Luther, *On the Councils*, *LW* 41:11–12.

²⁸² Against this doctrine, Luther wrote Martin Luther, *The Keys* (1530), *LW* 40:321–77.

²⁸³ Luther, *Lectures on Titus*, *LW* 29:42; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, *LW* 30:288; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, *LW* 26:408; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:61; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 3:326; 8:185.

²⁸⁴ Martin Luther, *On the Papacy in Rome Against the Most Celebrated Romanist in Leipzig* (1520), *LW* 39:83–84; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, *LW* 39:190–91; Luther, *Misuse of the Mass*, *LW* 36:138; Luther, *Psalms 110*, *LW* 13:330. Luther dealt extensively with many of the main passages the Papacy claimed as proofs for its authority, such as Mt 16:13–19 and Jn 21:15–19. See for instance Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 7–41; Martin Luther, *Avoiding the Doctrines of Men and a Reply to the Texts Cited in Defense of the Doctrines of Men* (1522), *LW* 35:147–53.

²⁸⁵ Martin Luther to George Spalatin, *LW* 48:114, lt. 36; Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, *LW* 44:194; Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope*, *LW* 31:392–393; Luther, *Defense and Explanation*, *LW* 32:71, 77; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 98, 106; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, *LW* 39:195; Luther, [Christmas Postil], *LW* 52:137; Martin Luther, *That a Christian Assembly or Congregation Has the Right and Power to Judge All Teaching and to Call, Appoint, and Dismiss Teachers, Established and Proven by Scripture* (1523), *LW* 39:307; Martin Luther to Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, Grand-Master of the Teutonic Order, December, 1523, *LW* 49:67–68, lt. 139; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, *LW* 30:253; Luther, *Private Mass*, *LW* 38:174–75; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:82, 470; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 24:355; Martin Luther, *Counsel of a Committee of Several Cardinals with Luther's Preface* (1538), *LW* 34:237; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 4:141.

²⁸⁶ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 108–9; Luther, *Keys*; Luther, *Defense and Explanation*, *LW* 32:63, 64, 66.

²⁸⁷ Luther, *Defense and Explanation*, *LW* 32:66.

²⁸⁸ Martin Luther, *Lectures on 1 Timothy* (1528), *LW* 28:377.

blurred the difference between the Church militant and the Church victorious. The Church was supposed to be on pilgrimage in this world, waiting for the kingdom to come, when she would finally reign in glory. Instead, the Church reigned over the State as if the here and now was the Kingdom of God.²⁸⁹ And in addition to the indirect claims of authority over heaven, the Pope explicitly made even angels subservient to him and was even regarded of semi-divine stature.²⁹⁰ The arrogance and hypocrisy of the Pope's rule showed it to be the exact opposite to that of Christ: The supposed vicegerent of the Crucified One owned great lands and treasures (Dn 11:39, 43)²⁹¹ and lived in a palace; the servant of the Prince of Peace incited and waged wars, and with his highest ecclesiasts often led a life more sumptuous and corrupt than secular princes;²⁹² Christ had nowhere to lay his head, but his vicar, too holy to walk as other men, was carried around²⁹³ and had sovereigns bow and kiss his feet; and whoever opposed him faced his wrath, excommunication, and persecution.²⁹⁴

Thus the authority and jurisdiction claimed by the Pope showed that he did not represent Christ all. On the contrary, he replaced and removed Christ. Luther remarked grimly that "a man is vicar only when his superior is absent."²⁹⁵ By setting up a rule separate from and in opposition to the reign of Christ, it was inevitable that this rebellious rule be of a different nature altogether. Instead of the Christ's gentle rule over the innermost conscience, the Antichrist tyrannized and deceived the guilty consciences over whom he, an erring sinner himself, in his arrogance claimed absolute authority.²⁹⁶

Papal supremacy was not an isolated doctrinal error. Replacing Christ, the center of Christianity, with a human proxy, betrayed the fact that the entire religion was out of joint. Human religion had systematically replaced the divine religion. Instead of Christ there was the Pope; instead of Christianity, there was Roman Catholicism; instead of the community of true believers, there was the Roman Catholic Church. The same redefinition was found everywhere. Thus the Antichrist did not only eclipse Christ but the essence of Christianity, as could be seen throughout the tenor of Roman Catholic traditions, doctrines, and canon law.

²⁸⁹ Martin Luther to Philip Melanchthon, July 13, 1521, *LW* 48:261, lt. 85; Martin Luther, *Concerning the Ministry* (1523), *LW* 40:16; Luther, *On the Papacy*, *LW* 39:84; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 120; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, *LW* 26:408; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:61, 82; Luther, table talk no. 4487, *Table Talk*, *LW* 54:346–47.

²⁹⁰ Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:61. "Everyone, even God and the angels, is subject to him, while he is subject to no one, so that even his disciples say he is an extraordinary creature, being neither God nor man." Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope*, *LW* 31:392.

²⁹¹ Luther, *On the Papacy*, *LW* 39:60; Martin Luther, *Trade and Usury* (1524), *LW* 45:289.

²⁹² Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope*, *LW* 31:393; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 58–66, 115, 118, 120–121, 124–27, 140, 148–49, 174–75; Luther, *Misuse of the Mass*, *LW* 36:157–58; Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luther's Warning to His Dear German People* (1531), *LW* 47:40.

²⁹³ Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 7:188.

²⁹⁴ Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, *LW* 39:194; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 113; Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luther's Exposition of the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Chapters of the Gospel of St. John* (1527), *LW* 23:212; Luther, *War against the Turk*, *LW* 46:180–81; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:61, 82; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, *LW* 8:283–84.

²⁹⁵ Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, *LW* 31:342. See also Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 90.

²⁹⁶ Luther, *Lectures on Titus*, *LW* 29:42; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, *LW* 26:386, 408; 27:110.

Canon Law, Catholic Doctrine, and Traditions

Luther believed that the reign of the Antichrist could be seen not only in the replacement of the divine Christ for a human head of the Church, but also in the exchange of the living Word of God for human words—ceremonies, traditions, and canon law. Replacing the divine for the human meant that the unfathomable, divine dimensions of true religion were replaced by measurable categories that could be supervised by man.²⁹⁷ The focus was shifted away from spirituality towards the externals of life—even when the categories were apparently inner, spiritual phenomena such as repentance, prayer, and good works. Instead of putting the Bible in people’s hands, their lives were minutely regulated by traditions, ceremonies, and canon law. But quantifying life was an impractical endeavor and called for ever more rules, which could be adhered to only with great effort. The numerous rules, their controlling intent, and external focus obscured the freedom, simplicity, and spirituality of Christianity. Thus Christianity was reduced effectively to formalism, empty of true meaning and life.²⁹⁸

But the problem with the antichristian apostasy (papal Christianity) ran deeper than formalism and unbiblical innovations: The uplifting of human laws and traditions instead of God’s word stemmed from or moved simultaneously with a flawed conception of the fundamentals of religion such as law, sin, repentance, good works, forgiveness, and faith. Luther here pointed out many distorted fundamentals and how one distortion led to another. The broad, all-encompassing law of God was replaced with the minutiae of canon law.²⁹⁹ Good works were understood not as the practical expression of the divine law but as acts prescribed by the papal system. This trivialized sin and disinformed the conscience, for it was regarded as a greater sin to transgress against canon law than the Decalogue. This qualified the Pope as the “Man of Sin” (2 Thes 2:3): He required obedience where none was needed and dismissed it where it was imperative, and thus he created sin and guilt where neither one existed, and overlooked both where the divine law was transgressed.³⁰⁰ According to the Church, to make right for sin, one must repent adequately and confess every known sin, and

²⁹⁷ “Who is he who can control the Spirit of the Lord and determine what He should do? The self-righteous say, ‘I can do it because I set up my work, and that ought to please Him.’ Better leave it alone. Better leave our Lord God unmolded! The self-righteous say: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is elusive. We desire to circumscribe Him by means of definite rules.’ So every self-righteous man is a master of the Holy Spirit, of the God of heaven and earth. He ascribes terminus and boundary to God, because he keeps on saying that the church has power to change the Word, so that the Sacred Scriptures should get their authority from the faith of the Roman Church.” Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah*, LW 17:18.

²⁹⁸ Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, LW 36:73; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 97–98; Luther, *On the Papacy*, LW 39:84; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 56–101, 137–38, 142–44; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, LW 39:191–92, 195; Luther, *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, LW 40:129–30; Luther, *Lectures on 1 Timothy*, LW 28:373; Luther, *Private Mass*, LW 38:190; Luther, *Against Hanswurst*, LW 41:211.

²⁹⁹ Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, LW 44:193–94; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 102; Luther, *Misuse of the Mass*, LW 36:138; Luther, *Lectures on Zechariah*, LW 20:263–64.

³⁰⁰ Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, LW 44:194; Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, LW 36:72; Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope*, LW 31:392; Luther, *Defense and Explanation*, LW 32:63; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 99–100, 139, 141–44, 155–56, 158; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, LW 39:194, 201–2; Martin Luther, *Sermons on the First Epistle of St. Peter* (1523), LW 30:107; Luther, *Against the Heavenly Prophets*, LW 40:130; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, LW 30:288; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, LW 27:110; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 3:121, 326; 8:283; Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, LW 41:288, 339.

then make satisfaction with good works. But again this quantified understanding of sin and repentance did not meet the human condition. Man was sinful by nature and needed more than forgiveness for individual acts.³⁰¹ He needed the assurance of forgiveness of all his sins. But the penitential system did not achieve assurance for the sinner, for it asked the sinner to recount all sins—which was impossible³⁰²—while still leaving the soul in doubt about its absolution.³⁰³ As a result, conscience either became self-righteously pleased with its adherence to the papal rule or chronically guilty by its constant failure. To alleviate this burden, the sinner was offered a buy-out from the third part of the sacrament of penance (the satisfaction with good works) by paying the Church money instead of performing the good works prescribed by satisfaction.³⁰⁴ But this only aggravated the burden, for this cheapened sin and salvation in the eyes of the masses, who thought they were paying for salvation, and were discouraged from actual repentance and good works by the whole affair.³⁰⁵ All of this showed that the problem of sin was misrepresented, and the opposite side of that meant that the solution—salvation and its reception by faith—was misrepresented as well. In critiquing indulgences Luther had inadvertently touched the nerve of the entire system. “Here,” Luther said about faith, “the dispute begins.”³⁰⁶

The most heinous distortion in the apostate Christianity was that Antichrist left faith—the very lifeblood of the Gospel—out of the equation of religion—it was even denied in the Mass³⁰⁷—and taught people that they must accomplish their salvation themselves.³⁰⁸ This was in coherence with the theological system. Since the enormity of sin was not comprehended, too much credit was given to human nature and faculties. Humanity could, so to speak, take the first steps towards God. In fact, the entire system was nothing else but man’s attempt of saving himself dressed in the trappings of Christianity. Man had to repent enough, make sure he either did the works of satisfaction or buy indulgences in their place. But by allowing the Pope to have jurisdiction over the sanctuary of the soul, instead of receiving divine pardon that alone could take away guilt and bring peace to the heart, conscience was continuously terrified and tortured by constant lack of assurance about its standing with God. Thus the

³⁰¹ Luther struck at this understanding of repentance with the very first of his ninety-five theses: “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ‘Repent’ [Matt. 4:17], he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.” Martin Luther, *Ninety-Five Theses or Disputation on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences* (1517), *LW* 31:25, brackets in the text.

³⁰² Martin Luther, *A Discussion on How Confession Should Be Made* (1520), *LW* 39:33.

³⁰³ Luther, *Keys*, *LW* 40:344.

³⁰⁴ This was at least the situation in Luther’s time. Indulgence salesmen confounded the release from church-prescribed punishment, i.e. satisfaction, with God’s punishment of sin. And the fact they did so shows there was a market for it. Martin Luther, *Explanations of the Ninety-Five Theses or Explanations of the Disputation Concerning the Value of Indulgences* (1518), *LW* 31:151–52.

³⁰⁵ Luther, *Explanations of the Ninety-Five Theses*, *LW* 31:153; Luther, *Luther’s Warning to His Dear German People*, *LW* 47:41.

³⁰⁶ Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 24:308.

³⁰⁷ Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, *LW* 36:83; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 108–9.

³⁰⁸ Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, *LW* 36:72; Luther, *Monastic Vows*, *LW* 44:280; Luther, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, *LW* 30:99; Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, *LW* 30:252–53; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, *LW* 26:180, 334–35.

towering façade of antichristian Christendom cast a shadow over the Christian experience from the beginning to the end. In the darkness souls were misguided as to their diagnosis and remedy, receiving neither, and perishing *en masse* while believing themselves to be Christians.³⁰⁹

The allowance of human incursions had also corrupted other doctrines. Combined with the Pope's right to establish new articles of faith, this fact accounted for why new doctrines had arisen³¹⁰—such as monkhood, canonizing saints,³¹¹ and purgatory³¹²—and why biblical ones had been defaced. Some of the most blatant doctrinal changes regarded baptism, the mass, marriage, and asceticism. The main distortions of the mass were the suspension of two kinds to the laity and construing the mass, God's offer of forgiveness, into its opposite, humanity's offer to God.³¹³ Marriage had been denigrated as an unholy way of life compared to celibacy, which was prescribed to monks and the clergy.³¹⁴ These were but mere aspects of doctrinal distortion. Its extreme manifestation was when the myriad rules of formalism came together to form an entire way of life that was even stricter than the motions through which the masses must go—asceticism.³¹⁵ Those who took the monastic vow were regarded as entering upon a higher plane of spirituality than regular Christians. Thus the first step of monasticism undermined the first step of Christianity. Baptism was a life-long vow to follow Christ, which meant there was no higher vow or higher life. Two ascetic statutes had been singled out for the Apostle's prophetic condemnation, namely the dietary regulations for fasting and celibacy (1 Tm 4:1–4).³¹⁶ Luther also read celibacy in Daniel's prediction that the Antichrist would

³⁰⁹ Luther, *To the Christian Nobility*, LW 44:193; Luther, *Freedom of a Christian*, LW 31:336, 375; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 151; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, LW 39:202; Luther, [Christmas Postil], LW 52:137; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, LW 26:180, 386; Luther, *Psalms 110*, LW 13:282; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 7:344.

³¹⁰ “There are still more innovations, like purgatory, relics, consecration of churches, swarms of decrees and decretals, and many more countless books full of vain, new inventions, of which neither the ancient church nor the apostles knew anything.” It is therefore “evident that as the arch-whore of the devil they have abandoned the ancient church and its ancient bridegroom and have not only become apostate and heretical . . . but Antichrist.” Luther, *Against Hanswurst*, LW 41:205.

³¹¹ Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will* (1525), LW 33:88.

³¹² Luther, Martin Luther, *Wideruff vom Fegefeuer* (1530), WA 30^{II}:(360)367–90.

³¹³ Martin Luther, *An Order of Mass and Communication for the Church at Wittenberg* (1523), LW 53:35; Luther, *Private Mass*, LW 38:160, 183, 206; Martin Luther, *A Letter of Dr. Martin Luther concerning His Book on the Private Mass* (1534), LW 38:232–33; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 8:230.

³¹⁴ Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope*, LW 31:391; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, LW 39:210, 12; Martin Luther, sermon, March 11, 1522, in *Eight Sermons at Wittenberg* (1522), LW 51:80; Martin Luther, *An Exhortation to the Knights of the Teutonic Order That They Lay Aside False Chastity and Assume the True Chastity of Wedlock* (1523), LW 45:144; Luther, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, LW 30:106–7; Martin Luther, *Exhortation to All Clergy Assembled at Augsburg* (1530), LW 34:40–41; Luther, *His Book on the Private Mass*, LW 38:232–33.

³¹⁵ Luther, [Christmas Postil], LW 52:247–48; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 8:21. Luther wrote several works against monasticism: Martin Luther, *Themata de votis* (1521), WA 8:(313)323–35; Luther, *Monastic Vows*, LW 44:(243)251–400; Martin Luther, *How God Rescued an Honorable Nun* (1524), LW 43:(81)85–96; Martin Luther, *An Answer to Several Questions on Monastic Vows* (1526), LW 46:(139)145–54.

³¹⁶ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 141; Luther, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, LW 30:106–7; Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, LW 39:83–84.

disregard the love of women (Dn 11:37).³¹⁷ These two statutes affected the laity as well as monks and priests, for the common people had to abstain from certain food articles during fasts, and not only were they taught that marriage was unholy than chastity, but they also suffered under unjust marriage regulations.³¹⁸

The Downfall of the Antichrist: The Reformation and the Last Day

The Antichrist still reigned in Luther's day. But there was something else that defined the present as well. The Papacy was no longer the entire picture. Now there was a clash between the Papacy and the Reformation. Luther, and indeed everyone in his day, friends and foes, were aware that they were living in momentous, history-defining times. To Catholics this was the most serious schism since the Great Schism of 1054, and a heresy that rivaled any former one. But to Luther this was not a schism. The Reformation was nothing less than the true Church's first successful resistance against the Antichrist. There had been faithful believers through the centuries; some had even protested against corruption and false doctrine—here Hus a century before was prominent. But the Reformation had exposed the Antichrist, apparently permanently, and the true Church had reorganized itself apart from the Antichrist, which had not happened since the days of the apostles. To Luther all of this was a fulfillment of prophecy.

The traditional belief about the Antichrist was that his reign would be cut short when he would be destroyed by Christ. Daniel said "he shall be broken without hand," and Paul explained that further by writing that "the Lord will consume [him] with the breath of his mouth and destroy [him] with the brightness of his coming" (Dn 8:25, ESV; 2 Thes 2:8, NKJV). To Luther these scriptures showed that the Papacy would be brought to an end—or "broken"—by Christ in two phases. First, the Papacy would decline by the preaching of the restored Gospel, which was the "breath" of Christ's mouth. It was the restored Gospel which freed people's consciences from the Antichrist's deception and tyranny and thus caused his reign to decline.³¹⁹ Then, eventually, the Antichrist would be "destroyed" by "the brightness of [Christ's] coming" when the Savior would return to earth. Luther saw his own time, the Reformation, as the commencing fulfillment of this prophecy: The Gospel had been restored, the Antichrist had been exposed, and his decline had begun. All that remained now was the waiting for the Savior's return on the Last Day. "After the revealing of the Antichrist," wrote Luther, "nothing else is to be hoped for or expected but the end of the world and the resurrection of the dead. Here the Scripture is over and all prophecies come to an end."³²⁰

³¹⁷ Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, LW 39:195; Martin Luther, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* 7 (1523), LW 28:5, 24; Luther, *Exhortation to the Knights*, LW 45:153; Luther, *Epistle of St. Jude*, LW 30:206; Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*, LW 35:313; Martin Luther, *Concerning His Book on the Private Mass* (1534), LW 38:232; Luther, *On the Councils*, LW 41:163.

³¹⁸ Luther, *Babylonian Captivity*, LW 36:98, 102; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 8:21.

³¹⁹ Luther, *Misuse of the Mass*, LW 36:219.

³²⁰ Luther, on Dn 12:1, in *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, WA DB 11^{II}:112. Translation mine.

This part of Luther's theology was his own present and was therefore particularly dynamic. He lived, so to say, in the phrase "but he shall be broken without hand": The Antichrist had begun to be broken by declining, and would eventually be fully broken by being destroyed. But in this twilight of present and future, how long would it be to dawn? Early on Luther spoke positively: The light of the Gospel had swept away the deception so the Antichrist was now the scorn of all people and would soon be brought to naught.³²¹ Luther put, at least once, a time on his sense of imminence. During the incursion of the Turks in 1529–30, Luther discovered he had overlooked one other prophetic fulfillment before the end, namely the Turk's conquest of three kingdoms (Dn 7), which Luther believed was fulfilled that winter. Accordingly, Luther said that the Last Day must arrive within few months.³²² Even when that expectation tempered, Luther always had this sense of imminence. On other occasions, which shows how varied this sense can be, Luther spoke of decades or even centuries, yet always in the sense of short time.³²³ Luther's sense of agency in the Antichrist's fall also changed. As it became clear that the Papacy, though exposed and challenged, was not going anywhere, Luther's hopes grew fainter. He emphasized less the decline of the Antichrist and more his eventual destruction. After all, his destruction implied that despite the Church's most valiant effort, the foe would remain until the very end. What was worse, as Luther observed the results of the Reformation, instead of the Gospel causing the Papacy to nearly fall to pieces, he worried that times of darkness would return.³²⁴ This development could already be read in what was happening: Most Christians were content with remaining deceived within the Roman fold and not all who rejected the Antichrist truly accepted the Gospel. Some joined the "sects" and many who adhered to the Reformation failed to be reformed at heart by the Gospel. Others essentially left faith altogether and became "Epicureans," Luther's catch-all phrase that seems semi-equivalent to thorough worldliness and *de facto* atheism. Despite saying that no prophecies remained unfulfilled but the end, here Luther indeed did add to the picture: As the Antichrist declined and people threw off his yoke, most people distorted their freedom into Epicureanism instead of accepting salvation. Luther noted that this was the import of a certain prediction about the Antichrist³²⁵ and also harmonized with Jesus'

³²¹ Luther, *Against the Spiritual Estate*, LW 39:279; Luther, *Against Insurrection and Rebellion*, LW 45:69–70; Luther, table talk no. 439, *Table Talk*, LW 54:76.

³²² See section 1.4.2.

³²³ This table talk would be the upper limit of time: "This wicked world cannot last much more than three centuries." Martin Luther, *The Familiar Discourses of Dr. Martin Luther, (The Great Reformer), Which He Held with Various Learned Men at His Table, &c., on the Important Doctrines of Religion, Containing Histories, Prophecies, Directions, Instructions, &c.* (London: Sussex Press, 1818), 8. The title page says that this particular table talk collection is by Anton Lauterbach. It would be of interest to locate it in the *WA*.

³²⁴ Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, LW 24:370; Luther, table talk no. 4469, *Table Talk*, LW 54:343.

³²⁵ "Among the pictures of the Antichrist there is an old prophecy which says that at the end of the world, when the deception of the Antichrist is uncovered, people will become wild and fierce, falling away from all faith and saying there is no longer a God and living in all sorts of wantonness according to their own lusts. Such old pictures move me very much indeed and also hit the nail squarely on the head." Martin Luther, *Psalm 101* (1534), LW 13:190–91.

mournful description of a nearly-faithless world at his return (Lk 18:8; 17:26).³²⁶ Indeed, as the Church was hastening the Day with the Gospel, the Antichrist was also hastening it with his wickedness.³²⁷

In his 1541 additions to the *Preface* to Daniel, Luther fleshed this darker future scenario out in his notes on Daniel 11 (a chapter which was explaining Daniel 8). The Antichrist had had a long prosperous reign as predicted by Daniel 8 (vv. 12, 24–25). Through the centuries there had always been saints who raised their voice against the Roman Pontiff. But for a long time protest had not been able to expose the masterful deception. Some emperors had nobly resisted the encroachments of the Holy See and this had been foreshocks of the “push” against the Antichrist (Dn 11:40). The push proper had come with Hus who had preached the restored Gospel and decried the Pope as the Antichrist a century before Luther.³²⁸ But it was not until the Reformation that the long-observed Gospel broke through the darkness. The Gospel was the news that so upset the Antichrist (v. 44) and presaged his end (v. 45). And so, with the Antichrist’s exposure and decline begun, the next great event to occur was the Last Day.³²⁹ Now the prayer and promise was that the Church would not be completely extinguished. Luther even wondered whether the 1290 and 1355 days of Daniel 12 were the time period during which the Gospel would be forbidden again during the final years of history, just as in pre-reformation times.³³⁰ This implied that in the final end-time apostasy most Protestants would oppose the true believers just like the papists!

There was another element in the prophecies about the downfall of the Antichrist that was much more important to Luther than the Reformation, and that was the Second Coming. Whether the success of the Reformation would turn out to be small or great, Luther believed that it was not enough to transform the world. Jesus himself must return to do away with Antichrist and save God’s people. This is why Luther’s discourse about theological realities of his day usually led his thoughts to his ultimate hope: Jesus’s imminent return. No matter what aspect of Antichrist’s decline Luther began to discuss, he ended with the glory to come. And since Luther saw this prophetic topic—the end of the Antichrist—as framing his present and future, his views of the Antichrist’s fate reflected his thoughts and emotions about the current situation of the Reformation and its prospects. Put another way, Luther’s views on the decline and destruction of the Antichrist were a projection of his current reality, darkened by his fears about the Gospel’s success, and gilded by his hopes for the returning Savior. This correlation between Luther’s own experience and his interpretation of the Antichrist’s decline

³²⁶ Luther, *Psalm 101*, *LW* 13:190–93; Martin Luther to Wenceslaus Link, June 20, 1543, *LW* 50:243, lt. 302.

³²⁷ Luther, *Psalm 101*, *LW* 13:188.

³²⁸ See also this statement: Jan Hus “was the first to call the pope an Antichrist. That honor we must concede to him.” Martin Luther, *Psalm 112* (1526), *LW* 13:417. See also Martin Luther, *An Instruction to Penitents concerning the Forbidden Books of Dr. M. Luther* (1521), *LW* 44:227.

³²⁹ “Nach offenbarung des Endechrists, ist die Schrift aus etc.” “Und hie sehen wir, das nach dieser zeit, so der Bapst offenbart, nichts zu hoffen noch zu gewarten ist, denn der Welt ende und aufferstehung der Todten. Hie ist die Schrift aus und hat alle Weissagung ein ende.” Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, *WA DB* 11^{II}:112.

³³⁰ Luther, *Vorrede über den Propheten Daniel*, *WA DB* 11^{II}:120–22.

and destruction also explains the range of emotion coloring this theme. He would exclaim joyfully that the Gospel had been restored and the Antichrist had begun to decline; he expressed his discouragement about how slow that decline was, and his hopes that the Second Coming would cut it short. The fact that the reign of the Church's greatest enemy, though weakening, was unavoidable, frequently merged Luther's white-hot indignation against the Papacy with his heart-felt longings for the return of the Savior, who would destroy the fiend.³³¹

When it came to the order and nature of events at the time of Christ's return and Antichrist's destruction, Luther reverted back to the traditional eschatology, which did not go into great detail but simply outlined the rough order of events that would take place: Christ would return to judge the living and the dead; the Antichrist would be condemned and cast into hell with the wicked, and the righteous would reign with Christ through eternity. Luther does not seem to have focused much on the sequence of events after Christ's return. Throughout his life the focus of his prophetic interpretation stayed on the current struggle against the Antichrist and the hope of the Savior's soon return.

1.5.3 Interpretative Alternatives

The choices that Luther faced in the interpretation of Daniel 8 had mostly to do with the identity of the last horn, i.e. the Antichrist. On what came before that in the vision he had no disagreement with the consensus. Luther was familiar with at least two other interpretations of the Antichrist, and they were both potential paths that he decided not to walk down. The first was the traditional interpretation of a single future tyrant and has already been discussed in the historical section. The second identified the Muslim power—in Luther's time, the Turks, i.e. the Caliphate or the Ottoman Empire—as the Antichrist. (This interpretation, incidentally, shows that the idea of Antichrist being a dynasty rather than a single ruler was already in the water before Luther, though applied to a different power.) In the *Responsio*, Luther's very first prophetic exposition on the Antichrist, Luther brushed aside both of these identifications of the enemy as untenable³³² and demonstrated why it referred to the Pope instead.

As Luther's theology developed during the formative years, it appears he may have had the second interpretation in mind to begin with, for in his first Psalm lectures (1513–1516), he mentioned the Muslim power and the Antichrist several times in the same breath:

Mohammed prospered. "By his cunning he makes deceit prosper under his hand," as Dan. 8:25 says.³³³

³³¹ Luther, *Daniel VIII*.23–25, 90; Luther, *Answer to the Hyperchristian*, LW 39:202–3; Luther, *War against the Turk*, LW 46:181; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, LW 26:86; Martin Luther, *Preface to the First Book of Maccabees* (1533), LW 35:352; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, LW 22:61; Luther, *Against the Roman Papacy*, LW 41:361.

³³² Luther, *Daniel VIII*.23–25, 41–42, 56–57.

³³³ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:34.

The devil is the horn of all ungodly realms and especially of the Antichrist, and the Antichrist is the horn of his people. On the contrary, the kingdom of Antichrist is his horn, and beyond that, he himself is the horn of the devil and by means of this horn he will crush the church, as we read in Dan. 7:21 and Rev. 13:7. Thus the Turk is the horn of the Turks, etc.³³⁴

Second, these verses [Ps 74:13–14] can be taken as referring to the devil and the whole world equally. Third, to heretics and their leaders. Fourth, to the Turk and Antichrist. Fifth, to any superstitious head that speaks like a dragon, detracting from the truth and resisting it, as he is pictured in Rev. 12:3–4, where it is said that he draws the third part of the stars down to earth.³³⁵

The church is being abandoned in its latest devastation by the Turk or Antichrist, so that the remnant of the elect will scarcely be saved. And then the things set on fire and undermined (that is, the wicked congregation) will perish at the rebuke of Christ's countenance, since, as the apostle says [2 Thess. 2:8], "the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of His mouth and destroy him with the brightness of His coming. . . . It will be a "wild boar," not tamed, but a denizen of the woods. . . . The domesticated pig is the sinner in the obedience and yoke of the church, but the woodland and wild boar is outside the church. Such a one, indeed, is the Turk or Antichrist, just as Herod was over against the synagog [*sic*], as well as those who have removed themselves from under Christ's yoke and have led the Jews astray."³³⁶

Luther seems to equate the Turks with the Antichrist in some of these statements. At the same time some of them are ambiguous; he might be treating the Turks and the Antichrist as two but belonging in the same category.³³⁷ Furthermore, at other times in the lectures Luther spoke of the Antichrist in a way that excluded the Turks from the equation. In the most apocalyptic passage of the lectures, Luther warned that the decadence of Christendom was preparing the ascendancy of the Antichrist, who would "kill the majority of people not through poverty but through an abundance of everything"³³⁸—hardly a reference to the Turkish threat. If there is inconsistency in Luther's identification of the Antichrist, time and topic accounts for it. Luther lectured on the Psalms for six semesters, and mentioned the Antichrist only several times. If his interpretation was not set, intermittent remarks would reflect some fluctuations. At the very least Luther believed that the Muslims played a role in prophecy, and even in connection with the Antichrist.

³³⁴ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:114.

³³⁵ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:449.

³³⁶ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 11:100, translator's brackets.

³³⁷ In the first quote, Luther was explaining prosperity, and could have been using Daniel 8:25 as a proof text for how the wicked as well as the godly prosper, as he did elsewhere: "For the ungodly are guided, and they make progress according to the words of Dan. 8:24–25: 'Craft shall be successful in his hand, and he shall prosper and do it.'" Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 11:128. In the second comment, Luther might be mentioning the Turk as separate from the Antichrist. In the third, Luther was either identifying the Turk as the Antichrist or putting them in the same category, as he did with the world and the devil. The fourth statement seems to most strongly equate the two. However, if Preuß's contention that Luther used the Latin conjunction *vel* as disjunctive is correct, then he might not have been equating the two in this statement either. Preuß, *Vorstellungen vom Antichrist*, 174n2. But he might have.

³³⁸ Luther, *First Lectures on the Psalms*, LW 10:353.

Over the next years, however, from 1516 to 1521, Luther did not mention the Turks in connection to the Antichrist. During that time he came to the conclusion that the Pope was the Antichrist. The next time Luther wrote about the Muslim Antichrist interpretation—the first completely clear instance that he did so—was when he rejected it in the *Responsio*. There he stated that the Antichrist was to be “powerful in faces,” i.e. a ruler of the Church, not of a territorial kingdom:

He is not powerful in horns, or hoofs, or sword, or arms, like any other king the Word of God describes; but totally diverse from every other; he is “powerful in faces.” . . . Hence it is evident, that this prophecy cannot be applied to Mahomet, nor to any other kingdom that is obtained by force, or by arms. For kingdoms of this kind, are always represented in the Scripture, under the emblems of teeth, horns, and hoofs.³³⁹

Luther abandoned this peculiar understanding of “faces” in Daniel 8:23 shortly thereafter. But he retained the belief that the prophecies clearly foretold the Antichrist would arise within the Church and rule over it as a Christian ruler. The Muslim power made no such pretensions, being an open enemy to the Christian faith, and hence could not be the Antichrist. But if they were not the Antichrist, how was the role of Muslims in history to be understood in the light of prophecy? Luther had put the Turks in close connection to the Antichrist in the first Lectures on the Psalms, and now that he had become convinced that the Pope was the Antichrist, the question remained what to do with the Muslims. The alarming advance of the Turks into Europe forced this question upon the Reformer’s mind.

Luther’s first attempt to explain the prophetic role of the Turks was to call them the Antichrist with the Pope. This he did already in 1522: “Das der Bapst der Antichrist sey mit dem Turcken, ist myr kein tzweyfel mehr.”³⁴⁰ Luther made similar statements sporadically over the next two decades.³⁴¹ During the same time period, he often explicitly denied the idea

³³⁹ Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 56–57.

³⁴⁰ Martin Luther, *Kirchenpostille* (1521–35), *WA* 10¹.1:148.

³⁴¹ “This Christian Church exists not only in the realm of the Roman Church or pope, but in all the world, as the prophets foretold that the gospel of Christ would spread throughout the world, Psalm 2[:8], Psalm 19[:4]. Thus this Christian Church is physically dispersed among pope, Turks, Persians, Tartars, but spiritually gathered in one gospel and faith, under one head, i.e. Jesus Christ. For the papacy is assuredly the true realm of Antichrist, the real anti-Christian tyrant, who sits in the temple of God and rules with human commandments, as Christ in Matthew 24[:24] and Paul in II Thessalonians 2[:3 f.] declare; although the Turk and all heresies, wherever they may be, are also included in this abomination which according to prophecy will stand in the holy place, but are not to be compared to the papacy.” Martin Luther, *Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper* (1528), *LW* 37:367–8. “Ego omnio puto papatum esse Antichristum, aut si quis vult addere Turcam, papa est spiritus Antichristi, et Turca est caro Antichristi. Sie helffen beyde einander wurgen, hic corpore et gladio, ille doctrina et spiritu.” Luther, table talk no. 330 (summer/fall 1532), *Tischreden*, *WA TR* 1:135. “And whoever believes that this Lamb bears the sins of all the world must regard pope and Turk as the Antichrist.” Luther, sermon, November 3, 1537, in *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:163–164. “Ideo est Endechrist i. e. quia aliter docet et regnat quam Christus. Christus ita . . . Ideo qui te volunt ducere per decreta etc. setzen sich an mein stad. Ideo sunt EndeChrist. Turca hat seinen Mahemet gesetzt in Christi locum. Papa quoque.” Luther, sermon, January 6, 1538, in *Predigten des Jahres 1538* (1538), *WA* 46:137–38. “Corpus Antichristi est simul papa et Turca, quia corpus constituitur corpore et anima. Spiritus Antichristi est papa, caro eius Turca, qui corporaliter infestat ecclesiam, ille spiritualiter. Sunt tamen ambo ex uno domino, Diabolo, cum papa sit mendax et homicida Turca. Reduc illum Antichristum ad

that the Muslims were *the* Antichrist. What can be done with these conflicting remarks? To begin with, Luther's statements that the Turk was or was not the Antichrist must be seen in the context of his overall prophetic interpretation, and this context is Luther's countless mentions of the papal Antichrist.³⁴² With that in mind, the following points can help to evaluate these statements about the Turk as the Antichrist. First, Luther never referred to the Turks as the Antichrist alone; when he called them the Antichrist they always shared this title with the Pope. Since both were the enemies of the Church, Luther viewed them as an attack coordinated by the devil, and in the sense that the two worked together the Turks could be referred to as being (*a part of*) the Antichrist in this sense that they were associated with the Antichrist. This line of thought explains most of the double Antichrist references. Secondly, this inclusive usage of the term Antichrist for the Muslims must be left at that, since Luther often explicitly denied that the Muslims were the Antichrist:

Daß der Papst der rechte Widerchrist sei erscheinet aus dem klärlich und öffentlich, daß die, so seine Satzungen ubertreten, viel härter gestraft werden, denn die wider Gottes Gesetz, Gebot und Wort thun. Also sitz der Papst im Tempel Gottes . . . darüber erhebt er sich und will Gott sein. . . . Der Türk ist nicht der Antichrist, denn er ist und sitzt nicht in der Kirchen Gottes, sondern ist eine böse Bestie; aber der Papst sitzt in der heiligen Kirche und maßet sich des Diensts und der Ehren an, die allein Gotte gebühret! Denn Niemand ist ein Widerchrist außer Gottes Kirchen.³⁴³

This explanation echoes Luther's rejection of the Muslim Antichrist in the *Responsio* of 1521 and leads to the third point. Luther might sometimes have entertained the idea that since the Muslims aided the Pope they could be not only cohorts of but also part of the Antichrist

unitatem, et ambo inveniens in papa." Luther, table talk no. 3055a–b (undated), *Tischreden*, *WA TR* 3:158–59.

³⁴² They are so frequent that they can be found close in time to every mention of the Turks as the Antichrist with the Pope, often in the same work. In the *Christmas Postil*, Luther called the Pope Antichrist in distinction to the Turks. Luther, [*Christmas Postil*], *LW* 52:114, 248. As to table talk no. 330, table talk no. 332 (same page in Veit Dietrich's Ms.) distinguishes between the Pope as the Antichrist (Dn 11) and the Turks as another enemy. Luther, table talk no. 332 (summer/fall 1532), *Tischreden*, *WA TR* 1:135. Shortly before the sermons 1537–38, Luther wrote the Schmalkald Articles in which it is clearly stated that the Pope is the Antichrist and not the Turks. Martin Luther, *Die Schmalkaldischen Artikel* (1537), 2:2, 4; 3:11 = *WA* 50:209a, 217a–18a, 249a.

³⁴³ Luther, table talk no. 3443 (undated), *Tischreden*, *WA TR* 3:318. See also the following: "The pope, along with his followers, wages war, commits murder, and robs not only his enemies, but he also burns, condemns, and persecutes the innocent, the pious, the orthodox, as a true Antichrist. And he does this while sitting in the temple of God [II Thess. 2:4], as head of the church; the Turk does not do that." Luther, *War against the Turk*, *LW* 46:180–81, translator's brackets. "Ich halt den Mahmet nicht für den Endechrist, Er machts zu grob und hat einen kendlischen schwartzen Teuffel, der weder Glauben noch vernunft betriegen kan, Und ist wie ein Heide, der von aussen die Christenheit verfolget, wide die Römer und andere Heiden gethan haben. Denn wie kan der einen Christen betriegen, der die heilige Schrifft, beide, New und Alt testament verwirfft, Die Tauffe, Sacrament, Schlüssel oder vergebung der sünden, Vater unser, Glauben, Zehen gebot, Auch den Ehestand für nichts helt, Und eitel Mord und unzucht leret? Aber der Bapst bey uns ist der rechte Endechrist, der hat den hohen, subtilen, schönen, gleiffenden Teuffel, Der sitzt inwendig in der Christenheit, Lest die heilige Schrifft, Tauffe, Sacrament, Schlüssel, Catechismus, den Ehestand bleiben, Wie S. Paulus sagt, Er sitze (das ist: regiere) im Tempel Gottes, das ist: in der Kirchen oder Christenheit, nemlich in solchem colck, das getaufft, das Sacrament, die Schlüssel, die heilige Schrifft und Gottes wort hat." Martin Luther, *Verlegung des Alcoran Bruder Richardi* (1542), *WA* 53:394–95.

predicted in Scripture. But when Luther undertook to distill his prophetic views, whether in his prophetic expositions³⁴⁴ or creedal statements,³⁴⁵ it was always clear that the Pope was the Antichrist. Ultimately, Luther believed that the Muslims were not the Antichrist, but his “associate” in their fury against the Church—not the little horn of Daniel 8 but the little horn of Daniel 7.³⁴⁶

Luther rejected both the idea of an individual future Antichrist, and seeing the Turk as the Antichrist for the same reasons. If the Church was already apostate, what sense was there in expecting an individual to come in the future to lead her into apostasy? And though Islam was heresy, it was one that openly rejected Christianity, and thus could hardly be seen as very deceptive. Furthermore, despite his threat, the Turk did not reign over the Christian Church—he was an outside menace. In Luther’s rejections of these choices we can see what guided him or convinced him of the identity of the Papacy as the Antichrist: The ideas of orthodoxy, apostasy, and authority.

1.5.4 Daniel 8 and Christian Practice

The phrase in Daniel 8 that Luther connected most often directly to Christian practice was the statement that the Antichrist would be “be broken without hand” (v. 25). This prediction was traditionally understood as excluding human agency and ascribing the foe’s fall completely to God. Luther believed the statement had a passive and active sense. He believed that resorting to force and insurrection to preserve the Gospel and the Church was not only wicked disobedience to civil authorities, but was also a faithless reliance on human strength. In Daniel’s words he read a prohibition against taking up arms to such ends. Rebellion was out of harmony with the divine work of the Gospel. The Word must do everything. The Gospel and the Church could only be promoted and protected by God himself, through preaching the Word and trusting its Author. Hence he also read Daniel 8:25 (and other texts) as a call to action: The Gospel must be preached, the iniquity of the Antichrist exposed, and prayers for deliverance from him must be sent up to heaven. Thus the Church’s mission could hasten the Last Day and the Antichrist’s decline and destruction.³⁴⁷

³⁴⁴ See, for instance, Luther, *Preface to the Prophet Daniel*; Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*; Luther, *Preface to the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*.

³⁴⁵ Martin Luther, “The Smalcald Articles,” part 2, article 4 (“Of the Papacy”), *Book of Concord*, site copyrighted 2001 to 2020, <https://bookofconcord.org/smalcald-articles/part-ii/article-iv/>; Brecht, *Luther*, 3:180. Melancthon did not include anything about the Papacy in the Augsburg Confession in 1530, obviously because the Augsburg Diet was an attempt at compromise. Even so Luther would later criticize it for not speaking about the Antichrist! Brecht, *Luther*, 2:395.

³⁴⁶ See section 1.4.4.

³⁴⁷ Luther, *Against the Spiritual Estate*, LW 39:279; Luther, *Against Insurrection and Rebellion*, LW 45:59–62, 66–68, 69–70; Luther, *Both Kinds in the Sacrament*, LW 36:263; Martin Luther to John von Staupitz, LW 49:13, lt. 124; Martin Luther, *To the Councilmen of All Cities in Germany That They Establish and Maintain Christian Schools* (1524), LW 45:359; Luther, *Concerning the Rebellious Spirit*, LW 40:57–58; Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, LW 26:86, 223, 383; Luther, *Preface to the First Book of Maccabees*, LW 35:351–52; Luther, *Private Mass*, LW 38:175–76; Luther, *His Book on the Private Mass*, LW 38:232; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, LW 24:371.

The prophecy about the Antichrist also called for theological discernment. The Antichrist had arisen inside the Church, and though this meant that though Christianity was deeply corrupted, much good remained in the Church under the reign of the Antichrist. The easy solution of the sectarians—that of throwing out everything that the Papacy acknowledged as correct—was therefore a dangerous oversimplification. The fact of the Antichrist called for an understanding of the nature of the apostasy, of his tyranny and deception and self-exaltation. Error could only be separated from truth and the Antichrist exposed in the light of the Gospel.³⁴⁸ This also meant that the strongest weapon to cut through the deception of the Antichrist was not prophecy in and of itself, but the Gospel:

It is necessary for simple people to understand this passage and similar passages well and to contrast the pope's rule with these statements when one wants to question and examine them. Then they can answer and say: "Thus Christ spoke and did. But the pope teaches and does the very opposite. Christ says yes. But the pope says no. Now because they are at loggerheads, one of them must surely be lying. Now Christ surely does not lie. Therefore I conclude that the pope is a liar and, in addition, is the real Antichrist." Thus you must be so well armed with Scripture that you not only can call the pope an antichrist but know how to give clear proof of this, that you can confidently stake your life on this and prevail against the devil when you die.³⁴⁹

This must be continuously emphasized: "We must henceforth deal with this subject often and diligently in order that our own people might see a clear and certain distinction between the true, holy church and the papacy, between the temple of God and the Antichrist who dwells in it."³⁵⁰ To expose or even mock the Papacy, however, was easier than to be reformed oneself.³⁵¹ The prophecies about the Antichrist called therefore for more than a discernment between what was theologically right and wrong.

The prophecies about the Antichrist called for personal acceptance of the Gospel. If people would realize that they were saved by faith alone and grasped the hand of Christ, formalism would disappear, and with it the power of the Antichrist: "If the pope taught that our righteousness is nothing and that we are saved solely because of the righteousness of Christ, then he would say: 'Therefore the Mass is nothing. Therefore the monastic life and one's own

³⁴⁸ Martin Luther, *Concerning Rebaptism* (1528), *LW* 40:231–34; Martin Luther, *On Translating: An Open Letter* (1530), *LW* 35:201; Luther, table talk no. 574 (1533), *Table Talk*, *LW* 54:101; Luther, *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John*, *LW* 22:102.

³⁴⁹ Luther, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, *LW* 30:138.

³⁵⁰ Luther, *Private Mass*, *LW* 38:210–11. See also Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 142.

³⁵¹ "As a rule, we are all glad to hear the pope, together with priests and monks, attacked and censured. But no one is willing to be reformed as a result of this. It is not such a trifling matter that one has to laugh. No, it is so serious that the heart should fear and tremble. Therefore we should tackle it earnestly and ask God to turn His anger and such a plague away from us. For this misery did not come upon us unexpectedly; it was inflicted on us by God as a punishment, as Paul declares in 2 Thess. 2:10–11: 'Because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false, etc.'" Luther, *Second Epistle of St. Peter*, *LW* 30:191.

deeds of satisfaction profit nothing,’ and thus the whole kingdom of the pope would be overturned.”³⁵² Luther reiterated:

The doctrine of justification is this, that we are pronounced righteous and are saved solely by faith in Christ, and without works. If this is the true meaning of justification—as it certainly is, or it will be necessary to get rid of all Scripture—then it immediately follows that we are pronounced righteous neither through monasticism nor through vows nor through Masses nor through any other works. And thus the papacy is overthrown without the abrogation of any external things, without tumult, *without any human force*, without any attack upon the sacraments—solely by the Spirit.³⁵³

The prophecies warning of the Antichrist also called for self-reflection, which was necessary to accept the Gospel and remain in it. The Antichrist’s pride, his self-exaltation, the desire to be without God and in his place, was inherent in sinful human nature common to all: “That ambition to be God still inheres in us. We, too, want to be gods, as Paul says to the Thessalonians (2 Thes 2:4) concerning the Antichrist.”³⁵⁴ Thus the Antichrist was nothing but the final manifestation of the human condition systematized as religion. Luther acknowledged that this human pride was the common ground from which every error sprang, whether one’s own sin, heresy, Judaism, Islam, or the Papacy. But unlike the other errors, the Papacy assumed the name of the true religion and effectively ruled in Christendom. Thus it was the most brilliant deception of the devil, for it offered the malady—sin and pride—as the solution to itself, as the Gospel, causing the ruin of the soul. The sheer magnitude of the deception—that the leader of the largest Christian Church was the agent of the devil—was so astounding as to render it nearly incredible. Luther reminded his readers that despite such a strong chorus of prophets and apostles had sounded the warning against the Antichrist, the Impostor had nevertheless prospered, and from this they should take heed, lest the prophecies be written in vain for them as well.

1.5.5 Conclusion

Daniel 8 played an important role in Luther’s overall prophetic interpretation and an indirect role in his redemption history. He regarded this vision as a foundational prophecy about the Antichrist. It was not a coincidental choice of passages that when Luther reached the conclusion that the Pope was the Antichrist, the first prophecy about the Antichrist he expounded to justify this interpretation was Daniel 8:23–25, which Luther took care to even translate. Luther did cite 2 Thessalonians 2 more frequently in connection to the Antichrist through his writing career. This does not lessen the stature of Daniel 8 in Luther’s interpretation of the Antichrist. Luther believed Paul’s predictions of the Antichrist were based on Daniel, and also often spoke about the Antichrist without referencing particular

³⁵² Luther, *First Epistle of St. John*, LW 30:252–53.

³⁵³ Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, LW 26:223, emphasis supplied. See also Luther, *Daniel VIII.23–25*, 158.

³⁵⁴ Luther, *Lectures on Isaiah*, LW 17:19. See also Luther, *Lectures on Galatians*, LW 26:179–80, 258; Luther, *Lectures on Genesis*, LW 8:230.

prophecies. Time limitations also played a part why Luther only wrote once on Daniel 8 in detail. Luther tried to write on as many books of the Bible as he could during his career, and there were only a select precious few—such as the Psalms and Galatians—which he wrote on more than once. There was no time to write on what was a given or had been explained to a reasonable extent. Luther's theological usage of Daniel 8 must therefore be informed by his interpretation of the Antichrist in general. Daniel 8 portrayed the rise, reign, and downfall of the Antichrist and Luther's major historiographical change resulted from his changed view of the Antichrist: Church history was, for the most part, the history of the Antichrist, as prophecy had predicted (including Daniel 8).

The main theological belief that interacted with Luther's reading of Daniel 8 was his conviction that he had rediscovered the Gospel and that the Church was apostate. This conviction was based on Luther's reading of Scripture in general, his personal religious experience, and the realization that the Church did not teach the Gospel. Not only did the Church in the present officially condemn Luther's reformed theology; when Luther studied canon law and church history he could see that the Church had not taught what he believed was the true Gospel for a long time. In fact, when he looked into the Pope's claims to supremacy, he found them both unscriptural (rejecting scriptural proofs for Petrine succession) and unhistorical (discovering that the Donation of Constantine was a fraud and that the Bishop of Rome had won out in the bishops's competition for power).

It was here that the prophecies of the Antichrist like Daniel 8 came into play. These prophecies were traditionally understood as predicting that an Apostate would temporarily deceive the Church and that his rule would be cut short at the Second Coming when Jesus would strike him down. Thus the prophecies about the Antichrist provided a conceptual framework to make sense of orthodoxy, heresy, and apostasy, i.e. the spirituality of the Church. Heresy and apostasy were understood as things of antichristian nature; notorious heretics were Antichrist's forerunners; ecclesiastic corruption was omens of the Antichrist's approach. When Luther reached the conclusion that the Church was apostate—and for him to be even able to conceive of such a conclusion—, this was the framework he could use and adjust to make sense of his unsolvable disagreement with the Church. Luther's theology and the Pope's were so diametrically opposed, and the dimensions of their clash so great, that to both sides there were only two conceivable options: Either Luther was a powerful heretic—an antichrist, one of his forerunners—or the Church was apostate and thus the Pope, its leader, was the Antichrist.

Luther's belief that the Church was apostate ruled out alternative interpretations of Daniel 8 and the Antichrist: The threat of Islam was not nearly as great as that of a nearly comprehensive apostasy inside the Church, so Mohammad could not be the archenemy of the Church; and if the Church was already apostate, a prediction about a single additional apostate ruler in the future seemed redundant.

This belief went hand in hand with a changed redemption history. The past history of the Roman persecutions and then the establishment of the Papacy was not the history of the establishment of the true Church and its orthodoxy. Instead, the peace which followed the persecutions had been a change in Satan's methodology to conquer the Church. This he had accomplished by raising one bishop to the highest pinnacle of power in the Church and by corrupting the Christian faith. The revised historiography came at an apparent cost: Luther had to downplay the significance of the early Councils which were traditionally seen as the establishment of orthodoxy. The historiography, however, Luther believed was more than supported by the evidence of the Papacy's unscriptural rule, unchristian behavior, and extrabiblical laws (canon law), which church history was full of. Luther situated himself in this history close to the end. The present was the time of the unmasking of the Antichrist at the hands of the Reformation. The only prediction that remained to be fulfilled was the Second Coming of Christ, who would finally conquer the Antichrist and deliver the Church.

Luther did not frequently associate Daniel 8 directly with Christian practice, but when he did, he did so in the same way as he did with the prophecies about the Antichrist in general: The Antichrist's reign called for sound biblical understanding, theological discernment, separation from the Antichrist (departure from the Roman Catholic Church), self-reflection, and a heartfelt acceptance and preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

1.6 Conclusion

The historical dynamics that defined Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 (and the Antichrist) were several interwoven processes. First there was his personal religious experience and theological development that moved from *Anfechtungen* to his belief that he had rediscovered the Gospel. Second, Luther and the Church clashed over his reformed theology to the extent that he was put on church trial which ended in his excommunication. The process brought Luther into an existential crisis, for he believed in one Church and one Gospel, and yet the Church was declaring him a heretic for his belief in the Gospel. Luther made theological sense of this dilemma with the conceptual framework that was traditionally used to explain orthodoxy, heresy, and apostasy, i.e. the prophecies about the Antichrist. When Luther was excommunicated, he denounced the Pope as the Antichrist. Third, as Luther studied the Church's past during his trial he realized that his differences with the Papacy were irreconcilable for he was not opposing contemporary ideas but ancient orthodoxy. Thus historical research played a part in forming Luther's views. Fourth, Luther's character obviously influenced the trajectory of events. Luther was certain of his theology, assertive in action, and intrepid in the face of opposition. Had Luther not had these characteristics, it is unlikely that a conflict would have developed between him and the Church, or that it would have evolved into a schism.

The textual dynamics of Luther's interpretation Daniel 8 were several historicist conventions. First, Luther extended the antitypical meaning of the last horn of the goat. The

horn did not foreshadow a king in the sense of an individual ruler, but in the sense of a king over a kingdom, i.e. a dynasty. The referent of this extended antitypical fulfillment was the Papacy. Luther utilized other historicist tools in his first exposition of the chapter in the 1521 *Responsio*, such as extending the meaning of the four goat horns, harmonizing them with the kingdoms in chapters 2 and 7, systematizing the referent of the horn symbol as always being a kingdom, and the almost implicit idea that the Antichrist was the sole or primary meaning of the last horn. In the same work Luther also drew on several peculiar renderings of some of the phrases in vv. 23–25. The conventions Luther used in 1521 proved to be a short-lived attempt to further historicize the chapter. The dynamic that remained was the extended foreshadowing.

The theological dynamic in Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 were as follows. First, his belief that he had rediscovered the Gospel. This belief was based on Luther's scriptural reading and personal religious experience. Second, his belief that the Church was apostate. This belief was based on the Church's excommunication of Luther (its concomitant rejection of his rediscovered Gospel) and Luther's study of the Church's past which showed it had taught in opposition to the biblical Gospel (Luther's reformed theology) since the early medieval period. Third, his equating of the Church's apostasy with the prophecies about the Antichrist, found in Daniel 8 and other texts. These prophecies provided a theological framework for Luther to explain the Church's apostasy in the context of redemption history. This equation meant that Luther's views on orthodoxy and apostasy led to a new reading of redemption history (prophecy and history). Fourth, these beliefs are reflected in his practical use of Daniel 8, which he saw as a call to accept the Gospel and reject the Antichrist.

Another step in historicizing the vision of Daniel 8 was taken when the tension which Luther had introduced between the type and antitype of the last horn was resolved. One of the more famous names to do this was Isaac Newton. More than a century after the Reformer's death, Newton affirmed that the last horn had nothing to do with Antiochus Epiphanes, and that the chapter had only one meaning, extending from Persia down to the final times of the Antichrist.

2 DYNAMICS OF ISAAC NEWTON'S INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 8

2.1 Introduction

Isaac Newton (1643–1727) arrived at his interpretation of Daniel 8 at the latest in 1687, more than a century after Luther's death. By then Protestants in their various countries had written scores of commentaries on Daniel and by and large they stood by Luther's interpretation of chapter 8. The vision narrated the history of Medo-Persia and Greece till the reign of Antiochus, whose career foreshadowed the papal Antichrist. This interpretation had lived on in England as elsewhere in the Protestant world. Catholics and Orthodox agreed with the interpretation but not the application, since they believed the foreshadowed Antichrist was still to come. Newton lived during the early Enlightenment and there were already glimmerings of biblical criticism and liberal theology. Newton stood between the two worlds—he was conservative in the sense he believed the Bible was the Word of God and its prophecies were true, but he was freethinking enough to doubt some traditional dogmas such as the Trinity and open to the idea that the text of the Bible had changed. Using a more systematic approach in deciphering the prophecies, Newton broke with a two thousand year old interpretation of Daniel 8. Newton concluded that the vision had but one fulfillment and Antiochus did not fit it whatsoever. Furthermore, the 2300 days had to be interpreted as years and thus the vision spanned history till the end times. Newton did not only change the interpretation of Daniel 8 but saw it as revealing the secret of Christianity's apostasy. The apostasy of the Papacy (the little horn) was not, as Luther had taught, the fact that it had obscured the doctrine of justification by faith, but rather its distortion of the doctrine of God.

Interpreting time periods on the basis of one day in the prophecy as equating one actual year was an old tradition, but had seldom been applied to Daniel 8. Newton brought his genius to bear on whatever matter he researched, though the outcome differed depending on the field of inquiry. When he studied Bible prophecy, just as he did in the sciences, he strove to found out the elemental principles. With tireless effort and system building, he studied the prophecies for years and decades. He tried to be consistent in his methodology—seen in his regular interpretation of the symbols—and to focus on the most fundamental of all doctrines—the doctrine of God. Using Daniel 8 as canvas, Newton wrote a long manuscript on church history (hitherto but little studied) in which he traced how the Bishop of Rome had deformed the one God and his Son with the paganized doctrine of the emanating, triune God. Thus paganism had become enshrined in Christian orthodoxy already in the fourth century and the faithful had been in partial darkness since then. In this way, Newton made Daniel 8 crucial to his church history with a reading that was radical to most Protestants.

Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8 eventually became immensely influential among expositors of prophecy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The more systematic method of having but one referent for the little horn and extending the 2300 days into years became commonly accepted among historicist expositors. And while Newton had dated the end of the period to the distant future—centuries after his own death—, eighteenth century

expositors dated it to their own lifetime, which caused the Advent Awakening—many disperse groups, the most known of which was the Millerites in the United States. These expositors were not antitrinitarian and probably had next to no idea about how intimately Newton’s views on God’s nature were connected to his prophetic interpretation. In Newton’s day, Protestants viewed antitrinitarianism with as little charity as the Papacy, so Newton kept his views to himself. Nearly all of his theological manuscripts remained unpublished and neglected until the twentieth century. His short commentary on Daniel and Revelation, in which he stayed silent about his antitrinitarianism, was published shortly after his death, and thus Newton’s prophetic interpretation, in particular on Daniel 8, became influential while being disassociated from what he saw as the most important part of the chapter’s fulfillment.

The name of Newton alone is sufficient to warrant theological interest in his prophetic interpretation, particularly in this area where he proved to be so influential. To identify the factors at work in his interpretation of Daniel’s third¹ vision, this chapter will first review the literature on the issue, then sketch out what is known about the historical context of his interpretation, analyze his reading of Daniel 8, and how it interacted with his theology.

2.2 Literature Review

At his death in 1727, Newton left behind a mass of manuscripts which did not gain the world’s attention until the twentieth century. Since Newton left no will, how to dispose of his unpublished writings was up to his heirs. In the following years only three works were published from the vast amount of manuscripts, two of those connected to prophecy: *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms* (1728) and *Observations upon the Prophecies* (1733).² For the next two hundred years the published commentary was studied by prophetic expositors,³ but the manuscript collection stayed within the family, mostly unknown and ignored.⁴ In 1936, the manuscripts were put up for auction at Sotheby. They would have been irretrievably scattered, had it not been for the prompt reaction and foresight of economist John Maynard Keynes and “Jewish scholar and businessman” Abraham Yahuda, admirers of Newton who set out individually to buy up as many of the sold manuscripts as possible. The Keynes manuscripts were donated to King’s College, Cambridge after Keynes’s death in 1946 and the Yahuda manuscripts were given to the National Library of Israel and after cataloging “became

¹ The first being Daniel’s dream in chapter 2 and the second his dream in chapter 7.

² Sarah Dry, *The Newton Papers: The Strange and True Odyssey of Isaac Newton’s Manuscripts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 13.

³ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946–54), 2:746, 3:336, 344, 427, 490, 590, 611, 629, 700, 733, 4:66, 79, 120, 162, 354–355, 369n10, 370, 673–74, 676n31, 726, 731, 874, 1104; Richard H. Popkin, “Newton and the Origins of Fundamentalism,” in *The Scientific Enterprise*, ed. Edna Ullmann-Margalit, 4 vols., Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science 146 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 1992), 4:241–59; Richard H. Popkin, “Newton and Fundamentalism, II,” in *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton’s Theology*, ed. James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, International Archives of the History of Ideas 129 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 1990), 165–80.

⁴ “[History of Newton’s Papers:] 1727–1872,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/history-of-newtons-papers/1727-1872>.

generally accessible to scholars at the end of the 1960s.”⁵ As these collections and other manuscripts found their ways into institutions, a relatively complete mapping out of Newton’s manuscripts was accomplished. In the twenty-first century the manuscripts became even more accessible to researchers due to online digital databases. The most notable of these efforts is the Newton Project⁶ which has as its main goal “to produce a comprehensive edition of all of Newton’s printed and unpublished writings.” It started publishing transcripts of Newton’s manuscripts in 2008.⁷

As the manuscripts became more and more known and accessible to scholarly research, the following latter half of the twentieth century saw secondary literature on Newton’s non-scientific pursuits grow to such an extent that it became known as “the Newton industry.”⁸ Some of the more prominent works investigated Newton’s prophetic interpretation. Prophetic interpretation was not the main concern of these works, however, and in their treatment Daniel was given little room. Historian Frank Edward Manuel wrote the first book on Newton’s theology, *The Religion of Isaac Newton* (1974). Half of it had to do with prophecy and its fulfillment,⁹ but he wrote next to nothing about Newton’s interpretation of Daniel. Historian of science Richard S. Westfall wrote the latest standard biography on Newton, *Never at Rest* (1980).¹⁰ It was the first biography to describe Newton’s theology and prophetic interpretation based on the manuscripts.¹¹ Yet besides a brief mention of how Newton calculated Daniel’s prophetic periods¹² there was little else to Westfall’s analysis of Newton’s interpretation of Daniel. In the 1990s and early 2000s, several volumes of the series *International Archives of the History of Ideas* were devoted to Newton’s theology,¹³ but there

⁵ “[History of Newton’s Papers]: The Sotheby Sale,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/history-of-newtons-papers/sotheby-sale>; Dry, *The Newton Papers*, 177.

⁶ The Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/>.

⁷ “About the Newton Project,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/about-us/newton-project>.

⁸ See, for instance, the title of chapter thirteen in Dry, *The Newton Papers*, 176.

⁹ Frank Edward Manuel, *The Religion of Isaac Newton*, The Freemantle Lectures 1973 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 53–104.

¹⁰ Richard S. Westfall, *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

¹¹ See in particular Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 309–357, 804–30. The standard biographer before Westfall, David Brewster, “perversely claimed that Newton’s theological views were not unorthodox” despite having consulted the manuscripts. “[History of Newton’s Papers:] 1727–1872.”

¹² Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 816–17.

¹³ James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, eds., *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton’s Theology*, *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 129 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 1990); James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, eds., *The Books of Nature and Scripture: Recent Essays on Natural Philosophy, Theology, and Biblical Criticism in the Netherlands of Spinoza’s Time and the British Isles of Newton’s Time*, *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 139 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 1994); Matt Goldish, *Judaism in the Theology of Sir Isaac Newton*, *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 157 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 1998); James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, eds., *Newton and Religion: Context, Nature, and Influence*, *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 161 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 1999); James E. Force and Sarah Hutton, eds., *Newton and Newtonianism: New Studies*, *International Archives of the History of Ideas* 188 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 2004).

was only one summary article on Newton's interpretation of Daniel.¹⁴ In 2017, historian of science and former general editor of the Newton Project Rob Iliffe published the monograph *Priest of Nature*. The main bulk of the book deals with Newton's views on the history of the faith and its prophetic framework.¹⁵ But while it contains three chapters on Newton's interpretation of Revelation,¹⁶ it offers only bits on his interpretation of Daniel.¹⁷ Esotericism scholar John Chambers (2018) devoted three chapters to some topics in Newton's interpretation of Daniel and Revelation.¹⁸ Whereas the books only touch on Newton's prophetic interpretation, some articles have been devoted to it in particular. The articles focus on specific influences, issues, and factors in Newton's prophetic interpretation, such as hermeneutics,¹⁹ Judaism,²⁰ Joseph Mede,²¹ Israelology,²² cosmology,²³ and alchemy.²⁴ There is an article on his apocalypticism in general,²⁵ some summary articles on his views on Daniel and Revelation²⁶ and on Revelation in particular.²⁷ But the only material written specifically

¹⁴ Matania Z. Kochavi, "One Prophet Interprets Another: Sir Isaac Newton and Daniel," in Force; Popkin, *The Books of Nature and Scripture*, 105–22.

¹⁵ Rob Iliffe, *Priest of Nature: The Religious Worlds of Isaac Newton* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 123–353.

¹⁶ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 219–314.

¹⁷ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 175, 224, 249, 265, 289, 305, 400.

¹⁸ John Chambers, *Isaac Newton: Alchemy, Prophecy, and the Search for Lost Knowledge* (Rochester, VT: Destiny Books, 2018), 130–92 (= chs. 7–9).

¹⁹ Goldish, *Judaism in the Theology of Sir Isaac Newton*, 75–83; Reiner Smolinski, "The Logic of Millennial Thought: Sir Isaac Newton among His Contemporaries," in Force; Popkin, *Newton and Religion*, 259–89.

²⁰ Goldish, *Judaism in the Theology of Sir Isaac Newton*, 57–83.

²¹ Sarah Hutton, "More, Newton, and the Language of Biblical Prophecy," in Force; Popkin, *The Books of Nature and Scripture*, 39–53; Rob Iliffe, "'Making a Shew': Apocalyptic Hermeneutics and the Sociology of Christian Idolatry in the Work of Isaac Newton and Henry More," in Force; Popkin, *The Books of Nature and Scripture*, 55–56; Jeffrey K. Jue, *Heaven Upon Earth: Joseph Mede (1586–1638) and the Legacy of Millenarianism*, International Archives of the History of Ideas 194 (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), 169–71.

²² Goldish, *Judaism in the Theology of Sir Isaac Newton*, 62–74; Stephen D. Snobelen, "'The Mystery of This Restitution of All Things': Isaac Newton on the Return of the Jews," in *Millenarianism and Messianism in Early Modern European Culture: The Millenarian Turn: Millenarian Contexts of Science, Politics and Everyday Anglo-American Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. James E. Force and Richard H. Popkin, International Archives of the History of Ideas 175 (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academy Publishers, 2001), 95–118.

²³ Stephen D. Snobelen, "Cosmos and Apocalypse," *The New Atlantis* 44 (winter 2015): 76–94.

²⁴ Deborah E. Harkness, "Alchemy and Eschatology: Exploring the Connections between John Dee and Isaac Newton," in Force; Popkin, *Newton and Religion*, 1–15; Paul T. Greenham, "A Concord of Alchemy with Theology: Isaac Newton's Hermeneutics of the Symbolic Texts of Chymistry and Biblical Prophecy" (PhD dissertation, University of Toronto, 2015).

²⁵ Arthur Quinn, "On Reading Newton Apocalyptically," in *Millenarianism and Messianism in English Literature and Thought 1650–1800*, ed. Richard H. Popkin, Clark Library Lectures 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 176–92.

²⁶ Leonard Trengove, "Newton's Theological Views," *Annals of Science* 22, no. 4 (1996): 277–94; Rob Iliffe, "Newton, God, and the Mathematics of the Two Books," in *Mathematicians and Their Gods: Interactions between Mathematics and Religious Beliefs*, ed. Snezana Lawrence and Mark McCartney (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121–44.

²⁷ Florian Cajori, "Isaac Newton's Early Study of the Apocalypse," *Popular Astronomy* 36, no. 2 (February 1926): 75–78; Maurizio Mamiani, "Newton e l'Apocalisse," *I Castelli di Yale: quaderni di filosofia* 1, no. 1 (1996): 5–16; Iliffe, "'Making a Shew,'" 63–75; Sarah Hutton, "The Seven Trumpets and the Seven Vials: Apocalypticism and Christology in Newton's Theological Writings," in Force; Popkin, *Newton and Religion*, 165–78; M. Murrin, "Newton's Apocalypse," in Force; Popkin, *Newton and Religion*, 203–20; Maurizio Mamiani, "Newton on Prophecy and the Apocalypse," in *The Cambridge Companion to Newton*, ed. I. B. Cohen and George E. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 387–405; Raquel Delgado-

on Newton's interpretation of Daniel are summary articles by Matania Z. Kochavi (1994)²⁸ and historian Scott Mandelbrote (2007)²⁹ and articles on the 1260 years (a time prophecy found in both Daniel and Revelation) by historian Stephen D. Snobelen (1999, 2003).³⁰ Theologian Jørgensen's forthcoming dissertation will analyze Newton's prophetic interpretation with a focus on Daniel and Revelation.³¹ Despite increasing literature on Newton's religious views, so far his interpretation of Daniel and the dynamics of his prophetic interpretation has received little scholarly attention.

Finally, a word on Newton's manuscripts and their citation. First, the Newton Project offers a normalized and diplomatic transcription of the manuscript. The present work follows the normalized transcription. Second, Newton's manuscripts are often subdivided. These subdivisions are treated as one and the same manuscript. E.g., citing a folio in two subdivisions of Yahuda Ms. 1 will look like this: Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 1r; 1.2., 1r, instead of instead of citing them as two separate sources like this: Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 1r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.2, 1r. Third, in the Newton Project, each manuscript subdivision has a different URL. To make the footnotes less crowded, only the main URL for each manuscript is cited.

2.3 Historical Dynamics

2.3.1 Introduction

Newton grew up during a period of great societal upheaval in England. The English Civil War (1642–1651) broke out a few months before he was born, and lasted until he was eight years old. The Parliamentarians were victorious over the Royalists; King Charles I was executed, and during the Commonwealth (1649–1660) the shifting government attempted to legislate its Puritan views. The monarchy was restored with the return of Charles II to the throne in the Restoration of 1660, a year before seventeen-year old Newton traveled to enter Cambridge. All sides and factions in the War and the Commonwealth were Protestant, and since politics and theology were connected in Christian England, all sides defended their side with not only theological arguments but also prophetic ones. It was probably impossible to live during this time without being aware of religious disputes and apocalyptic rhetoric—and the prophecies

Moreia, "Newton's Treatise on Revelation: The Use of a Mathematical Discourse," *Historical Research* 79, no. 204 (May 2006): 224–45.

²⁸ Kochavi, "One Prophet Interprets Another," 105–22.

²⁹ Scott Mandelbrote, "Isaac Newton and the Exegesis of the Book of Daniel," in *Die Geschichte der Daniel-Auslegung in Judentum, Christentum und Islam: Studien zur Kommentierung des Danielbuches in Literatur und Kunst*, ed. Katharina Bracht and David S. Du Toit, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 371 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 351–71.

³⁰ Stephen D. Snobelen, "Isaac Newton, Heretic: The Strategies of a Nicodemite," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 34, no. 4 (December 1999): 381–419; Stephen D. Snobelen, "'A Time and Times and the Dividing of Time': Isaac Newton, the Apocalypse, and 2060 A.D.," *Canadian Journal of History* 38 (December 2003): 391–93.

³¹ Kenneth Jørgensen (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, forthcoming).

of Daniel.³² Where Newton's sympathies, if any, lay, is unknown, but it is of interest that while he was very interested in biblical prophecy, in his adult years he frequently expressed his distaste for disputes, religious ones in particular.

There were many people in Newton's life who were religious and even knowledgeable about prophecy, but no few direct influences have been established on his prophetic and theological views. Newton's step-father, who treated him with little love, was a minister, but it is unlikely that Newton was impacted positively by him theologically speaking, besides inheriting his library. Newton learned religion in school and attended Church and must have learned something about prophecy as common information. As an academic he also lived in a religious environment, nominally at least. Theology was part of university education, and to be a Fellow one had to be ordained, and it was not unusual for professors to count theology among their academic interests. Newton was interested in theology and also fairly well read so he was aware of the common prophetic interpretation as well as the latest works. He owned and read the widely-acclaimed prophecy commentaries by Cambridge professor Joseph Mede (1586–1639)³³ and later the prophecy commentaries of his colleague at Cambridge, Henry More (1614–1687).³⁴ He read something by William Lloyd, Bishop of Worcester, which is interesting because Lloyd believed the 2300 days in Daniel 8 were years.³⁵ However, Newton only mentioned him in connection to Daniel 9, and that in a manuscript with material datable to the 1700s.³⁶ He was also aware of the growing influence of preterism and did not appreciate it. When it comes to Newton's antitrinitarianism, influences have yet to be established. Newton scholar Iliffe writes that "Newton's descent into heterodoxy is shrouded in archival fog."³⁷ It is not known when, how or why his theological views developed; it is not even clearly known in what order he studied the topics (for instance, did he study church history and prophecy in tandem, or one before the other?). "Any account of how, and indeed exactly when, Newton arrived at his heterodox position must be conjectural."³⁸

It is clear that theology and even prophecy was part of Newton's social milieu. It was also one of his personal interests. What is much less clear is when Newton became interested in theology and prophecy and why. As his manuscripts became available and studied by scholars in the late twentieth century, Newton scholars constructed a partial chronology of his theological studies and development based on the manuscript evidence. But this chronology

³² The Puritan extremists the Fifth Monarchy Men, for instance, derived their name from the Book of Daniel, where God's Kingdom—which they intended to establish in England—was the fifth kingdom after four successive kingdoms from Daniel's time to the end.

³³ John Harrison, *The Library of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 189 (H1053).

³⁴ Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 195–196 (H1111, H1115, H1116).

³⁵ William Whiston, *An Essay on the Revelation of St. John, So Far as Concerns the Past and Present Times*, 2nd ed. (London: Printed for the author, 1744), 327.

³⁶ Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1c, 5v, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00050," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00050>.

³⁷ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 132.

³⁸ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 134.

rests on ill-founded assumptions and much of it must therefore be discarded as useless. What is left at present is only dots and clues.

To evaluate the historical factors at work in Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8, this section will attempt to connect some of these dots. It will first look at to what extent Newton's theological studies can be dated. Having established the likeliest timeframe in which Newton's theological and prophetic interests and views developed, the history of that period will be covered to try to detect the historical factors at work in Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8.

2.3.2 The Dating of Newton's Theological Studies

Scarcity of Biographical Information

Newton's personality is the most complicating factor in determining the historical context of his theological studies. It is the reason why there is so little biographical information extant that could have revealed when Newton studied what and why it is so hard to date the studies at all. Newton was a very private individual. In the most recent extensive biography, written by Westfall, the chapters on Newton's youth and student years are entitled "A sober, silent, thinking lad" and "The solitary scholar."³⁹ Newton lived in Cambridge for thirty-five years as student and professor, and half of that time as Europe's most celebrated natural philosopher and mathematician. And yet Westfall noted that "with the exception of Wickins, Newton formed no single friendship that played a perceptible role in his life from among his fellow students" and that when he became famous "none of his fellow students left any recorded mention that they had once known him."⁴⁰ Newton may have had a disposition inclined to privacy, but there was more here than that. Despite being a genius, Newton was insecure and found it hard to bond with people. When it came to relationships and dialogue, Newton was cautious, often to the point of secrecy and suspicion. A plausible reason has been offered for this nervousness:

Deprived of a father before birth, he soon lost his mother as well, for within two years she married a second time; her husband, the well-to-do minister Barnabas Smith, left young Isaac with his grandmother and moved to a neighbouring village to raise a son and two daughters. For nine years, until the death of Barnabas Smith in 1653, Isaac was effectively separated from his mother, and his pronounced psychotic tendencies have been ascribed to this traumatic event. That he hated his stepfather we may be sure. . . . The acute sense of insecurity that rendered him obsessively anxious when his work was published and irrationally violent when he defended it accompanied Newton throughout his life and can plausibly be traced to his early years.⁴¹

³⁹ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 40, 66.

⁴⁰ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 75.

⁴¹ Richard S. Westfall, "Isaac Newton," *Britannica*, last updated January 1, 2021, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Isaac-Newton>.

These personality traits were one of the strong reasons why Newton barely shared his theological views, and that means fewer primary sources on the development of his theological views. The majority of his fellow Cambridge students were on their way of becoming pastors, and all the professors were required to be ordained as ministers. And yet Newton found no confidant on campus to speak with about theological matters. Newton was even careful with what he confided to paper alone. As far as anyone knows, he never wrote a journal, let alone autobiographical accounts. The same can be said for his letters, which are as reticent on theological matters as the recollections of his contemporaries. For a man of Newton's stature and accomplishments, his surviving correspondence is surprisingly little. The printed outgoing and incoming correspondence consists of some 400 and 1200 items respectively, totaling but 1600 letters over the course of six decades (1669–1727).⁴² Outgoing letters until the publication of *Principia* in 1687, the terminus post quem for Newton's new interpretation of Daniel 8, are only 131. Newton addressed cosmology in five letters—one to Thomas Burnet (1680/1)⁴³ and four to Richard Bentley (1692–1693);⁴⁴ textual criticism concerning 1 Tm 3:16 and the Johannine Comma in several letters to John Locke (1690)⁴⁵—and that seems to be about the extent of his preserved correspondence on theology. It is possible that some correspondence on religious matters has not been preserved, but more likely Newton chose not to write much about them in his letters.

Newton's personal library indicates his interest in prophecy. In his personal 1660 Bible, the books of Daniel and Revelation are brown with usage compared to the rest of the Bible and contain marginalia (like some other passages).⁴⁶ He owned commentaries by Joseph Mede and by Henry More, the latter of which again contains Newton's scribbled comments.⁴⁷ Newton also owned several other works on theology and history on subjects related to his studies of prophecy. But all these books still leave modernity in the dark as to when and why Newton began to study prophecy and which reading influenced him most. He did not necessarily read all the books he owned, and he also had access to the University's excellent library, so his own books tell an incomplete story of the scope of his reading, though this is supplemented by the works he quotes in his manuscripts. Newton's library cannot either help to easily establish the timing of Newton's reading. Newton hardly ever marked the purchase

⁴² The two oldest letters are from 1661 and 1665. The following letters date from early 1668/9 and onward. Isaac Newton, *The Correspondence of Isaac Newton*, 7 vols., ed. Herbert W. Turnbull, Joseph F. Scott, and Alfred Rupert (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959–1978), 1:1–3.

⁴³ Isaac Newton to Thomas Burnet, a. January 13, 1680/1, in *Correspondence*, 2:2:329–35, lt. 247.

⁴⁴ Isaac Newton to Richard Bentley, December 10, 1692; January 17, February 11, and 25 1692/3, in *Correspondence*, 3:3:233–41, 244–45, 253–56, ltt. 398–99, 403, 406.

⁴⁵ Isaac Newton to John Locke, October 28, November 14, November 14, November?, November?, 1690, in *Correspondence*, 3:79, 82–146, ltt. 355, 357–60; see also Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 370–75, 463nn28–29.

⁴⁶ Newton's Bible from 1660, Trinity/Adv. d.1.10², Wren Library, Cambridge, United Kingdom; Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 101 (H188). For Newton's marginalia on Daniel and Revelation, see Appendix 3.

⁴⁷ Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 196 (H1115).

date in his books,⁴⁸ and if he did it does not necessarily mean that he read the books at that time.

Dating the Manuscripts

The absence of helpful biographical primary sources leaves the massive manuscripts themselves as the last and largest viable source for the historical source of Newton's theological and prophetic studies. Unfortunately their content and state makes it very hard to determine when they were written. Here again Newton's solitary disposition makes historical research hard. First, Newton did not publish the manuscripts or show them to many, but had either been the case it would have been easier to date them. Newton's unhappy childhood circumstances have already been mentioned, and they affected his interpersonal relationships, including the critique that publishing inevitably entails. He was "obsessively anxious when his work was published and irrationally violent when he defended it."⁴⁹ This colored Newton's entire career. His publications, which were mostly scientific, always led him into polemics.⁵⁰ This means that even when Newton was publishing scientific discoveries in areas in which he had no peer, "the give and take of honest discussion" was overwhelming to him.⁵¹ He still published though, so why did he not venture the same in the area of theology? Here the second factor comes in, and that is the content of Newton's studies and his fear of what reaction they would cause. While Newton knew that his discoveries in the natural world would be celebrated, he must have realized that publishing antitrinitarianism, no matter how convincingly argued, would be a dangerous undertaking. Yet he could not dismiss these convictions. He wrote on these topics in some of his lengthiest manuscripts, apparently until the end of his life, and with publication in mind. Did he shirk from the unpleasant experience of having his dissident views criticized publicly? Did he lack the courage to defend an unpopular truth? Or did he believe that the time of this prophetic truth had not come, and so to lose all for it would be to no purpose? Most likely it was all of the above.

Besides not publishing his theological manuscripts, Newton left most of them unfinished and not in any overall order,⁵² which makes it hard to ascertain their relation one to another and their chronology, and hence the development of Newton's thought. The nature of the manuscripts ranges from notes of books read, notes that stretch into longer thoughts, longer drafts of to-be-published works. Most of this material is rough and unfinished and at times very drafty and jumbled, though some portions are relatively polished. Newton's theological manuscripts all bear witness to deep interest, intense and methodical study, and considerable erudition, and regrettable lack of the perseverance needed to complete them. This method of

⁴⁸ This can be seen in Harrison's overview of Newton's personal library, for Harrison noted when Newton marked the date of purchase. Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 80.

⁴⁹ Westfall, "Isaac Newton."

⁵⁰ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 238–80, 698–780 (= chs. 7, 14); Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 315.

⁵¹ Westfall, "Isaac Newton."

⁵² Dry, *The Newton Papers*, 12.

work is again characteristic of Newton. Newton was an original thinker and highly inquisitive. Once something caught his attention he would seek it out and launch into an all-out investigation which was comprehensive, in-depth, and methodical. But as the answers started to appear to his quest and the investigation moved on from discovery to finishing a writing project, the interest waned and his diligence was to no avail: He tired of the project and would start another one.⁵³ This petering out of interest and resolve to finish projects also explains to a degree why Newton, a person of considerable organization, did not even bother to date and seldom to title his manuscripts and kept them in no overall order. Adding mud to the murkiness, since Newton's death the manuscripts have been shuffled somewhat around.⁵⁴ Some of these rearrangements have been detected, but some are most likely irreversible.

Newton's temper is also revealed in his writing style, and again this makes it unnecessarily difficult to establish the date of the manuscripts and sometimes to follow his line of reasoning. As much as Newton enjoyed the journey of discovery, he was either uninterested or inapt at teaching his findings to others. The few students who attended his lectures probably found them "incomprehensible,"⁵⁵ and even his masterpiece, the *Principia*, became notorious for being difficult to read. The same situation is seen in the manuscripts. Newton did not help his reader along by sufficiently explaining his path of thought. Instead, the reader is often confronted with figuring that out on their own. Not only did Newton reveal his mind insufficiently about the subject matter at hand but also about its relation to his present. Consequently, the manuscripts offer little inner chronological evidence, since in them Newton referred to the present in general terms, without enough specifics to establish the time of writing. The manuscripts still offer some chronological clues, such as the publication dates of sources Newton cited, and the dates of letters he used as part of the writing material in his manuscripts. This data only narrows down the timeframe in which Newton potentially wrote the manuscripts: Newton's sources which were published during his adult life establish the earliest date possible (*terminus post quem*) and not the actual time of writing. The letters and letter drafts also only offer a *terminus post quem*, since it is possible that Newton added his theological ideas to their paper long after he had originally written them. Still, the meager inner chronology helps with dating many of the manuscripts to at least some extent.⁵⁶

⁵³ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 407.

⁵⁴ After Newton's death, Thomas Pellet, "a member of the Royal Society," went through the papers for the inheritors. John Conduitt, husband of Newton's niece and one of the heirs, "also made a stab at cataloguing and editing some of the papers." The papers then "stayed with the Portsmouth family, the Conduitts' descendants." In 1777, Samuel Horsley was permitted access to the manuscripts and was the second person to attempt an inventory. James Cameron Taylor catalogued them more thoroughly for the auction at Sotheby in 1936, and as they were sold the manuscript collection was broken up into the "Sotheby lots." Dry, *The Newton Papers*, 11–12, 19, 28, 143. Most of the manuscripts were bought up by collectors and then found their way into institutions. There they were catalogued once again, and that is the cataloguing system used for them today. At any juncture where the manuscripts changed hands or were catalogued they may have been shuffled around.

⁵⁵ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 210.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 1.

Newton scholars have attempted to date some of the manuscripts based on the external evidence of watermarks⁵⁷ and the evolution of Newton's handwriting. The former dating device has only been applied in a limited extent to Newton's theological manuscripts. The latter is a main tenet for Newton's recent biographers's determination of the historical context of Newton's prophetic studies.⁵⁸ What is worrisome is that beyond Newton's earliest extant writings from his teenage years, academic dating of Newton's manuscripts seems to be completely unfounded. In standard forensic document analysis it is acknowledged that a person's handwriting develops from childhood until early adulthood and then reaches "graphic maturity," i.e. it reaches a mature and stable form, which is the reason why a person's handwriting can be identified at all. Handwriting remains dynamic throughout life—we write differently depending on our position, speed, writing material, etc.—but disabling sickness or old age excepted, handwriting remains constant enough through adulthood that experts would not feel comfortable asserting in which decade something was written without corroborating evidence.⁵⁹ The time might have arrived therefore to discard all manuscript dates that are based on Newton's adult handwriting alone, or, for the scholars who believe they are valid, to demonstrate on what grounds they date the various stages of Newton's adult handwriting.

Newton's biographers have attempted to narrow down the time frames in which Newton wrote most of his theological manuscripts. The reasoning behind the first suggested time window seems sound. The argument goes that during the time that Newton was most busy with his scientific pursuits he wrote less or nothing on other matters, and when he turned his attention from natural philosophy, he was busier with other studies, namely alchemy and theology. This stands to reason with certain caveats. First, while the chronology of Newton's scientific writings is much clearer than of his other studies, it is not completely clear. It is a dismay to see that Whiteside, the editor of Newton's mathematical papers, dated them to some extent on alleged handwriting development, the details of which he nowhere describes. According to Shapiro, Whiteside was "renowned for his ability to date Newton's manuscripts by their handwriting alone" down to a range of few years, a skill which Shapiro politely did

⁵⁷ Alan E. Shapiro, "Beyond the Dating Game: Watermark Clusters and the Composition of Newton's *Opticks*," in *The Investigation of Difficult Things: Essays on Newton and the History of the Exact Sciences*, ed. Peter M. Harman and Alan E. Shapiro (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 181–227; see also The Newton's Projects catalogue entries for Keynes Mss. 5 and 10, and Yahuda Mss. 21 and 41.

⁵⁸ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 89n70, 290n32, 309–10, 315, 349, 349. Handwriting is often the implicit reasoning behind dating of Newton's manuscripts when no reason is cited. See, for instance, The Newton Project, where most of Newton's manuscripts are dated, many without any explanation of or proof for the date.

⁵⁹ The dynamics of handwriting are studied by forensic document investigators, and the gist of handwriting development is usually given as described above. These specialists do not seem to make any claims to being able to date adult handwriting with any great precision. The following quote reflects the standard view: "When a person's handwriting becomes relatively fixed, there typically isn't much change in the handwriting and it would be very difficult to pin point a particular date or range without changes to the writing due to infirmity or illness that could provide a known, fixed reference point. . . . Dating a handwriting to a precise year or time would be very difficult (if not impossible) without extenuating circumstance." Jason Miller, President of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners, email to the author, February 8, 2018.

not claim.⁶⁰ Second, it is difficult to know how Newton divided his writing between different pursuits—for instance, were there drastic shifts or dwindling overlaps? Third, it is hard to calculate how much time Newton spent on each research topic. Before the world was aware of the extent of Newton’s other studies, his life was already regarded as a busy one. Newton was not an idle man and poured himself into whatever subject he decided to occupy himself with. Here was a life full of study and work, and suddenly scholars had to accommodate an enormous additional research into this already busy biography. Nor can volume or output be the deciding parameters: It can take little time to write many pages, and much time to write but few.

The first period of Newton’s theological studies and writings would then be sometime during 1666–84, after the miraculous years (1664–66) and before the writing of the *Principia* (1684–87). It stands to reason that during Newton’s early studies he was busy with entering the college world. Even geniuses need to learn something. Once Newton got his bearings, he moved on to more advanced readings. Here already he might have been reading something theological. There are, however, no theological manuscripts by Newton in a teenage hand. It is probably safe to assume from this that Newton was not doing extensive theological research as a teenager. During his *annis mirabiles* he was very busy with the sciences. It seems therefore reasonable to date his earliest in-depth theological studies to after those years. Newton was, however, still busy with sciences during the next years so it is hard to determine precisely when he turned to theology. Westfall put the start of the theological studies in the early 1670s,⁶¹ but there seems to be no reason why it could not have been already in the late 1660s. Be that as it may, Newton was studying theology at the latest in the 1670s. During that decade he complained he lacked time to engage in his most important studies and shunned the Republic of Letters.⁶² Newton scholars on all hands agree that these important studies he referred to were alchemy and theology. The time he managed to stay in near complete isolation from the scientific community was around seven years. Then ideas awakened that led to the writing of the *Principia*, an endeavor that consumed most of his time for two and a half years, and it is to the time shortly before or after that herculean task that Newton’s first datable theology manuscript can be dated. That manuscript contains views that are clear and mature enough that they are the fruit rather than the root of considerable theological inquiry. And among those views are Newton’s novel interpretation of Daniel 8 and his antitrinitarianism. His two most famous scientific periods, the *anni mirabiles* and the writing of *Principia*, serve therefore as the bookends of the first possible time period of extensive theological study and writing: 1666–84. Newton might have studied or written on theology in

⁶⁰ Shapiro, “Beyond the Dating Game,” 181.

⁶¹ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 310.

⁶² For several centuries, the intelligentsia of Europe interacted extensively through correspondence. Because of this the intellectual community was known contemporaneously as *Respublica litteraria*, i.e. the Republic of Letters. For the Republic of Letters, cf. Mapping the Republic of Letters, Stanford University, <http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/>.

his late student years, and perhaps even a tiny bit during his two scientific breakthroughs. But he probably wrote much more or even exclusively on theology between these two periods.

In the next section the major events and the pertinent datable books and manuscripts of the period in which Newton first studied theology and prophecy in earnest will be canvassed to see what historical events and developments can be detected as factors in Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8. It will begin with Newton's entering Cambridge at the age of seventeen, and conclude with the publication of *Principia* and the departure of his scribe in 1687 when Newton was forty-four.

2.3.3 Possible Historical Context of the Interpretation (1661–87)

At Trinity College (1661–68)

When Newton matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, in the summer of 1661,⁶³ the university was far from being on the intellectual frontier of Europe. The century-old curriculum, "still heavily slanted towards scholasticism," was becoming a mere formality which was less and less enforced.⁶⁴ There were glimmerings of the new intellectual horizons from the mainland, but by and large the University gave degrees which required less than rigorous studies to finish.⁶⁵ Newton graduated with a bachelor's degree in April, 1665 and with a master's degree on July 7, 1668 and became a major fellow of Trinity.⁶⁶ He followed the curriculum only to some extent during the first undergraduate years, only to abandon it to follow his own interests from 1663–1664 and onward.⁶⁷ These interests led him to read the cutting-edge natural philosophers and mathematicians during his late undergraduate years. That was indeed a remarkable reading program for a bachelor student. But what was truly astounding was the fact that Newton, on the cusp of his twenties, did not only read what was happening at the intellectual frontiers of Europe, but broke new ground beyond them.⁶⁸ What made it possible for Newton to pursue his own studies was the laxity of the official curriculum, as well as the Great Plague of London, which broke out in the early months of 1665, and reached Cambridge in the summer. "The university dispersed for most of two years"⁶⁹ and the students had to go home. (Newton came back from Woolsthorpe to resume

⁶³ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 67, 69–70.

⁶⁴ Derek T. Whiteside, introduction to volume 1, in Isaac Newton, *The Mathematical Papers of Isaac Newton*, 4 vols., ed. Derek T. Whiteside (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967–1971), 1:4. "By 1661 the official curriculum of Cambridge, prescribed by statute nearly a century before, was in an advanced state of decomposition." "Increasingly, as the entire structure of required studies and exercises lost its claim to legitimacy, tutors allowed students to go their own way." "During those thirty years, the intellectual life of Europe had been turned inside out. As far as Cambridge was concerned, nothing had happened." Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 80, 81, 83.

⁶⁵ Iliffe disagrees with Westfall and paints a brighter picture of Cambridge. Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 46.

⁶⁶ Westfall, "Newton;" Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 179, 180.

⁶⁷ The assumption that Newton read little in the curriculum is based in part on his extant undergraduate textbook notes, which are both few and incomplete. Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 84. He might have read somewhat more than they reveal: Note-taking is time-consuming, and it is easy to tire of it and yet continue to read.

⁶⁸ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 100, 106.

⁶⁹ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 87.

his studies in late April 1667.⁷⁰) This independent course meant that Newton's career as a scientist began before his formal studies were finished.⁷¹ The summer of 1664 marked the beginning of what Westfall termed in plural the miraculous years (*anni mirabiles*) of Newton's life (1664–1666), a period of discoveries that laid the groundwork for Newton's great contributions in mathematics, physics, and optics.⁷²

To what extent did Newton study theology during his student years? It is unknown, though there are some glimpses of his early theological interest. On Whitsunday 1662, Newton “felt impelled to examine the state of his conscience” and “to draw up a list of his sins before that date, and to start a list of those committed thereafter. His earnestness did not survive long enough to extend the second list very far.” The sins mentioned show a puritanical bent of spirituality. Newton's secrecy showed itself in this as other things: In this single instance that he wrote about personal things, it was in shorthand.⁷³ But Newton's personality notwithstanding, it is hard to read much into the fact that a personal project goes unfinished: Does the undertaking show interest or the quitting lack of interest? One other theological text can be dated to these years. In a notebook from the mid-1660s entitled “Certain Philosophical Questions” Newton wrote some metaphysical reflections on how God and souls relate to time and space.⁷⁴ In an entry on celestial bodies in this notebook, there is one stray Bible citation on Creation: “Heb 1 chap: vers [sic] 2 by [sic] God made the worlds by his son τῶν αἰώνων [the worlds].”⁷⁵ Some of Newton's purchases of theological and historical books can be dated to his student years as well. In an early list of expenses he wrote down Hall's *Chronicles*, Sleidan's *Four Monarchies*, and Schrevelius's Greek-Latin lexicon.⁷⁶ Sleidan's title is a reference to the four kingdoms found in the visions of Daniel, the common historical framework for Protestants. In 1661 he bought several other ones: Calvin's *Institutes*, Theodore Beza's *Annotations on the New Testament*, *Locorum Communium* by Lucas Trelcatius, Hoole's New Testament, and Pasor's Greek-Latin lexicon for the New Testament.⁷⁷ These works, however, are all of a rather general nature and thus do not reveal anything in particular about Newton's theological views during his student years.

Early Academic Career (1669–83)

Newton was appointed to the Lucasian Chair of mathematics at Cambridge in 1669, just a year after his graduation. He had continued to some extent the independent research he had

⁷⁰ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 142.

⁷¹ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 104.

⁷² Westfall, *Never at Rest*, ch. 5; Newton, *Mathematical Papers*, 1:154.

⁷³ For Newton's Whitsunday sin registry, see Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 77–78.

⁷⁴ Isaac Newton, “Quæstiones quædam Philosophiæ,” Ms. Add 3996, 113v, 128r, 129r, 131r, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00092,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00092>.

⁷⁵ Newton, Ms. Add 3996, 93v.

⁷⁶ Isaac Newton, Trinity College Notebook, Ms. R.4.48c, i, v, “Catalogue Entry: PERS00001,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/PERS00001>; Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 234, 239 (H1472, H1521); Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 87–88.

⁷⁷ This we know because he marked the purchase date in the front of these books. Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 100, 102, 114, 212, 252, (H181, H199, H335, H1264, H1640); Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 70–71.

begun during his miraculous years (1664–1666) past his graduation. Isaac Barrow, one of the professors with whom Newton was acquainted, knew something of Newton’s ability, and this explains why it was Newton who assumed the Lucasian Chair when Barrows resigned from that position in 1669.⁷⁸ Newton would hold this office until 1700, several years after his move from Cambridge to London in 1696. The young professor was obliged to lecture but one term a year. Apart from that he was free to occupy his time as he wished.⁷⁹

During his early professorship, Newton spent his time on science. He continued his studies, published them, and entered the academic community or the Republic of Letters. At first he allowed only a chosen few to look at some of his unpublished scientific tracts and began corresponding with some learned men. Then, at the end of 1671, the Royal Society, the newly founded scientific academy in England, saw Newton’s reflecting telescope. They were enthralled. The breakthrough came early next year, on February 19, when Newton’s new theory on color was published. But the praise was not undiluted and critique proved something that Newton could not handle well. The dialogue that ensued through letters and the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* over the following months and years exasperated Newton. “Less than a year after submitting the paper, he was so unsettled by the give and take of honest discussion that he began to cut his ties, and he withdrew into virtual isolation” from the academic community.⁸⁰ One letter excepted, there are no extant letters written by Newton between 1677 and 1683. During these years Newton wrote significantly less on scientific matters as well.⁸¹

While Newton sought to avoid scientific circles, he was busy with other studies, which most certainly were theology and alchemy.⁸² There is only one signature⁸³ that can be dated to Newton’s early academic career and that is Yahuda Ms. 14, 34r–43v, to ca./a. 1675.⁸⁴ This fragment contains notes on the barbarian tribes and the Arabs, and on “early popes and introduction of ‘superstitious’ doctrines and practices.”⁸⁵ These topics were related to the study of prophecy. It was necessary to study the history of the tribes to ascertain the identity of the ten kingdoms in Daniel 7 and the fulfillment of the first four trumpets in Revelation. The Arabs were seen as the fulfillment of the sixth trumpet. And the history of the Papacy was the fulfillment of the great apostasy predicted in much of the Bible’s apocalyptic

⁷⁸ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 206.

⁷⁹ Newton lectured supposedly until 1687—Westfall was skeptical whether Newton did lecture every year until then—but after that “he succumbed to the prevailing mode and held the position as a sinecure for fourteen years.” Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 211.

⁸⁰ Westfall, “Newton.”

⁸¹ For example, Newton’s mathematical writings from the decade 1664–73 fill three volumes, whereas the output from the next decade, 1674–84, fits into the fourth volume. See Newton, *Mathematical Papers*.

⁸² Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 281, 298, 309–310, 344.

⁸³ Signature, also called folio or section, is a bookbinding term. It means a large sheet of paper that is folded.

⁸⁴ “f. 42r–43v are written around a draft letter [to Henry Oldenburg, Jan. 1674/5].” “Catalogue

Entry: THEM00057 [on Yahuda Ms. 14],” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00057>.

⁸⁵ Newton Project, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00057.”

writings. Though it is short, the signature shows that Newton was probably involved in theological research by the mid-1670s.

Shortly before his withdrawal from the scientific community, an event occurred in Newton's life that Newton scholars have been tempted to see as an indicator of his antitrinitarian and prophetic views. After Newton had been hired as the Lucasian professor of mathematics, the final step towards tenure was to take holy orders. This had to be done within seven years after completing the master's degree, so in Newton's case in 1675 at the latest.⁸⁶ But in 1675 Newton somehow ensured a royal exemption from ordination for the Lucasian chair. It is tempting to think that Newton's heterodoxy was the reason why he was unwilling to be ordained as a pastor of the Anglican Church, or that the upcoming requirement awakened or furthered theological inquiries.⁸⁷ But in the absence of anything but a single folio of theological material from these years, it is impossible to know when he developed his heterodox views, and therefore how they were connected to the exemption from ordination. Iliffe suggests that perhaps "the primary motive" for avoiding ordination was born from the same reason as his complaints of lack of time for his non-scientific research, namely, "his desire for the freedom to pursue his research."⁸⁸ Ministerial duties would have been an additional distraction from research. Newton might have "made the case that he had a special vocation for the exact sciences" and he "may also have claimed that he had no aptitude for the ministry."⁸⁹ He further points out that if it was religious convictions that kept Newton from ordination, they did not hinder Newton from later assuming offices that required public oaths to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England,⁹⁰ though this excludes the possibilities that Newton was inconsistent or changed his mind on such oaths.⁹¹

There are other clearer indicators of Newton's prophetic views from his early professor years. In a letter written in August 1680, Henry More, a theologian and a fellow at Christ's College, Cambridge, recounted an incident to John Sharp and Hezekiah Burton, who had asked him regarding certain particulars of Newton's prophetic interpretation. Earlier that year, More had given Newton a copy of his newly published commentary on Revelation, *Apocalypsis Apocalypseos*. More related that

⁸⁶ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 179.

⁸⁷ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 311.

⁸⁸ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 130.

⁸⁹ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 130, 131.

⁹⁰ "Even if he were a committed anti-Trinitarian by this time, it was almost certainly not the reason behind his seeking a dispensation. Harboursing serious doubts about the Trinity did not later prevent him from twice becoming an MP, nor did it stop him from occupying two of the three senior positions in the Royal Mint. All of these appointments required him to publicly swear that he believed in the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, and indeed he had to do this frequently at Trinity. If Newton was heterodox before 1675, and it was a key factor in his decision to seek the dispensation, then this would be the only point in his career that he found his private beliefs incompatible with making a public profession of his commitment to the liturgy of the national church." Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 131.

⁹¹ Westfall, for instance, seems to charge Newton with hypocrisy on this count. Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 814–15. But that charge again rests on the assumption that Newton avoided ordination because of his heterodoxy.

after his reading of the exposition of the Apocalypse which I gave him, he came to my chamber, where he seemed to me not only to approve my exposition as coherent and perspicuous throughout from the beginning to the end, but—by the manner of his countenance, which is ordinarily melancholy and thoughtful, but then mighty lightsome and cheerful, and by the free profession of what satisfaction he took therein—to be in a manner transported.⁹²

More confessed there were some areas of disagreements but hoped that he would eventually win Newton over to his opinions. In the postscript to the letter, More added that Newton remained unconvinced, which shows that they had met again and discussed prophecy.⁹³ In More's commentary on Daniel which appeared the next year, in 1681, two of the three appendices argued for More's position in the areas of disagreement.⁹⁴ These meetings and Newton's marked copy of More's Daniel's commentary⁹⁵ show that by 1680 Newton had already formed an opinion of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. The exchange also shows that at least some people were aware of Newton's prophetic interest and views. Some of Newton's book purchases bear an additional witness to his prophetic and theological interest during this time. In 1680 he acquired Girgis Al-Makin's *History of the Arabs* and the works of Hilary of Poitiers, and two years later Benito Montano's commentary on the Gospels.⁹⁶ Arab history, as has been stated, was relevant to the fulfillment of the trumpets of Revelation and Hilary of Poitiers was one of the most ardent defenders of Trinitarianism in the fourth century, as his appellation "the hammer of the Arians" suggests. If Newton had not formed his own views on prophecy before, he was definitely doing so during his early professorship, starting in the latter half of the 1670s at the latest.

The *Principia* and Humphrey Newton, the Scribe (1683–89)

After many years of exclusion from the scientific community, Newton took up scientific pursuits again and re-entered the scene by writing one of the most important scientific monographs in history. The momentous task began in August 1684, when astronomer Edmond Halley visited Newton at Cambridge with "the problem of orbital dynamic" which he had heard Newton had solved. Newton promised to send Halley the answer, and "three months later [Halley] received a short tract." But the tract did not fully answer the question and Newton was set on solving the problem. Halley's inquiry had lit a fire in Newton that consumed his waking hours for the next two and a half years. Westfall underscored that until

⁹² Quoted in Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 349 and partly in Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 253–54.

⁹³ For More's exchange with Newton, see Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 255, 445nn57–59.

⁹⁴ Henry More, *A Plain and Continued Exposition of the Several Prophecies or Divine Visions of the Prophet Daniel, Which Have or May Concern the People of God, Whether Jew or Christian; Whereunto Is Annexed a Threefold Appendage, Touching Three Main Points, the First, Relating to Daniel, the Other Two to the Apocalypse* (London: Printed by M. F. for Walter Kettilby, 1681), 266–314.

⁹⁵ Newton's marked, personal copy has the calling number BS1556.M67 P5 1681 Copy 2, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA. Newton's marginal sign "NB" is on pp. 43, 52, 72, 74, 90, 93, 97–98, 105, 106, 110, 113, 134, 136, 138, 144–45, 149, 163–65, 171, 177, 185–87, 196, 216, 222–23. His marginal comments are on pp. 272–77, 279.

⁹⁶ Harrison, *Library of Isaac Newton*, 137, 159, 194–95 (H552, H764, H1102).

then Newton had “littered his study with unfinished” works. “Had Newton died in 1684 and his papers survived, we would know from them that a genius had lived. Instead of hailing him as a figure who shaped the modern intellect, we would at most mention him in brief paragraphs lamenting his failure to reach fulfillment.”⁹⁷ This time things were different: “The sheer grandeur of the theme carried him through to completion.”⁹⁸ Over the next two and a half years after Halley’s visit, Newton wrote the tract and then reworked and expanded it into his masterwork the *Principia*. It was published July 5, 1687.⁹⁹

In 1683, a year before Halley’s visit to Cambridge, another event occurred in Newton’s life that makes it possible to date a manuscript that contains Newton’s new interpretation of Daniel 8. John Wickins, who had been Newton’s roommate for twenty years, “decided to resign his fellowship” and moved away from Cambridge.¹⁰⁰ He had not only been Newton’s friend, but also his copyist and perhaps even his research assistant.¹⁰¹ “Later that year,” Newton “arranged to have a young man from his own grammar school in Grantham, Humphrey Newton, come to live with him as his amanuensis.”¹⁰² Humphrey would live in Newton’s chamber for five years, 1683–88.¹⁰³ Several of Newton’s theological manuscripts are in Humphrey’s hand and can therefore be dated to this period. Two are fragmentary: A copy of early creeds (Yahuda Ms. 22)¹⁰⁴ and a quote from an English medieval history in one of Newton’s notebooks (Keynes Ms. 2 or the Theological Notebook).¹⁰⁵ This is already of interest because Newton’s Theological Notebook is rather rudimentary. It is just a listing of Scriptures under different headings—but listing or organizing data was one of Newton’s

⁹⁷ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 407.

⁹⁸ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 407.

⁹⁹ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 407–8, 468.

¹⁰⁰ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 342.

¹⁰¹ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 212, 237, 246n31, 268–69, 269n96.

¹⁰² Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 343.

¹⁰³ In a January 17 1726/7 letter, written many decades after his stay at Cambridge, Humphrey wrote thus of his arrival to Cambridge: “In the last year of King Charles II, Sir Isaac was pleased through the mediation of Dr. Walker (then Schoolmaster at Grantham) to send for me up to Cambridge, of whom I had the opportunity as well as honor to wait of, for about five years.” Humphrey Newton to John Conduitt, January 17 and February 14, 1727/8, “Two Letters from Humphrey Newton to John Conduitt,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00033>. Charles II reigned until February 6 1684/5, so Humphrey gave the year of his arrival as 1684. Westfall surmised that Humphrey remembered incorrectly since he mentions a particularly cold winter. Humphrey wrote: “He very seldom sat by the fire in his chamber, excepting that long frosty winter, which made him creep to it against his will.” This winter was that of 1683–84 and not 1684–85. Furthermore, Westfall conjectured that “there is reason to think that he left before Newton’s long absence while he attended the Convention Parliament [January 1689 to February 1690], which Humphrey also failed to mention. This suggests that he left near the end of 1688, again implying that he arrived in 1683” since he stayed with Newton for five years. Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 343n31. Newton served for a year in Parliament, but the name “Convention Parliament” refers only to January 22 to February 12, 1689. For the dates of Parliament in session 1689–90, see The History of Parliament Online, “[The History of Parliament:] 1689,” <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1660-1690/parliament/1689>.

¹⁰⁴ Under “Notes” is written: “In Humphrey Newton’s hand.” “Catalogue Entry: THEM00065 [on Yahuda Ms. 22],” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00065>.

¹⁰⁵ “‘Ex historia Ingulphi edit. Oxonijs 1684’ (p. 101, title and text in Humphrey Newton’s hand).” “Catalogue Entry: THEM00002 [on Keynes Ms. 2],” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00002>.

preferred research methods in the initial stages of an investigation. It also shows Newton's interest in establishing the nature of the Son of God (or that he already had an opinion?).¹⁰⁶ The other two theological manuscripts in Humphrey's hand are much more substantial. One is a rough draft and notes on the origin of paganism and the Gentile kingdoms. This topic later evolved into larger manuscripts entitled "Theologiæ Gentilis Origines Philosophicæ" and "The Original of Monarchies."¹⁰⁷ The other is a treatise on Revelation (Yahuda Ms. 9), in which Newton discussed his original interpretation of Daniel 8.¹⁰⁸ In the treatise Newton focused mostly on how the visions were related one to another, what was the way to interpret symbols in prophecy. He mentioned fulfillment but a little, but though he did not mention his views on the nature of God in the work, how he applied prophecy to history shows that he was already an antitrinitarian: Newton interpreted the symbolic narrative of Revelation to depict the history of the Church, how it split into east and west, and how the west and then the east became corrupt. This is the historical trajectory that Newton always used in his church history drafts to show the rise of the apostasy of Trinitarianism. In this treatise, he was also clear on that Daniel and Revelation had to be understood together,¹⁰⁹ and that Daniel 8 was vital in understanding how the two books should be interpreted together.¹¹⁰

But can it be known when Humphrey wrote out this manuscript (Yahuda Ms. 9) for Newton during his stay as amanuensis? Iliffe seeks to narrow the timing down:

If we assume that the composition of the *Principia* and its drafts took up most of Newton's waking hours between the summer of 1684 and early 1687, then this tract was presumably written between the summer of 1687 and Humphrey's departure around the winter of 1688/89.¹¹¹ It is possible—but far less likely—that they were composed at the same time, and that he relaxed from the rigours of one by turning to the other.¹¹²

Alternatively, one could argue that Humphrey worked on the manuscript during his first winter of 1683–1684, before Halley's visit. In either case, Newton had reached and expressed his antitrinitarianism and new interpretation of Daniel 8 in the 1680s. This is of course a somewhat unsatisfactory conclusion to the historical context, for one suspects that his studies of history and prophecy had already brought him to these conclusions much earlier, in the 1670s, and maybe even earlier. There is unfortunately no way to know for certain at the moment.

¹⁰⁶ Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 310–11.

¹⁰⁷ Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 16, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00059," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00059>.

¹⁰⁸ Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 33r–34r; 9.2, 106r–12r, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00052," <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00052>.

¹⁰⁹ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 12r.

¹¹⁰ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 111r.

¹¹¹ Iliffe believes Humphrey stayed with Newton from 1684 until the winter 1688–89, rather than 1683–88 as Westfall did. Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 200, 221.

¹¹² Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 221.

2.3.4 Conclusion

The time when Newton began studying prophecy and when he reached his own conclusions remains somewhat unclear. Based on the earliest manuscripts that can be dated with certainty, what can be determined is that Newton had begun to study history (and most likely prophecy) at least by ca. 1675 and that by 1683–1689 he had reached his interpretation of Daniel 8.

Direct influences on his approach to Daniel 8 are also unknown. Works he is known to have read—Joseph Mede and Henry More—were traditional in their reading of the chapter. It is unknown whether Newton read Thomas Parker or Bishop of Worcester William Lloyd on Daniel 8, both of whom interpreted the 2300 days as years. Direct influences on Newton’s antitrinitarian views, which he wedded to Daniel 8, are also unknown. Only “macroinfluences” or the intellectual atmosphere of his times can be noted as an indirect influence, for Newton lived in the dawn of the Enlightenment and antitrinitarianism and other freethinking ideas were becoming more common. Whether there were any direct influences—such as particular antitrinitarian authors which Newton read—may also not necessarily have been the case. Iliffe may be right when he wrote that “one must conclude that Newton—with strong commitment to independent study—read himself into heresy.”¹¹³ Absent evidence to the contrary, it is entirely possible that Newton’s antitrinitarianism and his new interpretation of Daniel 8 were his own conclusions after thought and research.

What immediate historical events and developments were a factor in Newton’s interpretation is also unknown. Newton scholars have, in search of any plausible reason for his apocalypticism, grasped at any event that could be construed into a “crisis” that might have called forth an apocalyptic reaction from Newton. But these explanations ask isolated events to be of much more weight and influence than they were. The requirement to be ordained into the Church of England in 1675 at the latest; the pressure James II put on Cambridge to accommodate Catholic academics (1687)—neither did such events cause Newton to study prophecy, nor did they change his mind on what the visions meant.

A clearer factor at work in Newton’s views on God and Christ and Daniel 8 was his own character and personality. Newton was inquisitive, insightful, and when he put his mind to a problem he sought to get to the bottom of things, which to Newton meant to find “the first principles” or the basis of the system which he was investigating. His research methods were characterized by consistency and thoroughness. Perhaps Newton wanted to investigate the foundations of Christianity, which to him was apparently the nature and position of God and Christ. Or perhaps questions simply arose in his mind concerning the Trinity. However the case awakened, after consulting the Scriptures he probably remained unconvinced of the doctrine. If the Trinity was not to be found in the Bible, what led then to such an erroneous doctrine that people were willing to falsify verses to insert this foreign concept into the text? Such thoughts probably led Newton to investigate the development of the doctrine in the early

¹¹³ Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 135.

church fathers. Something similar can be said about his new interpretation of Daniel 8. Newton agreed with Mede's systematic approach to prophecy and took it further than Mede by applying it to the visions of Daniel as well. The discrepancies he perceived in Daniel 8 disappeared when the symbols were interpreted consistently. Being all for system-building, Newton may not even have needed Mede to reach this interpretation. Such a conjecture is strengthened by yet another aspect of Newton's temperament—his privacy and insecurity. It was an easy thing to him to investigate and discover new truths—publishing and defending them was an ordeal much harder, and when it came to the truths of Christianity, it was a battle he prepared for without ever entering publicly. This dread of confrontation and hate of disputes probably interacted with Newton's own theology—it was not really clear whether these truths were important or urgent, and therefore whether the action they called for was private study or public proclamation.

2.4 Textual Dynamics

2.4.1 Introduction

As far back as records go, prophetic expositors had interpreted Daniel 8 in a fairly similar way. Though the prophecy might foreshadow the Antichrist, it was primarily about the persecution of Antiochus IV against the Jews in the second century BC. The Seleucid ruler was the wicked king symbolized by the last horn (Dn 8:9, 23) and the vision focused on his actions (vv. 9–14, 23–26). Antiochus discontinued the Temple services (took away “the daily sacrifice”, vv. 11–13) and erected a pagan altar or idol there (“the abomination of desolation”, Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11, see also Dn 8:13). The ordeal lasted for several years (“2300 days”, v. 14) until the Maccabees “cleansed” the Temple (v. 14). Antiochus himself died suddenly of sickness and was thus providentially “broken without hand” (v. 25). The interpretation branched out in the Reformation: Catholics continued to expect a future Antichrist to fulfill the antitype of the last horn, whereas Protestants believed the Pope was the antitype. From the Reformation and during the period of orthodoxy, historicist prophetic interpretation remained the consensus in Protestant Orthodoxy, but began to give way to more preterist views during the time of the Enlightenment. Luther's interpretation of Daniel 8 remained therefore unchanged, except that some began to question whether the Antichrist had any place in the chapter.¹¹⁴ Newton broke with the traditional reading and historicized the chapter in direct opposition to nascent full preterism by rejecting the foreshadowing convention altogether.

Newton historicized Daniel 8 further than had been done before.¹¹⁵ He asserted that the chapter had only one meaning and therefore the last horn could have but one referent, not two.

¹¹⁴ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 2:506–10.

¹¹⁵ Jewish commentators had read Daniel 8 in a historicist way for centuries before Newton. The topic of the history of Jewish interpretation of Daniel remains sadly under-researched. As far as I know, there is no work that traces the topic over the centuries. There may be one in Hebrew without my knowledge. The most comprehensive text is still some chapters in Froom. See Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 2:184–240. There was at least one other seventeenth century Christian commentator who also rejected the preterist interpretation of Daniel 8. See Thomas Parker, *The Visions and Prophecies of Daniel Expounded: Wherein*

He compared the details of the prediction with the career of Antiochus and found them incompatible. He therefore concluded that Antiochus had nothing to do with Daniel 8. Instead, the referent of the last horn was the Roman power (pagan and papal). Even though most of his writings on prophecy lay unknown in manuscript for centuries, the one work that was published posthumously, his little commentary on Daniel and Revelation, influenced a whole school of interpreters over the next two centuries—particularly Newton’s reading of Daniel 8—and was an important tile in the path forward to the apocalyptic movements of the nineteenth century.

To assess the hermeneutical factors that guided Newton’s novel departure, this section will first give an overview of his writings on the prophecies of Daniel and then examine how he interpreted chapter 8 on its own and in the context of the other Danielic visions.

2.4.2 Writings on Daniel

Prophecy, ancient history, and the history of the church were the central themes of Newton’s theological research. Daniel’s visions were written as on an arch over all these studies, so they are found in nearly all of Newton’s larger manuscripts. This section will look at Newton’s manuscripts on these three subjects and how they relate to his interpretation of Daniel.

Newton worked on a commentary on Daniel and Revelation and seems to have come close to finishing it. After his death, his half-nephew Benjamin Smith prepared the manuscript for publication¹¹⁶ and published the commentary under the title *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John* (1733).¹¹⁷ Apart from introduction and three meager chapters on Revelation, the book was about Daniel. Besides this commentary

the Mistakes of Former Interpreters Are Modestly Discovered, and the True Meaning of the Text Made Plain by the Words and Circumstances of It (London: Printed for Edmund Paxton, 1646), 35–39, 43–49. It is not known whether Newton read this book or not. William Lloyd, Bishop of Worcester, believed that the 2300 days were years, and Newton quoted him on Daniel 9, but this research did not determine whether Newton read his views on Daniel 8. Whiston, *Revelation of St. John*, 327; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1c, 5v.

¹¹⁶ The author did not find a study that outlines to what extent Smith collected and edited the papers that are now Ms. Add. 3989 and Yahuda Ms. 7.1. There are editorial notes in Yahuda Ms. 7.2b, 1–9. These are “in the hands of John Conduitt and another, possibly Benjamin Smith,” “on how to deal with these texts.” “Catalogue Entry: THEM00050 [on Yahuda Ms. 7],” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00050>. Smith most likely chose the most finished parts of Newton’s projected work and edited them together. Despite the editing and what was left out (such as more unfinished chapters), the outcome is a rather consistent work. The Cambridge Digital Library uses too strong language when it describes Add. 3989 as “a collection of fragments assembled” by Benjamin Smith. See entry description for “Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John (MS Add.3989,” Cambridge Digital Library, University of Cambridge, <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-03989/1>.

¹¹⁷ Isaac Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St. John* (London: Printed by J. Darby and T. Browne, 1733). For later republications, see Isaac Newton, *Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, by Sir Isaac Newton*, edited by P. Borthwick (London: James Nisbet, 1831); Isaac Newton, *Sir Isaac Newton’s Daniel and the Apocalypse*, edited by William Wittla (London: John Murray, 1922). A critical edition was attempted by Barnett and Mills. The annotations, however, are too meager for their volume to be significantly helpful. Isaac Newton, *Isaac Newton’s Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John: A Critical Edition*, edited by S. J. Barnett and Mary E. Mills, Mellen Critical Editions and Translations 2 (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1999).

Newton wrote many other lengthy manuscripts on these prophetic books,¹¹⁸ apparently with publication in view. The drafts contain Newton's proposed outlines¹¹⁹ of the work, his notes-to-self on how to structure the work,¹²⁰ they have titled chapters, and sometimes address the reader.¹²¹ In these works, Newton often wrote a section on the prophetic symbols and explained them one by one.¹²² Some of his longer explanations have to do with the main symbols of Daniel: Beasts, heads, and horns.¹²³ Newton's novel interpretation of Daniel 8 was in large part due to his reading of these symbols, and in one of his prophecy drafts he put to the reader that this corrected reading of chapter 8 was key to advancing prophetic

¹¹⁸ The most important manuscripts Newton wrote on Daniel and Revelation are Keynes Mss. 1 and 5 and Yahuda Mss. 1–3 and 6–10. Keynes Ms. 1 is a fragment of an exposition on the seven trumpets. Keynes Ms. 5 is an explanation of the prophetic symbols and the rules of interpreting the visions, and an exposition on Revelation. Yahuda Ms. 1 contains the same, with a focus on how the visions are related to each other (“synchronizations”). Sections of Yahuda Ms. 2 are on prophetic symbolism. Yahuda Ms. 3 is a fragment on Revelation. Yahuda Ms. 6 is a fragment on the synchronisms of Revelation. Besides drafts of what would become *Observations*, Yahuda Ms. 7 is mass of disorganized fragments, mostly on prophecy. Yahuda Ms. 8 is also a collection of fragments, mostly on prophecy. Yahuda Ms. 9 is an explanation of the prophetic symbols and an exposition of Revelation in the light of the Jewish Temple service. Yahuda Ms. 10 is a short collection of fragments and notes on the prophecies. Yahuda Ms. 4 or “Variantes Lectiones Apocalypticae” can also be mentioned here. It is a work on variant manuscript readings in Revelation. Though it is a textual critical work, it still reflects Newton's interest in prophecy. For the manuscripts, see Isaac Newton, Keynes Ms. 1, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00001,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00001>; Isaac Newton, Keynes Ms. 5, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00005,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00005>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00044,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00044>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 2, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00045,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00045>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 3, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00046,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00046>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 6, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00049,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00049>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00050,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00050>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 8, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00051,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00051>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00052,” <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00052>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 10, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00053,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00053>.

¹¹⁹ One manuscript has two schemes of a work on Daniel that was never realized. The second one bears some similarity to the chapters of *Observations*. Newton, Yahuda Ms. 10b, 6r, 9v. A third scheme is found in a church history manuscript. Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 158v, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00058,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00058>. The first folios of “Of the Church” or the Bodmer Ms. have many proposed outlines of the work. Isaac Newton, Bodmer Ms., iii^r–vii^v, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Geneva.

¹²⁰ Countless examples of these self-editorial-reminders could be given. For instance: “After these prophecies of the old [*sic*] Testament, add those of the marriage of the Lamb.” “After the first discourse on the Apocalyps [*sic*] is ended, say how this is a key to all prophetick [*sic*] scriptures &c.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 8.2, 7r.

¹²¹ For Newton's addressing the reader, see e.g.: “We have given you some account of the decay of religion in point of faith, it remains that we [give] an account of its decay in manners.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 213r.

¹²² Newton, Keynes Ms. 5, Ir–6r; Isaac Newton, Ms. Add. 3989, 7r–9r, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00091,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00091>; Newton, *Observations*, ch. 2; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 20r–1.1a, 31r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1d, 1r–7r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 14, 30r–v, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00057,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00057>.

¹²³ Newton, Keynes Ms. 5, IIIr–IVv; Newton, Ms. Add. 3989, 8r; Newton, *Observations*, 21–22; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 9r, 37r–41r; 1.1a, 10r, 15r–18r; Newton, Ms. 7.1d, 3r, 6r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 19v–20v, 23r–39v.

interpretation: “The knot of these prophecies being untied, which has hitherto been the great stumbling block to interpreters, you may now by comparing Daniel and the Apocalypse together much better understand them both.”¹²⁴ How this knot was untied and what the meaning of Daniel and Revelation was, was what Newton sought to expound on in his church history manuscripts.

In his church history manuscripts, Newton used Daniel 8 as the prism through which to view the Christian Church and the history of its faith.¹²⁵ The chapter titles of the largest manuscripts are full of Daniel 8 terminology,¹²⁶ and Newton expressed the purpose of his church history to be an explanation of these and other terms in Daniel:

I designe [*sic*] in the following discourse to explain some of [Daniel’s] types & phrases wh^{ch} relate to y^e state of the Church in the last ages, & particularly, what is to be understood by the Host of heaven, the Prince of the Host, the Prince of Princes, Messiah the Prince, Michael the Prince of the Jews, the holy Covenant, the sanctuary of strength, the Host wh^{ch} was given to the last horn of the He Goat in transgression against the Holy covenant, the desolation of the Host of heaven, the transgression of desolation or abomination of desolation, the indignation against the holy covenant, the last end of the indignation, & the time of the end.¹²⁷

To understand Daniel properly, Newton also studied the history of the kingdoms which appear in the visions. This was one incentive for his great interest in ancient history. In his later years, Newton finished a chronology on the ancient kingdoms (it exists in drafts and fair copy)¹²⁸ entitled the *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended*. It was published in 1728, a year after his death.¹²⁹ One third of the book discussed the kingdoms of the Babylonians, the

¹²⁴ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 111r.

¹²⁵ This is most noticeable in the longest manuscripts—the Bodmer Ms. and Yahuda Ms. 15. Daniel also appears in some of the shorter manuscripts on the church governance, church history, and the creed. See Isaac Newton, Keynes Ms. 3, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00003,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00003>; Isaac Newton, Keynes Ms. 9, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00009,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00009>; Isaac Newton, “Paradoxical Questions concerning the morals & actions of Athanasius & his followers,” N563M3 P222, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00117,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00117>; Isaac Newton, SL 255, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00127,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00127>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 19, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00062,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00062>.

¹²⁶ The chapter titles in the tentative schemes in the Bodmer Ms. are nearly all from Daniel 8. Bodmer Ms., iii^r–vii^v. Some actual chapter titles are: “Of the Host of Heaven & the Prince of the Host,” “Of the Host of Heaven, and the corruption which crept into it,” “Of the sanctuary of strength, or Of the Temple & Synagogues of the Jews & Churches of the Christians.” Newton, Bodmer Ms. 1r; 143r, 250r.

¹²⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., i^v–ii^r.

¹²⁸ Main manuscripts for the *Chronology* are Mss. Add. 3987, 3988, and Yahuda Ms. 26. Isaac Newton, Ms. Add. 3987, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00423,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00423>; Isaac Newton, Ms. Add. 3988, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00090,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00090>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 26, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00069,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00069>.

¹²⁹ Newton prepared an abstract of his chronology for the Princess of Wales. Copies were then circulated without Newton’s permission (three of them are still extant). The abstract was finally published, again

Medes, and the Persians.¹³⁰ In addition to all these writings, Newton also drew up prophetic schemata, one of which he sent to his friend, John Locke.¹³¹

Newton's exposition of Daniel 8 will now be set forth by drawing upon all these works, in particular the *Observations*, the *Chronology*, and the larger church history manuscripts.

2.4.3 Exposition of Daniel 8

Before threading through the exposition, it may be helpful to highlight significant aspects of Newton's hermeneutic. Newton's novel interpretation of Daniel 8 is rooted in part in his insistence on interpreting symbols and words consistently. The important symbol here is horn and its meaning as 'king.'

without permission, as *Abrégé de la chronologie de M. le chevalier Isaac Newton, Fait par lui-même, & traduit sur le Manuscrit Anglois* (Paris, 1725). See Frank Edward Manuel, *Isaac Newton Historian* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1963), 21–22n5, 29n29. The chronology itself was published posthumously along with the abstract as Isaac Newton, *The Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended. To Which Is Prefixed, a Short Chronicle from the First Memory of Things in Europe, to the Conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great. With Three Plates of the Temple of Solomon* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, 1728).

¹³⁰ Newton, *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended*, chs. 4 and 6. These kingdoms also feature in Ms. 361(3), a manuscript on chronology. Newton's goal with the *Chronology* was to demonstrate that other nations had exaggerated their antiquity, and that Israel was the most ancient kingdom. Manuel, *Isaac Newton Historian*, 89, 122, 193. For this reason the book focused on the origin of the Greeks rather than the period during which they were one of Daniel's kingdoms. Newton might, however, have had intentions to link the *Chronology* more directly with an exposition of Daniel. Ms. Add. 3987 has two endings, one which was struck out, and the one that was printed. The first has these words: "And as Daniel has noted the principal actions of the Persian Empire, so he has noted the principal actions and changes in the Empires of the Greeks and Latins and has done it with more understanding than any Greek or Roman writer ever did, and therefore in the short account and general ideas which I intend to give of these Empires his description of them deserve to be regarded." Ms. Add. 3987, 123r. Manuel commented: "The word 'intend' is underlined in pencil and there is a note on this page, probably in John Conduitt's hand, which reads: 'This is proof that he intended his prophecies as a sequel to his Chronology.'" Manuel, *Isaac Newton Historian*, 163. Another link between Newton's *Chronology* and exposition of prophecy, indicating that Newton may have intended to unite them in one work, is found in one of the chronology drafts. There Newton started writing chapters on the Greek and Roman Empires, variously titled "Of the Greek & Latin Empires" and "Of the Empire of the Greeks under their own kings" which he dropped and did not work further on. Newton, Ms. 361(3), 20r–21r. If he had written these chapters, the *Chronology* would have included chapters on all of Daniel's four kingdoms. Newton also drafted other works on ancient history. "The Original of Monarchies" attempted the same as the *Chronology*, i.e. to show the origin of the ancient kingdoms and how Israel had been more ancient than they, and hence superior. "Philosophical Origins of the Gentile Theology" ("Theologiæ Gentilis Origines Philosophicæ") discussed the origin of paganism, a theme which he believed had a direct bearing on the later apostasy of the Christian Church. The main manuscripts for these works are Isaac Newton, Ms. 361(1), "Catalogue Entry: THEM00096," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00096>; Isaac Newton, Ms. 361(3), "Catalogue Entry: THEM00098," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00098>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 16, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00059," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00059>; Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 17, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00060," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00060>; and Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 41, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00077," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00077>.

¹³¹ Isaac Newton, Ms. Locke c. 27, 88r, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, published in Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 322, figure 8.5; Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, plates 17–18.

Of Beasts, Heads, Horns, and Kings

Altogether there are eight horns in Daniel 8. The ram had two horns (v. 3) which were broken when the goat attacked him (v. 7). The assaulting goat had at first only one horn (v. 5). That great horn broke and in its stead four horns came up (v. 8). Out of one of the four horns came the final horn (v. 9). It was “little” at first but then grew “exceeding great”, only to be broken (v. 25) like most of the previous ones. At first glance the text itself might seem to interpret the horns discordantly: All the horns were said to be ‘kings’ except the four horns of the goat, which were referred to as ‘kingdoms’ (vv. 21–23). To Newton this demonstrated that the words ‘king’ and ‘kingdom’ were used synonymously in chapter 8. He pointed out that the words were also used interchangeably by Daniel in chapter 7, where “the four Beasts are Kings in his language & yet by his own interpretation they are Kingdoms” (compare vv. 17 and 23).¹³² ‘King’ does not refer to the person but to the position. That is, ‘king’ was not the individual person who happened to be king at a certain moment in history, but a synecdoche for ‘kingdom.’¹³³ This had hermeneutic consequences for Daniel 8, because expositors generally interpreted some of the horns as individual kings and some as kingdoms. Newton moved away from this tradition and interpreted *all* the eight horns in Daniel 8 as kingdoms.¹³⁴

Another consistency that Newton held to was the time and territory of the symbols. According to Newton, the symbols of beasts, heads, and horns, properly signified not just a kingdom but its nation(s). The reason for this conclusion was that in the visions the kingdoms persisted after their downfall. A case in point was Daniel 7:12: “As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.” This meant that the meaning of the symbols was more complex than ‘kingdom,’ for the beasts continued to live after they lost their “dominion” (i.e. kingdom). The entities symbolized were therefore *nations* (living in their *territory*), which first reigned as kingdoms, but continued to exist as subjected people after their hegemony came to an end. Newton commented: “The three first of *Daniel’s* Beasts had their dominions taken away, each of them at the rise of the next Beast; but their lives were prolonged, and they are all of them still alive.”¹³⁵ While the four kingdoms of Daniel reigned successively, as territorially distinct nations they all existed side by side through history.

For Newton this nuanced meaning of the symbols brought up the potential shoddy interpretation of not distinguishing between them or applying them to many referents. An example from Daniel 7 can be used as an illustration. When the leopard (Greece) succeeded

¹³² Newton, *Yahuda Ms* 9.1, 33r.

¹³³ “Some interpreters have applied these horns to signify the persons of Kings but without ground, for although they are called Kings in Daniel & the Apocalyps [*sic*] yet it’s plain that by a king we are not there to understand a single person but the whole race of kings in each kingdom, according to the saying, *Rex non moritur*: & not only the whole race of kings but the dominion or Kingdom it self [*sic*].” Newton, *Yahuda Ms*. 1.1, 39r.

¹³⁴ In his symbology, Newton went through the eight horns and detailed the reasons for a congruous interpretation. Newton, *Yahuda Ms*. 1.1, 39r; Newton, *Yahuda Ms*. 9.1, 33–34r. This interesting section will be referred to through the exposition of the horns.

¹³⁵ Newton, *Observations*, 118. See also Newton, *Observations*, 31; Newton, *Yahuda Ms*. 10b, 3r.

the bear (Medo-Persia), the conquered Medes and Persians became Greek subjects and their country became part of the Greek kingdom. Greece then splintered into four kingdoms, signified by the leopard's four heads. Following Newton's rules, these four kingdoms could not include Medo-Persia (as territory and subjects) because then both the bear and part of the leopard's heads were interpreted as Medo-Persia. Such blurring and overlapping of symbol would not do. Newton stated that the successive kingdoms were geographically distinct:¹³⁶ While an ascendant kingdom did conquer the lands of its predecessor, these annexations were not included in the kingdom's symbol, just as a beast in a vision was distinct from the other ones, and did not merge with the one it lost to. Thus the body of a beast was the geographical extent of the nation(s)'s "original" or proper territory, and heads or horns of a beast were symbolic for the further divisions of that territory—though these subsequent divisions annexed more territory to the "homeland," the additional country was not the referent of the symbols. This meant that the last horn in Daniel 8 had to be a Greek kingdom, since it grew out of the Greek goat.

The Ram (vv. 3–7, 20)

The two-horned ram symbolized the Medo-Persian Empire. Newton explained the appropriateness of the symbol. The species reflected the empire's characteristics. Among the Eastern nations a ram signified wealth and therefore "the Persians are denoted by the Ram because of their great riches."¹³⁷ He also elucidated some of the implications of the symbol's application. The two-horned ram was interpreted in the text as "the kings of Media and Persia" (v. 20). This demonstrated that a beast, a horn, and a king all referred to a kingdom. The ram did not represent "single persons." Nor did the horns, for Medo-Persia was ruled by "one King [and not two] when the Goat brake his two horns."¹³⁸ The ram's two horns were

¹³⁶ Newton assigned territory to the four main kingdoms as follows: (1) "the nations of *Chaldea* and *Assyria*," (2) "those of *Media* and *Persia*," (3) "those of *Macedon*, *Greece* and *Thrace*, *Asia* minor, *Syria* and *Egypt*," west of Euphrates and all the way east to Greece, and (4) "those of *Europe*" west of Greece. Newton, *Observations*, 31. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 10b, 3r. Newton's refusal to acknowledge territorial overlap of the successive kingdoms overlooked the inconspicuous complexity of how the succession is symbolized in the prophecies. It is shown both by entities, their position, movement, and growth: The beasts move out of the sea and succeed each other; the goat comes running from the west; the bear devours much flesh; many horns are depicted as growing or being broken. This means that finding rules in the visions on how to define the borders of the symbol referents and to clearly distinguish between them is complicated; perhaps there are no such rules.

¹³⁷ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 23r. Joseph Mede had asserted that in ancient times the nations in the East had had a common language of metaphor. This he learned, in turn, from a dream interpretation book by the Arab Achmet. Since Daniel lived in the ancient East, Newton believed Achmet was therefore an authentic reference to interpret Newton's prophetic symbols. See Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 327; Iliffe, *Priest of Nature*, 228. The work, however, was a pseudepigraph written by a Byzantine Christian, fl. most likely in the tenth century. Achmet [pseud.], *The Oneirocriticon of Achmet: A Medieval Greek and Arabic Treatise on the Interpretation of Dreams*, ed. Steven M. Oberhelman (Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University Press, 1991), 11–12. The association of the ram with riches was based on an apparently superficial reading of Achmet. A ram had many meanings, and only two were related to riches: Finding "the liver and lungs of a ram or goat" signified to "get the entire wealth of a nobleman," and to meet many rams meant to become "wealthy in proportion to their fatness." Achmet, *Oneirocriticon*, §83, §240.

¹³⁸ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 39r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 33r.

therefore “not two persons but two kingdoms, the kingdoms of *Media* and *Persia*.”¹³⁹ Newton also noted the relation of the horns to the ram. When a beast and a horn (or horns) were used together to signify a kingdom, “the horns of a Beast are used to signify the number of particular kingdoms or Dynasties of which the universal kingdom represented by the whole Beast is composed.” Thus the two horns “were the kings or kingdoms of the Medes & Persians which composed that general kingdom” together.¹⁴⁰ The description of the two horns clarified this.

The relation of the two horns was described as successive and unequal in power: “One was higher than the other, and the higher came up last” (v. 3). Newton interpreted the horns thus: “The horn which came up first was the kingdom of the *Medes*, from the time that *Cyaxares* [of *Media*] and *Nebuchadnezzar* overthrew *Nineveh*, and shared the empire of the *Assyrians* between them.”¹⁴¹ “The kingdom of *Persia* was the higher horn and came up last” “when *Cyrus* having newly conquered *Babylon*, revolted from *Darius* King of the *Medes*, and beat him at *Pasargadae*, and set up the *Persians* above the *Medes*.”¹⁴² Though the Medes and the Persians were two different nations which reigned one after the other—and in that sense constituted “two kingdoms”¹⁴³—they were but two successive dynasties of the same empire. When *Cyrus* toppled *Darius*, he “founded no new kingdom but only translated the government from the Province of the Medes to that of the Persians. Whence the Medes & the Persians are constantly reckoned [*sic*] by Daniel as one kingdom.”¹⁴⁴ The fact that the Median horn was broken by the goat as well as the Persian horn showed that a kingdom does not necessarily cease to be symbolized after it loses power, because it still exists as a nation. Though the Medes ceded power to the Persians, they still existed, and were, alongside the Persians, subdued by Greece.¹⁴⁵

The Goat (vv. 5–9, 21–23)

The goat symbolizes the Greek Empire. The angel explains the goat as “the king of Grecia” (v. 21). This ‘king’ has to denote a kingdom, for the goat comprised many other kings: “the great horn between his eyes called the first King,” after that, the four horns “which are expressly interpreted of Kingdoms” (v. 22), and “the little horn which rose up after them.”¹⁴⁶ The species was an apt symbol for the Greek Empire for a couple of reasons. The goat is an

¹³⁹ Newton, *Observations*, 115.

¹⁴⁰ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.2, 38r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.3, 53r.

¹⁴¹ Newton, *Observations*, 116.

¹⁴² Newton, *Observations*, 115–16; see also 124; Newton, *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended*, 40, 329–30. In another manuscript Newton says *Cyrus* revolted against *Astyages*. Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 25.1d, 5r, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00068,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00068>.

¹⁴³ Newton, *Observations*, 115, emphasis supplied.

¹⁴⁴ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 25.1d, 5r–v.

¹⁴⁵ “The Medes did not cease to be a horn by the [revolt] of *Cyrus*, they & the [Persians,] though under one common King[,] were till the reign of the Greeks represented by two horns upon the Ram.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 109r.

¹⁴⁶ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 39r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 33r.

ancient emblem for Greece.¹⁴⁷ It was also “a very salacious animal” and as lust typified idolatry in Scripture it fit this kingdom, “because the Greeks were to take away the daily sacrifice & place the abomination [of desolation] & by consequence to be the most remarkable of Daniel[']s Kingdoms for Idolatry.”¹⁴⁸

“The great horn” of the goat is interpreted as “the first king” (v. 21). This is not only Alexander the Great, but his dynasty or kingdom. A close reading of the text bears this out. The first proof is the enumeration. This horn was “the first” king and that meant that the horns which come after it must be the following kings, otherwise the great horn “could not be the first of them.” “ffor [*sic*] the first horn is called the first King[,] not in respect of personal successors[,] no where spoken of in this prophecy, but in respect of the four which in the next words are said to stand up for it.” And since the following four are “expressly interpreted of kingdoms” (v. 22) “the first” must be a kingdom too. “For equivocals are never connumerated. To call a man the first King & kingdoms the next kings is against all rules of speaking.” The second reason is the use of the same symbol. When the great horn was broken, the four horns came up “for it [that is, in its place]” (v. 22). By this it is “evident that they were all of a kind” and have to be of the same meaning. The third reason is the explanation of breaking a horn. When the two horns of the ram were broken, it did not signify the death of the last emperor Darius III, but “the dissolution of his Kingdomes of Media and Persia at his death: so unless we will depart from the Analogy of the prophecy, by breaking the Goat[']s horn we must not understand Alexander’s death but the breaking & dividing of his Kingdom thereupon.” This was further supported by the last vision of Daniel, in which it was stated that “his kingdom shall be broken” and “his kingdom shall be plucked up” (Dan 11:13–4).¹⁴⁹ This consistency in interpreting symbols was elementary and crucial:

For in one & the same prophecy & in one & the same sentence of that Prophecy to interpret one horn of a kingdom & another of a single person is such a liberty as is never allowed in common speaking nor can be allowed in the scriptures without straining to serve an hypothesis. [']Tis by this shameless liberty of multiplying the signification of words & types that Interpreters have made the scriptures seem so uncertain & hard to be understood & therefore he that will understand them truly must not admit it.¹⁵⁰

The great horn is therefore the first Greek kingdom or dynasty, that of Alexander the Great. It did not end at his death, for he was succeeded by “his brother *Aridæus* and two young sons,

¹⁴⁷ “Caramus founded the Kingdom of Macedon by following a flock of Goats & thence gave the name of Ægea to the regal city [Athens] & of Ægeadæ to the people.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 23r.

¹⁴⁸ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 23r. Elsewhere, Newton cited verses associating goats with demons. Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 111r.

¹⁴⁹ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 39r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 33r–34r. See also Newton, *Observations*, 29–30, 117.

¹⁵⁰ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 33r–34r.

Alexander and Hercules.¹⁵¹ The house of Alexander was, however, short-lived. A little more than a decade after its foundation the entire royal family had been wiped out.¹⁵²

After “the great horn” of the goat was broken, four horns arose in its place (v. 8). This the text explains as “four kingdoms” that arose “out of the nation” (v. 22). The four horns grew simultaneously and represent contemporary and not successive kingdoms¹⁵³ emerging from the same previous kingdom.¹⁵⁴ Newton identified these four as the kingdoms into which Alexander’s successors carved his dominion: “The Monarchy of the Greeks at its first dissolution divided into four great kingdoms to the four winds of heaven.”¹⁵⁵ After the extirpation of the royal seed, Alexander’s generals “put crowns on their own heads,”¹⁵⁶ “having abstained from this honour while there remained any of Alexander[’]s race to inherit the crown. And thus the monarchy of the Greeks for want of an heir was broken into several kingdoms, four of which seated to the four winds of heaven were very eminent.”¹⁵⁷

Newton knew, however, that the successor states were more than four.¹⁵⁸ The first to proclaim himself king was Antigonus, and shortly thereafter Seleucus, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Ptolemy declared themselves kings as well. Antigonus fell before their joint forces, but even then his son Demetrius retained some territory as a fifth kingdom. There were even other kingdoms besides these five.¹⁵⁹ The vicissitudes of wars between Alexander’s successors made it hard for Newton to determine which four of the kingdoms the prophecy alludes to. He therefore gave conflicting lists of the four kingdoms and their territory,¹⁶⁰

¹⁵¹ Newton, *Observations*, 117.

¹⁵² Newton dated the dynasty as follows. It was founded by Alexander the Great in 334 BC (AN 414) and ended with the death of Hercules in 307 BC (AN 441), “12 or 16 years” after Alexander’s death. *Observations*, 117; Newton, Ms. 361(3), 20r.

¹⁵³ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.2, 36r; Ms. 1.3, 51.

¹⁵⁴ According to Newton, the four horns on the goat were another example of when “the horns of a Beast are used to signify the number of particular kingdoms or Dynasties of which the universal kingdom represented by the whole Beast is composed,” for “the four horns of the Goat were the four principal kingdoms of which the Grecian universal kingdom after the death of Alexander consisted.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.2, 38r; Yahuda Ms. 1.3, 53r.

¹⁵⁵ Newton, Ms. 361(3), 21v.

¹⁵⁶ Newton, Ms. 361(3), 20r.

¹⁵⁷ Newton, Ms. 361(3), 21v.

¹⁵⁸ Notice the wording cited: Alexander’s dominion fragmented into “several kingdoms, four *of which* . . . were very eminent.” Newton, Ms. 361(3), 21v, emphasis supplied. Newton acknowledged this straightout in another place: Alexander’s kingdom “was divided into more then [*sic*] 4 Kingdoms [For besides the Egyptian, Syrian, Asian, & Macedonian Kingdom there was (to mention no others) the Thracian which continued distinct about 36 years.” But since it was not one of the “principall kingdoms,” it “was not reckoned among the other 4 but rather referred to the Kingdom of Macedon as I suppose because it was at length united to that.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 10c, 4r.

¹⁵⁹ After counting four, Newton mentions Thracia, “to mention no others.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 10c, 4r.

¹⁶⁰

| Ms. 361(3), 20r | Ms. 361(3), 21v | <i>Observations</i> , 29–30 | <i>Observations</i> , 117 | <i>Observations</i> , 172–73 | Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 109r |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Antigonus: Asia | Antigonus: Asia and Syria | | Antigonus | Antigonus (and later Seleucus): Syria and Asia Minor | Asia and Syria (North) |

sometimes excluding the kingdom of Antigonus and sometimes that of Lysimachus.¹⁶¹ Since expositors unanimously had always agreed that the four horns were the successor kingdoms, it was not really necessary for Newton to settle the issue. There was something more important that Newton wanted to set straight, and that was the definition of the last horn.

The Last Horn (vv. 9–14, 23–26)

When it came to the last horn of the goat, Newton rejected Antiochus Epiphanes categorically out of the prophecy. He does not even countenance the idea of foreshadowing typology. This was the inevitable result of his insistence upon consistent use of the symbols and that all the details in a prophecy must be identified in the fulfillment to ascertain correct application to history. For these reasons, Newton believed that instead of being a symbol of Antiochus, the last horn had to be a Greek kingdom which, under foreign rule, grew greater than all the previous Greek states.

Its Identity

According to Newton, the little horn symbolized a new kingdom and not an individual. The text interpreted the last horn as “a king” (v. 23) but Newton emphasized that since a horn signified a kingdom in all other instances in chapter 8, it must be the case here too: “This last horn is by some taken for *Antiochus Epiphanes*, but not very judiciously. A horn of a Beast is never taken for a single person.”¹⁶² The previous scenes in the vision demonstrated this: “The two horns of the Ram & the five first horns of the Goat were kingdoms; & and there is the same reason of the last; for the horns are all of a kind.”¹⁶³ Neither can the horn symbolize Antiochus’ kingdom, Seleucia, for a horn does not symbolize a power that has appeared

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Cassander: Macedonia | Cassander: Macedonia, Greece, and Epirus | Cassander: Macedonia, Greece, and Epirus | Cassander | Cassander: Macedonia, Greece, and Epirus | Macedonia (West) |
| | | Lysimachus: Thrace and Bythinia | Lysimachus | Lysimachus: Thrace | |
| Ptolemy: Egypt | Ptolemy: Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia | Ptolemy: Egypt, Lybia, Arabia, Caelosyria, and Palestine | Ptolemy | Ptolemy: Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia | Egypt (South) |
| Seleucus: Syria | Seleucus: Babylonia and all the East | Seleucus: Syria | | | Babylonia and Persia (East) |

¹⁶¹ In one of the lists, Newton tried to eliminate Lysimachus and thus reduce the count to four on the grounds that “Thrace was not absolutely a part of Alexander[']s kingdom.” He went on to undermine his own argument by describing how Lysimachus conquered some territory from Antigonus which had been a part of Alexander’s original kingdom, leaving it unsettled whether to drop Lysimachus or Antigonus out of the count. Newton, Ms. 361(3), 21r. In another list, Newton counted the kingdoms of Antigonus and Seleucus as one, since Seleucus conquered Antigonus. Newton, *Observations*, 172–73.

¹⁶² Newton, *Observations*, 123.

¹⁶³ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 34r.

already in the same vision. A horn “always signifies a new kingdom, and the kingdom of *Antiochus* was an old one. *Antiochus* reigned over one of the four horns [already presented in the vision], and the little horn was a fifth under its proper kings.”¹⁶⁴

Newton noted that “some” have identified the little horn as *Antiochus*. By “some” he most likely referred to preterists who saw *Antiochus* as the sole fulfillment of the last horn. Since the earliest extant commentaries, expositors had always seen *Antiochus* Epiphanes as the immediate fulfillment of the last horn, with the addition that his career was set forth as a type of the Antichrist, by whose arrival the prophecy would be completely fulfilled. Newton rejected the idea of antitypical fulfillment and looked for a single fulfillment. And that could not be *Antiochus* IV. “Let those who are for making this horn to be *Antiochus* consider how little it agrees with him,”¹⁶⁵ Newton wrote, and marshalled his critique of how the Seleucid ruler’s history did not match the specifications of the prophecy. Since the exclusion of *Antiochus* from the chapter was Newton’s most significant contribution to the interpretation of Daniel 8, his argument is cited in full:

This horn was first a little one, and waxed exceeding great, but so did not *Antiochus*. It is described great above all the former horns, and so was not *Antiochus*. His kingdom, on the contrary, was weak, and tributary to the *Romans*, and he did not enlarge it. The horn was a *King of fierce countenance, and destroyed wonderfully, and prospered and practised*; that is, he prospered in his practises against the holy people: but *Antiochus* was frighted out of *Egypt* by a mere message of the *Romans*, and afterwards routed and baffled by the *Jews*. The horn was mighty by another’s power, *Antiochus* acted by his own. The horn stood up against the Prince of the Host of heaven, the Prince of Princes; and this is the character not of *Antiochus* but of *Antichrist*. The horn cast down the Sanctuary to the ground, and so did not *Antiochus*; he left it standing. The Sanctuary and Host were trampled under foot 2300 days; and in *Daniel*’s Prophecies days are put for years: but the profanation of the Temple in the reign of *Antiochus* did not last so many natural days. These were to last till the time of the end, till the last end of the indignation against the *Jews*; and this indignation is not yet at an end. They were to last till the Sanctuary which had been cast down should be cleansed, and the Sanctuary is not yet cleansed.¹⁶⁶

To identify the correct referent of the last horn, Newton first observed the time and place of its rise to power. First, the text says that the horn arose in “the latter time” of the four kingdoms, “when the transgressors are come to the full” (v. 23). “The latter time” of the Greek kingdoms was the closing epoch of their reign. This “was when the *Romans* began to conquer them, that is, when they conquered *Perseus* King of *Macedonia*, the fundamental kingdom of the *Greeks*,” “the chief of the four horns.”¹⁶⁷ “At that time the transgressors came to the full” with the Hellenizing Jews and *Antiochus*’s attack on Jerusalem and proscription of

¹⁶⁴ Newton, *Observations*, 123. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r.

¹⁶⁵ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r.

¹⁶⁶ Newton, *Observations*, 123–24. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r–111r. For other passages in which Newton refutes preterist reading of Daniel, particularly of chapter 7, see Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.2, 52r–53r; 1.4, 7r–12r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 29r–31r; 9.2, 104r–6r, 117r.

¹⁶⁷ Newton, *Observations*, 117–18; see also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 159r, 159v, 179v.

Judaism.¹⁶⁸ Newton noted that both events—Rome’s conquest of Macedonia and Antiochus’ attack—occurred “in the very same year” of 168 BC.¹⁶⁹ The kingdom symbolized by the last horn must therefore have arisen at that time. Second, the text describes the little horn as growing “exceeding great towards the south, and towards the east, and towards the pleasant land” (v. 9). This power was therefore “to rise up in the northwest part of those nations [represented by the four horns], and extend his dominion towards *Egypt, Syria, and Judea*”—which is precisely what the Romans did.¹⁷⁰ Thus the last horn arose in 168 BC—when Macedonia (and eventually all the Greek states) fell to Rome—and in the northwestern territory of the four Greek kingdoms, i.e. in Macedonia—which Rome attacked first. And yet this kingdom did not symbolize the Romans themselves.

The last horn belonged to the goat of Greece and must therefore represent a Greek nation and a Greek kingdom, located within the Greek territory.¹⁷¹ The text describes the dominion of the last king as “mighty, but not by his own power” (v. 24). To Newton this phrase was key. It meant that the kingdom “was to be assisted by a foreign power, a power superior to itself.”¹⁷² Since the power that subdued the Greek kingdoms was Rome, the power making this kingdom great must be Roman. “And such a little horn was the kingdom of *Macedonia*, from the time that it became subject to the *Romans*.” When it was conquered by the Romans, Macedonia “ceased to be one of the horns of the Goat, and became a dominion of a new sort . . . a horn of the goat which grew mighty but not by its own power, a horn which rose up and grew potent under a foreign power, the power of the *Romans*.”¹⁷³ Thus the last horn symbolized Macedonia in a subject state (and therefore indirectly referred to Rome).

The insistence of identifying the last horn as a Greek kingdom involved Newton in further difficulties, for according to his interpretation of the prophecy this power was to last until the end. How did the last horn signify an un-independent Macedonia or a Greek kingdom to the end of time? Newton traced the history of this last kingdom in the following way. At first this Greek kingdom was “mighty but not by [its] own power” as Macedonia under Roman rule. Then, with “the building of *Constantinople*, and endowing it with a senate and other like privileges with *Rome*; and by the division of the *Roman* Empire into the two Empires of the *Greeks* and the *Latins*, headed by those two cities; a new scene of things commences:”

¹⁶⁸ It is unclear whether Newton saw “the transgressors” as referring to the depraved Hellenizing Jews or to the invading Greek king, or both. Newton, *Observations*, 117–18.

¹⁶⁹ Newton, *Observations*, 118. See the calculation of the 2300 years later in the exposition.

¹⁷⁰ Newton, *Observations*, 119–20.

¹⁷¹ “The *Latins* are not comprehended among the nations represented by the He-Goat in this Prophecy: their power over the *Greeks* is only named in it, to distinguish the times in which the He-Goat was mighty by his own power, from the times in which he was mighty but not by his own power. He was mighty by his own power till his dominion was taken away by the *Latins*; after that, his life was prolonged under their dominion, and this prolonging of his life was in the days of his last horn: for in the days of this horn the Goat became mighty, but not by his own power. Now because this horn was a horn of the Goat, we are to look for it among the nations which composed the body of the Goat. Among those nations he was to rise up and grow mighty.” Newton, *Observations*, 119.

¹⁷² Newton, *Observations*, 120.

¹⁷³ Newton, *Observations*, 120. In another instance, Newton believed the Romans conquered Macedonia in chapter 11 but Pergamus in chapter 8. Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 179v.

Greece—suddenly not limited to Macedonia any longer—was an independent kingdom again, i.e. strong in its own might (Dn 11:36). It was conquered by the Ottomans and so again became strong in another's power (Dn 8:24).¹⁷⁴ Adding to the difficulty of how Newton identified the last horn, he believed it referred to the Antichrist as well (as can be seen from his church history manuscripts). This he apparently did by seeing the Antichrist as a Greek development: It was in the fourth century, while the Roman Empire was still one under the rule of the Greeks (as the Byzantines were called in Newton's time) that the apostasy of the Antichrist appeared. Newton noted that many in antiquity had already associated the last horn with the Antichrist, and suggested that the description of the last horn exalting itself against the Prince of the host might in fact be where the term *Antichrist* came from, for "indeed the name of Antichrist seems to have been first taken from this horn's standing up against the Prince of Princes."¹⁷⁵

Newton's identification of the last horn as a subjected Greek kingdom seems convoluted,¹⁷⁶ and it is difficult to know whether (or when) his exposition on the later history (and identity) of the last horn shows a development in his interpretation or that the interpretation was multi-faceted. There is one possible way in which Newton may have seen the last horn as being both Greece—under Roman rule, then as the independent joint Empire and later the Eastern Empire, and finally as under Ottoman rule—and the Antichrist. Newton dated the crucial moment of the apostasy to the fourth century. During that century, the Roman Empire was ruled from Constantinople and so the Christian Church was subject to the Greek Emperor.¹⁷⁷ This would mean that when the fourth century Church Councils made Catholic doctrine orthodoxy it could be said that this apostasy was done by Greece (the last

¹⁷⁴ Newton, *Observations*, 191–93.

¹⁷⁵ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r; see also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 108v, 158r, 180v.

¹⁷⁶ To talk about the defeat of Greece as its exaltation under another's rule is tortuous, for how could this not be said about all the previously conquered kingdoms? Newton's different ways to explain how the last horn was Greek either show how convinced he was of this aspect of his interpretation, or his difficulty of reconciling the Greek origin of the last horn with the rise of Rome. In one fragmentary draft, he seems to have suggested that the Greek origin of the last horn referred to the origin of the Romans themselves: The Romans were descendants of the Trojans "which were originally no other tha[n] greeks [*sic*]." And "Italy together with Sicily was at first peopled by colonies of the Greeks[,] especially on the sea coasts, & from thence called Græcia magna." Among these jottings is the repeated and unfinished phrase: "Yea Daniel himself" (speaks to this effect, presumably in Daniel 8 by symbolizing the Romans as a horn growing out of the goat of Greece and thus acknowledging their Greek origin). Isaac Newton, Yahuda Ms. 31, 1v–2r, "Catalogue Entry: THEM00073," Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00073>. In another manuscript, Newton suggested that one of the four horns was Pergamus. It was inherited by Rome, which then conquered all the kingdoms. In that way the last horn came out of one of the four and grew greater than all of them. As to why Rome only entered the prophecy in this way, Newton conjectured that the Roman Republic itself "was democratical and far remote from the prophet's country and foreign to the kingdoms he had been describing before" so "no wonder if the prophet" mentioned Rome only when they "were adopted into this Kingdom" of Pergamus as "legal heirs & successors to their Kings"! Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 108r–11r.

¹⁷⁷ Constantinople was in the Eastern and Greek-speaking part of the Empire, which later became independent. In Newton's day it was not known as the Byzantine Empire but as the Greek Empire. Consequently, even before the split, while the Roman Empire was ruled from the Eastern capital, it could be seen as under Greek rule.

horn).¹⁷⁸ This reasoning would still leave some inconsistencies in Newton's interpretation unresolved. According to Newton's interpretation, the apostasy of the last horn took place when it was mighty but not in its own power. In the fourth century, however, the Roman Empire was one, under the rule of the Greeks, so at that time Greece was mighty in its own power and did not meet the specification of being an oppressed power. And even if Greece and the bishop of Rome could once have been said to fit in one symbol—the bishop of Rome being under the jurisdiction of the Greek Emperor in the fourth century—later history, as Newton himself read it, hardly allowed it: The Pope became supreme and thus not under the rule of an Emperor, the Church divided and then the Pope had nothing to do with Greece, and the Eastern Empire fell to the Ottomans. Newton himself interpreted the Greeks and the papal Antichrist as two distinct entities in the prophecies, for according to him the Antichrist would reign until the end, whereas Greece would not, for it would be subject to foreign rule. It is hard to see how they could therefore be both included in the same symbol in Daniel 8.¹⁷⁹

To complicate matters further, Newton interpreted not only the identity but also the actions of the last horn in seemingly different ways. In *Observations*, the last horn's attack against the host, the Prince of the host, the daily sacrifice, and the sanctuary, signified how the Romans attacked the Jews in the first century. But in the church history manuscripts, Newton applied those verses to the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church arising in the fourth century.

Its Actions

After the last horn's conquests towards the east, the south, and "the pleasant land" (v. 9), the vision describes its vertical attack (vv. 10–12). That passage was of chief interest to Newton in Daniel 8:

¹⁷⁸ Here are a couple of passages where Newton mentioned how the Eastern part of the Roman Empire started the errors which led to the apostasy of the Roman Catholic Church: "Greeks [*sic*] became a stumbling block to the people[,] being misunderstood by them & leading them into the errors of the ancient hereticks contrary to the meaning of the Nicene decree, & these errors ended in the great Apostasy & revelation of the Man of Sin." Newton, Bodmer Ms., 115r. "When the Roman Empire became Christian & its Emperors began to act as Princes of the Church of Christ & to take upon them the authority of Christ himself in giving laws to his Church by their edicts[,] then this horn is said to magnify himself to the Prince of the host, that is, to usurp his throne & legislative authority & by doing so took away the daily worship of the Prince & cast down the place of his sanctuary & set up the transgression of desolation." Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 179v. In this scenario, the last horn went on to symbolize only the Eastern Empire, eventually under Ottoman rule, and it will be destroyed when the Turks will be defeated in the battle against Gog and Magog (Gog = king of the north = last horn of the goat). Newton, Bodmer Ms., 420r. (But in another passage it is unclear how the Catholic Church and the Eastern Empire relate to the wicked host and the last horn. Newton, Bodmer Ms., 374v.) This seems to be in conflict with Newton's insistence in *Observations* to limit the apostasy described in chapter 11 (and hence also in chapter 8, on which chapter 11 is "a commentary") to the East. Newton, *Observations*, 169. He acknowledges that the apostasy "quickly spread into the *Western Empire* also", but the passage "describes chiefly the things done among the nations comprehended in [Greek territory]." Newton, *Observations*, 231.

¹⁷⁹ Newton dealt more clearly with the symbols of apostate powers in Revelation, where he saw the Eastern Empire and the Antichrist each having their own symbols. See, for example, Newton, Bodmer Ms., 225r, and the Yahuda Mss. on Revelation.

And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven, and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the Prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground, and it practiced and prospered. KJV.

Before going into the first century application of the passage, this is how Newton interpreted the symbols and actors point by point. “The host of heaven” or “the stars” (vv. 10–11, 13)—interpreted by the angel as “the mighty and the holy people” (v. 24)—signified God’s people, which at the time of fulfillment were the Jews. “The Prince of the host” (v. 8) and “the Prince of princes” (v. 25) was Jesus.¹⁸⁰ “The sanctuary” was the Jewish Temple. “The daily worship”¹⁸¹ conducted there stood for the true religion (Judaism). The “transgression of desolation” (v. 12–13) was synonymous with “the abomination of desolation” (Dn 11:31; 12:11; Mt 24:15) which was “set up” in place of “the daily worship.” The latter phrase meant ‘desolating idolatry’ and referred to the false religion which replaced the worship of God’s people and caused their desolation.¹⁸²

In *Observations* Newton applied the vertical attack of the last horn to the first century. The attack on the host (v. 10) was a further comment on the Roman conquest of Judea that was described in the previous verse by the horn’s growth towards the pleasant land.¹⁸³ After Rome conquered Judea, it magnified itself up to or stood up against the Prince of the host (vv. 8, 25) when it crucified Christ.¹⁸⁴ Next the passage moved on to the events of the Jewish-Roman Wars.¹⁸⁵ “The armies of the *Eastern* nations, under the conduct of the *Romans*”¹⁸⁶ destroyed the Temple (“cast down” “the place of his sanctuary”) and thereby removed the worship of the true God (took away “the daily”). Several decades later, Emperor Hadrian had a temple built to Jupiter Olympius on the Temple Mount. This sacrilege (abomination) caused the Jews to rise up in arms, but the Romans crushed the revolution, exiled the Jews, and left Judæa “desolate.”¹⁸⁷

In the church history manuscripts, however, Newton applied vv. 10–12 to the Roman Catholic apostasy which unfolded over the first few centuries. All the symbols retained the

¹⁸⁰ Newton, *Observations*, 121.

¹⁸¹ In Hebrew the adjective is not followed by any noun. The translators understood this as elliptical usage and supplied the noun ‘sacrifice.’ Newton supplied the noun ‘worship’ instead.

¹⁸² Newton, *Observations*, 121–22, 136–37.

¹⁸³ Newton, *Observations*, 120–21.

¹⁸⁴ Newton, *Observations*, 121.

¹⁸⁵ In one manuscript, Newton showed how Matthew 24:15 and Luke 21:20 equate “the abomination of desolation” with Rome’s “idolatrous armies in Iudæa.” Newton, *Yahuda* Ms. 8.2, 7r.

¹⁸⁶ This wording probably reflects the identity of the last horn as Greece under Roman rule, and not the Romans themselves directly, *Observations*, 121. Newton may also see the Eastern armies as “the host” given to Rome (v. 12).

¹⁸⁷ Newton, *Observations*, 121–22, 136–37, 189–90.

same meaning but had a later application. The Prince was still Christ¹⁸⁸ and his host his people, who were now composed of both Jewish and Gentile believers.¹⁸⁹ The sanctuary was the Church. Newton explained the Church as a referent in the following way. The Temple was not only a building but the highest level of both worship and government. It was overseen by “the great Council of seventy Elders sitting in the Temple” and there were also “lesser Councils” of elders in the cities. The locations “where y^e lesser Councils met” were “called Synagogues.”¹⁹⁰ Thus the Temple was the seat of religion and governance, with the synagogue as the local level of those affairs. The early Christian congregations were synagogues led by elders, just like their Jewish counterparts,¹⁹¹ and together the Jewish and the Christian believers constituted one Church. And since the Temple, as the administrative and religious center, comprised God’s people as a whole, the synagogues and churches were related to it or synonymous with it.¹⁹² “The daily worship” was the true faith (Christianity), “the public worship” of God’s people.¹⁹³ The “abomination of desolation” was the destructive idolatry that replaced the true faith.¹⁹⁴ The other “host” (vv. 12–13) given to the horn was the apostate Church.¹⁹⁵ Much was involved in the apostasy, but to Newton the crucial moment, when the abomination was “set up,” occurred in the fourth century, when apostasy was introduced into the Creed and gained the official status of Christian orthodoxy. Newton here had in mind the doctrine of the Trinity, but more on this later.

Newton addressed these differences in interpreting the last horn’s attack more than once. Sometimes he tried to show how both were aspect of the same predicted attack: Since the Jewish and the Gentile believers constituted one host under one Prince, with one sanctuary

¹⁸⁸ “The Prince of the Host is the Head of the Church, the Prince of Princes, the Messiah the Prince or Christ the Prince.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r. See also 8r, 13r, 19r, 21r, 22r, 22v, 163r, 204r, 361r, 374r, 374v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 23r, 108v, 179v.

¹⁸⁹ “The people of God usually called his Church are by Daniel called the holy people & the Host of Heaven.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r. See also 6r, 7r, 22r, 22v, 27r, 143r, 158r, 177r, 204r, 218r, 298r, 361r, 364r, 365r, 374r, 374v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 23r, 24r, 36r, 108v, 123Av, 126v.

¹⁹⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 257r–58r. See also 378r–79r.

¹⁹¹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 258r–59r, 262r–63r, 268r, 272r, 273r–74r, 376r, 410r.

¹⁹² On one hand, Newton sought to show how churches and synagogues are related to the Temple. He described the Temple and from there he traced the history of the civil and religious administration of elders to the time of the synagogues and later the Gentile synagogues or churches. This explains some of his manuscript chapter titles, such as: “Of the Temple & Synagogues of the Jews and Churches of the Christians & the daily worship therein.” Another title on the same folio, after striking out “Of the sanctuary of strength,” reads: “Of the Synagogues of the Jews & Churches of the Christians.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 249r; see also iir, vr, 249r, 250r, 361r, 374r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 57r, 58v, 59v, 104r. The same narrative about the relation of the Temple to the Church is in another place entitled “Of Ecclesiastical Polity, or The ancient form of Church Government.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 378r. On the other hand, Newton seems to treat ‘sanctuary,’ ‘temple,’ and ‘church’ as synonymous. The Church being the Temple of God is a traditional Christian concept with roots in the New Testament itself. In this vein, Newton saw a link between the last horn attacking “the sanctuary” and the Antichrist sitting in “the temple” (2 Thes 2:4): He “pollutes the sanctuary of strength & takes away the dayly [*sic*] sacrifices & places the abomination of desolation & therefore he sits in the Church or Temple of God.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 116r; see also Newton, Bodmer Ms., 89r, 117r, 359r.

¹⁹³ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r, 52v, 249r, 369r, 374r, 374v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 104r, 108v.

¹⁹⁴ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r, 247r, 249r, 336r, 369r, 374r, 374v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 111r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 123Av.

¹⁹⁵ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r, 361r, 374v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 120r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 104r, 108v.

and one daily worship, both the Jewish-Roman Wars and the fourth century apostasy had to happen for these objects to be fully attacked.¹⁹⁶ In another manuscript he weighed both possibilities and favored the Catholic option.¹⁹⁷

What makes Newton's interpretation of the horn's identity and the nature of its attack even more interesting than the fact that he offered two explanations, is the different tenor of the works in each of the explanations is found. It is a distinct feature of *Observations* that Newton had purged those papers of anything that came close to revealing his antitrinitarianism, whereas exposing the antitrinitarian apostasy was the bold intent of his church history. Without knowing the precise dates of the manuscripts, there are several ways to make sense of these differences. Perhaps the exposition is one and the same, with the appropriate aspects presented according to the work's intention.¹⁹⁸ Both the *Observations* and the ecclesiastical history were works which Newton intended for eventual publication, and interestingly he seems to have worked on both during the same period of his life.¹⁹⁹ The former may represent his decision to explain the prophecies while keeping his antitrinitarian views out of sight, and the latter his effort to express his antitrinitarian views to the fullest. Perhaps Newton's interpretation changed, as his various attempts to reconcile the differences suggest. Perhaps he was uncertain as to which was more correct and kept the possibilities open; perchance he contradicted himself. Further research of the manuscripts may piece together a clearer picture of the development his interpretation.

The 2300 Years and the Final Events of the Vision (vv. 13–14, 17, 19, 25–26)

Newton saw the 2300 “days” as actual years and thus as a 2300 year period. He believed it had begun sometime during the early career of the last horn and that it would end with the restoration of all things. To Newton the text itself indicated that the 2300 “days” were to be understood as a long period. First, Daniel was told to seal the vision about them “for it shall be for many days” (v. 26), i.e., “for a very long time.”²⁰⁰ Newton thought these words were clarified in chapter 12, where Daniel was told to “seal the book, even to the time of the end”

¹⁹⁶ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 369r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 159v, 180v.

¹⁹⁷ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 117r–119r.

¹⁹⁸ In *Observations* Newton wanted to hide his antitrinitarianism, so he did not explain the dimensions of the horn's attack against true Christianity besides denouncing its saint worship. In his church history, Newton focused on the loss of antitrinitarian orthodoxy, and the early aspect of the horn's attack (the Jewish-Roman Wars) were immaterial to his purpose, so he only mentioned the fourth century apostasy.

¹⁹⁹ Yahuda Ms. 7.1 contains drafts of *Observations*, and later portion (Ms. 7.3) contains “re-used letters to or draft letters from Newton bearing the dates 26 April 1709, 26 Oct. 1709, 2 Aug. 1714, 1719, 27 Jan. 1721, 1 Feb. 1725/6.” “Catalogue Entry: THEM00050.” But as the manuscript collection is of sundry nature, dates in section 3 may have nothing to do with section 1. The church history manuscripts contain fragments of work-related material from Newton's years at the Royal Mint. Some of this material in Yahuda Ms. 15 can be dated to the years 1708–9, c. 1710, and c. 1711, and in Bodmer Ms. from after 1701. See Newton, Bodmer Ms., 17v, smaller sheet between 412v and 413r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 124r, 132–33r, 165r, 181v, 182; “Catalogue Entry: THEM00058 [on Yahuda Ms. 15],” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00058>.

²⁰⁰ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r; see also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1i, 11v.

(Dn 12:4).²⁰¹ Second, chapter 8 was said to last to “the end” or “the last end of the indignation” (v. 19).²⁰² Therefore Newton interprets the 2300 days as actual years, based on the correspondence of one symbolic day in prophecy for one actual year in history.²⁰³ Third, the events predicted to take place at the end of the 2300 “days” were still future: The period was to last to the end of the indignation and then the sanctuary would be cleansed (vv. 14, 19). “And this indignation is not yet at an end . . . and the Sanctuary is not yet cleansed.”²⁰⁴

Newton believed these two eschatological events had to do with the future of the Jews and the Christians. “The indignation” (also mentioned in Dn 11:36)²⁰⁵ was “God[’]s indignation against the Jews” “during their captivity” and the close of the 2300 year period marked “the last end of the long captivity and dispersion of the Jews.”²⁰⁶ The Jews would return to their Lord the Messiah and would also return to Judæa. They would rebuild the Temple and then the sanctuary would be “cleansed” and their daily worship would be restored. According to Newton, chapter 9 shed additional light on these events.²⁰⁷ Newton interpreted the several time periods in chapter 9 as non-contiguous, separate time prophecies. He believed the “seven weeks” (v. 25) were an eschatological period. These actual forty-nine years would commence with a decree for the Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem; the period would end with the return of Christ to rule over the Jews and the entire world, and thus to establish his kingdom. Newton never explained out how the two periods of the 2300 years and the seven weeks aligned, but they had to be chronologically related, since they both pointed towards the Return of the Jews. The terminus events of the 2300 years also had a bearing on the Christians. They too had suffered at the hands of the abomination of desolation and their daily worship had also been removed. When the 2300 years would end, the Papacy would come to its end (the last horn would be broken). The endless schisms within Christendom which had originated with the Papacy and were sustained by the lack of charity among Christians would be healed. Thus the Church would be healed or the Sanctuary cleansed. The sanctuary cleansing at the

²⁰¹ Newton, Keynes Ms. 5, 10r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 12r. In these passages Newton conjectures that several scriptures refer to the one and same sealed book which was to be opened in the last days (Is 8:16; 29:10; Dn 8:26; 12:4; Rv 5; 10:4).

²⁰² Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1a, 8v; 7.1i, 6r, 8r, 10r, 11r, 11v; Ms. 7.1j, 2r, 8r, 12r; 7.1l, 12r, 14r, 13v, 20r; 7.3c, 35r, 50r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 159, 180r.

²⁰³ “In *Daniel*’s Prophecies days are put for years.” Newton, *Observations*, 123. See also 122; Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r; Ms. 15, 159r. Newton points out the correspondence of beasts signifying kingdoms and the short periods signifying long eras: “Whilst short lived Beasts are put in sacred prophesies [*sic*] for long lived Kingdoms” or “bodies politique” “the short times of these creatures must in reason signify much longer times of those bodies.” Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 39r.

²⁰⁴ Newton, *Observations*, 124.

²⁰⁵ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1j, 14r–15r.

²⁰⁶ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 110r. See also Newton, Keynes Ms. 5, 137r, 137v; Newton, Yahuda 7.1e, 26r, 30r; 7.1.g, 13r; 7.1, 6r, 8r, 10r, 11r; 7.1j, 2r, 3r; 7.1k, 2r, 5r, 8r–9r; 7.1l, 14r, 14v; 7.1n, 19r, 20r; 7.3c, 35r, 36–37r, 50r. Newton referenced many scriptures as proof that ‘indignation’ entailed the captivity of God’s people: Dt 29:24, 27–28; 31:29; Jo 23:16; Ps 85; Is 26:20; Jer 23:20; Ez 5:13; Mi 7:9, 18, “and other places.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.1i, 11r. The text of Daniel itself bore this relation between indignation and captivity or oppression out: Antiochus “is said to have indignation against the holy covenant” (Dn 11:30) when he persecuted God’s people and overran their country with idolatry. Yahuda Ms. 7.1j, 8r; see also Ms. 15, 158r.

²⁰⁷ Newton, *Observations*, 132–34.

end of the 2300 years thus pointed forward to the restoration of all things: The Jews would be converted and return to their land, the Temple building would be rebuilt and thus restored, Jewish and Gentile believers would finally be united again as “one host” in the genuine and original faith, and Christ would return—“the time of his second coming”²⁰⁸ being predicted in chapter 9—to reign in Jerusalem over his kingdom forever.

Newton remained tentative about the dating of the period. “The Sanctuary and Host were [to be] trampled under foot 2,300 days.”²⁰⁹ But when did this trampling begin, i.e. when did the last horn arise? In one jotting, Newton gave the *terminus post quem* as the rise of the last horn in 168 BC and the *terminus ante quem* as the destruction of the Temple in AD 70. These dates were based on Newton’s first century application of the last horn. Rome had arisen as the last horn when it conquered Macedonia in 168 BC, so the period could not have begun earlier, and in AD 70 the Temple was destroyed and the Jews ceased to be a people, so Rome’s attack on them had to have begun before that date. According to these limits, the earliest possible dating of the 2300 years was 168 BC–AD 2133 and the latest AD 70–2370.²¹⁰ In *Observations*, Newton made another attempt to narrow down the range for a possible starting date. The events that were candidates for the commencement event from which the 2300 years were to be calculated were the casting down of the sanctuary, the setting up of the abomination, the subsequent desolation, or some other time of which he was unaware:

These years may be reckoned either from the destruction of the temple by the *Romans* in the reign of *Vespasian* [AD 70], or from the pollution of the Sanctuary by the worship of *Jupiter Olympius* [AD 132], or from the desolation of *Judea*, made in the end of the *Jewish* war, by the banishment of all the *Jews* out of their own country [AD 136], or from some other period which time will discover.²¹¹

These start dates yield the following end dates: 2370, 2432, and 2436—showing the glorious and tragic spectacle of promised glory in the distant future, more than half a millennium from Newton’s time. Newton’s two attempts to figure out the starting date of the 2300 years also show that scholars are wrong when they claim Newton prudently tempered apocalyptic expectations by placing the end of all things safely in the distant future. The reason why

²⁰⁸ Newton, *Observations*, 137.

²⁰⁹ Newton, *Observations*, 123.

²¹⁰ “Prop. 1. The 2300 prophetick days did not commence before the rise of the little horn of the He Goat [in 168 BC]. 2 Those days did not commence after the destruction of Jerusalem & the Temple by the Romans AD 70. . . . Therefore the 2300 years do not end before the year 2132 nor after 2370.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.30, 8r. If the 2300 were to end in 2132 this would mean that they began in 169 BC. It is, however, clear that Newton had 168 BC in mind as the starting point. He mentioned that year in other places as the year in which the last horn arose. He also gave that date as AN 580, which calculated to 168 BC. Newton probably simply forgot to account for the year zero and therefore his first proposed terminus should have been 2133. For AN 580 and 168 BC, see Newton, *Observations*, 30, 118, 120, 125, 188. Two synchronisms can be used to convert Newton’s AN dates into the common era: Newton dated the commencement of Nabonassar’s reign (AN 1) correctly to 747 BC and the death of Christ to AN 780 or 34 AD. Newton, *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended*, 34; Newton, *Observations*, 121, 131. This would mean that AN 580 = 168 BC.

²¹¹ Newton, *Observations*, 122. The dates are Newton’s. Newton, *Observations*, 126, 136.

Newton gave many possible dates was that he was uncertain about what the starting event of the 2300 years was, and the reason why his terminus dates were late was simply that Newton, by his interpretation of the last horn as subjected Greece under Roman authority, had bound himself to start the period with Rome's attack on the Jews.

2.4.4 Harmonizing Daniel 8 and the Other Danielic Visions

Newton held to a rather traditional interpretation of chapters 2 and 7. These visions outlined the course of the same four kingdoms under the symbols of four metals in chapter 2 and four beasts in chapter 7. The kingdoms were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome.²¹² The ten toes of iron and clay in chapter 2 and the ten horns on the fourth beast in chapter 7 represented the ten European kingdoms into which the Roman Empire was divided²¹³ in the early fifth century.²¹⁴ The eleventh horn in chapter 7, which uprooted three of the ten horns, was the Roman Catholic Church, for the Pope became “a temporal Prince or King” (symbolized as horn) in the late eighth century by subduing the three powers of Ravenna, Lombardia, and the Roman Duchy and Senate.²¹⁵ The “time, times, and the dividing of time” in chapter 7 were the 1260 years of papal reign.²¹⁶ Both visions ended with the kingdom of God. In chapter 2, the eternal kingdom was symbolized as a stone which shattered the idol and grew into a mountain.²¹⁷ In chapter 7, the final scenes were those of the Second Coming, the Judgment, and the kingdom of God.²¹⁸

Newton harmonized Daniel 8 with the other chapters in several ways. First, Newton noted similarities between the symbols in chapters 7 and 8 used for Medo-Persia and Greece. The two dynasties of Medo-Persia were symbolized by the bear being raised on one of his two sides, and then by the two unequal horns of the ram.²¹⁹ The fourfold division of the Greek Empire was symbolized by the four horns of the leopard and then by the four horns of the goat.²²⁰ Second, Newton's reading of the Medes and the Persians as consecutive rather than contemporaneous dynasties harmonized the beginning of chapter 8 with the previous chapters. The kingdom sequence in chapters 2 and 7 began with Babylon whereas chapter 8 began with Medo-Persia. But since the Median dynasty was contemporaneous with Babylon—both rose to power after their common effort in overthrowing Assyria—chapter 8 began at the same

²¹² Newton, *Observations*, 28–30; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 117r.

²¹³ Newton, *Observations*, 26–27. Newton listed them with slight variation: Newton, *Observations*, 47; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.5, 37v.

²¹⁴ See Newton, *Observations*, chs. 5–6. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.5, 37r.

²¹⁵ Newton, *Observations*, 75, 113.

²¹⁶ According to Newton, since the Papacy was called a kingdom in chapter 7 (horn = king, i.e. kingdom), this period could not begin until the Papacy had “arrived at a temporal dominion.” That did not happen until after the uprooting of the three horns in the late eighth century. Newton, *Observations*, 113–14. In a jotting where Newton tried to reconcile the various time periods of Daniel, he gave the earliest dating for the 1260 years as 800–2060, and the latest as 1084–2344. Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7.3o, 8r.

²¹⁷ Newton, *Observations*, 27.

²¹⁸ Newton, *Observations*, 114; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 6, 3v–2v (written in this order), 7r–9r.

²¹⁹ Newton, *Observations*, 29, 115–16.

²²⁰ Newton, *Observations*, 29, 116–17. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.4, 7r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.1, 28r, 30r.

time as the previous chapters.²²¹ Third, Newton's interpretation of the last horn as a kingdom meant that both chapters 7 and 8 ended with a similar power—chapter 7 with the last horn representing the apostasy in the West, i.e. the Papacy, and chapter 8 with the apostasy in the East (which Newton sometimes conflated with the Pope). Fourth, Newton interpreted the 2300 days as years measuring the reign of the apostate horn, and this harmonized with chapter 7, which also presented a time period calculating the rule of an apostate horn. Fifth, Newton's interpretation of the last horn and the 2300 days in chapter 8 extended the time of the vision so its historical trajectory harmonized with the other vision: Newton extended the span of Daniel 8 so it aligned with all the other visions by covering the same history: Instead of being truncated at the time of the Maccabees rededicating the Temple, the vision reached to the end of time when the last wicked kingdom would be vanquished²²² and God's kingdom would be established (when the sanctuary would be cleansed).

Newton also extended chapter 9 so that it comprised the same time span as the previous visions. Newton explained the seventy weeks traditionally, as reaching from Artaxerxes' decree in 457 BC to rebuild Jerusalem to the death of Christ in AD 34.²²³ But instead of seeing the seven, sixty-two, and the last week as subdivisions of the seventy weeks, Newton saw them as separate but related time prophecies. The sixty-two weeks reached from the completion of rebuilding Jerusalem to the birth of Christ, the one week from Christ's death to the calling of the Gentiles and half the week comprising the first Jewish-Roman War and the seven weeks reaching from a future decree for the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem to the return of their Lord.²²⁴ The former visions had referred to Christ's First and Second Coming by the titles Prince of the Host and the Son of Man "and this Prophecy of the *Messiah* [ch. 9], in explaining them, relates to both comings, and assigns the times thereof."²²⁵ This interpretation of the time prophecies in chapter 9 was "more full and complete and adequate to the design, than if we should restrain it to his first coming only, as Interpreters usually do," "for *Daniel's* prophecies reach to the end of the world."²²⁶ Thus chapter 9 touched on events from the commencement to the close of the trajectory of the previous visions. This harmonized chapter 9 with chapter 8, for as was noted earlier, the seven weeks were intertwined with the closing of the 2300 years.

Newton followed tradition in believing Daniel's last vision (chs. 10–12) was "a commentary upon" Daniel 8 and followed the same trajectory.²²⁷ It first mentioned several

²²¹ "The empires of *Media* and *Babylon* were contemporary, and rose up together by the fall of the *Assyrian Empire*; and the Prophecy of the four beasts [ch. 7] begins with one of them, and that of the Ram and He-Goat [ch. 8] with the other." Newton, *Observations*, 116; cf. also 115.

²²² Newton, *Observations*, 115, 116.

²²³ Newton, *Observations*, 129–32.

²²⁴ Newton, *Observations*, 132–37.

²²⁵ *Observations*, 128.

²²⁶ *Observations*, 137, 132.

²²⁷ Newton, *Observations*, 169. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 117r, 120r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 159.

Persian kings (11:2),²²⁸ so like chapter 8 it began with Medo-Persia. The vision then followed the kingdom of Alexander the Great and the breaking of his kingdom into four (vv. 3–4) like the first and the four horns of the goat.²²⁹ The prophecy then zoomed in on the two strongest kingdoms of these four—the Seleucids in the north, and the Ptolemies in the south—and catalogued their conflict until the reign of Antiochus IV (vv. 5–30).²³⁰ Then the Romans entered the scene as the “Arms,” i.e. armies, which arose “after”²³¹ Antiochus (v. 31), corresponding with the power that arose late in the reign of the Greek kingdoms, and eventually made Greece into the last kingdom, great in another’s power (Dn 8:23–24). Then there followed the pollution of the sanctuary, the removal of the daily worship, the setting up of the desolating abomination (v. 31) and the persecution of God’s people (vv. 32–35),²³² events mentioned in Daniel 8 and 9. The apostasy of Christendom was next depicted (vv. 36–39), like the actions of the last horn in chapters 7 and 8. The apostasy happened when Greece had become independent again (“did according to [its] will”) through the relocation of the capital to Constantinople and later the division of the Empire.²³³ But after the Arab conquests (“the king of the south”) and the onslaught of the Turks (“the king of the north”), Greece was subjected once again, “and therefore the Goat still reigns in his last horn, but not by his own power.”²³⁴ The angelic exposition closed with the eternal kingdom of God, in harmony with the previous visions.²³⁵

2.4.5 Conclusion

Newton’s interpretation can be summarized as follows. After the battle of the Persian ram and the Greek goat, the last horn of the goat represented Greece under foreign rule to the end of time. Its actions against the temple, the host, the daily, and the Prince, signified either the Roman-Jewish Wars in which the Temple was destroyed and the Jews exiled—and/or these actions signified the Roman-Catholic apostasy of the fourth century. The 2300 days were 2300 year period of the diaspora of God’s people which would end when the sanctuary would be cleansed by at least two events: The Jews would return to Palestine and Christianity would be restored to its pristine faith. The prophetic period dated most likely from one of the events of the Jewish-Roman Wars and would therefore end in the distant future—the twenty-fourth or the twenty-fifth century.

²²⁸ Newton, *Observations*, 169.

²²⁹ Newton, *Observations*, 169–70.

²³⁰ Newton, *Observations*, 170–88.

²³¹ Newton read אַחֲרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ in Daniel 11:8 as ‘after the king’ and suggested that the preposition אַחֲרֵי might have that same meaning in אַחֲרָיו in Daniel 11:31, and that the translation there could be ‘after him.’ Newton, *Observations*, 189. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 179v.

²³² Newton, *Observations*, 189–91.

²³³ Newton, *Observations*, 191–92.

²³⁴ Newton, *Observations*, 192–93. In one manuscript, Newton linked Dan 11:45 with a prophetic period in Revelation 9, and surmised that at its conclusion in 1844, the Ottomans might lose Constantinople and set up their capital in Palestine (“plant the tabernacle of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain,” v. 45). Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.7, 66r.

²³⁵ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 6, 15r.

Newton's contribution to the historicizing of Daniel 8 can be broken down into the following elements. First, Newton believed the symbols in prophecy were a consistent code and tried to interpret them as such. This had consequences for Daniel 8: Horns always symbolized kingdoms, and Newton therefore interpreted the last horn as a kingdom rather than an individual king; days always symbolized years, and therefore the 2300 days stood for so many actual years. This meant that the last horn represented a kingdom which would last for centuries, and could therefore not refer to Antiochus IV, who was only one king who ruled for few years. Second, Newton did not believe in dual fulfillment of prophecy. This was another reason why he rejected the traditional interpretation of the last horn having two fulfillments, that of type and antitype. Third, Newton insisted that scriptural predictions were precise and accurate: A fulfillment of prophecy therefore met its exact specifications. If a historical event only met some of the details in a prediction, it was not the actual fulfillment. According to Newton, Antiochus's history did not square with the details found in Daniel 8, and was therefore not its fulfillment. Fourth, Newton harmonized the visions. Having similar symbols and wording, Newton aligned chapter 8 with the other visions so that it covered the same span of history as they did: The long reign of the four kingdoms down to the close of time, instead of ending in the second century BC.

2.5 Theological Dynamics

2.5.1 Introduction

In the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth century in England the challenges to orthodoxy caused by “the impact of rationalist philosophy” and different exegesis were “nowhere more apparent than in the doctrine of the Trinity.” Exegesis was turning more critical and some Trinitarian proof-texts, such as the Johannine Comma and the reading “God” in 1 Tm 3:16, were rejected as spurious. Study of the early church fathers showed a variety of views on the Trinity before Nicaea and challenged the traditional historiography of the doctrine of the Trinity. Several works further claimed that the post-Nicene church fathers had understood the Father, Son, and Spirit as three divine yet distinct beings (on the basis that they had understood *οὐσία* as ‘nature’ rather than ‘substance’); antitrinitarians claimed to follow the Bible and taught that the Trinity was an aspect of the Great Apostasy that the Reformation had failed to detect.²³⁶ The latter half of the seventeenth and the early eighteenth century were the prime time of Newton and all the themes mentioned above are found in his antitrinitarian theology. There was clearly a connection between his views and those of others in his time and place, yet due to his strong privacy it has remained difficult to demonstrate any direct sources for his antitrinitarianism. What is easier to show, and what has been neglected, is how his reading of Daniel 8—his most innovative prophetic interpretation—was directly joined to his most heterodox theology—antitrinitarianism.

²³⁶ Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 4:101, 115–17, 120–21.

Newton changed the theological usage of Daniel 8 by defining the apostasy of the papal Antichrist in terms foreign and implicitly condemning to Protestantism: At the heart of the Roman-Catholic apostasy was the pagan doctrine of the Trinity. Newton also believed that this prophecy was clearer than Protestants had realized: Instead of being a shadowy, secondary meaning of the last horn, the Antichrist was its sole and single fulfillment. This further historicizing of the chapter how Newton stood in the twilight of two ages—while he criticized traditional dogma and even used nascent biblical criticism to excise the most blatantly Trinitarian sentiments of Scripture, he at the same time resented atheism or too much skepticism, and fully embraced the inspiration of the Bible and the validity of its prophecies, spending much time to systematize their interpretation (which again showed the time of the age). Newton’s identification of the 2300 days as actual years darkened the shadow of apostasy further, for it would last for centuries into the future.

To Newton Daniel 8 was the crucial vision in detecting the Great Apostasy, and therefore the most important prophecy of the church age and the last events. According to Newton, Daniel 8 defined the original faith and the early state of the Church, as well as the nature and origin—and the distant end—of the apostasy. In these respects it outshone the other Danielic visions: Chapters 2 and 9 barely mentioned the apostasy and chapter 7 focused on the later development of the Papacy into a state entity in the ninth century (by uprooting the three horns). But Daniel 8 showed the nature of the apostasy and hence its origin: It was a development against Christ (the Prince of the host), the Church (the host, the Temple), and the Christian religion (“the daily,” the Temple) which instituted a false religion (the abomination of desolation), and this occurred with the acceptance of Trinitarianism in the fourth century. Chapter 11 was but a commentary on chapter 8. 2 Thessalonians 2 and John’s warnings about the Antichrist were also derived from Daniel 8.²³⁷ Daniel 8 also served as a key to understanding Revelation, but according to Newton’s interpretation the Apocalypse dwelt on the apostasy of the Church in the early centuries and thus it built on Daniel’s predictions.²³⁸

Newton’s theological usage of Daniel 8 was related to his chief theological interests: The origin and nature of true Christianity and its descent into the great apostasy. Prophecy and church history are therefore blended in most of his theological manuscripts, and this section will therefore draw on them in general. A quick overview of the topics of the manuscripts and how they relate to Daniel 8 is in order. Newton wrote a couple of manuscripts on the true faith and right church governance, and in these Daniel 8 is usually mentioned somewhere since the Messianic titles demonstrated the antitrinitarian nature of the original faith. Newton also wrote a church history which focused on the original state of the Church and its apostasy in the fourth century, and Daniel 8 lent itself nicely as a framework for this history. Daniel 8 tied into other topics as well, but Newton did not develop them as much as his church history, nor

²³⁷ On the roots of the terms Antichrist and Man of Sin in see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 374v.

²³⁸ For Newton’s interpretation of Revelation, see Newton, Keynes Ms. 5; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1; Newton, *Observations*, 234–323.

explain the role of Daniel 8 in them in as much detail. One of these interests was the Temple. Daniel 8 talked about the fall of the Sanctuary and its subsequent cleansing. Newton studied the architecture of the Temple, and his writings on this appeared as a separate chapter in his *Chronicle*, as the explanatory framework for Revelation in one manuscript²³⁹ and drafts of it are found in one of the church history manuscripts.²⁴⁰ But in that manuscript Newton did not explain how the Temple's architecture was relevant, and in all his writings he struggled with deciding whether the Temple of Daniel 8 referred to the Jewish one, to the body of believers, or to both. Another related topic was Israelology. Newton believed, like many others, that the Jews would be converted in the last days and return to Palestine and rebuild the Temple. Daniel 8 seemed to predict this by mentioning and even dating the cleansing of the Sanctuary. But as with other unfulfilled predictions, this was a topic Newton shied away from dissecting in much detail.

This section will attempt to identify the theological factors in Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8. To do so it will depict how Newton utilized the chapter as a framework in his redemption history. Next it will touch on how Newton chose between interpretative alternatives he had before him. The section will conclude with analyzing what Newton believed about the implications of Daniel 8 for Christian practice.

2.5.2 Daniel 8 in Redemption History

Newton used Daniel 8 (along with 2 Thessalonians 2) to frame his church history, which was one of the most important works he wrote on redemption history.²⁴¹ It traced the history of the Church from a state of apostolic purity to the Great Apostasy of the fourth century rather consistently but unraveled with its aftermath. That was because in comparison to the early medieval period, Newton had little to say concerning subsequent history, the present, and the future. Through his uneven account of church history from beginning to the end, Newton believed he traced the golden thread of the true faith of the people of God, thus demonstrating its nature and history for his readers.

The Original Faith

To Newton Daniel 8 showed the early state of the Church as one people (or "host") united in love and in the one true faith in the one true God and his Lord. The very first sentence in the longest church history manuscript commenced with Christ and his people in the words of Daniel 8: "The people of God, usually called his Church, are by Daniel called the holy people and the host of heaven. The Prince of the Host is the Head of the Church, the Prince of Princes, the Messiah the Prince[,] or Christ the Prince, & Michael the great Prince who

²³⁹ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.

²⁴⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 250r–55r.

²⁴¹ The other major works he wrote on redemption history were "Theologiae Gentilis Origines" on the origin of paganism and his *Chronology* on the origin of the ancient Gentile kingdoms in contrast to the antiquity of Israel.

standeth for the children of God[']s people.”²⁴² The genuine faith in God and the original state of the Church were then the themes which Newton explored.

Faith in One God and One Lord

Newton began his church history by placing Daniel 8 in the larger Biblical context. Since the earliest promise of the Savior to come, God’s people had always been one and their religion had always been the same, ritual differences excepted. This faith had been adhered to by Noah and his descendants till they apostatized. Then it was followed by Abraham and his descendants till they fell away. Daniel 8 continued this history of the preservation of God’s people as one and the continuance of their faith despite a pattern of apostate majority and a remaining faithful minority.²⁴³ Though the chapter traced the history of God’s people from the time of the Jews to the time of the Christians, it referred to them and their religion as one (the “host,” the “daily” worship) without distinction,²⁴⁴ and the rise of the last horn and its false church (the “host” of v. 12) showed the history of the third major apostasy, that of the Christians. Newton then turned to what this true faith was and how it had been preserved by the early Church.

The true faith was that there is one God, called the Father, who is the Creator of all things, and that he has a son, Jesus Christ, by whom he created the world and redeemed humanity, and that he communicated to the prophets through the Holy Spirit. God is omnipotent, simple, and eternal. Christ and the Spirit were exalted beings,²⁴⁵ next to the Father, but they were not divine, not God. The Scriptures explained their role in the salvation of mankind but cast little light on their precise nature and origin.²⁴⁶ In short, the true faith was antitrinitarian monotheism.²⁴⁷ Since ‘antitrinitarianism’ is an umbrella term for all views that reject the Trinity, it is necessary to look closer at what Newton believed specifically.

²⁴² Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r.

²⁴³ For the history of God’s people from the time of Noah to the time of Daniel 8, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r, 4r, 22r–v, 361r, 423r.

²⁴⁴ “The Jews who were taught to have but one God were also taught to expect a king, & the Christians are taught in their Creed to have the same God & to beleive that Iesus is that King.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 43v; see also Newton, Bodmer Ms., 75r, 361r. “The Christian religion was one & the same with the Jewish” one and its true continuation. Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r, 22r, 205r. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 23r, 171r.

²⁴⁵ Though Newton expressly denied their divinity, he consistently avoided specifying their nature and never called them “creatures,” probably not to break rank with Scriptures that never defined their nature either. He did sometimes call them ‘angels,’ but in the biblical sense of ‘messengers,’ which was even allowed in traditional Protestantism. He clearly put them above the angelic beings: Christ was “θεός, a spiritual person with dominion[,] reigning over Archangels & Angels and all things made by him.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 16r.

²⁴⁶ “The Father hath life in himself & hath given the son to have life in himself [Jn 5:26], & this giving the Son to have life in himself is all that we are taught to understand by God’s begetting him.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 16v.

²⁴⁷ The names orthodoxy gives to what it perceives as aberrant or heretical views are often not used by their heterodox adherents. Instead, they often come up with terms for the reigning orthodoxy. It comes therefore as no surprise that Newton did not use the word ‘antitrinitarian’ to describe the true faith but rather labelled the apostasy ‘Trinitarian’ and ‘homousian.’

Newton believed that the Bible was clear on the work and position of Christ; what was less clear and important was his nature and origin. God had wrought his creation through Christ and had made him Lord and Savior of his people. Jesus was God's spokesperson through Old Testament history, and the prophets had predicted his future work for God's people. In their prophecies they had referred to Christ under many titles that outlined his work and office. These titles were given so that when Jesus came the Jews could identify him as the promised King and Savior.²⁴⁸ To understand the work of Christ correctly it was necessary to study his titles in Daniel and other prophecies and their fulfillment in the New Testament.²⁴⁹ Many of these titles were found in Daniel, such as 'Messiah'—from which Christianity derived its name²⁵⁰—and 'Prince of the Host' (the head of the Church). This meant that the book of Daniel had great Christological weight. And indeed, when Newton explained the titles of Christ he began with the ones in Daniel.²⁵¹ Newton believed that the primitive Christians had understood these titles of Christ correctly. It was only later that they were read "metaphysically" as descriptions of Christ's nature and origin.²⁵² This, however, was not their meaning at all. The title 'Son of God' referred to Christ being the first to receive life from God.²⁵³ It also came from Psalm 2: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee" (v. 7, KJV). Peter applied this prophecy "to Christ[']s being begotten by his resurrection from the dead Act. 13.33 & the Angel Gabriel & the Creed to his being conceived or begotten of the Virgin by the power of the most High."²⁵⁴ 'Word of God' showed he had been God's spokesperson in the Old Testament.²⁵⁵ Even the appellation 'God' did not refer to Christ's nature but his position, since the word meant, "spiritual person with dominion,"²⁵⁶ which only

²⁴⁸ "The names given to Iesus related generally to his offices of Priest Prophet & King & to the Prophecies of the old Testament concerning him" and were given "for explaining those prophecies & signifying that he is the person predicted in them." Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 47v, 134v; see also 171r. On Christ's titles in the Old Testament, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 8r–13r, 16r–21r, 78r, 162r–64r, 396v.

²⁴⁹ The exposition of the prophecy of Daniel 9 was intended to be close to the beginning of the Newton's church history. See Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r–4r, 19r, 22r–25r, 205r–6r, 398r, 421r–22r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 23r–24r.

²⁵⁰ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 23r.

²⁵¹ "He is called the son of Man to signify that he is the person spoken of by that name in Daniel[']s prophecy of the four Beasts [ch. 7]: the Christ or Messiah to signify that he is the Messiah spoken of in the prophecy of Daniel's [seventy] weeks: the king of kings & lord of lords to signify that he is the Prince of the host & Prince of Princes spoken of in Daniel's prophecy of the Ram and He-goat, and Michael the Prince of the host (Apoc. 12) to signify that he is that Michael spoken of by Daniel in [12:1]." Newton, Bodmer Ms., 8r–9r, 398r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 134v.

²⁵² See, for instance, Newton, Bodmer Ms., 165r–v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 97r, 98r.

²⁵³ "The Word of God received life from the father immediately, both before the world began, & at his resurrection from the dead, therefore he is the son of God in a sense peculiar to himself, & his only begotten son: & all other beings formed by the son may be considered as the works of God[']s hand. For the language of generating & creating or making had its rise among men & was applied [*sic*] to God only by way of analogy & similitude. God is neither male nor female nor hath a wife nor generates in a literal [*sic*] sense by emission of substance as men generate. . . . The Father hath life in himself & hath given the son to have life in himself [Jn 5:26], & this giving the Son to have life in himself is all that we are taught to understand by God's begetting him." Newton, Bodmer Ms., 16v.

²⁵⁴ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 134v; see also Newton, Bodmer Ms., 9r–10r, 163r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 135v–134v (*sic*).

²⁵⁵ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 9r–10r, 17r, 163r–64r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 7, 84r, 96r, 96v, 97r, 98r, 135v.

²⁵⁶ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 16r.

God the Father was in the complete sense. In fact, the Bible had little to say about Christ's nature. Apart from stating that Jesus had existed since before the world and that he had a body even before his incarnation²⁵⁷ it was not explicit about the details of his origin,²⁵⁸ so it was apparently not important for mankind to know. It was true that as his Son Christ was very close to God. They ruled the universe together. But this was the whole extent of their oneness: It was not one of nature, but one of rule,²⁵⁹ "a monarchical unity"²⁶⁰ as Newton referred to it.

Though Christ was not divine he was still to be worshipped but not in the same sense as God. Newton emphasized this difference. God was to be worshiped as the Creator and Father, but Christ as Lord and Savior. This distinction was always maintained in Scripture. "We are forbidden to worship two Gods but we are not forbidden to worship one God & one Lord, one God for creating all things & one Lord for redeeming us with his blood."²⁶¹ "Thus to worship one God & one Lord" was "consonant to the language of the scriptures," the "practise of the primitive Church[,] & our indispensable duty, & sufficient to salvation."²⁶² Yet even though Christ's redemptive work was half the reason for his worship, Newton said little about Christ's death and righteousness and the nature of faith and works. He sometimes quoted Scriptures about these things when he dealt with the Creed, but he never put these themes into his own words, neither when he portrayed the genuine faith of the early Church, nor when he studied the prophecies about Christ.²⁶³ It seems he did not ponder these issues much, and if he did, that he did not hold traditional Protestant views. Once he wondered out loud whether Christ's death was not rather an example of self-sacrifice than substitutionary atonement.²⁶⁴

Newton had less to say about the Holy Spirit, but here also he went on occasion to Daniel 8. To know and love God and Christ one needed to study and believe the sacred Scriptures which God had provided. This was why it was needful necessary to know about the Holy

²⁵⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 10r, 11r, 18r, 20r, 163v, 396v; Newton, Yahuda Ms., 67r, 96r, 97r, 154r, 172v.

²⁵⁸ "Whether it be true or false [timing of Son's generation] we cannot know without an express revelation, nor is it material to the Christian religion. Sacred history begins with the creation, and what was done before the beginning we are not told in scripture." Bodmer Ms, 145r.

²⁵⁹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 167r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 97v.

²⁶⁰ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 45r, 97r, 98v, 154r.

²⁶¹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 74r. See also 13r, 74r–76r.

²⁶² Newton, Bodmer Ms., 13r, 21r.

²⁶³ Even when Newton studied Daniel 9, which had to do with the atonement of Christ—the seventy weeks ended with the death of Christ according to Newton's interpretation—he focused only on the chronological aspect of the prophecy.

²⁶⁴ "For a man to forgive injuries without satisfaction made to him is no injustice. It's an act of mercy & more commendable then to forgive injuries upon satisfaction made. It[']s our duty to do so & God has in effect commanded us to do it if we expect to have our sins forgiven. And that which is an act of mercy, a duty commanded a commendable meritorious act in us cannot be injustice in God. If we pray that God would forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us & the meaning of the prayer is that that God would be merciful to us as we are merciful to others & forgive us as we forgive others without insisting upon justice[, then] Certainly it is as lawful for God as for us to forgive injuries without satisfaction of justice. . . . If a favorite of a king by serving him has gained his favour, & by interceding with him for an offender who has deserved death, obtains a pardon for the offender, this is appeasing the kings wrath, satisfying his justice, meriting the offenders pardon, making an attonement & reconciliation for him: without paying a debt by way of equity: & why may not Christ have done all this without paying a debt for us by way of an equivalent[?]" Newton, Keynes Ms. 3, 36.

Spirit. He had been sent to inspire the prophets who wrote the Bible. He was the messenger or angel Gabriel who had appeared to Daniel (8:16; 9:21; 10) and the Revelator.²⁶⁵ His appearance in these visions underscored their importance, for “if all Prophecy be of the Holy Ghost[,] much more those of Daniel & Iohn[,] which are the principal.”²⁶⁶ And so the belief in the Holy Spirit led to the study of the prophecies of Daniel.

While Newton did not write much directly on the topic, he believed love to be of utmost theological importance in doctrine and practice. This was demonstrated by the Father and the Son: God “bears fatherly affection towards all his offspring”²⁶⁷ and Christ died to rescue sinners. Love was also the essence of Christian practice: The true religion consisted in keeping the Ten Commandments, i.e. loving God and mankind. Love was the summary of the Decalogue (as Jesus himself had taught) and it was also the foundation of the Gospel.²⁶⁸ Newton added: “For these [the Ten Commandments] are the laws of nature, the essential part of religion which ever was & ever will be binding to all nations, being of an immutable[,] eternal nature because grounded upon immutable reason.”²⁶⁹ They were “the holy covenant” which God offered the sinner to enter through the rite of baptism, whereby God became his or her God, and the believer became part of God’s people. By “faith and charity” the believer became a member of the invisible Church, and by baptism and fellowship a member of the visible Church.²⁷⁰ And when love reigned in the hearts of believers they all held to the one faith and were bound together by the ties of love as one Church or “the host of heaven” (Dn 8:10–11, 13).²⁷¹

The Simple Original Creed

The unity of the one “host” in faith and fellowship had been maintained by love and the “holy covenant” (Dn 11:28, 30). Newton believed that “the holy covenant,” the true faith in one God and one Lord, had been summarized into an original Creed that served as confession of faith upon baptism. The original Creed was important because it showed what was necessary for orthodoxy, church membership, and salvation in the first century—and hence in all

²⁶⁵ “Michale [*sic*] the Prince of God’s people (both in Daniel & the Apocalyps) is Christ, & therefore the Angel who saith there is none that holdeth with me in Matters of prophesy, but Michael [Dn 10:21], can be no Spirit inferior to the Holy Ghost. As God gave Christ the Revelation & he sent his Angel with it to Iohn, so ’tis an universal rule that God never speaks to us immediately by himself but always by his Son . . . & his Son sends his Messenger or Angel the Spirit to reveale to the Prophets what he receives of his Father: & besides these two Christ & the Holy Ghost there are none other that hold together in Matters of Prophecy. . . . Now the Prophecies of Daniel & Iohn are of a kind, & the Angel which shewed them appears in the same form & shape to both the Prophets: whence you may know him to be the same prophetick Angel in both cases.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 83r–84r. See also Isaac Newton, Keynes Ms. 2, 25r–v, “Catalogue Entry: THEM00002,” Newton Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/catalogue/record/THEM00002>.

²⁶⁶ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 9.2, 84r.

²⁶⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 12r.

²⁶⁸ For the importance of love in the true faith, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 4r–5r, 25r, 27r, 28r, 362r, 382r–85r, 395r, 411r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 24r.

²⁶⁹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 5r, 206r.

²⁷⁰ On love’s or the Covenant’s relation to baptism and membership, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 27–31r, 51r, 386v.

²⁷¹ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 59.

subsequent ages, since it was of lasting, unchanging nature. It was based on the teachings of Christ and formulated by the Twelve and therefore had divine authority and was no more open to change than Scripture itself.²⁷² Against the great traditional authority granted to later Creeds, Newton placed the Creed of all Creeds.

After his resurrection, Christ had taught the disciples the true meaning of the prophecies about himself, and commanded them to preach the faith to all nations and to baptize disciples in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.²⁷³ Summarizing Christ's teachings, the Apostles composed the Creed.²⁷⁴ Here Newton took a minimalist approach. To be baptized one had to accept the truths taught by the ceremony—faith, forgiveness, and repentance from dead works—and who they were in whose name one was baptized. That these fundamental tenets were all the knowledge required for baptism Newton believed could be seen from what the apostles preached before they baptized converts (Acts 2; 3; 10).²⁷⁵ The New Testament's repeated injunctions to believers to hold fast to "the tradition" or "form of doctrine" that had been "delivered" to them, and to pass it on to others (Rm 6:17; 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Tm 2:2; 2 Thes 2:15; Jude 3) showed that this faith was formulated into a Creed; some of these Scriptures even listed some of the articles (1 Cor 15:2–4; Eph 4:4–5; Heb 6:1–2).²⁷⁶ Paul's exhortation to "hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me" (2 Tm 1:13, KJV) showed that "the apostles delivered the form of sound words with direction not to vary from those forms."²⁷⁷ "Sound" meant that the Creed was limited to scriptural terms.²⁷⁸ The reason why the Creed was composed in scriptural language and could not be altered was that it was a statement of divine truths necessary for salvation, and what was necessary for salvation never changed and could not be mingled with human explanations.

To ascertain the text and tenets of the original Creed Newton used textual criticism. He compared the oldest creeds to identify and excise later additions and what remained was the original Creed,²⁷⁹ the faith adhered to by the host before the apostasy. There were slight

²⁷² On the divine, authoritative, and unchangeable nature of the Creed, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 35r, 37r, 173r, 410v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 67r, 92r, 95v, 134r–b, 173r.

²⁷³ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 34r–35r, 57r–58r, 398r–99r, 411r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 81v–82r.

²⁷⁴ "The Apostles seem to have comprised this faith in a short system of articles to be easily learnt by heart & rememb[er]ed by all men." Newton, Bodmer Ms., 33r; see also 373v. "The Apostles therefore collecting into one body the heads of what Christ had taught them & commanded them & their disciples to teach all nations to the end of the world, composed the Creed as the rule of faith into which all nations were to be baptized." Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 82r. "For uniting all Christians in one body & preventing disputes which tended to break this body into parties the Apostles in the beginning of the Gospel comprehended all the articles of faith necessary to communion, in one short systeme called the Creed or symbol of faith." Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 92r. See also 67r.

²⁷⁵ On the Creed's teachings being revealed by the Apostle's sermons, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 31r–33r, 43r, 373v, 386r–387r, 395v.

²⁷⁶ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 29r–30r, 33r–34r, 42r–43r, 55r–56r, 171v, 171r–72r, 372r, 380r, 386r, 390r, 394r–95r, 399r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 80r–81r, 91v, 92r, 94v, 94v–95r, 95v. "And this," Newton wrote about the Creed, "I take to be the only unwritten tradition of the faith." Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 81r.

²⁷⁷ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 80r; see also Newton, Bodmer Ms., 43r.

²⁷⁸ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 56r.

²⁷⁹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 38r, 56r, 173r–174r, 381v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 91v, 94r–95r, 102v, 103v, 134ra, 134v, 172v. Newton spent considerable time on textual criticism and church history to arrive at the text of the

disparities between the oldest most genuine creeds but these were immaterial. Translation and paraphrasing explained those minor variations.²⁸⁰ Newton's reconstruction of the original Creed reads like this:

- §1 I beleive in God the ffather Almighty, maker of heaven & earth;
- §2 & in Jesus Christ, his only son[,] our Lord, who was born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified[,] dead[,] & buried, the third day he rose again from the dead, & ascended into heaven, from whence he shall come to judge the quick & the dead;
- §3 And I beleive in the holy Ghost.²⁸¹

The short and simple nature of this original Creed was necessary. It was “short & free from repetitions,” “easy to be understood & rememb[er]ed by the common people” “as a symbol of religion ought to be.” “All its articles” were “in the scriptures in express words, & so liable to no disputes.” It contained “not mere Theories” but “practical truths on which the whole practise of religion depends, & therefore a system of faith fit to be learned in the first place as the foundation of all religion.”²⁸² The Creed served primarily as a rule of faith and communion, and “so it was also the Catechism of the primitive Church. ffor all catechizing in the first ages of Christianity consisted only in teaching & explaining repentance & the articles of the primitive Creed.”²⁸³ It also served as a symbol to recognize true believers and to this purpose Christians memorized it and kept it secret from unbelievers.²⁸⁴ As the mark of true Christianity, it was also a protective wall against heresy.²⁸⁵

There was of course more to theology than the Creed. Beyond its elementary truths of salvation lay further truths for the believer's lifelong study. Paul had differentiated between these by calling the first “milk” for young believers and the latter “meat” (Heb 5:12). The latter were the more complicated matters of Scripture and required wisdom to grapple with. They were still “truths of great importance” and were to be “learned” and the mind was “to be

original Creed. He studied and quoted the Apostles's Creed (Ambrose), the Apostolic Constitutions; the creeds of the Councils of Nicaea (325), Antioch (341, 342), and Constantinople (381); and of Alexander of Alexandria (324), Athanasius (341), Augustine, Cyril of Jerusalem, Eusebius of Caesarea (325), Irenæus, Lucian the Martyr (341), Maximus of Turin, Petrus Chrysologus, Rufinus of Aquileia, Tertullian, and Theophronius (341). See for instance Newton, Bodmer Ms., 34r, 37r–40r, 56r, 61r, 171r–72r, 172v, 241r–42r, 381v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 51r, 52r, 62v, 82r–82v, 93r–94v, 95r–v, 101r. The dates are as given by Newton.

²⁸⁰ For the minor variations, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 37r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 173r.

²⁸¹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 73r. See also 49r, 72r–73, 171v, 172r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 43r, 82v, 94v, 95r, 102v, 134v. The enumeration is based on Newton's remark: “The primitive Rule of faith consisted only in three principal branches, the first concerning the ffather, the second concerning the Son, the third concerning the holy Ghost.” Bodmer Ms., 49r. The fact that Newton called them “branches” and not “articles” suggests he saw each “branch” as composed of articles.

²⁸² Newton, Bodmer Ms. 73r–74r, Newton; Yahuda Ms. 15, 43r, 98v; see also 134v, 173r.

²⁸³ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 52r. On the three articles of the original Creed, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 49r, 52r, 71r–72r, 74r–76r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 43r–44r, 95v.

²⁸⁴ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 33r, 37r, 55r, 56r, 373v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 80v, 92v, 173r.

²⁸⁵ See for instance Newton, Bodmer Ms., 36r.

fed continually with them as the body is with meats.” But they were not essential for salvation and were therefore not required for baptism and fellowship.²⁸⁶

The Creed remained more or less intact through the second century. Here Newton pointed to the testimony of second century church fathers. On his visit to Rome from Syria, Hegesippus chronicled that “he visited many bishops . . . & found them all agree in one & the same doctrine” of the Apostles.²⁸⁷ Irenæus prefaced his Creed with the statement that “the Church, although dispersed throughout the whole world to the ends of the earth, keeps that faith wh^{ch} was received from the Apostles & their disciples.”²⁸⁸ The Creed as recited by Tertullian was more or less the same as that of Irenæus.²⁸⁹ It was therefore “manifest that in their days all the Churches[,] from one end of the earth to the other end thereof[,] had one & the same Rule of faith.”²⁹⁰ And since they had the same faith, they were still one Church.

Ecclesiastic Unity and Administration

The unity in love that imbued the primitive Church was beautifully illustrated in the communion of the Jewish and Gentile believers. God had called Israel to keep the Mosaic Law and this did not change with the arrival of Christ. When God called the Gentiles to the faith, they were not to keep the Mosaic Law and this was affirmed by the Jerusalem Council. This was neither made into a creedal difference nor a schism. So understanding as the love of the early Church that its members tolerated this difference of Jewish and Gentile believers (as well as other ritual variations), the simple Christology of some Jewish believers that Christ was just a man, and the wrongful insistence of some of the Jewish believers that the Gentile believers had to keep the Mosaic Law. Newton believed this union continued until the end of the second century as could be seen from the testimony of Justin Martyr.²⁹¹

The pure, simple state of the early Church was also safeguarded by its governance. Christ and the Apostles “instituted no new form of Church government, but continued the ancient form of government which was in use among the Jews in their Synagogues before his

²⁸⁶ On “meat” and “milk,” see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 33r, 49r–50r, 55r, 76r, 380r, 385r, 390r, 400r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 44r, 67r, 95v, 98v, 134r–b. Newton listed some of these heavier truths (“meat”): “And to these truths I refer what Christ did before his incarnation, & between his death & resurrection, what he doth now in heaven, how the saints shall reign with him as Kings & Priests at his second coming & rule the nations with a rod of iron & what he or they shall do after the day of judgment, as also all disputable questions about Providence, Predestination, free-will, Grace, the origin of evil, the nature of God[']s justice & of the satisfaction made by Christ, the nature of Angels, the state of the dead between death & the resurrection, the nature of the bodies wth wh^{ch} the dead shall rise, the power of the keys, forms of Church-government, the keeping of Easter & other holy days[,] & the like.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 49–50r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 134r–b.

²⁸⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 35v.

²⁸⁸ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 34r, 56r. See also 35r–36r, 56r–57r, 58r–59r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 81r–v, 92r, 97r, 100r–v, 103v, 134r–b.

²⁸⁹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 36r, 59r–61r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 81r, 91v, 92r, 94r, 97r, 100v–101r, 173r.

²⁹⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 36r. See also 61r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 102v, 410v.

²⁹¹ On the unity of Jewish and Gentile believers in the early Church, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 4r–8r, 13r–15r, 25r, 78r, 98r–100r, 159r–62r, 362r–66r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 77r–v, 96r, 78ar, 123r–v, 123Av, 126r, 176r, 363r–65r, 406v.

coming.”²⁹² Through its history, Israel had a civil and religious administration of judges or elders. The highest level was “the Great Council of seventy elders sitting in the Temple.” The local councils were the high-places in Scripture. After the Babylonian Captivity the Great Council became known as the Sanhedrin and the places of the local councils as synagogues.²⁹³ It was “from this constitution of Synagogues” that “the form of Church government among Christians had its rise.”²⁹⁴ Therefore “the Christian churches are nothing else then [*sic*] Synagogues.”²⁹⁵ In the beginning the elders (also called bishops²⁹⁶) were all equal and oversaw only their own diocese.²⁹⁷

This is how Christianity had looked in its pure dawn: The Church was united by love in one faith and one body. It believed in one God and one Lord. It expressed its faith in one Creed which was simple, scriptural, and universally adhered to. The churches were governed by equal bishops. Disputes about trifles and ambitions for eminence were not allowed to rupture the harmony of faith and fellowship. It was a picture characterized by love, simplicity, and tolerance—one host under one Prince, offering its “daily worship.” Having shown the shape of the original Christian faith, the next burden of Newton’s church history was to show how all of this had changed, as Daniel 8 had also predicted.

The Apostasy

The key verses in Daniel 8 which Newton connected to the apostasy were the ones that described the career of the last horn of the goat. This power attacked God’s people, cast the Sanctuary down, and replaced the true religion (the daily worship) with his apostate teachings (abomination of desolation), and raised his own apostate church (the other host). Newton believed this text was a picture of the rise of the Trinitarian and papal apostasy. In his church history, Newton traced several strands of the history of the apostasy, the most notable one being how the Creed was changed, with special separate emphases on the creedal changes caused by the Trinitarian controversy of the fourth century, the fragmentation of the Church, and the rise of the papal hierarchy.

Changing the Creed

The path to apostasy was partly paved with good intentions. To combat the various heretical groups from the late second to the fourth century, church leaders felt constrained to clarify the Creed, first with glosses and eventually with new articles. At first the additions were basically

²⁹² Newton, Bodmer Ms., 259r.

²⁹³ On the history of Israel’s judges or elders, and synagogue offices, see Bodmer Ms., 254r–55r, 257r, 258r–61r, 272r, 273r, 376r, 377v, 378r–79r.

²⁹⁴ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 258r.

²⁹⁵ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 259r. On the relation between church and synagogue, see 258r–259r, 262r–63r, 266r, 268r, 272r, 273r–74r, 376r, 398r, 410r.

²⁹⁶ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 260r, 275r, 376r, 377v.

²⁹⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 264r, 272v, 275r, 334r, 410r.

quotations from Scripture and were therefore harmless to the unity of the Church. But it was a dangerous precedent. “After the practise of adding new Articles became of some standing & was reputed authentic,”²⁹⁸ others were added that were not limited to scriptural terms, particularly in the fourth century. And those additions quickly divided the body of Christ.²⁹⁹ Such additions were nothing less than human additions to the divine covenant of faith, and attempting to change the divine legislation was nothing less than sitting in the Temple as God.³⁰⁰ These additions corrupted the original Creed which eventually became the Apostolic Creed—falsely so called according to Newton—and later the Nicene Creed. This section explains what Newton saw as the earliest accretions and the reasons for why they were added. The numberings are the traditional enumeration of the articles in the Apostolic Creed.³⁰¹

The resurrection of the body (§11) was the oldest addition, and an unnecessary one, since it was implied by Christ’s resurrection and his judging the living and the dead. The addition began as a gloss on these places when disputes arose in the second century about the nature of the resurrected bodies (see the paraphrases of Irenæus and Tertullian). It was also put forth against the Gnostics who denied the bodily resurrection. Later it was made an independent article by Alexander bishop of Alexandria (324), but did not gain general acceptance until the middle of the fourth century.³⁰² It is found in Athanasius’s creed presented to Pope Julius (341), Cyril, and in the Apostolic Constitutions, and was added to the Creed by the Council of Constantinople (381). In the meantime, starting with the Council of Sirmium in 349, the Greek councils dropped this article, as well as the other three last short ones, out of their Creed again, until they were forced to accept them at Constantinople in 381. But this addition, exclusion, and readmission of the last four articles “show plainly that they were additional” and “crept into the Creeds of the Roman Christian Empire in the fo[u]rth century by the authority of Athanasius & the bishop of Rome”³⁰³ until they were accepted everywhere.³⁰⁴

The clause “begotten before all ages” (§2) also had stemmed from the second century. In the days of Pope Victor, those who believed that Jesus had his beginning at his birth began to be excommunicated. To oppose their view, the Scripture that all things were created by Christ was added into the paraphrases of the Creed. It first had the meaning that Christ was begotten shortly before creation. And the phrase “begotten before all ages” was probably added in response to the heresy of Artemon and Paul of Samosata. The earliest creeds it appeared in were those of Eusebius of Caesarea and Lucian the Martyr.³⁰⁵

²⁹⁸ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 130r.

²⁹⁹ On creedal additions and their consequences, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 50r, 77r, 61r, 100r, 121r2, 410v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 101r, 102v, 121r, 122v, 130r, 134r–b.

³⁰⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 50r, 77r, 375r.

³⁰¹ For a helpful comparison of Newton’s reconstructed original creed, the Apostolic Creed, and the Nicene (Nicene-Constantinopolitan) Creed, see appendix 6.3.

³⁰² On the addition of the Resurrection of the flesh, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 44r1, 45r1, 70r, 100r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 48r.

³⁰³ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 47r.

³⁰⁴ On the four last articles, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 46r–47r, 49r, 71r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 62r.

³⁰⁵ On the addition “begotten before all ages,” see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 43v, 156r.

The clause “conceived by the Holy Ghost” (§3) was nearly as old. It appeared in one of Tertullian’s creeds and much later in Athanasius. It seemed to have been put against those who believed Jesus was only the son of Joseph and Mary. It was also “certainly an additional article because it was improper to mention the Holy Ghost in the Creed before the article of believing in the Holy Ghost.” It was taken from Scripture, but “worded in such a manner as if the holy Ghost was the father of Jesus Christ”³⁰⁶ and so “obscures the true sense of the primitive Creeds wh^{ch} teach that God is the ffather and the Virgin Mary the mother of Jesus, or that he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary by the Almighty power of God himself & had no other father then [*sic*] God.”³⁰⁷

Another article, also wanting in the earliest creeds, that interrupted the flow of thought in the original text, was “sitteth at the right hand of God” (§6). It divided the original phrase and its semantic wholeness: ‘Ascended into heaven, from whence he shall come to judge.’ For Jesus was to come from heaven to judge, after which he would still be sitting at the right hand of God in the world to come.³⁰⁸

The articles “holy catholic Church” (§9a), “remission of sins” (§10), and “life everlasting” (§12) were added in the wake of the Novatian schism in the third century. Novatian denied “the remission of sins to them who lapsed after baptism.” He and his followers were excommunicated and “to distinguish themselves from the Novatians” the Catholic Africans added the article “I believe in the remission of sins and life eternal by the holy Church.”³⁰⁹ This was “the first instance” of these articles. Then they appeared again, along with the resurrection article, in Cyril of Jerusalem, the Apostolic Constitutions, and some for the first time as separate articles in a letter by Alexander bishop of Alexandria, and then they gained universal acceptance with the effort of Athanasius and the Bishop of Rome.³¹⁰

The clause “descended into hell” (§4) first appeared after the mid-fourth century. At that time there was a debate about “whether Christ had a human soul” or not. Psalm 16:10 was put forth as proof for it. The passage was regarded as a messianic prophecy and reads: “For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption” (KJV). The clause was added by the Councils of Ariminum (359) and Constantinople (360), then by Epiphanius of Salamis, Rufinus of Aquileia (d. 411), and finally Rome. Newton argued “that this article of faith is grounded upon a doubtful interpretation of a text” since the

³⁰⁶ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 47r.

³⁰⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 72r.

³⁰⁸ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 73r. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 95r, 134r–a.

³⁰⁹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 44r–45r. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 48v, 63v, 134r–a. The article “life everlasting” was also put forth against the Gnostics “who denied the resurrection of the body” and taught transmigration of souls. Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 48r.

³¹⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 44r–45r, 46r–47r, 49r, 51r–52r, 37r, 38r, 40r, 61r, 62v–63r, 63v, 70r, 71r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 82v, 101r–v.

word translated as “soul” (נַפְשׁ) often referred to a body in the Scriptures, living or dead, rather than an immaterial soul, and the word behind “hell” (אֵשׁ) could be translated as ‘grave.’³¹¹

The clause “communion of the saints” (§9b) was added in the fifth century. It appeared only in the Latin creeds, starting with Eusebius Gallicanus (420/430), Augustine, and Paschasius. Based on Eusebius’s comments, it was apparently inserted “for establishing the opinion of a communion between the saints departed [from] this life and the church militant on earth.”³¹²

Though the additions had been added to the Creed to combat heresy, they often supported heresy themselves. Most of these additions had used words and phrases from Scripture. Though they should not have been added—for the Creed was not open for change any more than Scripture—they were seen as tolerable (some were nevertheless interpreted incorrectly to support heresy). Some of the additions, however, used unscriptural and downright heretical language: The consubstantiality of the Son with the Father (§2) was added at the Council of Nicaea (325)³¹³ and the worship of the Holy Spirit (§8) at the Council of Constantinople (381).³¹⁴ Newton dealt with the change to article 2 by far the most, but besides covering the work of Athanasius in detail—the champion of the change—he traced the error that lay behind this change further back, and this history is covered in the next section.

The Trinitarian Apostasy of the Fourth Century

The Bible had predicted that the Christian Church would apostatize. Already in the apostolic age, the New Testament writers warned that the apostasy had already begun to send down roots. John spoke of “antichrists” in his day that were as forerunners to the Antichrist. Paul said “the mystery of iniquity” was already working, and would continue until the pagan Roman Empire would “be taken out of the way,” after which the Antichrist would be revealed and reign in the Church (“sit in the Temple as God,” 2 Thes 2:6–7).³¹⁵ Traditional Protestant historiography saw these prophecies fulfilled in the rise of the Papacy in the early centuries. But to Newton the heresy went deeper than the Catholic errors that the Reformation had renounced.³¹⁶ The infiltration of paganism had obscured the very nature of God, the most foundational of all doctrines.

According to Newton, the core ideas of paganism clustered around the teaching

³¹¹ For the addition into the fourth article and Newton’s critique of it, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 47r–48r, 68r2; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 63v, 102r. For the translation of נַפְשׁ, Newton gave the references Lv 19:28; 21:1; 22:4; Nm 5:2; 9:6; Hg 2:13.

³¹² Newton, Bodmer Ms., 48r1, 70r. See also Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 63v, 102r–v.

³¹³ This creedal addition is one of the central topics of some of Newton’s church history manuscripts, including the Bodmer Ms. For reference, see for instance Newton, Bodmer Ms., 45r, 62r.

³¹⁴ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 69r2. According to Newton, the article on the Holy Spirit had already begun expanding before the fourth century. Irenæus and the Greeks added “who spake by the prophets.” Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 95r.

³¹⁵ For Newton’s mention of New Testament prophecies of the Apostasy, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 89r–90r, 97r, 117r, 127r–28r, 213r, 240r, 240v, 247r–v, 361r, 369r–70r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 65v, 77r, 115r, 131v, 139v.

³¹⁶ Newton did not even mention the Reformation in his writings.

that all things came from one first Being by emanation, emission, dilatation, or projection of substance[,] & were animated by him & returned into him: & that all the Gods were either parts or powers of the supreme God & by unity of substance were but one God; & that the chief of them were begotten of the supreme God & of one another successively before the world began, or at least before the flood.³¹⁷

This teaching blurred the distinction between God and his creatures by linking them metaphysically into one. It had begun with the ancient practice of honoring deceased rulers. The human tendency to superstition had pushed such veneration to full idolatry. As the royal family tree of the past raised its branches to godhood, the pedigree of the gods was eventually explained by emanations from the ultimate God. Eventually all of nature was linked in this way to God, and all souls were seen as descending and ascending from God (transmigration of souls).³¹⁸ The deification of the dead had been the origin of pagan religions among Noah's descendants, and the people of God had ever after been threatened by its influences. The nation of Israel had been led astray by such idolatry. The Jews had nourished paganism in the form of Kabbalah. The Christian Church adopted similar notions of God as orthodoxy in the fourth century and would be unaware for the afterward centuries that the early Church Councils were the triumph of paganism. To show how this had occurred, Newton focused on how two ideas of paganism—the emanations of God and polytheism—had been adopted into Christianity as the Trinity and the saints.

The polytheism of Christianity had been predicted in Daniel 11:38 where it was stated that the apostate power would worship the מַעֲזֵיזִים, which Newton translated as 'fortresses' or 'guardians.' This prophecy came to pass in the worship of the saints. The beginnings were innocent enough. After the persecution of Emperor Decius, annual festivals were kept in commemoration of martyrs and deceased believers (or saints). This was attractive to pagan converts, who were used to celebrate innumerable such festivities in honor of their gods. During the Diocletian persecution, believers started praying at the burial places of the saints and martyrs. Eventually the festivals were celebrated there and churches built there. When the Church faced the wrath of Constantius and Julian the Apostate, it began to claim that the earthly remains of the saints were associated with miracles. The monks were the main carriers of these stories, first across the Eastern Empire. Emperor Theodosius tried in vain to forbid the practice, for it but filled the fields and the highways with altars erected to the saints. Many church fathers wrote direct invocations to the saints, and the doctrine had become general before the fourth century was over.³¹⁹ But worse than the idolatry of saint worship was how paganism changed the doctrine of God himself.

³¹⁷ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 80r.

³¹⁸ On emanationism and its euhemerist roots in the worship of the deceased, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 80r–81r, 82r–84r, 90r, 91r, 117r, 128r–29r, 130r, 336r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 137r–v, 155r.

³¹⁹ For the history of saint worship, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 336r–359v; Newton, *Observations*, 203–31; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 29r–33r, 148r, 153r–v.

Newton believed paganism had entered Christianity through two sources. Since people are most susceptible to errors close to them, the main source of heresy was Kabbalah (which Newton believed was the ancient Jewish form of paganism³²⁰) when Jewish believers were the majority of the Church, and Platonism when the Gentile believers grew more numerous, as it was the main current philosophy of their society. Newton highlighted how these two schools of thought taught the same concepts as paganism. Kabbalah “consisted chiefly”³²¹ in emanationism. The Supreme Being, Ein Sof, “emitted gradually ten subordinate emanations,”³²² called sefirot or splendors. The first sefirah was called Adam Kadmon, “the first man, making him the son of God as Adam is called the Son of God in scripture.”³²³ From the sefirot emanated a chain of worlds with the lowest one being the material world. Souls migrated, “coming from above[,] passing into various bodies[,] & at length returning up to the internal light of the Shekinah.”³²⁴ Kabbalah’s origin with deified deceased men and women could be seen from the fact that the sefirot were partly male and partly female.³²⁵ The same teachings were found in Platonism. According to this philosophy, there were three superior beings and each of them had many names. The highest was the One, then there was the Word, Mind, or Wisdom, and thirdly The Soul of the World. From the Supreme One emanated a succession of lower “Ideas,” all the way down to humanity, animals, and the material world. And being consubstantial to God, all souls migrated from and to him.³²⁶

Gnosticism³²⁷ was the next attempt to merge paganism with Christianity. The attempted merging resulted in an array of heresies that denied one God and the one Lord, the incarnation, and the passion in various ways (errors which Newton saw predicted by 1 Jn 2:22; 4:2; Jude 4). The main error was again a pagan view of God. Instead of the pagan deities, Kabbalistic sefirot, and Platonic Ideas, the Gnostics called God’s emanations Æons. The first Æon was called Ennoia, while some of the others retained their Platonic names, such as Word, Wisdom, and Mind. The Æons inferior to the Supreme One created the world.³²⁸ And as usual, not only were the Æons consubstantial with the Supreme Being—so were the souls of humans as well. Thus the Gnostics also taught the transmigration of souls.³²⁹ These heresies were so blatant that they were more or less rejected by the Church. The next waves, however, were ever subtler and more successful. Montanus refined “the errors of the

³²⁰ In Newton’s day scholars still believed Kabbalah was ancient. Joseph Dan, *Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 64–65, 68.

³²¹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 91r.

³²² Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 137v.

³²³ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 91r.

³²⁴ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 92r.

³²⁵ For the history of Kabbalah, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 83r–84r, 91r–92r, 92v, 129r–30r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 53r–v, 110r, 118r, 127r–29r-b, 137r–v, 138r. See also Matt Goldish, “Newton on Kabbalah,” in Force; Popkin, *The Books of Nature and Scripture*, 89–103.

³²⁶ For Platonism, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 92r, 92v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 137v–138r.

³²⁷ On Gnosticism, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 84r–87r, 90r, 95r–97r, 117r–21r, 117v–18v, 131r–32r, 139r–40r, 402r–3r, 407r–9r, 407v; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 54r–v, 56r, 83r–84v, 88r–v, 105r–11r, 116r, 120r, 120v, 131r, 138r, 183r, 190r.

³²⁸ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 92r.

³²⁹ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 118v1, 118r2, 96r1.

Gnostics” by making Christ and the Holy Spirit the only emanations of God “and subordinate to him.” To give scriptural support to this he read the titles of Christ as metaphysics. Christ was the Word (λόγος) because he was the internal reason (λόγος) of the Father from all eternity, who then emanated from him before Creation. The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit were consubstantial in the sense of being of one substance numerically. The Church rejected this idea as heresy along with its attendant terminology (ὁμοούσιος) when it condemned it in the teachings of Paul of Samosata at the Council of Antioch in the late second century.³³⁰ But as the second and third centuries passed it became “the prevailing opinion among the learned and philosophical part of the Church.”³³¹ This was the situation when the Roman persecutions came to an end with Constantine the Great and the Arian controversy broke out.

The Gnostic tenets about emanations “at length occasioned the famous dispute in the Church of Alexandria between Alexander the bishop & Arius[,] one of the Presbyters”³³² over the nature of the Son’s procession. Arius claimed that the Son was not the internal reason of the Father and before he was begotten or emanated, he had not existed at all. Alexander argued that this made the Godhead mutable, and avoided that difficulty by stating that the procession of the Son was from eternity. In return, Alexander’s critics said that an eternal procession made the Son practically unbegotten like the Father.³³³ The controversy finally led Emperor Constantine to call for an ecumenical Council at Nicaea in 325.³³⁴ He was of the same opinion as Alexander³³⁵ and “pressed” the representatives to make the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son explicit in the Creed with the word ὁμοούσιος.³³⁶ Many of the bishops had reservations about introducing extra-scriptural terminology into the Creed. They would only subscribe to it if their qualifications of the term were understood: The sameness of the substance of the Father and the Son did not mean that they were numerically one like two pieces of an unbroken stone. Rather, the Father and the Son were “two substances of the same nature.”³³⁷ And so Christ, the most eminent being after God, was elevated to divinity at the Council of Nicaea.³³⁸

³³⁰ On Paul of Samosata, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 94r–95r, 114r, 115r, 120r, 137r–39r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 115v, 192r, 193v.

³³¹ On Montanus, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 90r, 92v–94r, 99r, 132r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 56r, 131r, 131v, 138r, 143ra–44r; and on λόγος ἐνδιάθετος, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 144r–56r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 87v, 89r–v, 174r.

³³² Newton, Bodmer Ms., 229r.

³³³ On the conflict between Arius and Alexander—the commencement of the Arian controversy—see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 156r, 229r–30r.

³³⁴ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 48r, 230r–31r.

³³⁵ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 48r.

³³⁶ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 101v.

³³⁷ On the conditional acceptance of the term ὁμοούσιος at Nicaea, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 183r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 25r, 49v, 101v–2r, 119r.

³³⁸ Newton believed that the creedal change was not only heretical but mishandled: “They intended to establish the eternal deity of the Son but they did it unskillfully. For any man who with the old heathens & hereticks takes the souls of men for rays[,] sparks[,] or particles of the Deity may subscribe [to] their Creed without beleiving Christ to be more then [*sic*] a mere man.” Newton, Bodmer Ms., 114r. See also 167r, 375r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 190r.

Over the following tumultuous decades, the next development in the apostasy was the deification of the Holy Spirit. It was a story that wove together the masterful power plotting of the bishop of Rome, the career of Athanasius—the most energetic promoter of the heresy—the further tuning of Trinitarian terminology, and the eventual defeat of the Eastern bishops. The main contours of Newton’s treatment of the controversy were as follows. After the Council of Nicaea the Western bishops had the ill fortune to explain the word ὁμοούσιος not only with consubstantial (Latin) but with the phrase *unius substantiae*, which they took to be the equivalent of one οὐσία or one ὑπόστασις. The difference was that the adverbs for ‘consubstantial’ in both languages (ὁμοούσιος and *consubstantial*) “were always taken by the ancient Greeks and Latins for two [numerical] substances of one and the same essence, nature, or species,” whereas the nouns underlying them had different ranges of meaning. *Unius substantiae* could be understood to mean that the Father and the Son were not only of the same nature, but of the one and the same substance numerically.³³⁹ These translational difficulties resulted not only in mutual misunderstanding, but led many members into heresy, “and these errors ended in the great Apostasy & revelation of the Man of Sin.”³⁴⁰

It was here that Athanasius entered Newton’s account, accused of crimes before the Council of Tyre in 335. As the champion of false orthodoxy his hagiography was suspect. By a critical reading of the sources Newton sought to remove the saint’s halo. The criminal charges brought against him were true. By critical reading of the church fathers, Newton sought to uncover that Athanasius was not only apostate but wicked. His case escalated into two rival Church Councils, the Council of Sardica (for Athanasius), summoned by the bishop of Rome, and the Council of the Eastern bishops. The Council of Sardica issued the first creed that declared the consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. This exacerbated the misunderstanding between the two sides. The Western bishops said that the three were ὁμοούσιοι in the sense of being one οὐσία or ὑπόστασις, and so were accused of Sabellianism. The Eastern bishops refused to use the word ὁμοούσιος, and said that the three were three οὐσῖαι or ὑποστάσεις, and were accused of Arianism. To some extent the accusations were correct, because the ambiguous terminology fanned the spread of heresies in both directions.³⁴¹ In an attempt to revert back to scriptural simplicity, the Eastern Churches held several Councils that abandoned all theological and creedal usage of the word οὐσία and its compounds and gave their reasons for doing so.³⁴² But it was the other side that carried the day. At a Church Council in Alexandria, Athanasius suggested that the terminology be adjusted. The three persons of God would be referred to by the word ὑποστάσεις, and their

³³⁹ For the language misunderstandings after Nicaea, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 63r–68r, 114r–15r, 121r–23r, 177r–82r, 184v, 231r–37r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 5r, 21v, 50v, 64r, 64v–65r, 65v, 99v, 116r, 130r–v, 154r.

³⁴⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 115r.

³⁴¹ On Athanasius and the Council at Sardicia, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 123r, 240r–241r, 240v, 306r–309r, 325r–329r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 1r–4r, 17r–21r, 61r, 62r, 65v, 113r–v, 117r–v, 124r, 125v, 134ra, 155v, 163v–64v, 175r, 178r, 185v, 190r.

³⁴² Newton, Bodmer Ms., 182r–83r, 243r–46r, 310r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 6r–11r, 19v, 20r, 21v, 21r–22r, 50v, 56r, 60v, 61r, 99v, 136r–v.

common nature with the word οὐσία.³⁴³ After this agreement the deity of the Holy Spirit was acknowledged in the Creed accepted at the Council of Constantinople in 381.³⁴⁴ Hence the Trinity had become orthodoxy. The final touch of the pagan doctrine of the Trinity emerged in the Dark Ages, when, mostly out of ignorance, scholars began to understand the words referring to the common nature of the three divine persons as referring to their one undivided substance.³⁴⁵ Ever since, scholars mistakenly read that understanding back into the past as if that had been the orthodoxy established at Nicaea.

The Papacy Divides and Conquers

The Church weathered the Roman persecutions as one undivided body, united in love and one Creed about one God and Lord. Christians rightly left theological uncertainties or mature doctrines outside of the Creed and did not judge one another on account of such differences, let alone excommunicate one another based on them. But as time passed and long suffering love waned disputes over things indifferent and uncertain increased. A notable example of this, in Newton's opinion, was the dispute over when to keep Easter in the time of Victor, bishop of Rome. He wanted to force the Jewish Christians to keep Easter on the same time as the Gentile believers, and this was the first deep crack between the churches of the circumcision and the uncircumcision.³⁴⁶

There was another tendency to division which was more alarming, and that was caused by the bishop of Rome's desire for supremacy. Several short-lived schisms occurred because of his policy. This evolved into the theological thunderstorm of the fourth century which caused the fragmentation of the body of Christ. As the bishop of Rome gained power, neither dissidents nor genuine Christians were tolerated, and the great Antichrist divided the church into many factions. The apostasy of the Church did not only corrupt doctrine and morals, but also church governance. The prophetic pictures all showed this ecclesiastical dominance: the little horn tore up other kingdoms and changed God's laws (Dn 7); the last horn rose to the heights of Christ himself (Dn 8); the Man of Sin sat in the Temple as God. All these prophetic pictures showed that the Antichrist would reign in the Church and Newton highlighted the major steps by which he ascended to power.

The bishops started convening in provincial church councils in the late second century by the admission of the secular rulers. The councils took place in the large cities and this gave "first a preference and then an authority" to the metropolitan bishops, who in turn vied with

³⁴³ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 183r, 237r, 311r, 331r–32r, 370r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 12r–13r, 26r, 27r–27v, 28v, 51v.

³⁴⁴ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 188r–201r, 241r–42r, 246r–47r, 312r–17r; Newton, Yahuda Ms., 165v–66v, 175v–r, 183Ar, 188r–v.

³⁴⁵ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 185r–87r, 237r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 27v, 28v, 49v, 50v, 103v, 165r–v, 168v, 181r, 182v–181vb. Newton cited four authorities on this: Bishop George Bull, Étienne de Courcelles (Curcelleus), Ralph Cudworth, Hueteius, and Denis Pétau (Petavius). See, for instance, Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15.2, 27v.

³⁴⁶ On the division between Jewish and Gentile believers in the time of Victor, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 99r–101r, 365r–367r, 401r.

each other for more authority. Rome was one of the most important cities in the Empire, and the bishop there soon became one of the most powerful bishops of the Church.³⁴⁷ The bishopric was growing from the humble office of local church leaders to an ever increasing hierarchy, and the bishop of Rome intended to come out on top.

The bishops of Rome legitimized and increased their authority by getting emperors to acknowledge their status in imperial edicts, and in turn by issuing their own edicts. The earliest edict by the bishop of Rome that Newton could find was by Siricius in the second century, and an important imperial edict that sustained Roman Catholic authority was issued by Gratian and Valentinian II in 378/9. The edict led other bishops to seek counsel from Rome and it validated Rome's subsequent edicts. Rome would later claim falsely that their authority stemmed from the Scriptures, the spread of the Gospel from Rome, and from the Nicene Council, but Newton refuted all such assertions.³⁴⁸

The most important move in the Roman playbook to gain ecclesiastical and doctrinal authority was to use disputes in the Church to its advantage. The bishop of Rome would side with the party accused of heresy, and not acknowledge their excommunication. Newton referred to this strategy and its results as "the baptism of heretics." By acknowledging the membership of heretics, Rome also acknowledged all their functions as members, including the right to baptize new members and continue their teachings. This policy lowered the biblical requirements for admittance and continued flooding the Church with heretics, which Rome supposedly agreed with. (The crowning achievement was reached when Roman Catholicism was asserted to *be* Christianity.) But the policy had a more directly political gain. As the bishop of one of the greatest cities, the bishop of Rome already had significant clout in the Church. By interfering in disputes, Rome's claims inevitably gained legitimacy: The heretics knew that Rome was a powerful ally and would seek redress of their grievances, whereas their judges would quarrel with Rome about their meddling or ask to be heard as well. This continued until all the Church was brought under Rome's jurisdiction.³⁴⁹

The Papacy's power grew further when it became a kingdom on its own. The appearance of the Antichrist had been possible by the removal of the pagan Roman Empire (2 Thes 2). This removal occurred at the death of Julian the Apostate, the last pagan Roman emperor. It was in his reign that Athanasius championed full-blown Trinitarianism. Yet though the Empire turned Christian, it still impeded the growth of the Papacy as long as the bishop of Rome had to submit to the emperor. This stumbling block was also cleared out of the way. The Western Roman Empire fell and in its place arose ten barbaric kingdoms which soon all turned Roman Catholic. Rome was now part of the Exarchate of Ravenna, part of the Eastern Roman Empire. When the exarchate sided with the emperor against the Pope, he was

³⁴⁷ On the rise of Councils and bishops, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 264r, 272v, 334r–35r.

³⁴⁸ On how the Bishop of Rome used Edicts to increase his power, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 169r–71r, 247r–v, 275–95r, 330r–32r, 335r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 146r, 149r–52r, 156r–57v.

³⁴⁹ On the Bishop of Rome's strategy to use disputes to his advantage, see Newton, Bodmer Ms., 102r–13r, 120r, 299r–321r, 335r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 48v, 71r–76v, 86r–v, 116r, 152r.

overturned by the Lombardians. At the Pope's request, the Frankish kings Pepin and Charlemagne conquered the Lombardians. Now the bishop was only subject to the Roman Senate, and this subjection was soon undone. When the Romans accused the Pope of crimes he declared himself above their jurisdiction, and this became evident at the coronation of Charlemagne as Emperor in the West: The Roman Senate subjected itself to the Emperor, and the Emperor swore to be the protector of the Roman Catholic Church, and it was the Pope who crowned him. By the fall of these three kingdoms (Dn 7) in the eighth century the Pope "acquired Peter's patrimony out of their dominions, and thereby arose up as a temporal prince or king."³⁵⁰

Restoration

In comparison to the origin and apostasy of the Church, Newton spent significantly little time on describing its final restoration and was vaguer on how the last events related one to another. This was not because Newton believed one should not try to understand future events. He himself lauded former prophetic commentators, stating that each attempt at understanding the prophecies had brought its rewards.³⁵¹ But prophecies were usually best understood when on the cusp of or in the act of fulfillment.³⁵² And Newton believed the last events lay centuries in the future,³⁵³ and did not claim to be eagle-eyed enough to view them clearly: "The manner of the general judgment & the future Kingdoms [*sic*] is hard to be understood & I shall not enter into disputes about it."³⁵⁴

The final events in Daniel 8 were "the cleansing of the sanctuary" at the end of 2300 years and the end of "the indignation" of the Jews's captivity. Newton believed the Sanctuary or the Temple was both the literal building and also the people of God. In the early days of the Church, God's people had been Jewish and Gentile believers, united by faith and charity though under different ritual requirements. The cleansing of the Sanctuary therefore involved the restoration of the Temple and God's people: The Return of the Jews and the reformation of the Church. Thus God's people would once again comprise Jewish and Gentile believers united by faith and charity, with the Temple as the center of their worship. The Church would reform and reunite probably after the 1260 years of the Antichrist's apostate reign, and the

³⁵⁰ Newton, *Observations*, 75.

³⁵¹ "Amongst the Interpreters of the last age there is scarce one of note who hath not made some discovery worth knowing." Newton, *Observations*, 253.

³⁵² "The folly of Interpreters has been, to foretel[l] times and things by this Prophecy [the Apocalypse] as if God designed to make them Prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also into contempt. He gave this and the Prophecies of the Old Testament not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event." *Observations*, 251. This must be understood not as a warning against any future interpretation, but as a warning against what Newton deemed too much confidence about too detailed interpretation of the future. Newton himself compared the prophecies of the Second Coming to those of the First Coming: Both were given to prepare God's people for Christ's arrival, which they could not do had they had no inkling about his coming before he came. But since the final events lay in the future, "the time is not yet come for understanding them [the prophecies] perfectly." Newton, *Observations*, 252, emphasis supplied.

³⁵³ See his interpretation of the 1260 years and the 2300 years.

³⁵⁴ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 6, 2v.

Jews would return to Palestine and rebuild the Temple somewhere around the end of the 2300 years.

These final events of Daniel 8 would herald the return of Christ. From the decree allowing the Jews to return home until the return of Christ there would be forty-nine years. And since the Jews would rebuild the Temple once they had returned (start of the forty-nine years) and the 2300 years ended with the Temple rebuilt, these two time periods must overlap or connect. The Antichrist's reign (1260 years) would end before the 2300 years. The end of Antichrist's rule would occur shortly before his demise, which the prophecies said would be at the hand of Christ returning in his brightness (2 Thes 2).³⁵⁵ Jesus would therefore return around the time when the 2300 years would expire.

Newton agreed with Mede that the Day of Judgment was the period of the millennium. The millennium or Day of Judgment would begin when Christ would return. The Antichrist would be destroyed. The first resurrection would take place and all mankind would be judged. The wicked would suffer "the second death" and be cast into the lake of fire (Rv 20:14–15). Newton acquiesced that the fire was literal but did see it as local rather than the cleansing of the entire natural world. The righteous would be of two classes. Some of the saved would reign with Christ in New Jerusalem over the earth not only during the millennium, but for all eternity. They would not be "the saints risen from the dead, but a race of mortal men like those nations over whom they reign."³⁵⁶ The immortal saints would live with Christ in heaven, able to manifest themselves to people on earth and move between realms at will.³⁵⁷ At the end of the millennium two events would take place. The inhabitants of the City would fight the forces of Gog and Magog—the final resistance of the nations against God's reign on earth—and the second resurrection would take place. Newton was unsure about its nature, but surmised that it might be of those who had not deserved eternal hell, but had had to be cleansed from their sins during the millennium before eternity.³⁵⁸

2.5.3 Interpretative Alternatives

Newton was familiar with the traditional Protestant interpretation of Daniel 8 that saw the last horn as having two fulfillments, Antiochus as type, and the papal Antichrist as the antitype. He rejected this interpretation on three main grounds. First, prophecies had but one fulfillment, which had to meet each and every specification of the prediction, and this ruled dual fulfillment out as sloppy reading, offering two incomplete fulfillments. Second, Newton

³⁵⁵ Newton, *Observations*, 132–34.

³⁵⁶ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 6, 13r.

³⁵⁷ Newton equated the coming earthly kingdom of God with the restored Jewish kingdom: "The mystery of this restitution of all things is to be found in all the Prophets: which makes me wonder with great admiration that so few Christians of our age can find it there. For they understand not that the final return of the Jews['s] captivity & their conquering the nations of the four Monarchies & setting up a righteous & flourishing kingdom at the day of judgment is this mystery." Newton, Yahuda Ms. 6, 12r. It is therefore possible, though he did not say so, that his two classes of the redeemed—the ones reigning over the earthly kingdom and those living in heaven—were the Jews and the Christians.

³⁵⁸ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 418r–20v.

believed that upon close inspection, Antiochus did not meet the specifications of the prophecy. Third, according to Newton the symbols had to be interpreted consistently, and this could not be the case if a horn was a symbol for a kingdom in all instances of Daniel 8 except when it supposedly stood for but one king, i.e. Antiochus. These concerns of Newton have been discussed in 3.4.3.

Newton could also, theoretically, have applied these rigorous textual rules, but without antitrinitarianism. That is, he could have systematized the traditional interpretation so that it applied solely to the papal Antichrist and not Antiochus, and gave the exact time of his rule. Newton himself unknowingly facilitated this application of his interpretation of Daniel 8 by hiding his heterodoxy in his most finished papers on Daniel. These papers were published posthumously as a commentary on Daniel, as has been noted, and consequently many Protestant prophecy scholars adopted his views on Daniel 8, oblivious to Newton's antitrinitarianism. But to Newton the prophecy did not only point out the time and place of the papal Antichrist: It also showed the nature of his Trinitarian apostasy. This, Newton believed, was revealed by the titles of Christ which were so prominently used in the visions of Daniel and which, upon scrutiny, did not describe him in Trinitarian terms, and therefore undermined the traditional understanding of these messianic predictions. Here Newton predated biblical criticism, which does not see the "messiah-figure(s)" in Daniel's visions as predicting a divine Person of the Godhead and his earthly and heavenly ministry. It is unlikely, however, that Newton's antitrinitarianism stemmed solely or mostly from reading the prophecies. More than that cannot be said, since what sources or ideas or ruminations were most prominent in leading him to antitrinitarianism is unknown.

2.5.4 Daniel 8 and Christian Practice

Newton believed the study of the Scriptures in the light of prophecy and history showed what the true original faith and Church was like. To worship God with a clear understanding of who he is, and to love one another, comprised the whole of Christian doctrine. To Newton this meant the dismissal of the Trinity and a return to the original Creed. The Father was to be worshiped as God, the Son to be worshiped as the Lord and Savior but not as God, and the Holy Ghost was to be recognized as the one who inspired the Scriptures.³⁵⁹ The Church Christians were to live in peace and not make advanced doctrinal differences a matter of division. But to see this as Christian duty one had to understand how the great apostasy had obscured the original faith. And for this one needed to study and understand prophecy. This meant that Christian duty included proclamation of prophetic truths, and Newton put his hand to the plough.

In the introduction to "Of the Church," Newton declared his intention to explain the historical fulfillment of the prophecies, and their salvific importance:

³⁵⁹ On the practical intentions of the original Creed, see Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 43r–45r, 65r, 134v–rb.

To know this Christ & this Antichrist and their Hosts [churches] is of the greatest consequence to religion. ffor he that knows not Christ & his Church is not a Christian tho[ugh] he may call himself by that name: & he that knows not Antichrist & his Church knows not the grand enemy of the true Christian religion nor how to avoyd [*sic*] him & testify against him.³⁶⁰

In an introduction to another manuscript, Newton wrote in the same glowing tone about the importance of understanding prophecy, exhorting and warning his reader. The Jews had neglected the study of prophecy and so were unprepared for Christ's first coming. And were Christians not in danger of repeating that history before Christ's Second Coming?:

Consider that the same Prophets who foretold our saviours first coming foretold also his second coming; & if it was the main & indispensable duty of the Church before the first coming of Christ to have searched into & understood those prophetesies aforehand, why should it not be as much the duty of the Church before his second coming to understand the same prophetesies aforehand so far as they are yet to be fulfilled? Or how knowest thou that the christian church if they continue to neglect, shall not be punished even in this world as severely as ever were the Jews?³⁶¹

Newton addressed the concerns of his reader: Yes, the prophetesies might be difficult to understand, but the more time had passed, the easier they are to understand. Were they incomprehensible? How could that be? Was prophecy "not given for the use of the Church to guide & direct her in the right way, And is not this the end of all prophetick Scripture? If there was no need of it, or if it cannot be understood, then why did God give it? Does he trifle?"³⁶² Surely not. "But if it was necessary for the Church then why doest thou neglect it, or how knowest thou that thou art in the right way, and yet doest not understand it?"³⁶³ "They will call thee it may be . . . a Bigot, a Fanatique, a Heretique &c."³⁶⁴ But

when thou art convinced be not ashamed of the truth but profess it openly & indeavour to convince thy Brother also that thou mayst inherit at the resurrection the promis made in Daniel 12.3, that they who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the starrs for ever & ever. And rejoyce if thou art counted worthy to suffer in thy reputation or any other way for the sake of the Gospel, for then great is thy reward.³⁶⁵

Newton seemed to be preparing to do just this himself: "To profess it openly" by publishing works on prophecy and history. But either his own exhortations never sank in fully, or his convictions changed or wavered, for Newton did not publish anything on these issues he thought so crucial.

At other times Newton did not call honest individual Christians to declare the prophetic truth boldly in face of opposition. In a manuscript entitled "Irenicum, or Ecclesiastical Polity

³⁶⁰ Newton, Bodmer Ms., 1r.

³⁶¹ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 3v.

³⁶² Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 4r.

³⁶³ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 3v.

³⁶⁴ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 5r.

³⁶⁵ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 4r.

Tending to Peace”³⁶⁶ he outlined the duty of the different denominations to lay aside their disagreements and agree on the simple truths of the original Creed as the only requirement for baptism, communion, and salvation. The return to the Creed was requisite for the restoration of the Church: “As the Christians of all nations were in the primitive times united into one mystical body by one rule of faith and by departing from this rule brake into many factions and parties, so it is not to be expected that all the parties of Christians should ever reunite into one mystical body of Christ until they shall return to the primitive rule of communion.”³⁶⁷ More difficult doctrines were to be the believer’s life-long study³⁶⁸ and nobody was to be excommunicated for doctrinal differences that went beyond the primitive Creed.³⁶⁹ In a conciliatory tone, Newton even stated that the Creeds of Nicaea and Athanasius could be tolerated, as long as it was understood that people were allowed to have different opinions about them.³⁷⁰ This showed what Newton thought the churches should do—though how he envisioned this interdenominational reconciliation to take place without massive doctrinal confrontations, he did not explain. And even if churches did nothing, Newton’s emphasis on tolerance showed another way in which the individual believer could respond to the unideal reality: Be longsuffering enough to live with the status quo.

Newton might also have had other motives for prudence besides love and tolerance. William Whiston, one of Newton’s disciples, attributed to Newton the fear “that Protestantism would once more be covered by as foul a corruption as ever was that of Popery, before the happy liberty and light of the Gospel [should] take place.”³⁷¹ Whiston may have been right. In all of Newton’s calculations, the time prophecies about the reign of the Papacy still extended centuries into the future. As to the Protestant churches, they had never gotten to the root of the apostasy, as Trinitarianism and bitter schisms still showed. They would probably remain in the dark shadow of the Antichrist till the end of his reign. Newton did believe that a reformation would take place eventually: “And now [that] the Gentiles [Christians] have corrupted themselves we may expect that God in due time will make a new reformation.”³⁷² But most likely he thought that “due time” was in the distant future. Either that, or some less

³⁶⁶ Newton, Keynes Ms. 3.

³⁶⁷ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 186r.

³⁶⁸ Newton even suggested a list. See Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 67r–68v.

³⁶⁹ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 186r.

³⁷⁰ “They are indeed appointed by the Common prayer book to be read in the Churches upon certain occasions. And so are many parts of the Scriptures which we do not understand. . . . We dayly dispute: about the meaning of these & many other parts of scripture without falling out about them & are allowed to do so, And so we may about the meaning of the two Creeds notwithstanding their being read in Churches.” Newton, Keynes Ms. 3, 51. Furthermore, the articles of the Church of England confessed that the General Councils were only to be accepted as far as they were in harmony with the Scriptures, which alone constituted the basis for faith, and with this caveat they could indeed be accepted. Newton, Keynes Ms. 3, 51–52. Newton also suggested the Apostolic Creed. See Newton, Bodmer Ms., 52r; Newton, Yahuda Ms. 15, 186r–87r.

³⁷¹ Arthur Ashley Sykes wrote this in his biography on Samuel Clarke, another disciple of Isaac Newton. Whiston affirmed this belief came from Newton. William Whiston, *Historical Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Samuel Clarke: Being a Supplement to Dr. Sykes’s and Bishop Hoadley’s Accounts; Including Certain Memoirs of Several of Dr. Clarke’s Friends* (London, 1730), 156–57. See Westfall, *Never at Rest*, 815.

³⁷² Newton, Keynes Ms. 3, 35.

noble sentiment kept Newton quiet. He may have become comfortable with popularity and scared of losing his status in society. He may have been discouraged at the dismal prospects of his own time and the future for any significant reformation of the Church. Even in his call for courage already quoted, he lamented: “There are but few that seek to understand the religion they profess. . . And as is their faith, so is their practice. For . . . where are they that live like the primitive Christians, that love God with all their hearts and with all their souls and with all their might, and their neighbor as their selves . . . ? I fear there are but very few whose righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.”³⁷³ Any of these factors or all of them, combined with Newton’s notorious difficulty in finishing a text, likely explains why Newton kept his convictions mostly to himself.

2.5.5 Conclusion

Daniel 8 was an important chapter in Newton’s overall prophetic interpretation. Of the visions in Daniel it gave the clearest overview of the great apostasy of Christendom. It described its nature (and hence its appearance could be located in history) and it predicted its ultimate overthrow at the end of the 2300 years. The other visions of Daniel had to do with later aspects of the Papacy: Chapter 7 predicted its 1260 year reign starting in the eighth century, and chapter 9 implied its destruction at the end of the “seven weeks” when Christ would return and destroy the Antichrist by his brightness (2 Thes 2:8). Chapter 11 was but a further commentary on chapter 8. The vision was also foundational to later prophecies about the apostasy. Both Paul (2 Thes 2) and John in his epistles drew the titles “Man of Sin” and “Antichrist” from the description of the last horn in Daniel 8. Daniel 8 was also a key to understanding Revelation more fully.

Newton framed his church history with prophecy, giving precedence to Daniel 8. The history began with the primitive and pure faith, which had been preserved by God’s people or “the host”, who were the descendants of Noah, then the Jews, then the Christian Church, then the faithful believers. Daniel 8 marked how they were then divided by the rise of the horn and its own spurious host or false church. “The Prince of the host” was one of the many prophetic titles of Christ, all of which bore witness to antitrinitarianism. The titles described Christ’s offices as the Ruler and Savior of God’s people, and it was a later forceful reading to see them as a metaphysical description of divinity. In the fourth century the truth about God (“the daily worship”) was removed and in its place the Roman Catholic religion of the Trinity and saint worship (“the abomination of desolation”) was inserted into the Creed. This would continue for centuries, until the 2300 years would expire and God’s people, both Jewish and Christian, would return to the true faith, and then the Temple (the building and worshippers) would be cleansed. This was a redemption historiography of original purity, a majority apostasy with a faithful remnant, and then a final restoration to the original faith and completion of salvation.

³⁷³ Newton, Yahuda Ms. 1.1, 4r–6r.

Thus the doctrine that interacted with Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8 the most was his views on God and Christ—his antitrinitarianism, in short. The chapter described hostility towards the Prince, the host, the daily worship, and the Temple, but not in such detail that it left no room for interpretative options. The nature of the horn's acts, once unmoored from the Antiochus history, must be determined by one's views on Christ, God's people, his worship, the Temple, the relation of Israel and the Church, for *what* is attacked must first be defined, and that in turn helps define what constitutes an attack on it. The Antichrist is usually the opposite of one's views on Christ. After Newton's reading of Scripture and church history, he was convinced that Trinitarianism was the crux of the great apostasy from pure Christianity. Since the Church Councils of the fourth century settled this apostasy as orthodoxy, and since historicist hermeneutic led him to see Daniel 8 as describing the origin of the apostasy, the two were a match. Other doctrines such as Israelology played a lesser and more uncertain role. Newton believed the Jews were part of "the host" but was unsure of until when, and refrained from going into too much detail about the Jews' final returning to Christ and Palestine.

Newton's antitrinitarianism and his insistence on systematic interpretation of prophecy ruled out alternatives. He could not accept the traditional Protestant interpretation of Daniel 8, because it did not interpret the symbols consistently, and accepted an incomplete historical "match" for the predictions. His antitrinitarianism also ruled out only applying systematic rigor to Daniel 8 so that the last horn pointed to the papal Antichrist as he was commonly understood. Instead, Newton saw a deeper apostasy and read Daniel 8 in that light.

Newton's antitrinitarianism resulted in an extensive re-reading of early church history. While Daniel 8 does not seem to be necessary to such historiographical endeavors, to Newton it was inseparable from it. He went so far as to organize his longest church history drafts along the lines of Daniel 8. Newton's rereading centered on the history of the meaning of the technical terms used to explain the Godhead, and their usage by the Church Fathers and the Councils in the early centuries. Newton came to the conclusion that the Church had been antitrinitarian, and that Trinitarianism was an apostasy that had only come about gradually. This had further ramifications for church history, which were implied, but which Newton did not make explicit: Protestantism was not the reformation that was needed to undo this apostasy, and thus Christendom was still in the shadow of paganism when it came to understanding the Deity. Newton calculated the time periods associated with the Antichrist—such as the 2300 years in Daniel 8—as ending many centuries in the future, which meant that the final and full reformation of the Church (the cleansing of the sanctuary) would not occur until then. This was a much grimmer view of the state of Christianity that was conventional in English Protestantism, which was still quite apocalyptic in Newton's day.

Newton's translation of Daniel 8 into practice was unsure because it is unclear whether he regarded the truths concerning the original monotheistic faith and the Trinitarian apostasy only as important or also as urgent. On the one hand prophecy was "meat," an important truth

to be studied by believers, but not required for baptism, fellowship, or salvation. On the other hand it was vital to distinguish the religion of Christ from the apostasy of the Antichrist and therefore it was crucial to orthodoxy and salvation and had to be proclaimed. It is obvious from Newton's manuscripts that he did devote himself to an in-depth study of these matters, and that he intended to publish them as well. While it is known that he never published them, it is less clear why he did not. From a theological perspective, he may have eventually settled on the former option—a lifelong study without causing disputes or division—as the extent of the duty required in regard to the truths of Daniel 8.

2.6 Conclusion

The historical factors in Newton's interpretation are somewhat hard to identify due to his very private personality. When it came to influence of others, it is not clear whether there was any direct influence that guided him to antitrinitarianism—apparently this was a conclusion he reached himself. The same can be said when it comes to his stronger historicist reading of Daniel 8. If there were former expositors that influenced him, they are unknown. When it comes to influential events, again little can be gleaned. Newton scholars have grasped for anything that could be explained in terms of an influential crisis on Newton's theological views, but upon closer inspection the cases are overstated. Of course Newton's historical context must at least have lent a coloring to his theological and prophetic views but attempts to determine the hue remain unconvincing.

When we move from historical events to what role Newton's character played in his interpretation, however, the touch becomes easier to discern. Newton believed that it was clear that Daniel 8 portrayed the Trinitarian apostasy. He was more hesitant about the details of the last events connected to the cleansing of the sanctuary. He was always adamant that prophecy was important, so important that he drafted more than one publication on the prophecies of Daniel: a commentary on Daniel and Revelation, and a church history framed by Daniel 8. But Newton detested disputes, both from a personal and from a theological standpoint, and he knew what would be the likely outcome of publishing antitrinitarian views. When it comes to urgency, Newton's testimony is conflicting. And since it is next to impossible at present to order his manuscripts chronologically, we cannot know whether Newton switched from thinking prophecy was urgent to important, or whether he swayed between the two. The same can be said about how Newton acted on the prophecy—on the one hand his own example testified to the peaceful private study of the important truths about genuine Christianity and the history of its apostasy, on the other hand this secret study was spent in preparing a public proclamation about what all Christians should know. This prudence, hesitancy, or uncertainty, hid Newton's prophetic understanding during his lifetime.

The textual factors in Newton's interpretation of Daniel 8 are first and foremost the workings of historicist hermeneutic. Newton insisted that the symbols must be interpreted consistently. This meant that the last horn in chapter 8, just like the other horns in Daniel's

visions, had to symbolize a kingdom rather than a single king. Another attempt at consistent treatment of symbols was applying the day-represents-a-year key to the 2300 days—just as to other time periods in the visions—making them a period of 2300 years. The fulfillment of the prophecy had to meet the details of the prediction. This led Newton to discard the preterist interpretation, since the career of Antiochus did not square with the specificities of the prophecy of the last horn. Newton also extended the vision. Instead of climaxing with the atrocities of Antiochus and his demise in the 2nd century BC, the chapter spanned history from the time of the prophet to the time of the end. This in turn aligned the vision within the system of Daniel: chapters 2, 7, 8, 9 (which Newton also extended), and 10–12 now all covered the time of the four kingdoms until the establishment of the kingdom of God.

The main theological factors at work were Newton's antitrinitarianism and his views on church unity and theological disputes. Newton was an antitrinitarian so to him the portrayal of the apostasy was, yes, about the Papacy, but this featured prominently how the Papacy managed to get the pagan notion of the Trinity accepted as Christian orthodoxy. Another factor, seemingly in direct conflict with Newton's rejection of Trinitarianism, was his emphasis on Christian unity. To reach and preserve this fruit of Christian love, it was necessary to accept the fact that the only truths necessary for salvation, baptism, and communion were the basic tenets of the primitive Creed, and not to dispute about other matters. This made it difficult to know whether the truths of Daniel 8 called for a public warning against the reigning apostasy, or for the encouragement of private study of "meat doctrines" and individual acceptance without disturbing the peace of the Church.

There were other expositors who would proclaim their views. They would not only accept Newton's historicist reading of Daniel 8—they would go beyond it by determining the exact dates of the 2300 years and what final events they led up to. One of these expositors was William Miller, who predicted that at the end of the 2300 years, Jesus would return to earth.

3 DYNAMICS OF WILLIAM MILLER'S INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 8

3.1 Introduction

During the years 1816–23—a century after the publication of Newton's commentary on Daniel—, William Miller (1782–1849), a self-educated farmer who had retired from a promising civil career, spent all the free time he could on his farm upstate in New York immersing himself in the most systematic and rigorous Bible study of his life. He spent many of these years determining whether or not his astonishing conclusions were biblically sound—and nearly another decade in struggling with the calling to a public ministry to which they inevitably led. In the early 1830s, Miller finally overcame his reluctance and began preaching and publishing. The title of the first book explains the momentous truth he had discovered: *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*. The book was published in 1833, mere ten years before the close of time. One of the main “evidences” was Daniel 8.

Daniel 8 played the key role in Miller's dating scheme. While Miller claimed he had more than a dozen scriptural lines of proofs for the date of the Second Coming, upon closer inspection the 2300 years (symbolized as days) were the central pillar of Miller's system. Miller was not an isolated exception. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the calculation and dating of the 2300 years had become common among prophetic expositors. Daniel 8 seemed to offer no clear starting point for the period, but this was overcome in a brilliant way. When it came to Daniel 9, there was a traditional and rather undisputed consensus that the prophetic period there (the “seventy weeks” or actual 490 years) began in 457 BC. Expositors came to believe that the time period of Daniel 9 was the first part of the longer period in Daniel 8, meaning that the starting point of both the time periods was the same—and thus a terminus date was found for the longer period. Miller's exposition of these prophecies had the unique feature that he believed that the terminus event was not a milestone close to the end of history, but the very last event itself: The Second Coming of Christ.

Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 was highly influential during his time: Before the expected end, Miller's message had escalated from one man's preaching to an apocalyptic mass movement. It was also very controversial. It met with almost universal criticism or ridicule by the clergy and academy. The public had more mixed feeling—pastors and church members appreciated the revival effects of the message, dreaded the possibility of being soon arraigned before the Judge of all, rejoiced at the news of their returning Savior, or mocked and even persecuted the audacious date-setters. The movement imploded when its predictions failed. Miller's prophetic exposition had little lasting effect on the development of the prophetic interpretation, except being remembered as a very notorious cautionary tale. It was not only the failed prediction that caused Miller's scheme to have little influence—after all, others had set dates and failed, and yet much from their system had been salvaged or improved upon. Protestant eschatology was shifting away from historicism—liberal theology would adopt preterism and many conservatives futurism. At the end of the nineteenth century,

the various Adventist groups that sprung from the Advent Movement were among the few denominations that still adhered to historicism.

Miller is a staple figure in the history of American religion and probably the most known date setter in Christian history. It is therefore of theological interest to understand what led to the views that materialized as his apocalyptic movement. This chapter will attempt to identify the dynamics of his interpretation of the captive prophet's vision in Susa.¹ It will first give an overview of the literature on Miller and his exposition. It will then look at what historical factors influenced Miller to reach his conclusions, then analyze his interpretation of Daniel 8, and finally how it interacted with his theology.

3.2 Literature Review

There are several reference works that provide a helpful overview over primary and secondary Millerite literature. Carner, Kubo, and Rice gathered a bibliography of primary Millerite sources (1974).² Land surveyed historical works on the Millerites (1994).³ Burt gave an overview of writings on Miller in the introduction to a special edition of Sylvester Bliss's biography of Miller (2005).⁴ Miller never ceased seeing himself as a Baptist, but because of his heterodoxy and the denominations that sprung from his movement and claim him as their forerunner, works on Miller have mostly been written by Adventists rather than Baptists, as well as by scholars who study nineteenth-century American church history or apocalypticism.

The earliest works on Miller and his movement are confessional in nature, biographies and histories of the Advent Movement written by his coworkers and early Adventists. The earliest such work was the biography *Memoirs of William Miller* (1853) by Millerite leaders Joshua V. Himes, Apollo Hale, and Sylvester Bliss, the last one being the main author.⁵ Despite its confessional tone, Bliss's work is still an invaluable historical source and all subsequent literature on Miller has relied on him to a greater or lesser extent. Seventh-day Adventist founder Ellen G. White situated William Miller in general church history. She explained the theological rationale for his interpretation and his calculation of the time prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9 (1858; 1884; 1888; 1911).⁶ Her husband and co-founder of Seventh-day Adventists,

¹ I.e., Dn 8. "I saw in the vision; and when I saw, I was in Susa the citadel" (Dn 8:2, ESV).

² Vern Carner, Sakae Kubo, and Curt Rice, "Bibliographical Essay," in Gaustad, *Rise of Adventism*, 207–317. The microfilm collection "The Millerites and Early Adventists, 1840–1870" was probably based on their bibliography. The collection is available through ProQuest and also in the Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University. For an overview of the collection, see "The Millerites and Early Adventists: An Index to the Microfilm Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts" (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1978).

³ Gary Land, "The Historians and the Millerites: An Historiographical Essay," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 32, no. 3 (autumn 1994): 227–46.

⁴ Merlin D. Burt, "Introduction," in Sylvester Bliss, Joshua V. Himes and Apollos Hale, *Memoirs of William Miller*, Reprint, Adventist Classic Library (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2005), xvii–xxv.

⁵ 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). Republished with the same name in the Adventist Classic Library (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2005).

⁶ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy, between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels*, vol. 1 of *Spiritual Gifts* (Battle Creek, MI: James White, 1858), 128–32; Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*

James White, treated Miller similarly in his biography on Miller (1875), which relied on Bliss to a great extent.⁷ In his autobiography (1868), James White quoted Bliss extensively on how Miller reached his conclusions⁸ and also added a section where he explained systematically Miller's interpretation of Daniel 2, 7, 8, and 9.⁹ Advent Christian author Isaac Wellcome wrote the history of the Advent Movement leading to the Advent Christian Church (1874). When it came to Miller's interpretation, he summarized Bliss¹⁰ but also traced how Miller's premillennialism and day-year theory should be seen as part of the Protestant tradition.¹¹ An anonymous Advent Christian biography (1895) relied mostly on Bliss¹² and so contributed little. In the history of his denomination (1918), Advent Christian Albert C. Johnson traced the doctrine of the Second Coming and Christ's reign briefly to Miller¹³ but otherwise his account of Miller's discovery is similar to Bliss.¹⁴ Advent Christians and Seventh-day Adventists continued to show the place of Miller's life, interpretation, and movement in works on their denominational history.¹⁵ Due to the scope of such works, the treatment was necessarily of a summary character.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the Adventist denominations began to have institutions of higher learning. At the same time, scholarship on Millerism began, though much of the literature continued to analyze it as the precursor to the denominations that sprung from it. This literature was for the most part interested in Miller as the founder of the Millerite Movement, meaning that it focused on him until he started preaching and then it zoomed out to take in the Movement, meaning it was not about Miller per se. Sears wrote the first non-denominational (and excessively critical) history of the Millerite Movement

between Christ and Satan from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of the Controversy, vol. 4 of *Spirit of Prophecy* (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1884), 202–6, 493–96; Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan during the Christian Dispensation* (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1888), 317–30; Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1911), 317–30.

⁷ James White, *Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller, Gathered from His Memoir by the Late Sylvester Bliss, and from Other Sources* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1875).

⁸ 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), 25–39, 54–56.

⁹ White, *Life Incidents*, 40–54.

¹⁰ Isaac C. Wellcome, *History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People* (Yarmouth, ME: Published by the Author, 1874), 41–54.

¹¹ Wellcome, *History of the Second Advent Message*, 39–40, 460–77.

¹² *A Brief History of William Miller the Great Pioneer in Adventual Faith* (Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1895). The book was republished several times. See *A Brief History of William Miller the Great Pioneer in Adventual Faith*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1910); *A Brief History of William Miller the Great Pioneer in Adventual Faith*, 4th ed. (Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1915).

¹³ Albert C. Johnson, *Advent Christian History: A Concise Narrative of the Origin and Progress, Doctrine and Work of This Body of Believers* (Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, 1918), 11–32.

¹⁴ Johnson, *Advent Christian History*, 33–42.

¹⁵ See Beulah M. Bowden, "History of the Advent Christian Church" (MA thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1920), 14–22; Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen, *A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1925), 107–11. The same could be said about many subsequent denominational Adventist histories.

(1924).¹⁶ Harkness wrote a dissertation (1927) about the social context of the Millerite movement.¹⁷ Dick wrote the first dissertation about the Millerite Movement and focused on the years 1840–44 (1930), summarizing Miller’s early history and interpretation.¹⁸ Nichol (1944) defended Miller and his movement over against the critics, and since the criticism did not focus on details in Miller’s interpretation, neither did Nichol.¹⁹ Froom devoted four hundred pages in *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, his four volume history of the interpretation of prophecy (1946–54), to the Millerite Movement.²⁰ Miller’s early life and interpretation received slightly more than one chapter.²¹ Froom’s meager treatment of Miller’s interpretation is rather disappointing, seeing how systematically and thoroughly he analyzed the interpretation of each commentator in his work.

Another wave of scholarship on Millerism arose in the 1970s within and outside of Seventh-day Adventism, and the works were of a more critical nature. Gaustad’s edited essay collection *The Rise of Adventism* (1974) explored the social and religious context of Millerism and early Seventh-day Adventism in the 1840s–50s.²² Rowe’s *Thunder and Trumpets* (1974; 1985) focused on the Millerite Movement and other “dissenting religion” in upstate New York from 1800 to 1850.²³ In his 1977 work on missiological aspects of early Adventist theology, Damsteegt devoted one hundred pages to Millerite theology.²⁴ Hewitt’s *Midnight and Morning* (1983) traces the history of the Millerite Movement to the founding of the Advent Christian Church in 1860.²⁵ Numbers and Butler’s edited essay collection, *The Disappointed* (1987;²⁶ 1993), is on the Millerite Movement and also contains a chapter on

¹⁶ Clara Endicott Sears, *Days of Delusion: A Strange Bit of History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1924).

¹⁷ Reuben E. Harkness, “Social Origins of the Millerite Movement” (PhD dissertation, University of Chicago, 1927).

¹⁸ Everett Newfon Dick, *William Miller and the Advent Crisis* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1994), 1–8. The original work was Everett N. Dick, “The Adventist Crisis of 1843–1844” (PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1930).

¹⁹ Francis D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry: A Defense of the Character and Conduct of William Miller and the Millerites, Who Mistakenly Believed That the Second Coming of Christ Would Take Place in the Year 1844* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1944).

²⁰ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946–54), 4:427–851.

²¹ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:455–75, 79–81.

²² One chapter in the work is also devoted to Millerism in particular. See David T. Arthur, “Millerism,” in Gaustad, *Rise of Adventism*, 154–72.

²³ David L. Rowe, *Thunder and Trumpets: Millerites and Dissenting Religion in Upstate New York, 1800–1850*, American Academy of Religion Studies in Religion 38 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985). The book was based on his dissertation. See David L. Rowe, “Thunder and Trumpets: The Millerite Movement and Apocalyptic Thought in Upstate New York, 1800–1845” (PhD dissertation, University of Virginia, 1974).

²⁴ P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 3–100.

²⁵ Clyde E. Hewitt, *Midnight and Morning: An Account of the Adventist Awakening and the Founding of the Advent Christian Denomination, 1831–1860* (Charlotte, NC: Venture Books, 1983).

²⁶ Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, eds., *The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century*, 1st ed. (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1987).

Miller himself.²⁷ In her work *The Miller Heresy* (1987), Doan explored the overlaps and differences between the Millerites and their opponents and the resulting shift in the landmarks of orthodoxy.²⁸ In *Millennial Fever* (1st ed. 1993; 2nd ed. 2010), Knight traced the history of the Millerite Movement.²⁹ Barnard's master thesis (2009) analyzes the Millerite movement in the context of American millennial culture.³⁰

In comparison to the literature on his movement, works on Miller himself are scarcer. As has been noted, the earliest works on Miller spoke of him to trace denominational history. There were some exceptions, such as Weniger's dissertation on Miller's public speaking (1948),³¹ and Bean's dissertation on his influence on American Christianity (1949).³² It was not until the 1970s, with the wave of new scholarship on Adventism, that more works were written about the movement's founder. Steiner wrote a master's thesis (1970)³³ and Fleming a senior's thesis (1975) on Miller.³⁴ Gale's (1975) and Gordon's (1990) denominational biographies of Miller were written for popular consumption and followed earlier authors.³⁵ Burchfield's dissertation (1996) compared the religious experience of Miller and Ellen G. White.³⁶ A new original biography finally appeared with Rowe's *God's Strange Work* (2008).³⁷

Some works on Miller focus on his prophetic interpretation or are particularly relevant to it. Rasmussen's master thesis (1983) explored the "roots" of Miller's prophetic interpretation. Rasmussen focused on the various proofs Miller provided for 1843 as the year of Christ's return. He suggested a twofold influence on Miller: Deism's requirement that divine Scriptures be rational and harmonious, and the tradition of British premillennialist expositors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, i.e. Joseph Mede, Isaac Newton, Thomas Newton,

²⁷ Wayne R. Judd, "William Miller: Disappointed Prophet," in *Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, 2nd ed. (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1993), 17–35.

²⁸ Ruth Alden Doan, *The Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1987).

²⁹ George R. Knight, *Millennial Fever and the End of the World: A Study of Millerite Adventism* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1993); George R. Knight, *William Miller and the Rise of Adventism* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010).

³⁰ John R. Barnard, "The Millerite Movement and American Millennial Culture, 1830–1845" (MA thesis, University of Missouri-Saint Louis, 2009).

³¹ Charles E. Weniger, "A Critical Analysis and Appraisal of the Public Address of William Miller Early American Second Advent Lecturer" (PhD dissertation, University of Southern California, 1948).

³² Raymond J. Bean, "The Influence of William Miller in the History of American Christianity" (ThD dissertation, Boston University, 1949).

³³ Stanley J. Steiner, "William Miller: His Travels, Disappointments and Faith" (MA thesis, Texas Christian University, 1970).

³⁴ Thomas J. Fleming, "William Miller and the Second Advent Doctrine" (Senior thesis, Brandeis University, 1975), 6–7.

³⁵ Robert Gale, *The Urgent Voice: The Story of William Miller* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1975); Paul A. Gordon, *Herald of the Midnight Cry* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1990).

³⁶ Lee S. Burchfield, "Adventist Religious Experience, 1816–1868: A Comparison of William Miller and Ellen White" (PhD dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996), 42–48.

³⁷ David L. Rowe, *God's Strange Work: William Miller and the End of the World*, Library of Religious Biography (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008).

John Gill, and George Stanley Faber.³⁸ Arasola's dissertation (1989) explains Miller's interpretation of Old Testament time prophecies—that is, his various proofs for dating the return of Christ to the year 1843. This is helpful since most works talk about Miller's calculation of the 2300 days in Daniel 8 as if that had been his only proof for the date.³⁹ O'Leary (1994) set forth “a theory on millennial rhetoric” by comparing the rhetorical topics of evil, time, and authority in the thought of the Millerites and Hal Lindsey.⁴⁰ Faris's dissertation (2007) discusses the role of reason and common sense in Miller's life and theology. Two chapters review Miller's prophetic interpretation and a third his polemics with critics.⁴¹ Crocombe's dissertation (2011) explores the roots of Miller's biblical interpretation. It focuses on Miller's cultural context (revivalism) and philosophical influences (Deism, common sense philosophy, Protestant biblical interpretation, and Freemasonry) and what sources Miller read as he studied the Bible (his Bible edition, Cruden's concordance, biblical commentaries). Crocombe shows the similarities of the hermeneutics underlying the works of Miller on the one hand and the British historicist commentators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries on the other.⁴² The work's scope was not, however, to explain the prophetic interpretation of Miller and his predecessors, nor why Miller changed their interpretation.

Literature on apocalypticism or millennialism in the nineteenth century, particularly in the United States, usually features William Miller. In his famous work *The Burned-Over District* (1950), Cross analyzed the social and ideological context of “enthusiastic religion” in Western New York from 1800 to 1850. One chapter deals with the Millerite movement.⁴³ Thomas's dissertation (1967) on millennialism in Michigan from 1830 to 1860 spent half a chapter on the Millerites.⁴⁴ Sandeen wrote about *The Roots of Fundamentalism* (1970) and Miller appears in the chapter on the American early nineteenth century “millenarian tradition” with Nichol as the main source.⁴⁵ Whalen (1972), Beam (1976), and Harrison (1979) wrote about millenarianism and millennialism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Whalen

³⁸ Steen R. Rasmussen, “Roots of the Prophetic Hermeneutic of William Miller” (MA thesis, Newbold College, 1983), 87, 89–90.

³⁹ Other parts of Arasola's work are less helpful. One chapter traces the historicist tradition from the church fathers to Mede, who Arasola claims popularized historicism for the next two centuries until its demise with Miller's failure. No proof is offered for the supposed roles of Mede and Miller in popularizing and ending historicism. Kai Arasola, *The End of Historicism: Millerite Hermeneutic of Time Prophecies in the Old Testament* (Uppsala: University of Uppsala, 1989), 1, 35.

⁴⁰ For the chapters on Millerite rhetoric, see Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 93–133.

⁴¹ Tommy L. Faris, “William Faris: A Common Sense Life” (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 2007), 84–153, 154–80.

⁴² Jeff Crocombe, “‘A Feast of Reason’: The Roots of William Miller's Biblical Interpretation and Its Influence on the Seventh-day Adventist Church” (PhD dissertation, University of Queensland, 2011), 51–85, 139–72.

⁴³ Whitney R. Cross, *The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800–1850* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1950), 287–321.

⁴⁴ Nathan G. Thomas, “The Second Coming in the Third New England: The Millennial Impulse in Michigan, 1830–1860” (PhD dissertation, Michigan State University, 1967), 109–16.

⁴⁵ Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 49–55.

traced American “millenarianism and millennialism” from 1790 to 1880 but mentioned Miller only in passing as a semi-fanatical variety.⁴⁶ Beam covered American millenarianism from 1740 to 1840 and therefore did not mention Miller, who first caught the nation’s attention the year Beam’s period ended.⁴⁷ Harrison wrote about millenarianism from 1780 to 1850 and gives a short summary about the Millerite Movement.⁴⁸ Ward’s dissertation (1980) on “religious enthusiasm” in Vermont from 1761 to 1847 devotes a chapter to the Millerites.⁴⁹ In the *Crucible of the Millennium* (1986), Barkun analyzed utopian communities and Millerism in “the burned-over district” of New York in the 1840s as a case study for his theory that millennialism is a reaction to calamities, whether perceived or real.⁵⁰ Besides mentioning the dates of Millerite predictions, the prophetic explanation is skipped over.⁵¹ It is therefore hard to see how Barkun demonstrated the catalyst connection between the historical context of the Millerites—perceived as a time of calamity—and their prophetic interpretation.

Despite Miller’s notoriety as a prophetic expositor in the history of apocalypticism and millennialism and his role as a forerunner of the several Adventist denominations, few works have been written on Miller’s prophetic interpretation per se. Arasola is the exception, with Rasmussen and Crocombe circling the nearest orbits. Arasola’s work is, however, delimited to explaining what Miller believed about prophecy—Arasola explains Miller’s various proofs for his dating scheme—but not so much why. The sociological and ideological influences surrounding Miller’s overall theology and prophetic interpretation have been explored in the literature, but they have not been linked to an in-depth analysis of his prophetic interpretation. This chapter seeks to remedy this lack.

3.3 Historical Dynamics

3.3.1 Introduction

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were a time of great transformation in the United States and Europe in politics, religion, and technology. After decades of struggle, the United States gained full independence when they emerged victorious from the War of Independence in 1783. A few years later, the Second Great Awakening swept through the new Republic and lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century, establishing the religiosity of the young nation and changing its denominational makeup. Around the same time that the revival began in the United States, the French Revolution (1789–99) erupted on the other side

⁴⁶ Robert K. Whalen, “Millenarianism and Millennialism in America. 1790–1880” (PhD dissertation, State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1972), 44–45.

⁴⁷ Christopher Merriman Beam, “Millennialism in American Thought, 1740–1840” (PhD dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1976).

⁴⁸ J. F. C. Harrison, *The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780–1850* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 192–203.

⁴⁹ Donald Ward, “Religious Enthusiasm in Vermont, 1761–1847” (PhD dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1980), 209–62.

⁵⁰ Michael Barkun, *Crucible of the Millennium: The Burned-over District of New York in the 1840s* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1986).

⁵¹ Barkun, *Crucible of the Millennium*, 32, 39.

of the Atlantic Ocean, with the ensuing Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), changing both the political and religious landscape of the Old World. All this occurred during the Industrial Revolution that changed every aspect of daily life, with its endless technological advances and increasing knowledge, rising standards of living, and shifting demographics from the countryside to the growing cities. The most consequential change (for this story at least) that the Industrial Revolution brought about was the transformation of communication. Improved transportation and technology, such as the railroad network and telegrams, meant that the movement of people and ideas became swifter than ever before in human history.⁵²

The late eighteenth and the earlier half of the nineteenth century also saw changes in prophetic interpretation, and while not many direct influences on Miller have been established, his prophetic interpretation bears the unmistakable evidence of its time and place. In both the Old and New World historicist expositors factored the great contemporary political changes—the French Revolution and its atheist regime, the Napoleonic Wars and the fall of the Papacy, the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the expectation of its imminent downfall—into the scheme of prophecies. In tandem with these events, the conviction grew that the long time periods of the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation—such as the 2300 years of Daniel 8—were drawing to a close and the last days were at hand.⁵³ The nineteenth century was the zenith of historicism.⁵⁴ At the same time, biblical criticism and liberal theology moved from its Enlightenment incubation period and entered the universities, first in Germany and later in the United States.⁵⁵ It would be an uphill battle and it would not be until the early twentieth century that biblical criticism would become the academic norm. Meanwhile, in the early nineteenth century, liberal theology and its preterist view of prophecy was still relatively young and fiercely disputed, being popular mostly in some learned circles and in the protoliberal groups like the Unitarians.⁵⁶ The mainstream eschatology of the times, however, was postmillennialism. With roots in Puritanism and having gained ascendancy since early eighteenth century,⁵⁷ it was an optimist view of the present and the coming future

⁵² American historian Howe calls the early nineteenth century in America “communications revolution,” stating that “during the thirty-three years that began in 1815, there would be greater strides in the improvement of communication than had taken place in all previous centuries.” Daniel Walker Howe, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815–1848*, The Oxford History of the United States 2 (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5.

⁵³ Froom’s hypothesis is that the events of 1798 are the reason for the swelling interest among historicist commentators in Daniel 8. Many historicists believed the “times, time, and dividing of time” of Daniel 7, calculated as 1260 years, ended in 1798. They therefore presumably turned their attention to the 2300 “evenings and mornings” of Daniel 8, calculated as so many years, a period they believed extended beyond the 1260 years, and which they had not calculated to their satisfaction before. Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 2:782, 3:270–71, 744–45, 4:207–8.

⁵⁴ For the high tide of historicism from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, see Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 3:263–4:426.

⁵⁵ Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) and Moses Stuart (1780–1852), the fathers of German liberal theology and American biblical exegesis, respectively, were both contemporaries of William Miller (1782–1849).

⁵⁶ Gary Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 179.

⁵⁷ Timothy P. Weber, “Millennialism,” 376.

that postponed the traditional end times until after a millennium during which the all-encompassing advancements of the present would develop into the messianic kingdom on earth.⁵⁸ According to postmillennialism, Christ would arrive spiritually at the commencement of the millennium and reign spiritually over his people, and then arrive physically at the period's close. This differed from the traditional concept of the Second Coming as a single event (before the millennium). Miller was a premillennialist historicist, and as such incorporated many recent momentous events into his prophetic scheme using a systematic methodology that bore the marks of the rationalism.

The time period of investigation is nearly synonymous with Miller's life, though it emphasizes the latter part. Miller grew up Christian but religious doubts led him to reject faith and become a Deist in 1804. When Deism turned to be as intellectually and existentially dissatisfying as Christianity, Miller slowly became a Christian again in 1816. To be sure of his refound faith, he decided to study the Bible to be sure of its truths. In 1818 he had studied the Bible to his satisfaction, but also reached the conclusion that prophecy predicted the return of Christ to earth in 1843 based on Daniel 8 and other texts. He gradually started sharing this belief more and more, until he dedicated his life to itinerant preaching in the early 1830s. When the prediction failed, he was sure it was a matter of chronological margin of error based on incomplete historical data, and died in that belief a few years later in 1849. Since Miller's interpretation continued to develop during the Millerite Movement and after its failure, the period of discussion will begin with Miller's upbringing and extend to his death.

This section will try to identify the historical factors that gave rise to such a popular interpretation of Daniel 8 by describing the time in which Miller reached his conclusions and promulgated his beliefs.

3.3.2 Christian Upbringing and Growing Doubts (1782–1803)

William Miller was born on February 15, 1782, the oldest son of William and Paulina (née Phelps) Miller.⁵⁹ Soon after his birth, the family moved to farm in the frontier town Low Hampton, close to the New York-Vermont border, which at the time was “an almost uninhabited wilderness.”⁶⁰ Young Miller inclined more towards schooling than farming, but the education available to him was limited. Though the family was industrious, money was tight, and there was much work to do. This made financing Miller for further education impossible, and also left him only late evenings and nights to read the books which he either bought or borrowed from the library of a well-off neighbor.⁶¹ Yet Miller sought all the self-education he could get.

⁵⁸ For postmillennialism in nineteenth century America, see James H. Moorhead, *The World without End: Mainstream Protestant Visions of the Last Things, 1880–1925* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1999), 1–18.

⁵⁹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 2, 4.

⁶⁰ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 7.

⁶¹ For Miller's education in youth, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 10–16; Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 16–21.

The home was half-religious, which may in part explain the conflict which Miller found himself in as he became a young man. Miller's father was nominally Christian, but was not religious and probably leaned towards the freethinking ideas of his associates.⁶² His mother was a devout Baptist. The father was not opposed to her religion, and it was from her that Miller learned to view the Bible as God's Word.⁶³ As a boy, "between the years of seven and ten," Miller "was often concerned about the welfare" of his soul. He tried to please God by seeking to do good and no wrong, and by practicing self-sacrifice, but failed to find peace.⁶⁴

Miller's main problem with religion was, however, not only with praxis but also with the text which supposedly outlined it. The Bible appeared full of contradictions and things hard to understand. Miller could not resolve these inconsistencies, and yet he knew "that if the Bible was what it purports to be, it must in some way all be harmonized." Miller asked ministers frequently to help him with these difficulties. But they either referred to different commentators, which upon inspection contradicted each other, or confessed their ignorance and said that these things were mysteries not meant to be understood. This was true in particular about the prophecies. "The advocates of the Bible did almost all acknowledge that God had revealed himself in a mysterious and dark manner." Miller was appalled by this. God had given mankind the Scripture to teach salvation, and required faith in his Word as a whole, but at the same time he seemed to shroud it in mystery and then punished people for disobeying what they could not understand. This seemed more worthy of the cryptic oracles of the pagans than of a loving God appealing to the mind and heart. How could such "a being be called either wise or good"? And what was belief in the incomprehensible but "a blind faith, and the very height of folly"?⁶⁵ With such thoughts, Miller moved on to married life and a new town where his doubts matured into forsaking Christianity.

3.3.3 Deist Years (1804–16)

On June 29, 1803, when he was twenty-two, Miller and Lucy Phebe Smith got married and settled in the nearby town of Poultney, VT.⁶⁶ Poultney was a larger town than Low Hampton with more opportunities and here Miller's religious beliefs and social status changed. His in-laws were part of the upper class and Miller continued his self-education by availing himself of the public library. By both means the young, ambitious man soon moved in the educated circles of the community. They were skeptics, which at the time amounted to Deism. Miller noted later that they were moral, upright citizens. This he, still a church member, did not

⁶² Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 36–37.

⁶³ Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 4–5, 15; see also William Miller, *Wm. Miller's Apology and Defence* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1845), 2; Bliss, *Memoirs*, 5.

⁶⁴ Joshua V. Himes, "Memoir of William Miller," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology, Selected from Manuscripts of William Miller with a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 9.

⁶⁵ On Miller's early doubts, see William Miller, "Letter from Mr. Miller—No. I," *Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1840, 8; Himes, "Memoir of William Miller," 9; Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 2–3.

⁶⁶ For Miller's marriage and relocation, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 18; Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 22–23.

expect from those who supposedly undermined truth and righteousness. Through the library and his friends Miller became familiar with Deist literature, reading “Voltaire, Hume, Paine, Ethan Allen, and other deistical writers.” Miller felt the reading opened his eyes to what he now saw as the true nature of the Bible and the Church. If the Bible was only a collection of human writings, then all that troubled him in it needed no resolution, for human imperfection was to be expected. Furthermore, the dark, mysterious, and inconsistent threats and promises showed the Bible to be “a work of designing men” who used it to prey on the “hopes and fears” of the masses to ensure their own power. Such facts corresponded to the career of the Church, for it was exposed to be “but history of blood, tyranny, and oppression,” with the lower classes “as the greatest sufferers.” These conclusions left Miller with no reasons to remain a Christian. So in 1804 he announced himself publicly a Deist and defended those views for twelve years. As a Deist, Miller still believed in God or a Supreme Being, and in his providence over, or in, the world, though it was probably a far more distant kind of providence than the direct interferences described in Scripture. Miller also believed in an afterlife in which happiness would be proportionate to the life lived on earth. Implicit in Miller’s Deism was also a benign view of human nature.⁶⁷

During these years, Miller advanced his career and became a respectable and renowned local citizen. He worked his way up from being a constable, then a county sheriff in 1809, and finally a justice of peace.⁶⁸ He joined the local Masonic lodge, the Morning Star, and advanced to Grand Master, “the highest degree” conferrable.⁶⁹ He was active in the local politics as Democratic Republican.⁷⁰ He was also known for his talent for poetry and writing.⁷¹ In addition to all this, “he owned a relatively prosperous farm.”⁷² Yet something was missing despite the growing prosperity and the renunciation of unreasonable faith.

Through the years Miller continued his self-education, reading mostly works on history. The reading had the unintended consequence of undermining Miller’s views of the goodness of human nature. Secular history, centered on the rise and fall of empires, appeared no less bloody than the annals of the Church. The so-called “heroes of history” were cruel conquerors, and the world’s misery had increased in tandem with their power. The more Miller read, “the more dreadfully corrupt did the character of man appear.” History bore a grim testimony to human nature and Miller “began to feel very distrustful of all men.”⁷³ Miller also started to worry that the logical conclusion of Deism was a total rejection of the afterlife, a position that “was always very abhorrent to [his] feelings.” One autumn day in 1812, Miller asked Judge Stanley, a Deist friend and coworker, what he thought about the

⁶⁷ For the influences in Poultney and Miller’s conversion to Deism, see Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 3; Bliss, *Memoirs*, 18–25; Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 24–33; Knight, *William Miller*, 24.

⁶⁸ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 22.

⁶⁹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 21–22; Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 27.

⁷⁰ Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 27–29; Knight, *William Miller*, 25; see also Bliss, *Memoirs*, 22.

⁷¹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 16, 19–21; Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 29–30.

⁷² Knight, *William Miller*, 25 See also Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 25–26.

⁷³ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 23.

afterlife. Stanley likened it to a tree that withers and returns to the soil and to a candle that shines and then burns out. To Miller this confirmed “that Deism was inseparably connected with, and did tend to, the denial of a future existence.” Miller would have preferred to believe in the afterlife and take his chances with whether he would end up in heaven or hell, rather than to accept such a terrible reality as no afterlife at all. But his faith in the afterlife was gone, since he knew the Bible was false. And yet he could not reconcile himself to the finality of human existence.⁷⁴ Human depravity and the implausibility of an afterlife conflicted with Miller’s Deism,⁷⁵ and the tension caused by these unresolved issues manifested themselves in his renewed unhappiness.

Meanwhile, Miller turned to patriotism. Here surely there must be something good, he thought, in protecting one’s own, and even gaining glory in doing so.⁷⁶ Miller enlisted in 1810, and quickly rose through the ranks. Starting as a lieutenant in the Vermont Militia, he became a captain in 1812. He was then transferred to the regular U.S. Army as a lieutenant and assigned to recruiting in and around his home area. In 1814 he became a captain in the regular army.⁷⁷ Meanwhile, the War of 1812 broke out. Miller saw little action until the Battle of Plattsburgh in early September 1814. To the astonishment of both sides, the Americans defeated the British, and this secured the northern border and was a turning point in the war.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, peace negotiations had already begun in the Old World in August 1814. The Treaty of Ghent was ratified by the U.S. Senate on February 15, 1815⁷⁹ and that same year Miller was discharged.

Military life and the war experience deepened Miller’s crisis. Firstly, war made death an ever present thought. In June 1813, Miller was thrown out of a wagon by accident and was knocked unconscious. A month later he fell deadly sick with fever.⁸⁰ Miller not only had brushes with death himself, but had to see people kill and be killed. He also lost family at the outset of the war. In December 1812, his father and one of his sisters died within days of each other.⁸¹ After seeing one of his soldiers die in agony, Miller wrote a melancholy letter to his wife.⁸² All these experiences brought back the unresolved question about the afterlife. The war also disabused Miller of his romantic notions about patriotism. In addition to the common lot of disease, death, and destruction which it offers most of its participants, war tends to bring out the worst in people. And finally, the shaping of many events in the war were so

⁷⁴ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 3–4.

⁷⁵ Knight, *William Miller*, 25–26.

⁷⁶ Himes, “Memoir of William Miller,” 10; Bliss, *Memoirs*, 22–23.

⁷⁷ For Miller’s military positions, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 31–42; Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 44, 47.

⁷⁸ For the Battle of Plattsburgh, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 44–53; Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*, bicentennial ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 196–99 Hickey more precisely calls the lake engagement the Battle of Lake Champlain and the one on land the Battle of Plattsburgh, instead of including both in either name as is sometimes done.

⁷⁹ Hickey, *The War of 1812*, 290, 297, 300.

⁸⁰ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 34–36.

⁸¹ Knight, *William Miller*, 26.

⁸² Bliss, *Memoirs*, 54–55.

unlikely that contemporaries ascribed them to Providence, and Miller could not shake that conviction off either.⁸³

After the War, Miller did not return to his promising civic career. Instead, he decided to retire to full-time farming. He paid the mortgage on his mother's farm, moved to Low Hampton and built a new house for himself and his family. He had become "completely disgusted with man's public character" and thought he would find happiness in the simpler rustic life and "the domestic circle." But after a while, farming duties proved too monotonous to him, and he was at a loss what to do. Summarizing his unhappiness and puzzled thoughts at the time, Miller wrote:

I had lost all those pleasing prospects, which in youth I expected to enjoy in riper years. It appeared to me that there was nothing good on earth. Those things in which I expected to find some solid good had deceived me. I began to think man was no more than a brute, and the idea of hereafter was a dream; annihilation was a cold and chilling thought; and accountability was sure destruction to all. The heavens were brass over my head, and the earth as iron under my feet. ETERNITY! *What was it? And death, why was it?* The more I reasoned, the further I was from demonstration. The more I thought, the more scattered were my conclusions. I tried to stop thinking; but my thoughts would not be controlled. I was truly wretched; but I did not understand *the cause*.⁸⁴

Miller had been perplexed as a Christian. Deism turned out to be another insufficient answer to the problems of life. Miller was unhappy with human nature and the futility of a life that would end in annihilation. In religious parlance, Miller was on his way to conversion.

3.3.4 Conversion, Bible Study, and the Time of the Second Coming (1816–early 30s)

Conversion (1816)

As a respectable citizen, Miller attended church. He went to the small Low Hampton meeting house on Sundays and the visiting pastors stayed over at his house. When no pastor visited, Miller felt the sermon reading of the deacon was so tedious that he stayed at home. Miller's church going was apparently entirely cultural. In his autobiographical accounts, he does not link it to his growing existential crisis or hint at his hope of finding any answers in church. He had not begun reading the Bible again, and church was boring enough to skip it when there was no live minister. His mother discussed this with him, and when he said that if he would do the reading he might actually be edified by it, his mother suggested this to the church officials, and they approved.⁸⁵

In May 1816, Miller noticed himself taking the name of God in vain. It was a habit that he had picked up in the military service. He had apparently never thought about it before, but

⁸³ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 52–53. Miller had already believed in Providence as a Deist. Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 3. He probably thought such providence was general and was therefore surprised by what he saw as such palpable and specific interventions in the affairs of mankind.

⁸⁴ Himes, "Memoir of William Miller," 10–11; emphases supplied by Himes or Miller. See also Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 4.

⁸⁵ For Miller's church attendance, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 64–65.

now he was “instantly convicted of its sinfulness.” This detection led him to further critique of his own Deist views. Deism taught that the outcomes were different in the afterlife depending on how life was lived. But now Miller wondered “how a just Being could consistently save those who should violate the laws of justice.” Here again Deism failed to explain why one could reasonably hope for a good eternity, and this increased Miller’s angst.⁸⁶

That September, an anniversary ball was being organized at Fairhaven, VT in commemoration of the Battle of Plattsburgh. For some reason, maybe as a joke, some of the young men (including Miller) decided to attend a religious service the evening before the ball. The sermon turned out to affect the young men. They left solemn and silent, so much so that they postponed the ball indefinitely. The next Sunday Miller read the sermon in church in the absence of a pastor. It was about parental duties. Miller was visibly moved. He could not finish the reading and took his seat.⁸⁷

Soon after this the idea of a divine being, able to save, came up in Miller’s mind. What if it was compassionate enough “to atone for our transgressions” and thus save mankind from “the penalty of sin”? Miller thought to himself “how lovely such a Being must be; and I imagined that I could cast myself into the arms of, and trust in the mercy, of such a One.” But it was unreasonable to believe in what was only a hope. And how could he prove the existence of such a savior? Miller knew that the Bible taught such an idea, and as he began reading it again, he “was perplexed to find how an uninspired book should develop principles so perfectly adapted to the wants of a fallen world. I was constrained to admit that the Scriptures must be a revelation from God. They became my delight; and in Jesus I found a friend. . . . The Bible now became my chief study, and I can truly say, I searched it with great delight.”⁸⁸ Miller had returned to Christianity and confessed it publicly. However, as was bound to happen, Miller soon had to face his own unanswered questions that before had led him away from the faith.

Bible Study and the New Interpretation of Daniel 8 (1816–23)

Soon after his conversion, in the same fall of 1816, Miller was sharing with a Deist friend how he had found the Savior and now had hope of the afterlife. The friend asked him how he knew there was a Savior. Miller replied that he knew that from the Bible. The friend then inquired how Miller “knew the Bible was true” and brought up Miller’s own former Deist “arguments on the inconsistencies, the contradictions, and the mysticisms” found in the Scriptures.⁸⁹ While Miller was not a Deist any longer, he still agreed with the Deist argument that if there was such a thing as a sacred revelation, it should be understandable and consistent. Miller had expected as much from the Bible as a nominal Christian, and it was the

⁸⁶ For Miller’s early conviction, see Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 4–5.

⁸⁷ For the anniversary ball and the two sermons, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 66.

⁸⁸ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 67.

⁸⁹ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 5.

Bible's failure to demonstrate such features that had largely led him to turn Deist. Miller now believed that the Bible revealed an actual Savior whom he had experienced as his own friend. If the central message of the Gospel—Christ and eternity—were true, then the Scriptures should, upon further research, continue to reveal such consistency and clarity throughout. And if they did not, the whole faith would have to be abandoned again. Miller therefore replied to his friend “that if the Bible was the word of God, every thing contained therein might be understood, and all its parts be made to harmonize; and I said to him that if he would give me time, I would harmonize all these apparent contradictions, to my own satisfaction, or I would be a Deist still.”⁹⁰

Miller was about to study the Bible like he had never done before. As he had thought about the undertaking, he came to the conclusion that the Bible could hardly be as mysterious as many Christians made it out to be.⁹¹ He was hopeful, and commenced at once. He may have consulted commentaries initially, but if he did he probably closed them rather quickly. Their conflicting interpretations had confused him formerly as a Christian, and he did not find them much more helpful now. In fact, neither commentaries, nor counseling with pastors nor Christians had been helpful to him when he struggled with the Bible before becoming a Deist. It is understandable why he decided on self-study. Miller writes: “I laid by all commentaries, former views and prepossessions, and determined to read and try to understand for myself.”⁹² What was needed, he felt, was to attempt as unprejudiced a reading as possible. Miller further decided to do this “in a regular and methodical manner.” Starting with Genesis, he read verse by verse, not proceeding until he had grasped the meaning of the text without having to resort to mystical reading or to leave contradictions unresolved. When the text was obscure or difficult in some way, Miller looked up related passages (probably via cross-references) and all passages containing the same main words as the text under consideration by using Cruden's concordance,⁹³ the standard biblical concordance of the time.

Miller's initial study lasted “for about two years,” until 1818.⁹⁴ To his joy, its conclusions affirmed his hope. The Bible was neither mystical nor inconsistent to him anymore. Instead, it “contained a system of revealed truths, so clearly and simply given that the ‘wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.’ [Isa 35:8.]”⁹⁵ This assessment extended to the prophecies in particular. Twelve years earlier, their incomprehensibility had weighed significantly in Miller's rejection of the Bible. It is therefore understandable that Miller had paid close

⁹⁰ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 5–6.

⁹¹ “My former arguments were presented against me; and then I came to the decision, that although my conclusions were just, the fault must be in my premises. Upon mature examination I was constrained to believe that the revelation of God could not be so mysterious as represented by some of its advocates.” The thoughts show that Miller was hopeful as he began his study. Miller, “Letter from Mr. Miller—No. I,” 8.

⁹² Miller, “Letter from Mr. Miller—No. I,” 8; Himes, “Memoir of William Miller,” 11; Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 6.

⁹³ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 6.

⁹⁴ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 6.

⁹⁵ Himes, “Memoir of William Miller,” 11–12; Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 6; Miller, “Letter from Mr. Miller—No. I,” 8.

attention to them through his study. And now, they were a particularly bright example of the truthfulness and clarity of the Bible. The prophecies were to be understood literally, unless they had obvious symbols, in which case Scripture decoded the symbol in the immediate context or somewhere else. Prophesied events were fulfilled according to all the specifications of the text, including their predicted durations. Miller noticed this by looking at the nature of the fulfillment of prophecies which took place in biblical times. He noticed the same pattern for prophecies whose fulfillment extended into post-biblical history and to the end. By comparing such prophecies with secular history, Miller traced each prophetic sequence of events down to his own time, with little left unfulfilled. He was living in the last days. In short, Miller either studied according to historicism or studied himself into it.⁹⁶

To do so came at a theological cost. At the time, the most prevalent eschatology was postmillennialism. Its theological underpinnings differed from those of traditional historicism in how it viewed God's workings with his people. It taught that the prophecies about Israel would all come true in the end, and that Israel would be reinstated in their country. As to the Church, it would eventually convert the entire world during a period of prosperity and glory which would last one thousand years. Miller rejected dual covenant theology because he felt it was in conflict with the doctrine of justification by faith, which offered no special status to the Jews. He also dismissed the millennial hope of the world's conversion since he believed it was a false hope which caused people to neglect to make their salvation sure in the last days. By rejecting postmillennialism, Miller agreed with older tradition and went against the mainstream modern view. It also meant that Miller, like Protestants before him, he interpreted many prophecies in the Old Testament symbolically if they seemed to go against his prophetic scheme. This means that both his contemporaries and modern scholars are partially incorrect in blaming and praising him for being a literalist.⁹⁷

But Miller's historicism was more than the rehearsal of recent or current historicism. Miller advanced the system further. The most important innovation was finding out when the 2300 years of Daniel 8 were to begin. Miller believed the 490 years of Daniel 9 (coded as "seventy weeks") were an explanation of the first part of the 2300 years. The whole period began with Artaxerxes's decree to restore Jerusalem in 457 BC, and would end in 1843, when the sanctuary would be cleansed. According to Miller the sanctuary stood for the earth and God's people, and they would both be cleansed—the earth by fire and the people from sin—when Jesus would return to earth.⁹⁸ Unbeknownst to Miller at the time, others had reached the same or similar terminus, but Miller's scheme became by far the most famous.

Miller could hardly believe his own conclusions. Once he came to see the Bible as the Word of God, at the same time he felt it could not be a mystery, but a message that could be understood. With that realization came another one, namely that the Church was now teaching

⁹⁶ For Miller's study of the prophecies, see Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 6–12.

⁹⁷ This will be discussed in further detail in section 3.5.3.

⁹⁸ For the results of Miller's Bible study years, see Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 6–12.

errors concerning the Second Coming, either an eschatology that threw it into the distant future or a preterism that claimed it would never happen. According to Protestant tradition itself, the prophecies had nearly reached their end. And Miller had found new light on when that end would happen. In just over a quarter century, Jesus was going to return to earth to the salvation of his people. Miller's thoughts turned to the practical significance of these stupendous findings:

With the solemn conviction that such momentous events were predicted in the Scriptures to be fulfilled in so short a space of time, the question came home to me with mighty power regarding my duty to the world in view of the evidence that had affected my own mind. If the end was so near, it was important that the world should know it. I supposed that it would call forth the opposition of the ungodly; but it never came into my mind that any Christian would oppose it. I supposed that all such would be so rejoiced in view of the glorious prospect, that it would only be necessary to present it, for them to receive it. My great fear was, that in their joy at the hope of a glorious inheritance so soon to be revealed, they would receive the doctrine without sufficiently examining the Scriptures in demonstration of its truth. I therefore feared to present it, lest by some possibility I should be in error, and be the means of misleading any.⁹⁹

There were also other reasons why Miller did not begin at once to share his findings:

Various difficulties and objections would arise in my mind, from time to time; certain texts would occur to me, which seemed to weigh against my conclusions; and I would not present a view to others, while any difficulty appeared to militate against it. I therefore continued the study of the Bible, to see if I could sustain any of these objections. My object was not merely to remove them, but I wished to see if they were valid.¹⁰⁰

This re-examination of his findings lasted five years, from 1818 to 1823.¹⁰¹ By now Miller had considered and studied the matter to such an extent that he later claimed that during this time he thought of more objections and counter-arguments than his opponents ever brought up in the future.¹⁰² But having given these objections proper attention, he found they did not hold up. The matter was clear, the truth obvious. What remained was to share the news with the world.

The Slow Acceptance of the Call to Public Ministry (1823–early 30s)

As soon as Miller arrived at his new interpretation in 1818, he was impressed “immediately” with the duty of proclaiming the message to the public.¹⁰³ For the next five years, he “managed to evade” this conviction as long as there was “a shadow of objection remaining against the truth.” But, in 1823, after five years of turning over every stone in the matter again

⁹⁹ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 13.

¹⁰⁰ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 13.

¹⁰¹ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 15.

¹⁰² Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 15.

¹⁰³ Miller, “Letter from Mr. Miller—No. I,” 8.

and again, Miller had exhausted the study of the question. The conviction of sharing his message with others now returned in force. Until now, Miller had barely spoken of his ideas with others, “only thrown out occasional hints.” Now he began speaking with “neighbors, to ministers, and others.” Miller did not see this, however, as his first steps towards a public ministry. He was expecting that once someone more qualified than him would be convinced of Christ’s soon return, the mantle would be cast on those more gifted shoulders. But to his surprise and disappointment, his glorious truths aroused little to no interest. Despite this, Miller insisted, with Mosaic hesitancy, that he could not do this work: He was neither accustomed to public speaking nor a gifted speaker. He was also very timid and worried that because of all of this, no one would believe the message. For about a decade, he continued to share only when opportunities arose in his social settings, all the while feeling the burden of an unfulfilled duty. He became fifty years old, and age became yet another objection to public ministry, which by now seemed out of the question.¹⁰⁴

The urgency of the message finally overcame all of Miller’s objections in the early 1830s and he decided to publish his views and to give himself fully to the work of proclaiming the message. This was sometime between 1831 and 1833, but the exact start of Miller’s public career as lecturer, as well as the order of steps he took towards it, is debatable. This is due to discrepancies in his autobiographical accounts and lacking primary sources.¹⁰⁵ The reason

¹⁰⁴ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 15–16.

¹⁰⁵ The first discrepancy is that Miller gives three different dates for the start of his public ministry. In the chronological order of the publications in which they appeared they are: 1832, 1824, and August 7, 1833. Joshua V. Himes, “Memoir of William Miller,” *Midnight Cry*, November 17, 1842, [1]; Himes, “Memoir of William Miller,” 12; Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 18. The earliest date can be ruled out easily: the dates 1832 and 1824 appear in a paragraph which is identical besides the date. The second version of the paragraph was published in the *Midnight Cry* in New York when both Miller and Himes, the editor, were there. See Bliss, *Memoirs*, 167. It is possible that they discussed Miller’s biographical account together, and with more information from Miller Himes hastily conflated or confused two points in Miller’s story: the year after his Bible study finally ended and Miller began to speak informally about his views to people around him (1824) and the year when he began his public ministry (1832), inserting the former for the latter.

1833 seems to be too late when compared with Miller’s letters from the 1830s. On March 26, 1832, Miller wrote: “I have been into Poultney, and some other places, to lecture on the coming of Christ, and in every instance I have had large assemblies.” William Miller to Truman Hendryx, March 26, 1832, f1. A day later: “I have lectured on it [“nearness of the advent”] in a number of places this winter.” William Miller to Joseph Atwood and Ana Atwood, March 27, 1832, f2. And again in April, 1833: Sawyer “wants me to go down [to Jay, NY] and spend a few days in lecturing on the prophecies with his folks.” William Miller to Truman Hendryx, April 10, 1833, f2. It seems likelier that Sawyer requested Miller to do something he had already done than Miller never having lectured and Sawyer coming up with the idea. To reconcile the correspondence and Miller’s autobiographical accounts, historians have usually suggested that Miller’s last date—August 1833—was right about the month, but that Miller misremembered the year. Since Miller was already preaching in early 1832, that rules out August 1832, and hence the correct date must be August 1831. See Bliss, *Memoirs*, 98n; Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 98–99.

There are problems with the corrected date of 1831 (and Miller’s date of 1832 for that matter). The first is the order of events in Miller’s last and most detailed biographical account. In it Miller writes that he tried to get rid of the burden to share with others by first writing a series of articles for the Vermont Telegraph. When that did not ease the conviction, Miller finally gave in and started lecturing publically. See Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 16–18. The discrepancy here is that the first article appeared on May 15, 1832, *after* Miller started lecturing in August 1831 (the corrected date) or in the winter of 1831–32 (correspondence), and not before. This is problematic because while people’s recollections of exact dates tend to become imprecise, the order of main events is usually easier to remember.

why this is mentioned here at all is that knowing the circumstances surrounding the calling of a religious founder can offer insight into what motivated the person to commence the work, and how he or she reached their conclusions and perceived the work ahead of them. This is why “the calling” and commencing ministry is usually an important part of both secular and confessional historiography of such persons. The work probably grew gradually: From sharing with people around him, to seeking out people to discuss with and sharing at evangelistic efforts he attended, to eventually lecturing. The first lectures on record occurred in the winter of 1831–32.¹⁰⁶ In May 1832 a series of articles by Miller began to be published in the *Vermont Telegraph*, though the exact number of articles is not known, due to gaps of issues that have not been preserved.¹⁰⁷ The subsequent year, Miller published a pamphlet with

There are several ways to reconcile the data. Perhaps Miller did not remember the sequence of events correctly. Perhaps he was dishonest—though there is no clear reason why he would be. A likelier reason may be that Miller made a distinction between his public speaking on the prophecies before and after August 1833. In his letters from 1831 to early 1832, Miller writes much about how ministers are responding to his interpretation. He also spent the summer and fall of 1832 attending “protracted meetings”—evangelistic efforts. William Miller to Truman Hendryx, October 1, 1832; William Miller to Truman Hendryx, November 17, 1832. Both points could be read in the light of Miller’s last biographical account: Miller was hoping for some others, preferably ministers, more qualified than him, to fully embrace the message and proclaim it to the world in his stead. He also shared in social circles, and probably attended church events as opportunities to share. Sharing may have opened the pulpit for him on several occasions, without Miller actually embracing a calling to full-time ministry. The sequence would then be this: Miller shared his message in ever broadening circles, until in 1831 and 1832 he actually preached several times. He shirked from this, hoping someone else would take up the mantle, and wrote a series of articles to get rid of the burden. When that did not work, he finally accepted his calling in August 1833 and started a full-time schedule of lecturing himself.

¹⁰⁶ William Miller to Truman Hendryx, f1; William Miller to Joseph Atwood and Ana Atwood, f2.

¹⁰⁷ Miller stated that the articles were sixteen. Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 16–17 I was able to obtain nearly all issues of the *Vermont Telegraph* from that date to the end of 1833, the likely time frame for the series. The first six articles are numbered as a series and appeared in every issue, from May 15, 1832 to June 19. Regrettably I only found three issues from the next few months until September 25: July 31, August 14, and September 4. The first of these carries an article by Miller, but unnumbered, and the second his reply to a critic. There are also articles and replies in the issues of October 30, November 6, January 22, 1833, and March 12 and 19. This is a total of twelve pieces, though some are replies to critics and therefore not part of the series Miller wrote for the paper. William Miller, “The Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” *Vermont Telegraph*, May 15, 1832, 131; William Miller, “The Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” *Vermont Telegraph*, May 22, 1832, 137; William Miller, “The Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” *Vermont Telegraph*, May 29, 1832, 141; William Miller, “The Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. IV,” *Vermont Telegraph*, June 4, 1832, 145; William Miller, “The Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. V,” *Vermont Telegraph*, June 12, 1832, 149; William Miller, “The Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. VI,” *Vermont Telegraph*, June 19, 1832, 153; William Miller, “Period of Daniel’s Vision,” *Vermont Telegraph*, July 31, 1832, 171; William Miller, “Personal Reign of Christ,” *Vermont Telegraph*, October 30, 1832, 21; William Miller, “The Second and Personal Coming of Christ,” *Vermont Telegraph*, November 6, 1832, 25; William Miller, “Reply to ‘B.’,” *Vermont Telegraph*, January 22, 1833, 70; William Miller, “An Explanation of the 11th Chapter of Revelations,” *Vermont Telegraph*, March 6, 1833, 93; William Miller, “An Explanation of the 11th Chapter of Revelations. Concluded,” *Vermont Telegraph*, March 7, 1833, 97

Without the missing issues, it cannot be ascertained how many Miller’s articles were in total. The first six numbered articles were published in every issue with no gap between, and it is possible that the series continued in the five missing issues of June and July. The rest of the located articles, starting from July 31 and August 14, are not numbered. Either the numbered and unnumbered count sixteen in total, or Miller misremembered the number of articles. If Miller did not remember correctly, perhaps he confused the number with the number of chapters in his first book, which were sixteen. William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ, about the Year 1843: Exhibited in a Course of Lectures* (Troy, VT, 1836), 226. In either case, the located articles cover nearly all the topics of Miller’s first pamphlet (and almost in the same order), published in the spring of 1833. This means that the missing articles can hardly be many, since Miller wrote the pamphlet using the material of his previous articles.

similar content.¹⁰⁸ A fuller record begins to emerge of Miller's public labors from the fall of 1833 and onward.¹⁰⁹ By then Miller's itinerant life had commenced in earnest.

3.3.5 Early Public Ministry (early 1830s–39)

Once Miller had made his decision to give himself to public ministry, to the proclamation of the return of Christ, invitations poured in, only a fraction of which he could answer. This took Miller on ever longer itineraries through the 1830s. Regrettably, no one has written an account of Miller's public labors that incorporates all the data that has become available.¹¹⁰ Bliss's detailed treatment sets the general tone of Miller's lecturing life. With Miller's record books, Bliss traced Miller's tireless itinerary tours from location to location, interspersed with descriptions lifted from Miller's letters or from the occasional newspaper articles written by attendees. The descriptions show a similar pattern. Miller was invited by a local minister and the venue was crowded to the maximum. Early on Miller lectured only for a day at a place, once or twice, but as time went on, he more frequently gave a week-long series of lectures, preaching twice a day. The audience of the usually packed venue showed great attention and conviction. In most places, some were convinced of Miller's prophetic interpretation, and everywhere some converted to Christ. In general, the ministers were thrilled with Miller's public labors. Firstly, they saw that Miller was an effective revivalist, and all desired a revival in their congregations. Secondly, they most often agreed with the general tenor of Miller's teachings. His prophetic interpretation and teaching on the Second Coming was to a large extent traditional orthodoxy, and his emphasis on piety and preparation for meeting the Lord was conducive to the spiritual welfare of the church. Even when ministers disagreed with his dates, they still often agreed with him that these were indeed the last times. Thirdly, some ministers actually were convinced of his predictions. This approval can be seen in the endorsements he received early on. On September 14, 1833, Miller's home church made him a licensed minister.¹¹¹ In 1835 and 1836 dozens of ministers signed a certificate endorsing Miller's public efforts and even his views.¹¹²

A description of Miller's itineraries through the years, though seemingly dry, gives a picture of the geographical reach of the nascent Advent movement. Miller did not keep a

¹⁰⁸ William Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year A. D. 1843, and of His Personal Reign of 1000 Years* (Brandon, VT: Vermont Telegraph Office, 1833).

¹⁰⁹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 110, 115ff.

¹¹⁰ Hale comes the closest in the *Memoirs*. He used Miller's correspondence and his writings, as well as articles about the Miller and the Millerites in the secular and religious press. It is not known how much of this material Miller had collected and kept, and what Hale added. Time cannot replace lost correspondence, but modern digitization has opened up vast resources. A quick search in Library of Congress's digital newspaper database *Chronicling America*, yields hundreds, even thousands, of news items and articles on the Millerites. See <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>. In addition, effort could be made to search archives for letters and writings of Millerites outside of the leadership. The local newspapers could also be searched systematically to record Miller's itineraries. This data has barely been touched, with more recent scholars depending in the main on the sources collected by Miller, Hale, and Wellcome. Such an endeavor is outside the scope of the present dissertation.

¹¹¹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 108–9.

¹¹² Bliss, *Memoirs*, 120–22.

record of his public efforts until October 1834. After quoting the few letters that touch on Miller's work in 1831–33, Bliss surmises that Miller "seems to have been constantly occupied in lecturing" in towns in New York and Vermont through the fall of 1833 and the following winter.¹¹³ In October 1834, when he was probably in the middle of an itinerary, Miller began recording the time, place, and scriptures of his lecturing travels.¹¹⁴ That month Miller lectured in New York towns along the western side of Lake Champlain. In November 1834 and then in the early months of 1835 (January to April), he lectured in Vermont towns on the southeastern side of the Lake, returning to Low Hampton in between.¹¹⁵ During the summer of 1836 (May to August), Miller worked his way through Vermont towns in the vicinity of his home, north along the eastern side of Lake Champlain, then making his way across the Green Mountains, and into Lower Canada, before returning home.¹¹⁶ In September and then November onwards, Miller revisited many of the Vermont towns on the southeastern side of the Lake, in addition to lecturing in many new locations. He did this through the winter and into the summer of 1836,¹¹⁷ when nature forced him to rest. In July he lay sick at home with a "bilious complaint" for three weeks.¹¹⁸ In the fall (August to October), he threaded the New York towns on the west side of the Lake up into the north of the State. After this he stayed in Low Hampton for the remainder of the year.¹¹⁹ From February 1837 to February 1838, he lectured mostly in Vermont towns southeast of the Lake and then took a month of rest.¹²⁰ From March to June 1838, he lectured in a handful of towns in Vermont, New York, and Canada, and then took the rest of the summer off.¹²¹ From the fall to the spring of the following year (August 1838–March 1839), Miller lectured in towns in the Green Mountains.¹²² He then made his first trip to Massachusetts from March to early June, and after lecturing in towns in Vermont, stayed mostly at home from July to October.¹²³ In October he went again east, to Massachusetts and New Hampshire, on a lecturing tour which lasted until the end of March 1840.¹²⁴

Miller also wrote during these years. He carried on an extensive correspondence answering inquiries, but most of this has been lost, since Miller did not copy his letters. Miller also wrote newspaper articles¹²⁵ though in general the press was unwilling to publish his views. And

¹¹³ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 110.

¹¹⁴ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 115. A photocopy of the two notebooks is kept in flds. 26–27, box 3, F. D. Nichol Collection (Collection 264), Center for Adventist Research.

¹¹⁵ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 115–20.

¹¹⁶ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 122–24.

¹¹⁷ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 124–25.

¹¹⁸ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 125.

¹¹⁹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 126.

¹²⁰ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 126–27.

¹²¹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 130–32.

¹²² Bliss, *Memoirs*, 132–34.

¹²³ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 134–38.

¹²⁴ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 138–49.

¹²⁵ No comprehensive research has been done to locate these. I am only aware of his rejoinder series to Vermont Baptist pastor Aaron Angier. Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 124–27.

finally, in 1836 Miller enlarged his pamphlet from 1833 into a book with nearly the same title.¹²⁶

At the end of the 1830s, Miller had been on the itinerant road for roughly a decade, mostly at his own expense. He had lectured in around hundred towns, often for a week in each place, and had visited most of these towns more than once. The venues had been primarily in Vermont and New York, but also in Canada, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. But it was finally during his eastern tour in late 1839 that Miller's public labors assumed the proportions of a mass movement.

3.3.6 The Advent Movement (1840–44)

Until the First Terminus (1840–March, 1843)

A turning point in Miller's ministry was reached when Joshua V. Himes entered the picture. In December 1839, during his eastern tour to Massachusetts, Miller lectured in Himes's church in Boston. Though Himes was not sure about dating the year of Christ's return, he was convinced of the main burden of Miller's message: All the prophecies pointed towards Jesus returning soon. Himes told Miller that if this was indeed true, the whole world should know about it. Miller agreed, but said that he was already doing all he could do, and had always been hoping that some more qualified persons would help him. Ministers opened up their churches to have him preach and edify their churches, but that was the extent of their help. Himes then declared that he would help him with all his strength. Himes, who had been active in ministry and in the various reforms of the age, had taken on a project equal to his ability. It would turn out that Himes was an executive genius and with his help Millerism transformed into a movement that gained nationwide attention.¹²⁷

At this juncture, most scholarship on Millerism zooms out from the person of Miller and follows the Adventist movement as a whole, touching on Miller only when it matters to the history. It is indeed necessary to paint the dimensions of the movement to understand Miller's context going forward. This will be done, but after that this text will follow Miller and not the movement as a whole.

Himes started an incredibly effective and sleepless publishing and marketing machine. The first thing he did was to launch a periodical, *Signs of the Times* (later *Advent Herald*) in Boston, in early 1840. A couple of years later, in 1842, he started the *Midnight Cry* in New York, as well as several other periodicals. Himes also published pamphlets and books by Millerite authors and also republished works by contemporary and former historicists.¹²⁸ The secular and religious papers had nearly always refused to publish Millerite writings, so most of the press that Millerites got was written by their critics. By having their own publishing

¹²⁶ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*.

¹²⁷ For the consequential meeting between Miller and Himes, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 139–41; Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 158–61; Knight, *William Miller*, 56–61.

¹²⁸ For Himes's publishing efforts, see Knight, *William Miller*, 64–70. On Millerite periodicals, see Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:621–41.

effort, they overcame this hindrance to spreading their message. In addition to this, Himes opened “reading rooms” stocked with Millerite literature. Passers-by could come in and acquaint themselves with the message.¹²⁹ Second, Himes devised more strategic lecturing campaigns. Himes arranged for Miller to lecture in spacious halls in the largest cities of the northern states: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington DC.¹³⁰ Another strategy was using camp meetings, with the innovation of an immensely large tent which could seat thousands.¹³¹ Third, Himes fostered more strategic planning and organization within the growing movement. To this effect, the believers came together in “general conferences” where they discussed theological matters, laid further plans, and also lectured to the public.¹³² Fourth, Himes organized the finances of the mission.¹³³ Not all of this was Himes’s work: As soon as he helped Miller in making the message more visible, other important thinkers and doers joined the ranks.¹³⁴ Though the movement had official leadership, it was still a grassroots movement. Believers organized local meetings, lectures, and papers in imitation of the leadership, causing a rapid multiplying effect in the speed and spread of the movement. It is not possible to make hard estimates about how big the movement was, since many adherents stayed in their churches, and most did not write. Estimates therefore vary greatly, from 50 000 to a million.¹³⁵ At the time, the population in the North was around ten million. The estimations therefore range up to 10% of the population. In any case, the movement was highly visible and the talk of most newspapers of the time.

The sudden growth in numbers and visibility brought two important changes with it. First, as the movement became more visible, so did its opposition. While some critics were moderate, many ridiculed the movement, and passed on uncorroborated slander. There were some incidents of mob violence and riots against Millerites.¹³⁶ Second, the movement appealed to Protestants of all stripes, as well as Deists and skeptics. The believers had diverse religious affiliations, and they inevitably broadened the theological discussion within the movement. In general, Millerite leadership discouraged doctrinal debates and discussion, feeling they paled into insignificance in comparison to the all-consuming truth of Christ’s imminent return, and that after his return all minor questions would be made plain anyhow. Among the topics discussed were the questions whether the soul is immortal or not, and whether Saturday or Sunday was the true Sabbath.¹³⁷ Miller and other leaders remained,

¹²⁹ Knight, *William Miller*, 68.

¹³⁰ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:552; Knight, *William Miller*, 63.

¹³¹ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:554, 642–62.

¹³² Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:555–620; Knight, *William Miller*, 70–71.

¹³³ Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 162–64.

¹³⁴ For Miller’s associates, see Knight, *William Miller*, 78–102; Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:528–54, 569–71, 576–79, 663–80.

¹³⁵ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 22; Cross, *Burned-over District*, 287; David L. Rowe, “Millerites: A Shadow Portrait,” in Numbers and Butler, *Disappointed* (2nd ed.), 2, 15n2; Knight, *William Miller*, 181.

¹³⁶ For opposition against the Millerites, see Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:738–83; Knight, *William Miller*, 120–25.

¹³⁷ For theological side-discussions within the Millerite Movement, see Knight, *William Miller*, 165–69, 181; Merlin Burt, *CHS 674 Development of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Berrien Springs, MI, 2017), 35–41.

however, mostly unconvinced of the agitated doctrinal questions. Other developments Miller and his fellow leaders rejected in the sternest terms. The “fanaticism,” as the leaders and many Adventists perceived and called it, centered on charismatic manifestations and perfectionism that taught that sinlessness could be attained in this life and that once reached, believers would not sin anymore, since their hearts were pure, and thus could do as they please.¹³⁸ In July 1843, as the opposition to the movement grew, churches began to excommunicate members who held to Millerite prophetic interpretation and believers also started leaving the churches rather than be silenced. This led prominent Millerite leader Charles Fitch to deduct that the churches had become apostate. So far Millerites had preached “the first angel’s message” of impending judgment (Rv 14:6–7). When the churches refused to accept the news of their arriving Lord, they proved themselves to be Babylon, “fallen” from the faith like the Catholic Church before them. In the summer of 1843, Fitch declared this was the “second angel’s message” (Rv 14:8) and encouraged Millerites to leave the churches, and this belief spread rapidly among Adventists in the summer of 1844.¹³⁹ For the most part Miller was reluctant to countenance this call to separate from the other churches, though he disliked the treatment that Adventists often received from other Christians.¹⁴⁰

The increasing momentum of the moment from 1840 onward changed Miller’s responsibilities. Finally he was not the only one in the forefront of giving the news. Plenty of capable talent was now involved in the leadership, and hundreds and thousands of men and women were now shouldering the work with him. And yet, increased opportunities did not lessen but increased the obligations. Miller continued his tireless itineraries, except when his health gave way, but now with much more exposure and public fanfare for and against his views. Miller returned from his eastern tour by the end of March 1840. After lecturing in the neighborhood, he went to New York City and Canada before taking a few weeks off in July.¹⁴¹ He then lectured for a few months in New York and Vermont. On his way to the first General Conference of Adventists in Boston he fell sick, had to return home, and lay in bed from October to December.¹⁴² From late December to April 1841, he lectured in New York State and also went on a tour to Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In late May, he got sick and had to return home where he stayed over the summer months.¹⁴³ From September 1841 to March 1843 Miller was almost constantly on the road, lecturing in New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maine, and Pennsylvania.¹⁴⁴ As the last year of the 2300 year prophecy was about to commence—extending from the

¹³⁸ On fanaticism within the ranks and the leadership’s response to it, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 229–39; Knight, *William Miller*, 145–50.

¹³⁹ For the unwilling and willing separation of Millerites from the churches and the “second angel’s message,” see Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:761–83; Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message*, 78–84; Knight, *William Miller*, 119–31.

¹⁴⁰ For Miller’s response to the call for separation from the churches, see Knight, *William Miller*, 131–32.

¹⁴¹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 141–51.

¹⁴² Bliss, *Memoirs*, 151–54.

¹⁴³ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 154–57.

¹⁴⁴ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 157–184, 227–28.

vernal equinox in March 1843 to the vernal equinox on March 20, 1844—, Miller got severely sick with boils in March 1843 and had to go home. For a time, it was unsure whether he would survive. He started recuperating in July and was lecturing again in September.¹⁴⁵ He then went on another tour east and lectured in New Hampshire, and took another trip to Boston where he gave his eighth lecture series. After a short rest at home in late October, he spent the rest of the year lecturing in New York State and rested at home in January 1844.¹⁴⁶ During January to March of 1844, the last months before the *terminus ad quem*, Miller toured the large cities: Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington DC, and Baltimore.¹⁴⁷

On top of his itinerary, Miller also continued writing during these years (1840–44). He kept up an incessant correspondence to answer inquiries from all over the Union. He wrote the occasional articles for the main Adventist papers to give news of his work and to answer critics. He also wrote longer articles which were published as tracts and also published together as books.¹⁴⁸ The main spike in these last publications was in 1842, probably because Miller wanted to say what he had to say before the last year—March 1843 to March 1844, or “1843” for short—since Jesus could come anytime during that period.

The Spring Disappointment and the Second Date Setting (March–October, 1844)

In mid-March 1844, Miller returned home to Low Hampton. But the vernal equinox, which in 1844 fell on March 20, passed, and the 2300 years, as Miller had calculated them, were now over, and Jesus had not returned.¹⁴⁹ Miller was deeply disappointed, but still believed Christ’s return to be imminent. Miller had always made it clear that his calculation was human.

Though multiple lines of prophetic evidence pointed towards March 1843–March 1844 as being the last year, a margin of error in the chronology of human history and the calculation of prophecy was still possible. Miller and the other leaders’s soft date explains why the spring disappointment did not undo the movement.¹⁵⁰ When Christ did not return, Miller and his followers did not see it as disproving their calculation, but rather demonstrating that their cautious caveat had been true, and that they must wait out the unknown but short time till Christ would appear. It was also to be expected that their faith would be tested.¹⁵¹

Furthermore, about this time the Millerites discovered several Scriptures that they felt spoke of such a trying of faith as theirs. These texts exhorted those who waited for prophecy to be consummated, to patiently wait when the fulfillment seemed to be delayed (Hb 2:2–3; Mt

¹⁴⁵ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 228–29.

¹⁴⁶ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 229, 246–48.

¹⁴⁷ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 248–54.

¹⁴⁸ See section 3.4.2.

¹⁴⁹ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 254.

¹⁵⁰ Knight, *William Miller*, 137–38.

¹⁵¹ For Miller’s (and his followers’) reaction to the spring disappointment, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 254–63; William Miller, “Letter from Mr. Miller,” *Advent Herald*, May 1, 1844, 97; William Miller, “Letter from Bro. Miller,” *Midnight Cry*, August 8, 1844, 29–30; Josiah Litch, “The Rise and Progress of Adventism,” *Advent Shield*, May, 1844, 79–80.

25:5; Heb 10:36–39).¹⁵² In a matter of months these Scriptures would assume an unexpected eschatological significance. Until then, however, the unexpected delay made the spring and summer a period of some disorientation and uncertainty.¹⁵³ Neither Miller nor any of his followers (nor their opponents for that matter) could figure out wherein the chronological error lay.¹⁵⁴ The work moved forward, at a more subdued pace, as believers waited to see how things would unfold. Miller stayed at home during the summer. In late July he went with Himes on a lecturing tour, first west to Cincinnati, and then they made their way east to Philadelphia and finally New York in late September.¹⁵⁵ When they returned from their western tour, they learned of a new development that was rapidly spreading through the movement and breathing new life into it like never before: The believers had set the date for Christ to return on October 22.

“The seventh-month movement,” as it was called, started in August with a presentation by Millerite preacher Samuel Snow at a camp meeting in Exeter, NH. Snow assumed Miller was right in interpreting the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14 as the Second Coming but believed the timing was more precise than Miller had thought. Snow argued that the proposed terminus of the 2300 years—the 2300th year extending from the spring equinox of 1843 to the spring equinox 1844—had been slightly off for several reasons.

First, the 2300 years did not begin with Artaxerxes’ issuing of the decree in the spring in the commencement of the Jewish year, but with “the promulgation and execution” of the decree when Ezra arrived in Jerusalem in autumn. This meant that the 2300 years extended not to the spring of 1844, but all the way to the fall of the same year.

Second, the spring feasts of the Jews had met the antitype at the exact time: Jesus, the true Passover Lamb, had been crucified on the day of Passover, and on the Feast of Firstfruits he had risen from the grave, and on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit had descended on the disciples. In the same way, the autumn feasts prefigured the events surrounding Christ’s Second Coming: The blowing of the trumpets announced the commencement of the millennium, the Day of Atonement would see Christ return to earth as the high priest appeared to the waiting congregation in the courtyard, and the Feast of Tabernacles would be the wedding supper of the Lamb celebrated in New Jerusalem. This meant that Jesus would come on the Day of Atonement in 1844.

Third, Millerites had not followed the accurate Jewish calendar. They had followed the rabbinic one, which, in imitation of the Roman calendar, regulated the year with the spring equinox. The Karaite Jews, however, ordered the year according to the calendar regulations of the Law of Moses. According to the Karaite reckoning, the Day of Atonement—the tenth day of the seventh month in the Jewish year—fell on October 22, 1844.

¹⁵² “Our Position,” *Advent Herald*, April 24, 1844, 93.

¹⁵³ Knight, *William Miller*, 142.

¹⁵⁴ Litch, “Rise and Progress of Adventism,” 80.

¹⁵⁵ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 264–68.

Taken together, the points spelled out the exact date of the return of Christ. This teaching swept through the Millerite ranks with surprising rapidity and conviction and breathed unprecedented urgency and power into its mission. Believers proclaimed this as the true “Midnight Cry” of Matthew 25: The Bridegroom is coming!¹⁵⁶ Miller and the leaders were caught off guard. At first, they were unsure how to respond to the date setting. But as they saw the character and fruits of the teaching, and studied the claim further, finding the former benign and the latter scripturally sound, they all slowly became convinced and joined in the joyful expectation. Miller came out in favor of the date on October 6:

Let Brother Snow, Brother Storrs and others, be blessed for their instrumentality in opening my eyes. I am almost home. Glory! Glory!! Glory!!! I see that the time is correct . . . My soul is so full I cannot write. . . . My doubts, and fears, and darkness, are all gone. I see that we are yet right. God’s word is true; and my soul is full of joy; my heart is full of gratitude to God.¹⁵⁷

On returning from his western tour Miller lectured in September in New York City, but then had to return home due to health issues.¹⁵⁸ There he became convinced of the new date, and there he waited for his Lord with his family. Himes also arrived with his wife Alice, wanting to be with his best friend when they would see Jesus arriving in the heavens.¹⁵⁹

The Fall Disappointment and Disintegration of the Movement (October 1844–March 1845)

When Jesus did not return on October 22, Miller and the Adventists experienced the greatest disappointment of their lives. Their Advent experience—particularly the phase since a concrete date had been set, the so-called “seventh-month movement”—had been the brightest chapter in their life of faith. The conviction had been so sincerely held, that the non-event swept the ground from under their feet as a tragic (and confusing) surprise. It was not only bewildering on a psychological level, but hermeneutically as well. It was necessary to explain the disappointment by adjusting or abandoning either the chronology or the prophetic interpretation, or both. But no one answer won out. The movement ceased. Many left. The remaining body of believers was disoriented. Soon many factions arose, and it took the Advent leaders until the following spring of 1845 to sort out the confusion and establish the official course forward for Adventists.

One of the most influential voices to lay out such a course was Miller himself. But Miller’s directive was rather late in coming. He had returned to Low Hampton due to poor health in

¹⁵⁶ On the “seventh-month movement” and the date, see Samuel S. Snow *True Midnight Cry*, August 22, 1844, 1–4; Bliss, *Memoirs*, 269–70; Knight, *William Miller*, 159–63; Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 186–87. Miller had had similar thoughts about the typology of the Jewish autumn feasts, though at the time he had not pursued them further. William Miller, “Letter from Wm. Miller,” *Signs of the Times*, May 17, 1843, 85.

¹⁵⁷ William Miller, “Brother Miller’s Letter, on the Seventh Month,” *Midnight Cry*, October 12, 1844, 121. The letter was republished on October 19, 1844 with the same title.

¹⁵⁸ Bliss, *Memoirs*, 268.

¹⁵⁹ Rowe, *God’s Strange Work*, 190–91.

late September 1844, and stayed there over the winter. He was tired and old, his health was broken, and his money spent after two decades of nearly non-stop travels and labors. His cause had been highly controversial, awakening everything from joyful acceptance to mockery and even downright persecution. He had invested all he had in the cause, and its future was now uncertain. To many it had downright failed. In this light it is understandable why Miller—though he would do some smattering of public work still—practically retired from his public career. For the rest of his life, Miller stayed mostly at home, followed the Adventist cause through correspondence and by reading the Adventist papers, and left leadership to younger shoulders—primarily Himes’s. Miller’s role of leadership did not disappear overnight, however, and his reaction to the fall disappointment impacted the future of Adventism by legitimizing one explanation over others.

Miller did not waver in his belief that Jesus was coming soon, although he was not sure how the fall disappointment should or could be explained. He reviewed the entire subject, but could find no error. It was possible, as he had always cautioned, that the historical record was chronologically imperfect, which meant a plausible margin of error of several years. But Miller was more inclined to believe that prophecy had been fulfilled and that he had overlooked some details as to the fulfillment. First, then, Miller could not find any chronological error in their calculations. Second, God had blessed the seventh-month movement and the declaration of the coming of Christ on October 22—what was implicit here was the thought that God would not have done so if they had been in the wrong. Third, the mocking and reviling of the public and their rejection of the message showed to all practical purposes that probation had closed—in Adventist parlance, that “the door was shut” (Matt 25). Fourth, Miller had some thoughts about why Christ had not yet come. Perhaps the seventh-month movement had been a preparation, the initial part of cleansing the sanctuary. This delay of the Second Coming might be the final test of the patience of the saints. This delay would probably be so short that Christ would come before or at the end of the Jewish year (October 22 was in the seventh month, and so five months remained of the year) and the declaration of the date would thus yet be vindicated. Miller urged the believers to remain patient and in a Christian spirit.¹⁶⁰

Believers in general agreed with Miller that hermeneutics and experience pointed towards the fact that they had been doing God’s work. But unlike Miller’s pleading for patience to see what would happen, neither the leaders nor the followers could wait out the unknown indefinitely. The very fact that experience and hermeneutics had led them into disappointment put them in a predicament: If divine guidance, Christian experience, and sound hermeneutics

¹⁶⁰ For Miller’s initial beliefs about the fall disappointment, see William Miller, “Letter from Wm. Miller,” *Advent Herald*, November 27, 1844, 127–28; William Miller, “Letter from Bro. Miller,” *Advent Herald*, December 11, 1844, 142; William Miller, “Letter from Bro. Miller,” *Advent Herald*, December 18, 1844, 147; William Miller, “Letter from Bro. Miller,” *Advent Herald*, December 25, 1844, 154–55; William Miller et al., “Address to Advent Believers,” *Advent Herald*, January 15, 1845, 182–83; William Miller, “Elijah the Prophet,” *Advent Herald*, February 5, 1845, 201–3.

had been on their side, why had they been disappointed? This predicament is not so clear when one reads Miller's few articles in the months after the fall disappointment. But it becomes glaringly obvious when one zooms out from Miller and reads the Adventist periodicals from the time. Besides Miller's position of correct date and delayed advent, two other main explanations were set forth. Both agreed that God had led the movement and that the return of Christ was imminent. But the two groups disagreed about other things. First there was the majority view. Most of the leaders saw the failed prediction as the result of human error; somehow the chronology must be off and the 2300 years were not yet over. God had blessed their efforts despite of their mistaken prediction, and not because of it, because though they had been wrong about the time, they had been right in the main and were bringing half-forgotten truths like the Second Coming and its imminence to the attention of the churches. Time remained, probation was still open, and the message must still sound. These continued their public work, though without previous public attention and momentum. Others, however, refused to give up the October 22 date as an error, for that would be to renounce their experience and hermeneutics which all pointed towards this date. This was the minority view. They affirmed that prophecy had been fulfilled on that day and that until now the believers had failed to understand the import of their own prediction about the close of the 2300 years: The Day of Atonement had not signified that Christ would return to earth. On that day he had, as the High Priest, entered on the final phase of his ministry. The Parable of the Virgins was also adjusted: The Bridegroom had indeed arrived, but to the wedding in heaven (accepting his kingdom from the Father before returning to earth). Probation had closed and as the parable said, "The door was shut." What remained for God's people to do was to wait the short indefinite time that would pass until Christ's imminent return, at which time the "marriage supper" would occur on earth (Christ celebrating his reign with his people). This view started developing shortly after the fall disappointment and in the early months of 1845 its adherents had already started their own periodicals.¹⁶¹

After the fall disappointment, Miller did not initially give up the date. He first believed that perhaps something had happened on the date, and that Christ would come at the end of the 2300th year, i.e. in spring 1845—just like the Jubilee was announced on the Day of Atonement before it actually occurred—and that the fall date would thus be vindicated when Christ would return. As tensions grew between the two opinions, both sides wanted to claim Miller as adhering to their point of view. After repeated requests, Miller clarified his position in a letter published February 12.¹⁶² The minority claimed that this article proved Miller to be on their side since he agreed with them that "the door was shut" and probation seemed to be over. This became even clearer in a second letter by Miller in which he clearly stated his

¹⁶¹ On the two views, see the chapter "The Dividing of Adventism: October 22, 1844, through May 1845" in Merlin 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 1849" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2003), 60–174.

¹⁶² William Miller, "Letter from Mr. Miller," *Advent Herald*, February 12, 1845, 1–2.

acceptance of the minority view.¹⁶³ Miller's letters were met with strong consternation from Himes and other majority leaders. Miller's February letter favoring the "shut door" was followed by an unprecedented and lengthy editorial rebuttal. Himes wrote him letters urging him to abandon the view. Himes believed that this view was inextricably linked with its attending "fanaticism": Feet-washing in connection with the Lord's supper, kissing to salute each other, ceasing from all labor, visions and dreams, charismatic manifestations, teachings of sinlessness, and "spiritual wifery." Himes told Miller of these harmful effects of the minority view, and that it was vital that Miller would lend his influence to the right side. Himes followed his letters up by visiting Miller. He showed Miller that probation could not be over since public labor was still resulting in conversions. Both Himes and Miller believed that probation would close sometime before Christ's return, so the idea per se was not problematic for them. But its application during a time when probation obviously was open, was as obviously erroneous. Hence the "shut door" view must be wrong. The visit was successful. Miller detested fanaticism, realized evangelism still bore fruit, and was probably ill-disposed in siding with a minority—which to all appearances was already descending into chaos on doctrine and praxis—against his own most trusted friends.¹⁶⁴ On March 26, the *Advent Herald* published a letter in which Miller acknowledged that the door was still open.¹⁶⁵ This was seen by the majority as a full rejection of the minority view. When the letters are read closely, however, it seems obvious that Miller never fully accepted or rejected either position but kept to his own. From the fall disappointment until the spring of 1845 he claimed the date was correct and hoped it would be vindicated by the Second Coming of Christ before or at the end of the Jewish year. He disliked the majority's rejection of the date and he disliked the impatience of the minority in weaving new theological intricacies about what happened on the date instead of waiting humbly for the Second Coming in this last trial of the saints.

With Miller on his side, Himes was now prepared to take further steps in answering the question of what the future course and action of Adventists should be. Resolutions concerning the majority and minority view on the fall disappointment had to be passed. Other theological discussions which had resurfaced and agitated the believers as a whole—such as the questions on Sabbath and the nature of the soul—also had to be dealt with. And most importantly, the mission of Adventists had to be defined during the margin of error that remained. The form of the mission's organization and Adventists' relation to the churches also had to be addressed. All this was done in a General Conference which took place at Albany, NY, April 29–May 1, 1845. There fanaticism (and the minority view) was denounced, the other on-going doctrinal

¹⁶³ "I do believe in the main they [advocates of the minority view] are right . . . Has Christ come in the sense spoken of, Matt 25:10? I think he has. Was the contract finished, and when? My opinion is, that it was on or about the 10th of the seventh month." William Miller, "Extract of a Letter from Bro. Miller," *Day-Star*, March 11, 1845, 13. The article was first published in *Voice of Truth*, probably on February 19, 1845. See Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 89n1.

¹⁶⁴ On Miller's change of heart and Himes's part in it, see Knight, *William Miller*, 203–4; Rowe, *God's Strange Work*, 207–10.

¹⁶⁵ William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Miller," *Advent Herald*, March 26, 1845, 49.

arguments declared immaterial for the mission, and the organization and the status of the group of believers clarified.¹⁶⁶ The conference stabilized the remaining body of believers. Soon after they felt that their rejection of the fanatics was vindicated. After starting and canceling periodical after periodical, with no consensus nor clear leadership, striking fanatical beliefs and practices, the minority was already falling apart by autumn of 1845 and continued into new doctrinal directions, separating it from ever further from mainline Adventists.¹⁶⁷ What remained as Miller-sanctioned Adventism was the main group of believers which, despite lurking disagreements on some doctrinal points, would remain one body until 1854, years after Miller's death.

With matters cleared up after the fall disappointment and the mission of Adventists charted out, Miller had effectually handed leadership over to Himes. All that remained for himself to do now was to write his *Apology* for the public. It was intended to explain the mistaken predictions of Adventism and to justify their course in promoting the sound doctrine of the Second Coming and their interpretation of the prophecies in general. In it, Miller finally rejected the idea that the "seventh-month movement" was a fulfillment of prophecy and thus dismissed the minority view altogether.¹⁶⁸ After that Miller did little public work and effectively retired.

3.3.7 Retirement (1845–49)

Once Miller had sided with the majority group of the Millerites in March 1845, the shifting of leadership from Miller to Himes and others, which had increased as the movement accelerated and Miller's health gave way, had been finalized. Miller now spent the last years of his life mostly at home in the care of his family. He was old, and in feeble health, after more than a decade of intense public ministry. Facing the unbelief and mockery, even persecution, of the Christian world, the disappointment of his dearest hopes, and the falling apart of his movement and the ongoing infighting, had taken its toll on Miller's soul as well. He was exhausted and yearned for rest. He did do some lecturing still, but much fewer lectures per location and fewer locations per tour. In May and June 1845 he lectured and went to Boston where he attended the General Conference of Adventists. After writing his *Apology*, he then lectured in September and November of 1845, then in March and June of 1846. His Canada tour of that same year lasted long, from September to probably early November, but only because he got sick and had to rest for several weeks at his sister's place. He then stayed at home in Low Hampton over the winter. The last time he lectured was in Boston in May 1847, where he also attended the General Conference.¹⁶⁹ Miller's publications also dwindled during these last years. From August 1845 to January 1848 he sent twenty articles to the *Advent*

¹⁶⁶ On the Albany Conference, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 300–326; Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:833–36; Knight, *William Miller*, 228–37.

¹⁶⁷ For the majority's view of "the shut door" minority, see, for instance, Bliss, *Memoirs*, 297–99.

¹⁶⁸ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 28.

¹⁶⁹ For Miller's ebbing public ministry of 1845–47, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 340–58.

Herald.¹⁷⁰ But these articles were neither seen nor written as the voice of the groundbreaking leader, but rather as the exhortations of a retired pioneer. Though Miller was cherished and respected and his articles were published, they were printed further back in the issues.¹⁷¹

Miller's articles during these last years are important for they show how Miller came to terms with his failed prediction, and what his theological outlook and main concerns were after his prediction apparently failed. He continued to emphasize the imminence and nature of the Second Coming, but now without going into a detailed prophetic explanations as before. He had not given up his interpretation, as can be seen from his continuing interest in prophecy and history—when the revolutions of 1848 broke out he took it as one of the signs of the times, for instance.¹⁷² The reason for the shying away from elaborate explanations was probably simply the fact that he had already written about everything he believed, and as to what he did not know—the causes for the failed prediction—he never reached further conclusions on how or where he had gone wrong. He remained convinced that in main the prediction was right: The 2300 years were soon to end and Jesus would return. Since Miller died about the time that the most generous margin of error that the Millerites had given themselves for the terminus of the period had passed, he did not have to face this problem in the more serious light of time continuing to roll on, decade after decade. From Miller's vantage point, all that was needed was to continue to tell people to prepare for Christ's return, and to wait patiently until he would come. In connection to this, he continued to be pained about the lack of unity among the believers, and often touched upon the importance of a Christian spirit.¹⁷³ He was hopeful that the believers would secure a united front and continue to proclaim the message of the Second Coming of the Lord until faith would become sight.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ William Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. I," *Advent Herald*, December 31, 1845, 167; William Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. II," *Advent Herald*, January 7, 1846, 171; William Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. III," *Advent Herald*, January 13, 1846, 177–78; William Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. IV," *Advent Herald*, February 2, 1846, 203–4; William Miller, "Letter from Wm. Miller," *Advent Herald*, February 11, 1846, 2–3; William Miller, "A Sermon," *Advent Herald*, February 18, 1846, 11–12; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Miller," *Advent Herald*, May 6, 1846, 99; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. William Miller," *Advent Herald*, September 2, 1846, 30; William Miller, "Address to the Public," *Advent Herald*, September 9, 1846, 33; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," *Advent Herald*, September 16, 1846, 46; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," *Advent Herald*, November 25, 1846, 127; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Miller," *Advent Herald*, December 23, 1846, 158–59; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Miller," *Advent Herald*, February 3, 1847, 207; William Miller, "The Parable of the Leaven," *Advent Herald*, February 17, 1847, 14; William Miller, "A Sermon," *Advent Herald*, April 6, 1847, 65–66; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," *Advent Herald*, May 8, 1847, 111; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," *Advent Herald*, October 16, 1847, 86; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Miller—The 'Shut Door' Doctrine Repudiated," *Advent Herald*, November 13, 1847, 119; William Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," *Advent Herald*, January 8, 1848, 182.

¹⁷¹ For comparison, Miller's first articles in the main Millerite magazine took up half the first issue, starting on the front page, whereas his last article is buried on page six in the smaller print of the issue. See *Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1840; *Advent Herald*, January 8, 1848.

¹⁷² Bliss, *Memoirs*, 368–70.

¹⁷³ For Miller's calls for unity and a Christian spirit, see Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," 46; Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," 127; Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," 111.

¹⁷⁴ Miller, "Letter from Bro. Wm. Miller," 182; Bliss, *Memoirs*, 360–66.

His death spared him from seeing his followers breaking up into even more factions, some becoming organized denominations on their own.

In January 1848, Miller lost most of his sight. He still did light work around the house, and kept up some correspondence with the help of his children. In April of the following year, his health began to deteriorate quicker, and over the summer and fall he suffered greatly. The last months of the year he “was confined mostly to his room.” When it became clear that death was at the door, the family telegraphed Himes, who hurried to the deathbed of his closest friend. Several days later, on December 20, 1849, Miller passed away.¹⁷⁵

3.3.8 Conclusion

Miller became a Deist when he felt the biblical message was imperfect and thus proven to be uninspired human literature rather than the Word of God. Eventually Deism did not offer him a clear worldview either, nor a peace of mind. Miller worried that annihilationism was its conclusion, which did away with any hope of an afterlife. Reading history showed it to be full of the same human depravity that Deists denounced in the bloody history of the Bible and the Church, and evil did therefore not flow from ignorance and priestcraft but the human heart. When Miller sought to live for the virtue of patriotism and enlisted in the army, he soon found himself in the War of 1812, and the military experience disabused him of notions of patriotic glory. Miller then retired to a simple life and turned his back on his promising civic career to become a full-time farmer. But the monotony of rustic life was no more enjoyable to him as a grown man than it had been when he was growing up. Finally Miller became convinced of his own wickedness and eventually reached out for a Savior and converted. When challenged by his Deist friends concerning his new-found faith, he set out to study the Bible systematically from cover to cover to verify his own hope in its divine message. Not only were Miller’s questions satisfied, but Miller interpreted some aspects of the prophecies in a new way, with the resulting conclusion that the Second Coming would take place in 1843/44. Miller’s attempt to share this message slowly grew until it became a nationwide sensation in the early 1840s. Miller’s own followers refined the time to October 22, 1844, and when that prediction failed, the movement faltered and fragmented. The disappointment did not undo Miller’s convictions, who died several years later in 1849 in the firm belief that the return of Jesus was imminent.

There is little known about the works that Miller read or was acquainted with before and during his Bible study. As has been noted, general prophetic ideas must have been familiar to him from sermons and general education, as well as from the few commentaries he is known to have read early on. As Miller’s efforts grew into a movement, he was bound to read and discuss much more: There were works from adherents as well as critics. The shared convictions of others must have strengthened Miller’s views, especially when they offered supporting arguments or refined his arguments. Millerites also republished works by

¹⁷⁵ For Miller’s deteriorating health and death, see Bliss, *Memoirs*, 366, 370, 376–378.

contemporary and old historicists through the ages to show that historicism had ancient roots and was widely regarded as normative. Miller does not seem to mention this much in his own writings, but this must have boosted his own beliefs. It was the reverse with the critics. Because their interpretation schemes differed they could not press a united front against Miller; one would critique a point in Miller's views that the next one would defend, and so on. Miller could therefore glean support for all his points from his supposed critics. This meant that none of the proffered alternatives were convincing to Miller, and on top of that he felt they went against the general theology of the Bible. Taken together, it seems Miller had a general knowledge of historicism and that reasoning along historicist lines he reached some of its conclusions (such as the joining of chapters 8 and 9 in Daniel to date the Second Coming) independently from others.

Miller's unique configuration of historicism was to a large extent counterstream. In the United States a positive outlook on the present and the future generally prevailed. Campaigning the traditional doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ proved to be a volatile matter at the time, derided both by skeptics and much of the clergy. Miller claimed not to have suspected that such a cold rejection awaited him. That may be true on one level, but at the same time, according to the traditional take on the Second Coming, the last times would be troublous and full of unbelief with but few saved. Miller himself also acknowledged that his views of human nature were dark. Taken together, this means that Miller probably saw himself living in a corrupt time, which fit with his understanding of the last times. In this way Miller's views of society and prophecy interacted, just as they did in the eschatology of optimist postmillennialists, simply with a very different outcome. Historical events influenced Miller's reading of prophecy more directly as well. When one reads his lectures, the momentous changes of Miller's age feature prominently in the last acts of the prophecies. There one reads about the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, the fall of the Papacy in 1798, the Second Great Awakening, the many reform movements, the Missionary Movement, the Industrial Revolution (with its increase of knowledge and technology), atheism and Deism. Yet one cannot escape the observation that before Miller started studying the Bible in earnest, his autobiographies and letters do not breathe a sentiment of one who feels he lives in momentous times or that most of the events listed occupied much of his thought. Silence does not mean absence, and yet it seems that the strongest reason Miller became convinced of the imminent end was prophetic arithmetic. Once the calculation had been affirmed, it was but natural to fill the last prophecies with the most notable events and changes of his age.

Miller's character proved to be just the catalyst for a prophetic movement. In his search for meaning and purpose, Miller sought clarity and harmony. He accepted Deism over Christianity for this reason, and rejected it in turn for the same. He resolved not to embrace Christianity until he had assured himself that the Bible was God's Word—which meant to see whether the Gospel he had accepted proved to be written in a book that was clear and harmonious. This search for harmony lent itself well to system building and Miller advanced

a historicist reading of Daniel 8. To him the chapter and its message was not only clear, it was important, urgent, and called for immediate action. Once Miller had overcome his own reluctance and timidity, he went all in. Time, money, health, and effort—all was sacrificed to the cause. Had Miller not persisted and trudged on for nearly a decade alone before he met Himes, it is unlikely that anything like the Millerite Movement would have occurred.

3.4 Textual Dynamics

3.4.1 Introduction

In the earlier part of the nineteenth century, the landscape of prophetic interpretation was not unified. The old interpretation of Antiochus foreshadowing Antichrist in Daniel 8 still existed. But many Christians had historicized the chapter in one way or another, seeing the last horn as yet another power—usually that of Rome or Islam—and the 2300 days (Dn 8:14) as 2300 years. According to the calculations of many commentators on both sides of the Atlantic, the period reached to the middle of the nineteenth century, though there were different ideas about the start and end dates of the period and what would take place at its end.¹⁷⁶ And though the Second Great Awakening had had a religious and conservative influence upon the nation, other readings of prophecy existed besides historicism. Unitarians, Universalists, and Deists believed the prophecies were opaque and hard to understand, accepting preterism. Liberal theology and biblical criticism was only nascent in the States at this time. In fact, one of Miller's critics, Moses Stuart, would become known as the father of biblical exegesis in the United States.¹⁷⁷ Besides historicism and preterism, there were of course Christians who did not study prophecy at all or did not believe in it.

Miller was a historicist and read the last horn (Dn 8:9–13) as Rome (pagan and papal) and the 2300 days as years. At the end of the period—which he dated by seeing the 490 years of Daniel 9 as its first part—Miller believed Christ would return to earth. None of these elements in and of themselves, or a constellation of some of them together, was uncommon in the historicist school. What set Miller apart was the unique configuration of his system—it did not overlap completely with any other system, and yet overlapped enough to be both appealing and difficult to entirely refute. Yet despite its near universal fame at the time, its influence collapsed with the movement when the prediction eventually failed. Apart from the groups that came out of the Adventist Movement and still valued his ideas, for Protestants at large Miller's prediction served, paradoxically, as a widely valued call to investigate the prophecies and dust off the doctrine of the Second Coming, and then as a case of warning against date setting and a confirmation to other schools of prophetic interpretation that historicism had disproven itself.

¹⁷⁶ Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 4:404–5.

¹⁷⁷ John H. Giltner, *Moses Stuart: The Father of Biblical Science in America*, Biblical Scholarship in North America 14 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988).

This section will go into Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 in detail to see what textual dynamics were at play in his reading. This will be done by giving an overview of his writings on Daniel and then his interpretation of chapter 8 will be analyzed and how it fit into his reading of the overall book.

3.4.2 Writings on Daniel

Miller wrote several short books and pamphlets, somewhere between one and two hundred articles, and several hundreds of his letters have been preserved.¹⁷⁸ Miller's crucial thesis was the dating of the Second Coming and this made the prophecies in the Book of Daniel fundamental to his works in general, since he derived his calculations from that prophet.

Miller's first work was a series of sixteen articles published in the local newspaper *Vermont Telegraph* starting on May 15, 1832.¹⁷⁹ Some of the articles explained the prophecies of Daniel and were the precursor to Miller's subsequent writings. In 1833 Miller published a pamphlet entitled *Evidences from Scripture & History of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year A. D. 1843, and of His Personal Reign of 1000 Years*.¹⁸⁰ It was colloquially known as his Lectures. Three of six chapters discuss the prophecies of Daniel, with a focus on Daniel 8.¹⁸¹ The pamphlet sets forth Miller's prediction, as is clear in the title, that the Second Coming would take place "about" 1843. Miller rewrote and lengthened this work and published it under nearly the same title in 1836.¹⁸² It contained sixteen lectures, with an additional lecture added in 1838 and two more in 1840.¹⁸³ Of the nineteen total, four lectures were on Daniel's prophecies, with one focusing on chapter 8.¹⁸⁴ From 1840 to 1842 Miller wrote and published many booklets. Most of them, together with some old articles and new material, were compiled in two books: *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology, Selected from Manuscripts of William Miller with a Memoir of His Life in*

¹⁷⁸ Miller's incoming and outgoing correspondence is around eight hundred letters and is kept at the Jenks Memorial Collection of Adventual Materials, Aurora College, Aurora, IN. See "The Jenks Memorial Collection of Adventual Materials," Aurora University, <https://aurora.edu/academics/library/jenks-collection/index.html>. The letters have also been microfilmed. See reels 11–12, section 5, in "The Millerites and Early Adventists," Center for Adventist Research.

¹⁷⁹ For what is known about the article series, see "The Slow Acceptance of the Call to Public Ministry (1823–early 30s)" in section 3.3.4.

¹⁸⁰ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History of the Second Coming of Christ about the Year A. D. 1843, and of His Personal Reign of 1000 Years* (Brandon, VT: Vermont Telegraph Office, 1833). This first pamphlet was republished several times. Of these at least one is extant. See 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*, 3rd ed. (Syracuse, 1835).

¹⁸¹ Chapters 1–3. Daniel 8 is discussed in chapters 1 and 2. Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12–18.

¹⁸² Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*. The book was republished many times with the same title: Troy, NY: Elias Gates, 1838; Boston: B. B. Mussey, 1840; Boston: Moses A. Dow, 1841; Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842; and as vol. 2 of Miller's works: Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841; 1842; see also William Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ; About the Year 1843. Comprising an Introduction, Twelve Lectures, and the Texts of Seven Additional Lectures* (Sandy Hill, NY: G. & E. Howland, 1842).

¹⁸³ "Lecture IV" [on Dn 9] and "Lecture XVII" [on Rv 12], Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 56–72, 244–61; "Lecture XVII" [on Lv 26], Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 250–63.

¹⁸⁴ In the 1842 version, which will be cited throughout henceforward, these were Lectures III, IV, VI, and VII. Lecture III centered on Daniel 8. Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 39–75, 86–114.

1841¹⁸⁵ and *Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth of Matthew; the True Inheritance of the Saints; the Cleansing of the Sanctuary; the Typical Sabbath; and a Review of Dimmick* in 1842.¹⁸⁶ Of this material much pertained directly to Miller's interpretation of Daniel: A summary of Miller's hermeneutical principles¹⁸⁷ and a dictionary of symbols and their explanations,¹⁸⁸ both foundational to his prophetic interpretation; a survey of his beliefs;¹⁸⁹ a world history chronology which incorporated Daniel's time periods,¹⁹⁰ and an essay on those periods;¹⁹¹ and Miller's defense of his interpretation of Daniel against his critics.¹⁹² Apart from Miller's

¹⁸⁵ William Miller, *Views of the Prophecies and Prophetic Chronology, Selected from Manuscripts of William Miller with a Memoir of His Life* (Boston: Moses A. Dow, 1841); republished with same title (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842) and as vol. 1 of *Miller's Works* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841; 1842).

¹⁸⁶ William Miller, *Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth of Matthew; the True Inheritance of the Saints; the Cleansing of the Sanctuary; the Typical Sabbath; and a Review of Dimmick*, Miller's Works 3 (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842).

¹⁸⁷ William Miller, "Mr. Miller's Letters. No. 5. The Bible Its Own Interpreter," *Signs of the Times*, May 15, 1840, 25–26; William Miller, "Rules of Interpretation," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 20–24.

¹⁸⁸ William Miller, "Explanation of Prophetic Figures," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 25–32.

¹⁸⁹ This work was written for John Hayward's regular title *The Book of Religions*, a collection and commentary on all Christian creeds. The synopsis first appeared in *Signs of the Times* and was republished several times, as an article in Millerite magazines, in *Views*, and as a pamphlet. William Miller, "Mr. Miller's Views," *Signs of the Times*, May 1, 1840, 20–21; William Miller, "Miller's Views on the Second Coming of Christ," in *The Book of Religions; Comprising the Views, Creeds, or Opinions, of All the Principal Religious Sects in the World Particularly of All Christian Denominations in Europe and America; to Which Are Added Church and Missionary Statistics, Together with Biographical Sketches*, ed. John Hayward (Boston: G. W. Cottrell, [1842?]), 170–76; William Miller, "Synopsis of Mr. Miller's Views," *Midnight Cry*, November 22, 1842, [2]; William Miller, "Synopsis of Miller's Views," *Signs of the Times*, January 25, 1843, 145–50; William Miller, "Synopsis of Miller's Views," *Midnight Cry*, February 24, 1843, [1–5]; William Miller, "Synopsis of Miller's Views," *Midnight Cry*, June 15, 1843, 105–9; William Miller, "Synopsis of Mr. Miller's Views," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 32–35.

¹⁹⁰ William Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ," *Signs of the Times*, August 15, 1840, 80; William Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ. Corrected," *Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1840, 144; William Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 36–39; William Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ," in *The First Report of the General Conference of Christians Expecting the Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, Held in Boston, Oct. 14, 15, 1840*, 94; Miller, "Second Coming of Christ" in *The Book of Religions; Comprising the Views, Creeds, or Opinions, of all the Principal Religious Sects in the World Particularly of All Christian Denominations in Europe and America; to Which Are Added Church and Missionary Statistics, together with Biographical Sketches*, 174–75; William Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ," *Midnight Cry*, January 27, 1843, [8].

¹⁹¹ William Miller, "A Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," in *First Report*, 83–93; William Miller, "A Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 40–53.

¹⁹² Vs. Ethan Smith and David Cambell: William Miller, "Mr. Miller's Reply to Cambell, Smith, and Others, on the Little Horn in Daniel's Fourth Kingdom," *Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1840, 1–2; William Miller, "A Review of Ethan Smith's and David Cambell's Exposition of the 'Little Horn,' and Return of the Jews," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 172–81. Vs. David Cambell again: William Miller, "Mr. Miller's Reply to Mr. Cambell," *Signs of the Times*, June 1, 1840, 34–35; William Miller, "Letter III. To Mr. Cambell, on the Little Horn, the Evening and Morning Vision, Jews' Return, and Millennium before the Resurrection," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 232–35. Vs. John Dowling: William Miller, "Mr. Miller's Review of Dowling," *Signs of the Times*, August 1, 1840, 67–68; William Miller, "Miller's Reply to Dowling. No. 2," *Signs of the Times*, August 15, 1840, 74–75. These articles were republished as "Brief Review of Dowling's Reply to Miller. No. I" and "Review of Dowling. No. II," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 182–91. Vs. L. F. Dimmick: William Miller, *Review of a Discourse, Delivered in the North Church, Newburyport, on the Last Evening of the Year 1841*, by L. F. Dimmick, *Pastor of the Church* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842). Republished in Miller, *Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth of Matthew*. Vs. Moses Stuart: William Miller, *Miller's Reply to Stuart's "Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy," in Three Letters, Addressed to Joshua V. Himes* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842). Republished as William Miller, "Miller's Reply to Stuart, on

lectures (*Evidence*), which was his main work, the most notable of these writings for his interpretation of Daniel 8 are an article explaining “the cleansing of the sanctuary” (Dn 8:14)¹⁹³ and *Wm. Miller’s Apology and Defense*, published on August 1, 1845, the year after the final prediction of October 22, 1844 had failed.¹⁹⁴

Besides these publications, Miller wrote plenty of articles in the Millerite magazines, nearly all of them during the years 1840 to 1844. Many of these articles touch on the prophecies of Daniel. Lastly, there is Miller’s unpublished correspondence, but Miller mentioned the prophecies in his letters as well.¹⁹⁵ Having reviewed Miller’s writings on Daniel, his interpretation of chapter 8 will now be analyzed.

3.4.3 Exposition of Daniel 8

Introduction to the Vision (vv. 1–2)

According to Miller, vv. 1–2 gave the date, time, and location of Daniel’s vision. Miller dated the third year of Belshazzar (v. 1) to 553 BC. The timing of the vision was “in the day time,” when the prophet was “at the palace” most likely “to transact business relating to the state.” This was in contrast to the visions in chapters 2 and 7, which were dreams that occurred at night.¹⁹⁶ The distinction is only important because Miller believed that the phrase “the vision of the evening and the morning” (v. 14) referred to chapters 2 and 7 (night vision) and chapter 8 (day vision), as will be seen later.

The Ram (vv. 3–7, 20)

The two-horned ram signified the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, as explained by Gabriel in v. 20.¹⁹⁷ The shorter horn represented the Median dynasty, and the later, taller horn represented “the Persian line of kings under and following the reign of Cyrus the Persian, son-in-law of Darius the Mede.” That the second horn was later and larger meant that the Persian dynasty was the more “powerful” and also the later dynasty in the kingdom.¹⁹⁸ The ram’s

Prophetical Interpretation, and the Designations of Time in Daniel and John. In a Series of Letters to Joshua V. Himes,” *Signs of the Times*, November 30, 1842, 81–84; William Miller, “Miller’s Reply to Stuart, on Prophetical Interpretation, and the Designations of Time in Daniel and John. In a Series of Letters to Joshua V. Himes,” *Midnight Cry*, February 10, 1843, [9–16].

¹⁹³ William Miller, “Cleansing of the Sanctuary,” *Signs of the Times*, April 6, 1842, 1–2; William Miller, *Letter to Joshua V. Himes, on the Cleansing of the Sanctuary* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842); William Miller, “Letter to Joshua V. Himes, on the Cleansing of the Sanctuary,” in Miller, *Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth of Matthew*.

¹⁹⁴ Miller, *Apology and Defence*; William Miller, “Miller’s Apology and Defense,” *Advent Herald*, August 13, 1845, 1–6.

¹⁹⁵ The correspondence that has been preserved is located in the Jenks Memorial Collection at Aurora College, Aurora, Indiana. It was put on a microfilm fifty years ago but the quality is poor. Reels 11 and 12, section 5, “The Millerites and Early Adventists, 1840–1870,” University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, MI, 1978. Unfortunately, the collection has not been digitized yet. The correspondence is both incoming and outgoing. It is only a part (probably just a fraction) of what Miller wrote during his heyday, and only extends through the year 1842.

¹⁹⁶ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 44.

¹⁹⁷ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 44.

¹⁹⁸ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 44.

“pushing westward, and northward, and southward” (v. 4) showed that the Medes and the Persians “would push their conquests to three points of the compass, north, west, and south, and that no government would be able to stand before their power, or resist their conquest. This was fulfilled under Cambyses, Xerxes, and other Persian monarchs.”¹⁹⁹

The Goat

The goat that defeated the ram was “the king of Grecia” as the angel explained (v. 21), that is, the Grecian “kingdom.”²⁰⁰ The great horn of the goat symbolized “the first king” of Grecia, who was Alexander the Great.²⁰¹ As the goat sped from the west towards the ram it came “on the face of the whole world” and “touched not the ground” (v. 5) to show that Alexander would conquer the world swiftly.²⁰² That the great horn “was broken” (v. 8) signified Alexander’s death.²⁰³

The four horns that arose in its place signified the “four kingdoms” (v. 22) that arose after Alexander. “After his death, four of his principals divided his empire” “into four parts, towards the four points of heaven, Persia in the east, Syria in the north, Macedon and Europe in the west, Egypt and Africa in the south.”²⁰⁴

The Last Horn (vv. 9–14, 23–26)

The Roman Power (Pagan and Papal)

Vv. 9–12 described yet another horn which was then explained to be another king in vv. 23–25. Miller saw this king or kingdom as the Roman power (covering its entire history after it came into contact with God’s people). In his earliest writings,²⁰⁵ Miller applied vv. 9–11 and 23 to “pagan Rome” and vv. 12 and 24–25 to “papal Rome.” This “little” horn came “out of one of them” (v. 9)—“meaning one of the four kingdoms into which Alexander’s [kingdom] was divided.”²⁰⁶ It then “waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land” (v. 9). This verse located Rome’s origin and the directions of its

¹⁹⁹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12.

²⁰⁰ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 45.

²⁰¹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 45 On Alexander being the “first” king of Greece, Miller explains: “He was not the first king of Macedonia, but the first that had all Grecia under his control, and that conquered the world.” Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 45.

²⁰² Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 45.

²⁰³ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 45.

²⁰⁴ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 45 In *Evidences*, Miller refers to the western territory as “Macedon and the Grecian Isles.” Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13.

²⁰⁵ The *Vermont Telegraph* articles and *Evidences*.

²⁰⁶ William Miller, “A Review of Ethan Smith’s,” 173. At another time, Miller read the verse as saying that the last horn “rose up out of one of the four winds of heaven, towards which the Grecian kingdom was divided.” William Miller, “Lecture I: Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew,” in Miller, *A Familiar Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew, and the Fifth and Sixth Chapters of Hosea. To Which Are Added an Address to the General Conference on the Advent, and a Scene of the Last Day* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1841), 17. This did not change the meaning for Miller—Rome still arose from the kingdom that lay toward that particular wind of heaven—but the reading shows an ambiguity that other historicists would later use.

conquests. The kingdom which Rome grew out of was “the western” one or “Macedon and the Grecian isles.”²⁰⁷ Macedon fell to Rome in 168 BC and the kingdoms in the south, east, and north²⁰⁸ eventually fell as well. In fact, “no other kingdom after this had the control of all these kingdoms but the Romans.”²⁰⁹ In v. 10 the horn grew up toward “the host of heaven” and threw some of it and the stars unto the ground and trampled on them. The heavenly host signified the Jewish nation and the stars its leaders (kings and high priests). The verse was fulfilled when the Romans subjugated the Jews and took authority away from their rulers.²¹⁰ The horn then magnified itself against the Prince of the host, took away the daily sacrifice, and cast down the place of his sanctuary (v. 11). The Prince was Christ, the daily sacrifice stood for the Jewish worship system, and the place of Christ’s sanctuary was Jerusalem. This verse came to pass when “the Roman government” magnified itself “even against Christ”—Miller probably had the Crucifixion in mind—and destroyed Jerusalem and thus brought an end to “the Jewish ceremonial law.”²¹¹

V. 12 reads: “And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered.” This was Rome turned papal, though Miller’s explanations are incomplete. In the *Vermont Telegraph*, Miller simply equated the power in this verse with the Papacy.²¹² He offered a bit more explanation in *Evidence* where he wrote that this verse showed the Papacy, “the abomination that maketh desolate, by reason of departing from the truth and leading off an host with them; they cast out and trampled on the true followers of Christ, and practiced and prospered in their iniquity.”²¹³ That is, because of its departure from the truth (“by reason of transgression”) the Papacy led many into apostasy (“an host was given him”), persecuted true Christians (“cast truth to the ground”) and was prosperous.

What Miller did not explain in regards to v. 12 was “the daily sacrifice.” In vv. 11 and 13 Miller explained it as the Jewish worship with its priesthood and sacrifices. How that understanding would have fit into v. 12—a prophecy about the Papacy—he left unsaid. Miller did not comment on every single phrase in the prophecies systematically, so it is precarious to interpret the silence here too much. Most likely another interpretation of “the daily sacrifice” was already competing for its place in Daniel 8 in Miller’s mind. According to this

²⁰⁷ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13.

²⁰⁸ Here is another example of Miller’s tendency to harmonize. The four kingdoms lay towards the four winds of heaven. North is not mentioned, but by equating “the pleasant land” with the north (“since Jerusalem was, and had been for a long time, under the control of the Assyrian or northern kingdom”) Miller saw all the four cardinal directions in the text. Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13. In the next edition of his Lectures, Miller may have abandoned this idea. There he simply quotes the verse without explanation, stating that Rome conquered “to the south and east and pleasant lands.” Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 50.

²⁰⁹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13.

²¹⁰ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13.

²¹¹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13–14.

²¹² “By this verse, I understand the papal power, or Christian abomination, represented by having an host, and casting down the truth.” Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131.

²¹³ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14. Miller seems to imply that the Papacy was apostate because of (“by reason of”) “its departure from the truth.”

interpretation, “the daily sacrifice” referred not to Jewish but pagan rite. The removing of the daily sacrifice (Dn 8:11–13; 11:31; 12:11) and the setting up, in its place, of the abomination of desolation (Dn 11:31; 12:11) signified the transition from paganism to the Papacy. Miller saw these two phases of pagan and papal Rome and the transition between them in many of the prophecies. And since Daniel 9 referred to these two phases as “abominations” Miller came to see the “daily sacrifice” in Daniel 8 as referring to the first abomination, i.e. paganism or pagan Rome, and called it “the daily sacrifice abomination.” Already in the *Vermont Telegraph* articles Miller applied the later mentions of “the daily sacrifice” (Dn 11:31; 12:11) to paganism and even called pagan Rome in Daniel 8:11 “the daily sacrifice abomination.”²¹⁴ By the second edition of *Evidence* Miller explained “the daily sacrifice” as referring to paganism or pagan Rome and not Judaism.²¹⁵

Gabriel explained the last horn in vv. 23–25 and those verses brought out some points not yet mentioned. As noted before, Miller applied v. 23 to pagan Rome. Verses 24 and 25 were applied to papal Rome. The last king was to arise (and come into contact with God’s people) “when the transgressors are come to the full” (v. 23)—that is, when the Jews had reached the height of their iniquity, God would allow them to make a pact with the Roman power which would then enter Jewish history for the first time.²¹⁶ The angel said that the last king would be powerful “but not in his own power” (v. 24). This referred to the fact that the Papacy received its power from the Roman Empire.²¹⁷ This transpired in two stages: When the ten kingdoms which arose out of the ruins of the Western Roman Empire had all become Catholic and thus loyal to the Pope by 508, and in 538 when the decree of the Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian concerning the supremacy of the Pope over the Christian churches went into effect.²¹⁸ The king “shall magnify himself in his heart” (v. 24) and Miller saw that language reflected in the

²¹⁴ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131.

²¹⁵ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 39–41. This interpretation was a comment on Daniel 8:13. That verse refers back to previous verses about what the little horn did, and it is conspicuous that when Miller summarizes how the description of vv. 9–12 fits with Rome he omits mentioning the taking away of the daily sacrifice (vv. 11–12). Miller is indeed hastening on to the 2300 in the passage, so the omission could be brevity. But it is notable that if Miller understood the daily sacrifice to mean paganism throughout the chapter, then events are not described in chronological order in v. 11, where the daily sacrifice is removed (paganism makes way for Catholicism in the sixth century) and then the place of Christ’s sanctuary is cast down (the Romans destroy Jerusalem in the first century). Or perhaps Miller still believed that the daily sacrifice signified Judaism in some instances. In either case, as far as I have read Miller’s co-workers and his opponents, they apparently did not see this as an issue, since they did not point out this seeming discrepancy.

²¹⁶ William Miller, “Brief Review of Dowling’s Reply to Miller. No. I,” 184; Miller, “Review of Ethan Smith’s,” 174.

²¹⁷ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14, 32; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 78; Miller, “Miller’s Reply to Cambell,” 1. The phrase was thus applied to Rome in its later (papal) phase. One could ask why it was not applied to the earlier phase (pagan) since in v. 9 the vision describes the horn growing “exceeding great” towards certain directions, but Miller (and others) applied that verse to pagan Rome and not papal Rome.

²¹⁸ William Miller, “A Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology,” 50; William Miller, *Dissertations on the True Inheritance of the Saints, and the Twelve Hundred Days of Daniel and John; with an Address to the Conference of Believers in the Advent Near* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 35–36; William Miller, *Remarks on Revelations Thirteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth*, Second Advent Library 47 (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1844), 6.

Antichrist prophecy of 2 Thes 2:4 where the Antichrist “opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God.”²¹⁹ Gabriel further said that the king “by peace shall destroy many” (v. 25). This prediction described the Papacy, which “by professing to preach the gospel of peace” destroyed and deceived many.²²⁰ The king’s downfall was foretold with the words that “he shall be broken without hand” (v. 25). This phraseology showed that divine and not human agency would bring down the king. His end would occur at the Second Coming when Christ would destroy the Papacy. The wording also echoed Daniel 2 where the Parousia was described as a “stone cut out of the mountain without hands” smashing the statue.²²¹

Not Islam

Some commentators believed that the last horn in Daniel 8 was Islam. In this scenario, Islam would reign until the end of the 2300 year period, and would then collapse (probably by the fall of the Ottoman Empire). This, in turn, would open the way for the Jews to return to their homeland and the Church, rid of the eastern apostasy and entering a revival (cleansing of the sanctuary) would enjoy the millennial reign. It is unknown when Miller first became acquainted with this application, but it was probably very early, since it was a reading of Daniel 8 that fit with the common view of the millennium and the return of the Jews, both of which Miller was familiar with throughout his life. In one of his biographical accounts Miller recounted evaluating those two ideas during his study years;²²² he may have looked into various applications of the last horn at the same time. As Miller went public with his views, he eventually faced the Muhammedan interpretation of the last horn of Daniel 8 and had to answer his critics.²²³

According to Miller, this interpretation of the last horn hit a snag right away. The first problem was the timing. The last horn arose out of one of the four Greek kingdoms (v. 9) “in the latter time” of their reign when the transgression of the Jews was “come to the full” (v. 23). These kingdoms, however, turned into Roman provinces, the last kingdom disappearing in 30 BC. This meant that the last horn must arise in that year at the latest. Moreover, the text meant that at the height of Jewish transgression God would suffer his people to join themselves with this power (because powers appeared in prophecy when they became part of the history of God’s people). The latest possible date for the height of the transgression of the Jews was the first century when they were punished by having their city destroyed and being scattered among the nations. But Muhammad arose centuries after both events. Islam could not be said to have arisen out of one of the four kingdoms or at the zenith of Jewish

²¹⁹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14.

²²⁰ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14.

²²¹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14.

²²² Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 14.

²²³ He replied to Ethan Smith and David Cambell on this point on the opening pages of the *Signs of the Times* and again to Cambell a few months later. Miller, “Miller’s Reply to Cambell,” 1–2; Miller, “Miller’s Reply to Mr. Cambell,” 34–35.

transgression.²²⁴ Secondly, this view of the horn made any reading of the host and its Prince difficult. If the host was the Jews and the prince their high priest, the timing of fulfillment must be while the Jews were still God's people (since the prophecy is about the heavenly host and not a rejected apostate people) and the sanctuary place thrown down must be the destruction of Jerusalem; but Muhammad arose centuries after the Jews ceased to be God's people and the Romans destroyed the Temple. If the host was the Church and the Prince was Christ, then what was the place of the sanctuary thrown down, and in what sense had Muhammad risen up like the Antichrist against Christ?²²⁵ Thirdly, the nature and actions of the horn did not fit Islam (but rather papal Rome). The king the horn symbolized was not mighty by his own power (v. 24), but Muhammad had surely been mighty by no borrowed power. This king destroyed the holy people "by peace," that is, under a Christian garb, by assuming the true priesthood and thus the power to judge supposed heretics (v. 25). Muhammad, on the other hand, did not pretend to the Gospel but was a heretic in the open, and he had not attacked God's people but apostate Christendom.²²⁶ Fourthly, the application of the last horn of Daniel 8 to Islam jarred against other prophecies which were about Rome and harmonized with Daniel 8. According to all commentators, Moses described Rome in Deuteronomy 28:49–50. Daniel 8:25 used the language of that passage and must thus be about the same power. The magnifying of oneself (v. 25) was reminiscent of other passages about the Antichrist (Dn 7:25; 2 Thes 2:5; Rv 13:4–6) which was the Papacy and not Islam. The king was broken without hand (v. 25) by the stone cut without hand in Daniel 2, which crushed the Papacy and not Islam. And finally if the last horn in Daniel 8 was Islam and not Rome, then this sequence violated the kingdom sequence of Daniel 2 and 7 which Daniel 8 was obviously following as well.²²⁷ This last argument was crucial because all of Daniel's prophecies ended with the Second Coming of Christ and the destruction of all earthly kingdoms—but the return of the Jews and the prolongation of the gospel age for a millennium could not possibly happen at the same time.²²⁸

Not Antiochus IV

Miller dismissed the idea that Antiochus IV Epiphanes was the last king in Daniel 8 out of hand in his early writings with a brief remark to the effect that Jesus referred to this power as yet future (Mt 24:15) and that the description fit the Roman power and could therefore not fit Antiochus.²²⁹ Later, he wrote an article to answer a critic who applied the last part of the chapter to Antiochus. In it Miller listed further reasons for excluding Antiochus from the

²²⁴ Miller, "Review of Ethan Smith's," 173, 174; Miller, "Letter III," 232–33.

²²⁵ Miller, "Review of Ethan Smith's," 174, 176. The dismissal of Muhammad's potential for standing against Christ is surprising, since Miller himself saw Islam as a deceptive heresy. See Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 117.

²²⁶ Miller, "Review of Ethan Smith's" 175–76.

²²⁷ For the harmonizing arguments, see Miller, "Review of Ethan Smith's," 174–76; Miller, "Letter III," 232.

²²⁸ Miller, "Review of Ethan Smith's," 176–77.

²²⁹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 40; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 49–50.

chapter. Most importantly, such application violated the parallelism of the three visions, such as the similarities between the little horn in chapter 7 and the little horn in chapter 8 and a day representing a year in symbolic prophecy. This parallelism was even mentioned explicitly by the text itself where Daniel spoke of chapter 8 as a vision “after (or like) that which appeared unto me at the first” (8:1).²³⁰ The symbol ‘horn’ stood for a king in the sense of a kingdom in all other instances in the chapter. Therefore it would be inconsistent to affirm that the symbol suddenly stood for but one individual king when it came to the last horn. Antiochus was strong in his own power but the king (kingdom) was strong in the power of another (v. 24). And the saint did not ask how long the last horn would last, but how long the vision would last (v. 13). Since the vision included entire kingdoms that came before Antiochus (such as Medo-Persia and Greece) and must therefore span centuries, the 2300 days could not possibly refer to but a bit over six years connected to Antiochus.²³¹

The 2300 Days and the Cleansing of the Sanctuary (vv. 13–14, 26)

The vision concluded, before moving to the angel interpreter, with a brief but significant exchange. After seeing the ram and the goat with its horns in vision, Daniel saw and heard two saints conversing. One asked the other: “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?” (v. 13). The one asked directed his reply to Daniel: “And he said unto me [Daniel], Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (v. 14). These verses showed how unreasonable it was to think it was forbidden or fruitless to understand the text. The dialogue was an invitation to study the topic and a promise that it could be understood. These holy beings would not ask a question about the vision in the prophet’s presence, address the answer directly to him, and he write it down if the matter was not intelligible.²³²

In the traditional interpretation, the question was seen as focusing on the actions of the last horn. How long would the vision about the removal of the daily sacrifice and the desolating transgression be, the time when both the sanctuary and the host would be downtrodden? In other words, for how long would the last horn do all these things? “Vision” here was thus limited to a part of chapter 8, the part concerning the actions of the last horn. In the historicist school, some commentators had already taken a different route. According to them, the saint

²³⁰ Miller’s addition. William Miller, “Review of Dowling. No. II,” 189. The English *after* can mean ‘like’ but the Hebrew אַחֲרֵי does not have that second meaning.

²³¹ For Miller’s refutation of a preterist reading of Daniel 8, see Miller, “Brief Review of Dowling’s Reply,” 182–87; Miller, “Review of Dowling. No. II,” 187–91.

²³² Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15. “The hearer will, at the first view of our text [vv. 13–14], perceive that there is something very important communicated in the question and answer given; or why are saints commissioned (as we may reasonably suppose) from the courts of heaven, to ask and answer the question contained in the text, in presence of the prophet? And that it concerned Daniel, and us for whom the prophet wrote his prophecy, to understand, is evident from the answer being given to Daniel, “and he said unto me,” instead of being given to the ‘saint,’ who made the inquiry. Then we are not treading on forbidden ground my dear hearer, to search to understand the meaning and truth of our subject.” Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 36.

did not ask about the duration of the last horn's atrocities but about the duration of the entire vision of chapter 8. Miller saw the question in such light.²³³ As noted before, Miller first thought "the daily sacrifice" stood for Judaism and "the transgression of desolation" for Rome (both pagan and papal).²³⁴ He later moved to the position that "the daily sacrifice" was paganism and "the transgression of desolation" was the Papacy (or Rome in general, Miller's writing was unclear on this point), two entities or abominations that reigned over God's people one after the other:

It is very evident, when we carefully examine our text [Dn 8:14], that it is to be understood as referring to Pagan and Papal rites, for it stands coupled with "the abomination of desolation," and performs the same acts, such as are ascribed to the Papal abomination, "to give both the sanctuary and host to be trodden under foot." See, also, Rev. 11:2, "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." This last text only has reference to the Papal beast, which was the image of the Pagan; but the text in consideration has reference to both Pagan and Papal. That is, How long shall the Pagan transgression and the Papal transgression tread under foot the sanctuary and host? This must be the true and literal meaning of our text; it could not mean the anti-Christian abomination alone, for they never desolated the Jewish church; neither could it mean Antiochus, the Syrian king; for he and his kingdom were made desolate and destroyed before Christ; and it is evident that Christ had an allusion to this very power, when he told his disciples, Matt 24:15, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place." I believe all commentators agree that Christ meant the Roman power—if so, then Daniel has the same meaning; for this is the very passage to which Christ alluded. Then the "daily sacrifice" means Pagan rites and sacrifices, and the transgression of desolation, the Papal; and both together shall tread under foot the "sanctuary and host."²³⁵

Pagan kingdoms had subjugated Judea from the time of the Babylonian invasions. However, since the vision of chapter 8 began with the Medes and the Persians (the ram), the question about how long pagan powers would suppress God's people could not refer to times before the vision's own *terminus post quem*. The question was therefore about the duration of pagan and papal oppression of God's people from the rise of the Medo-Persian Empire (when the ram began to push, v. 3) until the downfall of papal Rome (when the king would be broken without hand, v. 25).

²³³ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14; William Miller, "Miller's Answer to the Queries of 'a Subscriber,'" *Signs of the Times*, December 15, 1840, 143; Miller, *Reply to Stuart's "Hints,"* 17–18; Miller, "Brief Review of Dowling's Reply," 183–84.

²³⁴ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15.

²³⁵ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 40. Either the fine points of Miller's definitions and distinctions elude the author of the present work, or his inconsistencies eluded himself. On the one hand, "the daily sacrifice" denotes paganism from the days of the earliest kingdoms of Daniel until it was replaced by papism in the time of the fourth kingdom, the latter being called "transgression/desolation of abomination" (Dn 8 and 11–12). On the other hand, "the abomination of desolation" means the Roman power in general, since the Romans were still pagan when they destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple (Dn 9). How or whether Miller reconciled these usages seems to be unclear.

Miller interpreted the 2300 days as 2300 actual years. The Hebrew phrase for “days” was literally “evening-mornings”—as given in the margin of the King James Version, the English Bible translation of the time—but the phrase was universally translated as “days,” which Miller believed was its obvious intent.²³⁶ In symbolic prophecy, such as Daniel 8, a day symbolized a year. This Miller proved by pointing out how God had ordered days to be used in such prophetic relation to years on two occasions (Nm 14:34; Ezr 4:6) and that it was on this basis that the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 were calculated.²³⁷ To this Miller could have added the other time prophecies of Daniel and Revelation which a host of Protestant commentators had interpreted in like manner for centuries, and which he himself did as well. As to taking the days literally, Miller objected that even if one was willing to do so it could not be done: The period then amounted to only a little over six years, and yet, according to Miller’s understanding of the question in v. 13, the period measured the rise and fall of three kingdoms (ram, goat, last horn) and it was impossible for all of that to have taken place in such a short time.²³⁸

Chapter 8 therefore stated that the host and sanctuary would be trodden underfoot for 2300 years from the time of Medo-Persia (or when the ram began to push) to the end of the Papacy (when the last king would be broken). Yet this did not pinpoint a datable starting point. Miller pointed out here that Daniel was eager to understand the vision (v. 15), Gabriel was sent to explain it to him (v. 16) and told the prophet that the vision reached down to “the time of the end” (v. 17), “the time appointed” when “the indignation” would cease and “the end” would come to pass (v. 19). And yet despite Gabriel’s clear heavenly commission and stated intent, he did not explain the 2300 years on this occasion.²³⁹ In the very next chapter, Gabriel, whom Daniel had seen in “the vision” (Dn 9:21), returned to explain “the vision” (Dn 9:23). Miller affirmed that the vision referred to in those verses was that of chapter 8. It was in the vision of chapter 8 that Daniel had last seen Gabriel, and it was that vision Gabriel had said he would explain to Daniel. And now in chapter 9, the angel had returned to continue his explanation.²⁴⁰ This further explanation was about the seventy weeks, which Miller interpreted traditionally as 490 years from the decree to restore Jerusalem until the death of the Messiah. The decree was issued by Artaxerxes in 457 BC and Christ died in 33, 490 years later. These 490 years were the first part of the 2300 years, and thus a starting point was established for both periods.²⁴¹

²³⁶ Miller, *Reply to Stuart’s “Hints,”* 21.

²³⁷ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 51; William Miller, “Rules of Interpretation,” 21–22; William Miller, “Explanation of Prophetic Figures,” 27.

²³⁸ Miller, *Reply to Stuart’s “Hints,”* 22.

²³⁹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15–16.

²⁴⁰ For Daniel 9 being a continued explanation of Daniel 8 based on the mention of “the vision” in Daniel 9:21–23, see Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 16; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 51–52.

²⁴¹ For Miller’s interpretation of Daniel 9, see section 3.4.4.

Once the starting point of the 2300 years had been dated, it was a matter of simple calculation to figure out when they would come to an end. Miller suggested two ways to the reader to grasp the numbers. One could add the entire period to the starting date to find the end date: $2300 - 457 = 1843$. Or, since it was known that 490 years had passed of the total in 33, one could find how many years were yet to pass at that year ($2300 - 490 = 1810$) and add them to that date: $33 + 1810 = 1843$.²⁴² The 2300 years would thus end in the year 1843. Miller qualified the terminus date further, as will be seen shortly. It will be helpful first to go through Miller's interpretation of the terminus event. To do that, the actors or entities involved must be defined.

The question of v. 13 was how long the *host* and the *sanctuary* would be trodden underfoot. Since only the sanctuary and not the host is mentioned in the reply of v. 14, Miller only commented on the sanctuary in his *Vermont Telegraph* articles. The sanctuary stood for "spiritual Israel" since Daniel's prayer in chapter 9 (which mentioned the sanctuary, the same one as in the previous chapter) had been for all of Israel, scattered near and far (v. 7), that is, all true believers, not only Jews.²⁴³ This is inconsistent with Miller's own interpretation of Daniel 9, for he interpreted the sanctuary in Daniel 9:26 as the Temple in Jerusalem. In *Evidences*, Miller had abandoned this argument and in *Evidence* he defined the words in the following way: The sanctuary was "the temple at Jerusalem, and those who worship therein" and "the word *host* is applied to the people who worship in the outer court, and fitly represents the Christian church."²⁴⁴ Later in history, the "sanctuary" stood for "the true sanctuary which God has built of lively stones to his own acceptance, through Christ, of which the temple at Jerusalem was but a type."²⁴⁵ Thus Miller believed that with the changing of the eras from Judaism to the age of the Church, the referents of the words changed accordingly: "The host" was God's people—at first the Jews and then the Church; "the sanctuary" was the Temple of God—at first the Temple in Jerusalem with its worshipers, and then the Church. The nitty-gritties of the distinction between the host and the sanctuary were perhaps not clear, but this troubled neither Miller nor his critics. The main issue for all was the identity of the sanctuary since the answer focused on it alone. To verify his position before critics, Miller listed all the biblical referents of "sanctuary" and went through them by the rule of elimination. "Sanctuary" could refer to Jesus, heaven, Judah, the Temple in Jerusalem, the innermost sanctuary of the Temple ("the holy of holies"), the earth, and the saints. Neither Jesus nor heaven could be intended, for they were not impure in need of cleansing. Judah was no longer God's people. And the Temple (with the Most Holy Place) had been destroyed and thus could not be cleansed. To Miller, this left only the earth and the

²⁴² For the calculations, see Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I," 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 18, 31; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 54, 57, 73, 297; Miller, *Reply to Stuart's "Hints"*, 31.

²⁴³ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137.

²⁴⁴ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 41. The host "is properly the court, where the host stands waiting the return of our great High Priest." Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 46.

²⁴⁵ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 41.

Church as the possible meaning of God's sanctuary in v. 14 at the close of the 2300 years.²⁴⁶ And the Bible did indeed speak about how both the earth and God's people would be cleansed or justified at the end of time, as will be seen shortly. Miller therefore believed the sanctuary signified both the earth and God's people.

The host and the sanctuary were first trodden underfoot for 2300 years, and then they would be cleansed. "To be trodden underfoot" meant to be oppressed by foes:

[The Sanctuary was] trodden under foot by the Pagan kingdoms of the world, since the days of Daniel, the writer of our texts; then by the Chaldeans; afterwards by the Medes and Persians; next by the Grecians; and lastly by the Romans, who destroyed the city and sanctuary, levelled the temple with the ground, and caused the plough to pass over the place. The people of the Jews, too, were led into captivity and persecuted by all these kingdoms successively, and finally by the Romans were taken away and destroyed as a nation. . . . [The host or the Christian Church] are said to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth, having no continuing places, but looking for a city whose builder and maker is God.²⁴⁷

That is, the 2300 years measured the subjection of God's people to the kingdoms sequenced in Daniel 8. The downtrodden state would end when the sanctuary—God's people and the earth—would be cleansed or justified. This event was clearly explained throughout the Bible. The earth would be cleansed by fire when Jesus returned (Pss 46:6–10; 50:3; 97:3; Is 66:15–16; Na 1:5–6; Mal 3:17–18; 4:1–3; Mt 13:41–43, 49–50; 2 Thes 1:7–10; 2 Pt 3:10–13) and then renewed into a glorious state (Is 4:2–4; 66:22; Ez 28:18; Mal 4:3; Heb 12:27).²⁴⁸ The Church would also be cleansed at the Second Coming when Jesus would gather the wheat from the tares and glorify his saints in body and spirit (1 Cor 1:7–8; Eph 5:26–27; Phil 3:20–21; 1 Jn 3:2; Rv 19:8).²⁴⁹ Thus the calculation of the 2300 years and the interpretation of the cleansing of the sanctuary meant that the Second Coming of Christ would take place in 1843, when Christ would descend to the earth with all his angels, destroy the wicked, cleanse the earth and his people and reign with his saints on the earth in God's eternal kingdom.

Miller was careful to qualify his date. First, he made no claims to being a prophet. He had not received the date by private revelation but had reached this conclusion based on his study of Scripture. This calculation assumed that the present knowledge of history was chronologically accurate; if there was some error, the terminus of the 2300 years would end accordingly. But Miller believed the margin of error was only few years at the most, and as

²⁴⁶ For Miller's elimination of biblical candidates for "sanctuary" in Daniel 8:13–14, see Miller, *Letter to Joshua V. Himes, on the Cleansing of the Sanctuary*, 3–8. For the equation of the sanctuary as the Church, see also Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137; Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. IV," 145; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15, 40; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 41–42, 155–56, 281. And as the earth: Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 232; Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 47.

²⁴⁷ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 41.

²⁴⁸ Miller, "Cleansing of the Sanctuary," 9–12.

²⁴⁹ Miller, "Cleansing of the Sanctuary," 13–14.

far as he had studied, there was no obvious reason to expect an error.²⁵⁰ Second, Miller knew that the first objection of many would be the text where Christ stated concerning his return that “of that day and hour knoweth no man” (Mt 24:36; Mark 13:32). Miller pointed out that Christ in the very same passage taught people to study the signs of the times and to discern when the return of Christ would be near at hand. Moreover, Christ did not say that no man would know the *year*. And Miller did not specify the day or the hour, only that Christ would come sometime during the year 1843.²⁵¹

By the year 1843, Miller had the Jewish year in mind, which would run from March 21, 1843 to March 21, 1844. This clarification from Miller is first found in print early in 1843, but there seems to be no reason to doubt his honesty when he stated this had always been his understanding after his Bible study years.²⁵² During the high tide of the Advent Movement, many co-workers of Miller refined the basic chronological tenets underlying Miller’s system. These include some changes in the interpretation of the seventy-weeks prophecy, the acceptance of what was regarded as the better biblical Jewish calendar—that is, the Karaite reckoning rather than the Rabbinic one—, and the notice that the 2300 years should not be counted from the start of the Jewish year in 457 BC (spring) but rather from the fall since that was the time when the decree that started the period went into effect. To this they also eventually added the point that just as the spring feasts of the Law of Moses had been prophetic of events happening at the commencement of the Christian Era (the Crucifixion foreshadowed by Passover, etc.), so the autumn feasts symbolized events surrounding the Second Coming at the end of the Era. One of the fall festivals was the Day of Atonement, which had been the time when the sanctuary had been cleansed. The cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 was the antitype of that feast. According to the Karaite calendar the feast would fall on October 22, 1844, and that would be the time when the 2300 years would come to an end and Christ would return. Miller was not the author of these chronological developments. He had himself, however, speculated about the potential significance and implication of the fall feasts,²⁵³ and eventually became convinced of the date in early October, 1844. When the date passed he wavered between the interpretative options that his followers presented to explain the disappointment, but eventually fell back on his original thought, that the records of chronology might have contained a slight error, and believed there was a margin of error and thus some unknown and short time until Christ would return. Though

²⁵⁰ For Miller’s qualification of the date based on possible chronological error, see for instance Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 40.

²⁵¹ For Miller’s comments on Matthew 24:36, see William Miller, “A Review of Elder Levi Hathaway’s Letter on the Return of the Jews,” *Signs of the Times*, May 15, 1841, 30.

²⁵² Miller, “Miller’s Views,” 147; Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 24; Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message*, 38fn189.

²⁵³ “All the ceremonies of the typical law that were observed in the first month, or vernal equinox, had their fulfillment in Christ’s first advent and sufferings; but all the feasts and ceremonies in the seventh month or autumnal equinox can only have their fulfillment at his second advent. . . . If this should be true, we shall not see his glorious appearing until after the autumnal equinox.” Miller, “Letter from Wm. Miller,” 85.

Miller lived long enough to outlive the longest margin of error that Millerites had projected, he did not pass it by much, and died in 1849, still believing that Christ would come soon.

Gabriel's Explanation and Close of the Vision (vv. 15–27)

After Daniel heard the two heavenly beings converse about the length of the vision (vv. 13–14), a heavenly mandate went forth and Gabriel explained the vision to the prophet (vv. 15–26). Besides using this passage to explain the meaning of the symbols, Miller highlighted other points in it. Daniel “was very anxious to understand the vision” (vv. 16–19) and so the text yet again showed that it was not wrong of the reader to want “to understand and know too.”²⁵⁴ The most important point—which has already been mentioned elsewhere—was that “Gabriel was commanded to make Daniel understand the vision” (v. 16).²⁵⁵ Miller then connected this to the two later visits of Gabriel in chapters 9 and 10–12 where the angel also stated he was sent on the same errand, indicating that he had not finished making the prophet understand the vision in chapter 8. This was made explicit in 8:27 where Daniel claims that no one understood the vision—showing he did not understand it fully himself.²⁵⁶ Miller made this point about the connection between chapter 8 and the later chapters frequently, as will be seen in the next section.

3.4.4 Harmonizing Daniel 8 and the Other Danielic Visions

Miller interpreted chapter 2 and 7 in a traditional manner. The four metals of the statue represented the successive kingdoms to the end of the world: The Chaldeans, the Medes and the Persians, the Grecians, and the Romans.²⁵⁷ According to Miller, the Roman kingdom “still exists, although in a broken state, like iron and clay.” It had two phases, pagan and papal, and both united religion and state in their government (“mixing themselves with the seed of men,” Dn 2:43).²⁵⁸ The stone that struck and destroyed the statue and grew into a mountain symbolizes Christ. At his Second Coming, he will destroy the kingdoms of the world and the whole earth would become the kingdom of God.²⁵⁹ Chapter 7 was “another prophecy of the same things.”²⁶⁰ The four beasts rising from the ocean were different symbols for the same four kingdoms.²⁶¹ The ten horns of the fourth beast denoted the same as the ten toes of the

²⁵⁴ Daniel’s only thoughts or feelings described in vv. 16–19 is that he is so “afraid” at Gabriel’s approach that he falls upon his face. Miller does not explain how the passage shows Daniel’s desire to understand the vision. Perhaps he thought that God asking Gabriel to explain it to Daniel implied that the prophet wanted to understand. Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15–16.

²⁵⁵ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 16.

²⁵⁶ Miller made this point on Daniel 8:27 explicitly in an early article. Miller, “Period of Daniel’s Vision,” 171.

²⁵⁷ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 7; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 43.

²⁵⁸ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 43–44.

²⁵⁹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 7 Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 44, 228 Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 88–89, 95, 140.

²⁶⁰ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 7; see also Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 44.

²⁶¹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 7–9, 10; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 44–45.

statue, “the ten kingdoms into which the Western or Roman Empire was divided about A. D. 476.”²⁶² These ten horns in ch. 7 answered to the ten toes in ch. 2.²⁶³ The eleventh horn is the Papacy.²⁶⁴ The three horns which were plucked up were three kingdoms conquered by the Papacy.²⁶⁵ The “time, times, and the dividing of time” stood for the 1260 years of papal rule, from 538 to 1798.²⁶⁶ The Papacy had still continued after that period, though in a weakened state, and would continue until the Second Coming, when it would be destroyed (vv. 11, 21–22, 26).²⁶⁷ Chapter 2 had listed the sequence of the kingdoms and concluded with the transition from the last earthly kingdom to God’s kingdom at the Second Coming. Chapter 7 gave more details about that last conquest. The Son of Man would come in the clouds of heaven (v. 13)—this was clearly the Second Coming.²⁶⁸ The Judgment would commence (vv. 9–10, 22, 26).²⁶⁹ The fourth beast would be slain and cast into the fire (v. 9, 11, 26)—the Papacy and all the wicked would be destroyed in a consuming fire²⁷⁰ that would then renew

²⁶² Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131. Miller listed “the Goths, Huns, and Vandals” as the ones who conquered the West and yet did not include them among the ten kingdoms. Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9. Further in the text he offered a tentative list of the ten kingdoms: “The principle kingdoms were France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Great Britain—the lesser kingdoms authors disagree in—but Dr. Gill names Portugal, Scotland, Poland, Denmark, and Sweden. That the five first were a part of the Roman Empire there is no doubt, and but little doubt, that a part if not all of the last, are the ten kingdoms alluded to, by the ten horns.” Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12. In 1836, he quoted English expositor Edward Irwing’s roster: “France, Britain, Spain, Portugal, Naples, Tuscany, Austria, Lombardy, Rome, and Ravenna.” Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 46.

²⁶³ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Review of a Discourse*, 33.

²⁶⁴ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 46, 271.

²⁶⁵ In 1832 Miller identified them as France, Italy, and Germany, territory which the Pope gave to Charlemagne. Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131. In 1833, he corrected the list to Spain, Italy, and Germany. Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9. In 1836 he followed Irwing and identified them as Lombardy, Rome, and Ravenna. Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 46.

²⁶⁶ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 10, 11; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 47.

²⁶⁷ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9, 10, 11; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 47.

²⁶⁸ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9–10. Miller also believed that the phrases about the Ancient of Days spoke of the second coming, though it varies whether he applied the title to God the Father or the Son. Traditionally, Christ was seen as the Judge at the Final Judgment, but the Father was not excluded either. With that in mind, it is easy to see how Miller could have felt that some of the description fit the Son who returns to earth for the Judgment—the Ancient of Days sits down to judgment (v. 9) and fire streams from before him (v. 10), reminiscent of Christ’s blazing return (2 Thes 2); the Ancient of Days comes and judges (v. 22). On the other hand, the Son of Man comes in the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days (vv. 13–14) as if they are two, and this Miller felt fit better with the Father before whom Christ judges, to whom he presents the saints, and at whose right hand he sits (even at his return, see Mark 14:62). In that sense the title could belong to the Godhead and to each of the three persons. See William Miller to Truman Hendryx, August 17, 1834; William Miller, “Letter I: On the Second Advent,” in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 212. In his earliest works, Miller applied the title mostly to Christ but sometimes to the Father. Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. IV,” 145; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 5, 9, 10, 31, 40, 55; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 6, 17, 37, 47, 56. In later writings, Miller seems to have differentiated between the two, so that the Ancient of Days was clearly the Father. William Miller, “A Dissertation on the Judgment,” *Signs of the Times*, January 15, 1841, 154; Miller, “Explanation of Prophetic Figures,” 25; William Miller, “Lecture on the Harvest of the World,” in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 133; Miller, *Cleansing of the Sanctuary*, 15; Miller, *Reply to Stuart’s “Hints”*, 10, 41, 70.

²⁶⁹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I,” 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9, 10, 11; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 33, 46–48.

²⁷⁰ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9, 10, 11; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 46–47.

the earth. With the wicked perished and the earth renewed, the whole world would become the kingdom of God and the saints (vv. 14, 22, 27).²⁷¹

Miller effectively read Daniel 8 as a vision parallel to the previous ones in chapters 2 and 7. Several components of his interpretation brought this about. By identifying the last goat horn as pagan and papal Rome, the 2300 days as 2300 years, and the cleansing of the sanctuary as events at the Second Coming of Christ, all three visions traced the same long succession of kingdoms down to the end. The Second Coming of Christ and the founding of his eternal kingdom were now the crowning events of all three visions: The stone smashing the statue and growing into a mountain (ch. 2), the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven to judge, destroy his enemies in fire, and to reign forever (ch. 7), and the cleansing of the sanctuary—that is, of the church and the earth—upon his return (ch. 8).²⁷² Miller indeed believed that the text itself made this parallelism explicit. In the conversation between the saints (8:13–14) one had asked the other how long “the vision” would be and in v. 26 Gabriel had referred to the vision as “the vision of the evening and morning.” Miller concluded that Gabriel’s phrase meant the vision of the evening and the vision of the morning, that is, chapter 7 which was given at night (vv. 1–2) and chapter 8 which was given at daytime (8:1–2). (This by extension included chapter 2, because chapter 7 explained chapter 2, and because it was also given at night, see 2:1–3.) But why would Gabriel refer to the visions together like this? Because the visions spoke of the same course of history under different symbols and were in that sense one. So when the saints asked until when the vision would last (8:13–14), the end date (completion of the 2300 year period) would be the terminus for all the visions since they ended with the same events.²⁷³ Miller’s reading of Gabriel’s phrase was superficial; Gabriel of course referred back to the 2300 “evenings and mornings” of v. 14.²⁷⁴ The error was immaterial because the point was redundant anyway. According to Miller’s interpretation, the parallelism of the visions was seen throughout without angels making the point explicitly. This parallelism often strengthened Miller’s case for his interpretation of chapter 8. Most commentators agreed that chapters 2 and 7 traced history to the Second Coming. By pointing out the similarities between those chapters and chapter 8, the case was made for a similar interpretation of chapter 8. Miller pointed out the similarities of the little horn in chapter 7 and the last horn in chapter 8 to show that if the former represented Rome, so did the latter.²⁷⁵ Miller also pointed out that in other time prophecies each day equated an actual year. Consistency required that the same hermeneutics be applied to the 2300 days in

²⁷¹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 10, 11; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 48; Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, iv, 18–19, 61–62.

²⁷² Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 42, 55–57; Miller, “Review of Dowling. No. II,” 188.

²⁷³ To show that “the vision” in Daniel 8:13 refers to chapter 7 (and ch. 2) as well is the main bulk of Miller’s third Lecture (Question II). Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 39, 42–51, 55–57. See also Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 12; Miller, “Letter III,” 233.

²⁷⁴ Miller may have overlooked this connection because the “evening and morning” (v. 26) is in singular, whereas “days” (v. 14) is plural, which he may have thought would then be literally “evenings and mornings” and hence that Gabriel’s phrase did not refer to v. 14 but something else.

²⁷⁵ Miller, “Review of Dowling. No. II,” 188–90.

chapter 8.²⁷⁶ And for his new interpretation of the cleansing of the sanctuary, Miller could point out that since Daniel's visions were parallel and since the two previous ones obviously ended with the Second Coming of Christ, it was logical to believe the third vision did too.²⁷⁷ Once these points were granted, the result was that the end of all three visions ended with the same event, which could be dated.

In general Miller's interpretation of chapter 9 was traditional. The seventy weeks symbolized 490 years which started with a decree "to restore and to build Jerusalem" (v. 25) and reached until the days of Christ. Miller dated the period from Artaxerxes's decree in 457 BC until the crucifixion of Christ in 33.²⁷⁸ What was innovative was how Miller knitted chapters 8 and 9 together in manifold ways. The most important point that established the connection was the mission and time message of the angel interpreter. In chapter 8, Gabriel was told to make Daniel "understand the vision" (8:16). The angel himself exhorted the prophet to "understand" (8:17). But Gabriel had not finished explaining the vision in chapter 8; for instance, nothing was said about when the 2300 would start. Daniel himself admitted this when he finished his account of the vision in chapter 8 by writing that he did not understand it (8:26). Then in chapter 9, Daniel wrote that Gabriel, "whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning" (v. 21) appeared again. As the reason for his arrival Gabriel told the prophet in vv. 22–23: "I am now come forth to give thee . . . understanding . . . Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." The vision in which Daniel had seen Gabriel before (9:21) was the last vision Daniel had seen, that of chapter 8. The fact that Gabriel said he had come to make Daniel understand the vision showed that the angel was referring to chapter 8—making the prophet understand the vision had been his goal in chapter 8, and now in chapter 9 the angel referred to "*the* vision," showing he had a particular one in mind. The time message of chapter 9 fit charmingly into this context: In chapter 8, there was a time period that did not have a clear starting point and in chapter 9 there was a time period that had a very clear starting point. What Gabriel was doing was giving Daniel the starting point of the 2300 years by explaining the first 490 years of the period.²⁷⁹ Second, after Miller had written his Lectures, he accepted yet another proof—which was first presented by an associate—for the seventy weeks being the initial part of the 2300 years. The proof was based on what they regarded as a better translation of the opening of v. 24. Instead of "seventy weeks are determined upon thy people" the verb was better translated "cut off" so that the verse read: "Seventy weeks are cut off for thy people." What the angel meant was that the seventy weeks

²⁷⁶ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 51; Miller, "Rules of Interpretation," 21–22; Miller, "Explanation of Prophetic Figures," 27.

²⁷⁷ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 14.

²⁷⁸ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 16–18; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 52–53, 59–75.

²⁷⁹ For the connection between Daniel 8 and 9 based on "the vision" and the time message, see Miller, "Period of Daniel's Vision," 171; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 16–18; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 52, 54, 57.

were cut off the 2300 years as a period belonging especially to the Jews.²⁸⁰ Third, one of the purposes of the seventy weeks with its final event of the crucifixion was “to seal up the vision and prophecy” (v. 24). The vision in question here was again that of chapter 8. “Therefore the death of Christ would make Daniel’s vision [of the 2300 years] sure; for if a part of the vision should be exactly fulfilled, as to time and manner, then the remainder of the vision would be accomplished in manner and time, as literally as the seventy weeks had been.”²⁸¹ Fourth, Gabriel did not only give a prophecy of the seventy weeks in chapter 9. His prediction went far beyond that and indeed summarized the remainder of the 2300 years of chapter 8. First Gabriel mentioned how the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and the Temple after the close of the seventy weeks: “And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” (v. 26).²⁸² Then Gabriel summarized the remainder of the career of the Roman king (pagan and papal): “And unto the end of the war desolations are determined. . . . and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolator” (vv. 26b, 27b, KJV marginal reading). Previous visions had established that the Roman power would come to an end at the Second Coming of Christ and in chapter 8 this end was spoken of as “the time of the end,” “the last end of the indignation,” “the time appointed,” and “the end” (8:17, 19). In chapter 9, Gabriel spoke of the end of the Roman power (the consummation poured upon the desolator) so his explanation reached to the end there as well. The theme of the end featured there too: “The end” and the events leading to it was “determined” (9:26, 27).²⁸³ The harmonization of chapters 8 and 9 again strengthened Miller’s case: 457 BC was widely accepted as the starting point of the seventy weeks, and if Miller’s audience accepted the connection between chapters 8 and 9, they consequently had accepted the terminus of the 2300 years.

Miller harmonized the last vision of Daniel (10–12) with the previous ones as well and chapter 8 in particular: This was Gabriel’s third and last visit to Daniel to finish his explanation of the vision of chapter 8.²⁸⁴ Chapter 11 began with the kingdom of Medo-Persia

²⁸⁰ For Miller’s usage of the “cut off” argument, see Miller, *Reply to Stuart’s “Hints”*, 23; William Miller, “Answer to an Important Question,” *Advent Herald*, May 8, 1844, 110; William Miller, “Answer to an Important Question,” *Midnight Cry*, May 16, 1844, [1]. The verb *qata* literally means “cut off.” The figurative meaning of ‘to decree, determine’ seems to derive from the fact that the literal meaning of this hapax legomenon sounded odd in context. The literal meaning, however, was uncontested: Josiah Litch, a Millerite leader and educated minister, affirmed that “this rendering is sanctioned by all Hebrew scholars whom we have consulted.” Josiah Litch, *Judaism Overthrown: Or, the Kingdom Restored to the True Israel. With the Scripture Evidence of the Epoch of the Kingdom in 1843*, Second Advent Library 28 (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1843), 35.

²⁸¹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 62. See also Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 73; Miller, *Reply to Stuart’s “Hints”*, 28; Miller, “Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology,” 47.

²⁸² Miller, “Period of Daniel’s Vision,” 171; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 17; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 70.

²⁸³ For Gabriel’s explanation in chapter 9 summarizing the remainder of the 2300 years after the 490 years, see Miller, “Period of Daniel’s Vision,” 171; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 17; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 53, 70–71; Miller, *Reply to Stuart’s “Hints”*, 28–29; Miller, “Answer to an Important Question,” 110; Miller, “Answer to an Important Question,” [1].

²⁸⁴ Besides the content of the vision itself, Miller proved its connection to the previous chapters in the following way. First, the angel was the same as in chapter 9 (and hence chapter 8) because of the connection of vv. 11:1

like chapter 8. Four more kings were to rise and the fourth would attack Greece (v. 2). The counting to this particular king was done to show which king would commence the 2300 years. The fourth king was Artaxerxes, who attacked Greece and was therefore the (initial) fulfillment of the “ram pushing” (Medo-Persia attacking Greece), the very beginning of the vision in chapter 8. He was also the king who issued the decree which was the starting point of the 2300 years.²⁸⁵ Then Alexander the Great conquered the Persians and his kingdom was divided into four kingdoms (vv. 3–4),²⁸⁶ just as the goat in chapter 8 first had one and then four horns. The narrative then expounded on the history of the four kingdoms by following the two which eventually remained—the Seleucids in “Syria” and the Ptolemies in Egypt (vv. 5–13).²⁸⁷ The prophecy then moved on to the Romans and followed their history from their conquest of the Greek states until they crucified Christ (vv. 14–22).²⁸⁸ The first section of chapter 11 thus expounded on the seventy weeks in chapter 9, the first part of the 2300 years, from Artaxerxes to Golgotha.²⁸⁹ The history of the Romans was then showed from the angle of their connection with God’s people, from their pact with the Jews in the second century BC, until the Western Roman Empire fell (vv. 23–30)²⁹⁰ (the fragmentation of Rome into ten kingdoms, see ten toes in Daniel 2 and ten horns in Daniel 7). Shortly after the inpouring of

and 9:1, 21. Miller did not clarify enough what he meant; the verses show that the angel in the last vision strengthened Darius the Mede in the same year that Gabriel visited Daniel in chapter 9. Second, the angel said his mission was to help Daniel understand, “for yet the vision is for many days” (10:14). To make the prophet understand the vision had been Gabriel’s errand in chapters 8 and 9, as has been discussed before. Moreover, 10:14 used the same phraseology as 8:27, showing the vision referred to in both places was the same. Third, Daniel stated that this time around he understood the vision (10:1–2), “the vision” referring back to what he had previously seen, and understanding to the fact that this time around with the third visit of Gabriel had finished his task. Fourth, the angel told Daniel that he would make him known what would be at the last end of indignation, at the time appointed (8:16), and chapter 10 began with the words that Daniel received a vision, which was true, but that the time appointed was long. This showed that Daniel now understood the time appointed, i.e. the 2300 years. Fifth, the angel expounded on 10:14 in v. 21 when he stated that he would show Daniel what was “noted in the scripture of truth”—a reference to Daniel’s previous visions which he had written down (7:4). Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, “Period of Daniel’s Vision,” 171; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 18, 19; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 66, 74.

²⁸⁵ Miller, “Period of Daniel’s Vision,” 171; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 18–20; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 87. Miller believed the fourth king after Cyrus, the one who attacked Persia, was the one to issue the decree. He first counted the four kings as (1) Cambyses, (2) Darius, (3) Xerxes, and (4) Artaxerxes. This succession was correct except Miller missed Smerdis (who ruled after Cambyses). So Miller revised his count. He noted that the Bible (Ezra 4–6) mentioned only four kings after Cyrus: (1) Artaxerxes, (2) Darius, (3) Xerxes, and (4) Artaxerxes Longimanus. He identified Smerdis as the first Artaxerxes and conjectured that Cambyses was not included in the count probably because he reigned too short to have anything to do in either facilitating or hindering the rebuilding of Jerusalem like the other three kings.

²⁸⁶ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 20; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 87–88.

²⁸⁷ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 20–21; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 88.

²⁸⁸ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 21–22; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 84, 88–91; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew*, 57.

²⁸⁹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 22; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 91.

²⁹⁰ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 22–25; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 91–95.

the Barbarian conquerors, Rome turned from pagan to papal (a development mentioned in all the previous visions). The “daily sacrifice” (paganism) was removed from the Roman Empire and replaced by “the abomination of desolation” (Catholicism) when the Barbarian conquerors adopted Catholicism by AD 508 and acknowledged papal supremacy by AD 538 (v. 30).²⁹¹ The latter date was the commencement of the 1260 years of papal supremacy foretold in chapter 7. The text then described the papal persecution of God’s people (vv. 31–39) and thus expounded on the activities of the little horn in chapters 7 and 8. The persecuting king reigned until “the time of the end” (vv. 25, 40), that is, until 1798, the end of his 1260 year rule.²⁹² The remaining verses of Gabriel’s narrative described the 45 years from the end of the 1260 years to the end of the 2300 years (1798–1843). The Pope was taken captive by France and a few verses traced Napoleon’s career until his own defeat (vv. 40–45).²⁹³ With the sudden decline of the Papacy, the true Church had a respite of a few decades to finish her mission. Michael arose to help his people (12:1) and this was the American revivals which had started several decades earlier.²⁹⁴ They would be followed by the imminent “time of trouble” (12:1)²⁹⁵ and then the resurrection of the dead (vv. 1–3). That event would take place at Christ’s return, in or “about” 1843.²⁹⁶ Finally, two new time periods were discussed. The 1290 years started thirty years earlier than the 1260 years, with the conversion of the Barbarian kingdoms in AD 508, and ended in 1798 (v. 11). The 1335 years also started in AD 508 but extended to 1843, the blessing of Christ’s return (v. 12). The 1335 years added 45 years to the 1290 years, to cover the time from the close of the 1260 years to the close of the 2300 years.²⁹⁷ Thus the two final symbolic periods served to further knit together the time prophecies of chapters 7 (the 1260 years) and 8 (the 2300 years). And thus Miller had harmonized Daniel’s last vision with chapter 8 to cover the entire 2300 years, from Artaxerxes—the king who commenced the vision of chapter 8 by attacking Greece (“the pushing ram”) and the 2300 years by issuing the decree in 457 BC—to the first resurrection which would take place when Christ would return in 1843.

²⁹¹ Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 25–26; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 95–97.

²⁹² For the Papacy in Daniel 11, see Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II,” 137; Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 25–27; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 97–99.

²⁹³ For Daniel 11:4–45, see Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 27–28; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 104–8.

²⁹⁴ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 28; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 108–9, 158, 288–89.

²⁹⁵ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 28–29; Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 109; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew*, 27.

²⁹⁶ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 28–29; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 108–10.

²⁹⁷ For the 1290 and 1335, see Miller, “Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III,” 141; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 30–31, 37; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 29, 102–4, 237, 294–95, 296–97; Miller, “Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology,” 50–51; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth Chapter of Matthew*, 74.

3.4.5 Conclusion

Miller interpreted Daniel 8 in a fairly traditional historicist way. The ram and the goat were Medo-Persia and Greece, the four horns were the four kingdoms into which the Empire of Alexander was divided, and the last horn was the Roman power, at first pagan and then papal, which would last until the end. The 2300 days stood for 2300 actual years. The period started at the same time as the 490 years of Daniel 9, with the issuing of Artaxerxes's decree in 457 BC, and it would last until sometime in 1843, that is, to sometime during the Jewish year 1843/44. At that time the sanctuary would be cleansed (v. 14) which meant that God's sanctuary—the earth and his people—would be cleansed. This would take place when Christ would return to earth for the Last Judgment and to establish his eternal kingdom.

It is not clear whether Miller had read a similar interpretation of Daniel 8 before or during his study years, so direct influences on him remain unknown. It is possible that he read next to nothing—people using a similar hermeneutics can reach similar conclusions, and the historicist school was a widespread norm in the nineteenth century Anglophone world. But it is precisely because of how common historicism was that it seems questionable that Miller had never heard or studied interpretations similar to his own eventual conclusions. As to exegetical tools, Miller did not know Hebrew, which would have saved him misreadings (albeit those were minor and did not undo his main arguments). In fact, Miller was averse to the scholarship of his day. He was appalled by the theological scholarship of his day as it began using similar logic and ideas as Universalists, Unitarians, and Deists—to him this showed that academia was full of unbelief. The polemics with his critics did, however, help Miller in sharpening his ideas, but more often he and his critics spoke past each other, and Miller did not become convinced of their critique, even when his prediction failed.

The textual factors in Miller's further historicizing of Daniel 8 were as follows. First, Miller came up with some novel readings of some of the verses. He changed the reading of v. 13 based on harmonization with other visions: Miller believed the angel in v. 13 did not ask about the duration of the actions of the last horn, but how long the entire vision of Daniel 8 would last. This he did by reading the elliptical word of "daily" as "abomination" rather than "sacrifice" so that the question read: "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily [abomination = pagan powers], and the transgression of desolation [= papal power] be?" The question thus reflected a reading of Daniel 8 that harmonized it with the other visions, i.e. it extended over the course of the four kingdoms of chapters 2 and 7 rather than ending in the second century BC. Another novel reading was that of v. 26, which Miller saw as referring to the evening vision (of chapter 7 and thus of 2 as well) and the morning vision (chapter 8) as a proof that the visions referred to one and the same history, being coupled together by the angel. Third, Miller harmonized the visions based on the exchanges of Daniel and Gabriel: Gabriel was told to make Daniel understand the vision (vv. 16–17) and when this was unsuccessful in the first visit (v. 27), Gabriel returned two times more to make Daniel understand (9:22, 23, 25; 10:11, 14). The time period which Gabriel explained to Daniel in

the succeeding chapter (the seventy weeks of chapter 9) was therefore the first section of the 2300 years of chapter 8. This solved the problematic fact that Daniel 8 did not seem to give any clear indication of when the period started, whereas there was a rather strong consensus on when the seventy weeks began. Fourth, Miller interpreted the cleansing of the sanctuary in a new way. Most historicists regarded the sanctuary as the earth or the Church and its cleansing as its reformation and restoration. Miller, however, connected the cleansing to premillennialism in a different way, and believed it referred to the Second Coming, when Christ would cleanse both earth and Church. Fifth, this new reading of the sanctuary further harmonized chapter 8 with the other visions, which now all ended with the Second Coming.

3.5 Theological Dynamics

3.5.1 Introduction

Through the eighteenth century, particularly towards its close, and for the first half of the nineteenth century, more and more Protestant expositors of prophecy advanced the historicist reading of Daniel and Revelation. A notable feature of their systems was their treatment of the time prophecies. There was a consensus that the long prophetic periods were either past or would soon draw to a close. While some of these time periods had been interpreted by commentators for centuries—for instance, the 1260 years of Papal rule found in Daniel 7 and other places—others that had only occasionally been interpreted as long periods moved from the margin to the center. Important among these were the 2300 years of Daniel 8.²⁹⁸ It was the heyday of historicism. The historicist expectation of the end was strongest in England and in the United States, though the same interpretation could be found in continental Europe too, albeit to a much lesser extent. What made this period of prophetic interpretation pronounced was that it coincided and co-operated with the tremendous activity in revival and reformations that characterized the religion of the times. It was the time of the Second Great Awakening, reforms and movements in the areas of temperance and diet, Sunday schools, Bible societies, and foreign mission. The period was also the evening sun of historicism, though its adherents did not see it at the time. Schools of thought like Deism, Universalism, and “German neology” (liberal theology) were still branded as unbelief and ungodliness. But they were on the move from the margin to the center. When the nineteenth century would be over, liberal theology and biblical criticism would be far on its way to be the overall accepted academic norm in theology. Conservative theology would continue as well, but by then many had shed historicism and adhered to a new eschatology called Dispensationalism and futurism.

Miller was one of the historicists of the time who proposed an advanced historicist reading of the prophecies, with the 2300 years of Daniel 8 as his centerpiece. Like many others, he found the commencement date by seeing the 490 year period of Daniel 9 as an explanation of

²⁹⁸ For the historicism of the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century, see Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 2:749–82, 3:261–751, 4:9–851. For helpful overview maps of expositors of this period and their interpretation of the 2300 years, see Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, 3:270–71, 4:404–5.

the 2300 years, as the first part of the longer period. It was widely accepted that the 490 years began in 457 BC. This meant that the 2300 years would end in 1843 or 1844, depending on the counting technique. At the close of the period the sanctuary would be cleansed (Dn 8:14). Expositors agreed that the sanctuary stood for the Church, and perhaps the earth too, but disagreed on what its cleansing signified. Many believed the Church would be cleansed when Islam and the Papacy would fall, the Jews would return to Christ and to Palestine, and all the Church would be revived and thus cleansed from all errors into apostolic purity. Others believed the earth and the Church would be cleansed when Christ would return to cleanse the earth by fire into a new paradise and glorify his saints. Miller was among the latter.

Daniel 8 played a pivotal role in Miller's prophetic interpretation. Miller believed there were more than a dozen lines of proof in the prophecies that pointed to the return of Jesus in 1843/4. While he believed them to be independent, when they are analyzed they can be seen as twining around Daniel 8. This made sense, since it was conventional in interpreting the prophecies to read Revelation and other prophecies for the most part in the light of Daniel. While Daniel 8 was a mighty pillar in Miller's house of prophecy, it was not the single one, and his works presented a whole prophetic system. Daniel 8 also played an important role in Miller's theology because it gave the date of the year of the return of the Lord. This gave a more definite shape to some aspects of the history of redemption—the various threads of prophecy all tracing church history and converging in that date. It was also urgently practical for people must prepare to meet their God. Prophecy and theology were inseparable in Miller's writings. He did not write works on the history of redemption per se, but his views on it can be extracted from his exposition on the prophecies.

This chapter section (3.5) will analyze the dynamics between Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 and his overall theology. How did the interpretation interact with his view of redemption history and what did the prediction mean in praxis? Thus the theological dynamics in his interpretation of Daniel 8 can be brought into better focus.

3.5.2 Daniel 8 in Redemption History

History of the Captivity of God's People

Miller commenced his first lecture with the following words, with church history in general as well as the present in mind:

When we take a view of the trials, pains, afflictions, persecutions, poverty, and distress, which the people of God suffer in this world, we are almost led to exclaim with the apostle, "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." But no; we will not complain; for to suffer the short period of threescore years and ten, at most, will only give a greater zest to the glory which shall follow at the appearing of our Lord and Savior the great God and Jesus Christ.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 11.

Striking this chord was a fitting introduction to his lectures. It set forth the necessity of the Second Coming, which was the heart of Miller's message. A Christian life in this world was but the grasping of a promise yet to be fully realized. In this age believers were beset within and without by sin, death, and the devil. It was only at the Second Coming that full salvation from all evil would be realized: "One thing is certainly true, the church is no where [*sic*] promised deliverance, until the revelation of Jesus Christ from heaven." "Then, and not until then, 'will the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our Lord'" and "the church be freed from her outwards foes."³⁰⁰ This made the Second Coming not only indispensable but the very culmination, both of Christian belief and of human history.

The introduction also implied the base tone which Miller saw in history. In the present age, the Christian believer faced inward sin and outward foes. The external enmity was not only adversity or even persecution but the state of captivity. Ever since the Jews had been taken captive and their sovereign state under God undone in the sixth century BC, they, and then in turn the Church, had had to bow to an earthly sovereignty. Internal and external freedom would only be fully realized in the kingdom to come. This earthly captivity, spanning the time from the sixth century BC to the end of time, was the historical framework of the prophecies of Daniel, the four successive kingdoms which were depicted as ruling over the saints till the end of time.

God's people had, to a great extent, been free from the time of the earliest patriarchs until late in the history of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. By the time of the rule of Manasseh (r. 695–40 BC),³⁰¹ the dynasty became so corrupt that it was worse than the pagans around the chosen people (2 Chr 33:9). It was in the days of Manasseh that the scattering of the nation commenced (2 Kgs 21:10–14; 23:26–27; 24:3–4; Jer 15:4–7) when the king of Assyria took him captive to Babylon (2Chron 33:9–12). This occurred in the year 677 BC. Though Manasseh returned to his throne in Judah, thereafter he and the succeeding kings of Judah "only reigned by sufferance, paying tribute to Babylon."³⁰² (It is straining the point that Judah came under Babylonian sovereignty already with the temporary capture of Manasseh. Miller used this date for calculations, as will be seen later.) Incidentally, in the same year (677 BC), Esarhaddon king of Assyria took the last inhabitants of Israel captive and thus finished the scattering of the ten tribes.³⁰³ Judah's subjection to Babylon then reached full measure when Nebuchadnezzar attacked and destroyed Jerusalem and carried the people of Judah captive to Babylon. It was during his reign that Babylon was symbolized in Daniel's

³⁰⁰ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 58, 59.

³⁰¹ Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ," 38.

³⁰² Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 44. See also Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 256–57.

³⁰³ For the commencement of the captivity of God's people at the captivity of Manasseh, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 262, 2 (supplement); Miller, "Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," 45; William Miller, "Lecture on the Battle of Gog," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 80; William Miller, "Supplement: Exposition of Miller's Chart of the Chronology of the World, and of the Prophetic Periods," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 2; Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 43–44; William Miller, *A Lecture on the Typical Sabbaths and Great Jubilee* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 18–20; Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 11.

prophecies as the first kingdom to rule over God's people. Jeremiah had prophesied that the Jews would remain there for seventy years (Jer 25:11). Miller first dated the seventy years from the close of Jehoiakim's reign to the first year of Cyrus, 596–526 BC.³⁰⁴ Later he dated it from 607 BC.³⁰⁵

The Babylonian kingdom fell to the Medes and the Persians under the leadership of Cyrus and thus the seventy-year Babylonian Captivity ended.³⁰⁶ The Persian rulers issued a series of decrees that restored the Jews to some autonomy. Cyrus allowed the captive Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple in 536 BC (Ezr 1:1–11),³⁰⁷ Darius reinforced this decree in 519 BC (Ezr 6:1–14),³⁰⁸ and Artaxerxes Longimanus commanded Jerusalem to be rebuilt in 457 BC, thus making Judea a state again (Ezr 7:6–28).³⁰⁹ The Return to Judea and the rebuilding of the Temple and Jerusalem did not, however, mean that God's people were fully sovereign. The Jews remained subject to the new empire: "Then the Medes and Persians reigned over the Jews, and made them pay tribute, and put a yoke of bondage upon them, until Alexander the Grecian conquered them."³¹⁰

Alexander the Great conquered the Persians and thus the Jews came under Greek rule, the third kingdom to rule over God's people.³¹¹ After his death, the kingdom was divided into four among his generals.³¹² Two of those kingdoms rose to prominence, the Seleucids ("Antiochuses") in the north and the Ptolemies in the south. Their frequent wars were described in Daniel 11:5–13, but Miller sometimes did not parse the verses but referred interested readers to the history books, seeing that this part of prophetic interpretation was not in dispute.³¹³ A notable king during the time of the two warring Hellenist kingdoms was Antiochus IV who persecuted the Jews. Miller did not believe his persecutions were part of any prophetic prediction, and therefore only mentioned him when debating with preterist critics. In his Lectures Miller did however include those events when he summarized the fate of God's people under Greece:

[After Alexander conquered the Persians,] the Grecians became the masters of Judea, and continued the yoke of bondage, carrying away into captivity many of the principal citizens of Jerusalem, and obliging them to pay tribute, and their young men to serve as soldiers in their armies; destroying their riches, defiling their sanctuary, and compelling

³⁰⁴ William Miller, "A Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ," 39; Miller, "Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," 42; William Miller, "The Opposition—Mr. Miller," *Signs of the Times*, May 18, 1842, 56.

³⁰⁵ Miller, *Typical Sabbaths and Great Jubilee*, 31.

³⁰⁶ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 7, 8.

³⁰⁷ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 59; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 67.

³⁰⁸ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 67.

³⁰⁹ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 15; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 66–68.

³¹⁰ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 257.

³¹¹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 8, 13; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 43, 49, 87–88; Miller, *Reply to Stuart's "Hints"*, 40.

³¹² Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I," 131; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 13, 20; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 49, 87–88.

³¹³ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 21; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 88.

them to worship their gods, and sacrifice to their idols. This government lasted . . . [until] the Romans made the Grecian general Bacchides withdraw his army from Jerusalem, and never trouble the Jews any more, as Maccabees tells us in his first book, 8:31, 32; also, 9:1, 72, 73.³¹⁴

Antiochus's persecution occasioned the birth of the Jewish resistance movement led by the Maccabees. During their insurrection against Antiochus and his generals the Jews sought the aid of the Romans and made an alliance with them. This is when the Romans entered the history of God's people.

The Jews made an allegiance with the Roman Republic in 158 BC and that same year the Romans forced the Seleucid general Bacchides to withdraw from Jerusalem (1 Mc 8–9; Josephus's *Antiquities* 12.10.16). This treaty was unlawful, for God had told his people not to bind themselves to the pagan nations around them.³¹⁵ The consequences appeared as the centuries passed. Rome continued to grow in power and from being an ally it turned Judea into a province when Pompey the Great conquered it in the first century BC.³¹⁶ God's people did not learn humility from their adversity. As a whole, the preaching of John the Baptist (AD 26–30) and of Jesus himself (AD 30–33)³¹⁷ was in vain for them. They rejected Christ and crucified him and then persecuted his disciples. Thus they rejected themselves from being God's people. A few decades later, the Romans destroyed the Temple and the City and scattered the Jews.³¹⁸ This had two effects. First, the Church became the new official body of God's people and a new age began. Second, God's people still remained in captivity, but now they did not even have a country to call their own. They would remain scattered and in a subject state under the Roman power until the end.

The Roman Empire oppressed and persecuted the Church during the first centuries and the Ten Persecutions but the Church remained pure and separate from the state.³¹⁹ In the early fourth century, Constantine banned persecution. The Church compromised with the state and became corrupt and worldly and popular.³²⁰ During this period, the Roman state began to reap its divine punishment. A flood of barbaric nations from the north eventually caused Western Rome to crumble. Its territory was carved up between ten new kingdoms.³²¹ These ten kingdoms had all turned to the Christian faith by 508 and this ended paganism in the Roman

³¹⁴ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 257.

³¹⁵ On the Jews's treaty with the Romans, see Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137; Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III," 141; Miller, "Period of Daniel's Vision," 171; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 23, 36, 37, 39; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 84, 92; Miller, "Miller's Views," 148.

³¹⁶ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. II," 137; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 21; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 89–90.

³¹⁷ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 71.

³¹⁸ For the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE, see for instance Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 17.

³¹⁹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 130, 134–36, 180.

³²⁰ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 137–39, 181–82.

³²¹ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. I," 131; Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III," 141; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 9, 10, 33; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 46, 84, 95; Miller, "Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," 49.

Empire.³²² Some of these kingdoms were Arians, however. In 533, Eastern Emperor Justinian issued a decree stating that the Bishop of Rome was the true head of the Church and prohibited the laity from reading the Scriptures for themselves. This decree went into effect in 538, when the three Arian opponents to papal supremacy had been crushed.³²³ Thus commenced the long dark ages of the Papacy.—The Eastern Roman Empire also received its punishment, at the hand of the Ottomans, who arose at the end of the thirteenth century and finally conquered the East in the mid-fifteenth century. They ruled until 1840, when after a long decline, their power became dependent on European support.³²⁴

When the Church fell into apostasy and became the Papacy, the true Church still survived, and its captivity continued, now at the hand of the Roman Catholic Church. This captivity was the 1260-year reign of the Papacy.³²⁵ Miller acknowledged that the history of the true church was obscure during the first centuries of the papal night, though faint outlines were detectable in the history of the Waldenses in the Alps. Then finally the Reformers appeared in the sixteenth century and with them the Protestant churches. As the eighteenth century drew to a close, France, the kingdom most loyal to the Pope, revolted against all authority and all things religious and brought the plague of infidelism—Deism and atheism—into the world. The Papacy received its punishment at the hand of its former most loyal king. The French Revolution gave way to Napoleon who invaded the Papal States and abolished the Papacy in 1798.³²⁶

Thus the history of God's people had been subjection to worldly powers in addition to sin and death from the time of Babylon to the present day.³²⁷ Even though the Papacy had received a near fatal blow in 1798, it still existed, and would continue to the end (and persecute the saints once more before history would be over), and Christians would not experience full inward and outward freedom until the present age would end and all earthly

³²² Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III," 141; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 84–85, 95; Miller, "Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," 50.

³²³ Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III," 141; Miller, "11th Chapter of Revelations. Concluded," 97; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 96–97, 199, 216; Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 36, 54; Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 6–7, 27; William Miller, "Mr. Miller's Lecture on Friday Afternoon," *Midnight Cry*, November 21, 1842, [2].

³²⁴ On the Ottoman Empire, see Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. V," 149; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 41–43; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 116–24, 296. Miller originally predicted that the Ottoman Empire would fall in 1839. Another Millerite leader, Josiah Litch, refined this prediction down to the date, August 11, 1840. When the Ottoman Empire did not fall, certain political events that occurred on that date that reflected Ottoman's weakened position against the West were interpreted as the fulfillment, and the prediction shifted accordingly. For the development of Millerite interpretation of the Ottomans in prophecy, see Jón H. Stefánsson, "From Clear Fulfillment to Complex Prophecy: The History of the Adventist Interpretation of Revelation 9, from 1833 to 1957" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 2013), 13–43.

³²⁵ See, for instance, Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 11, 26, 27, 44, 45; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 216–17.

³²⁶ On the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the abolishment of the Papacy in 1798, see Miller, "Prophecies of Daniel and John. No. III," 141; Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 27–28, 48–49; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 104–8, 184–85, 197–200.

³²⁷ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 257; Miller, "Dissertation on Prophetic Chronology," 46.

powers would fall. This was Miller's treatment of the past; now to Miller's treatment of the present.

By 1798 and its aftermath Miller's present had been reached. The Protestant churches had never received such an opportunity to fulfill their mission. But despite the endless stream of technological advances (the Industrial Revolution) which facilitated movement and communication, despite countless reform movements in the areas of temperance, Sunday schools, Bible publishing, and missionary effort; despite revivals of the past decades (the Second Great Awakening), the Church was permeated with worldliness and self-satisfaction. The Ottoman Empire was tottering which could cause a widespread war; the Roman Catholic Church was ominously rising in power and influence; and though "the midnight cry" of Matthew 25 was finally being preached about the Second Coming of Christ being imminent, the Church and the world received that message with scoffing and rejection. Miller pointed to all of these conditions during his time as "signs of the times." He would show how all the lines of prophecy delineated centuries past down to the present, with only the final events remaining to be fulfilled. To see how he did this, the next section will describe Miller's delineation of the "lines" of prophecy that all converged in the Second Coming in his day.

Tracing the Prophecies to the Time of the Second Coming

What Miller wanted to show his audience about history was that it was coming to an end with the Second Coming. As a historicist, he believed that there were prophecies in the Bible that traced history from a given starting point down through the ages to the very end. Together, they formed many parallel lines that ran to the end. Demonstrating that the end was at hand therefore required him to interpret each of the lines and trace them to the end. To do this, Miller used all the prophetic evidence he believed was at his disposal: There were the visions in Daniel and Revelation, Matthew 24, the typological reading of the Old Testament Sabbaths (including the Creation Week Sabbath or the idea that history would last six thousand years before a millennial Sabbath), Ezekiel's prophecy of Gog and Magog, and even time prophecies in Luke 13 and Leviticus 26. The cumulative effect on the audience was that "all" Scripture prophecies traced history down to their own time. How Miller interpreted these parallel lines of prophecy will be summarized in this section.

Daniel

The Book of Daniel was the main prophetic book in Miller's scheme and was the dominant source in his Lectures. His interpretation has already been thoroughly detailed, and will therefore only be summarized here. Daniel showed the history of the four kingdoms which would rule over God's people from the prophet's time to the establishment of God's kingdom at Christ's Second Coming. They were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. In chapter 2, the kingdoms are depicted as a composite metal image destroyed by a stone that grows into a mountain. In chapter 7 they appear as beasts arising from the sea who then face the

Judgment of God. In chapter 8 they are described as a ram and a goat and their horns, with the vision lasting for 2300 years until the cleansing of the sanctuary. The commencement date for that period is given in chapter 9. The history of the kingdoms is then narrated in further symbol-free detail in chapters 11–12. Miller demonstrated to his audience that the present was the penultimate act in all these prophecies. They were living during the time of fragmented Rome before Christ (the stone) would hit; after the 1260-year period of the Papacy and before the Judgment of God; during the last decades of the Papacy's existence before the cleansing of the sanctuary in 1843/4, and during the time of the revivals (Michael standing up, 12:1) and before the time of trouble and the resurrection (12:1).

The main contours of Miller's interpretation of Daniel were traditional and contemporary historicism, such as the identification of the four kingdoms and calculating the time periods on the premise that each day symbolized an actual year. Miller's touches were mostly seen in the dates he chose for the periods—for there were several options for those among historicist expositors—and in how he aligned chapters 8 and 11–12 with chapters 2, 7, and 9. Harmonizing Daniel's chapters—based on the dating of the 2300 years in chapter 8—arched all of Daniel's visions towards the Second Coming of Christ in 1843. Other prophecies that Miller interpreted were all built on the foundation of Daniel, leading the reader time after time down the centuries to the present last days.

Revelation

The next most important book that Miller interpreted was Revelation, and in the line of tradition of nearly all of the time, Miller read it in the light of Daniel as its sequel. By the time John wrote, three of Daniel's four kingdoms had passed, so John traversed the history of the Roman power again and again under different symbols, from beginning to end. In this way, historicists saw the book as a series of symbolized summaries of the Christian Era and their interpretation of the book was influenced by how they defined or interpreted the fourth kingdom of Daniel. This meant that Miller's particular interpretation of Daniel—for instance the dated end of the fourth power in 1843/4—colored his reading of all of Revelation.

The first prophecy was the epistles to the seven churches (chs. 2–3). In Miller's day, most commentators read this section preteristically and saw the churches as the local churches in John's time. Miller, however, as some others before him, believed the letters were addressed to the seven epochs of the Christian era to the end.³²⁸ Miller's interpretation followed traditional Protestant church history. The epistle to Ephesus chastised the Church for departing from its previous love. This was the apostolic age, but already in the first century New Testament exhortations showed how the Church was losing its original love.³²⁹ The epistle to Smyrna comforted the persecuted Church, which was yet to face tribulation for ten

³²⁸ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 127–30.

³²⁹ On Ephesus, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 130–34.

days. This was the period of the Ten Persecutions in the Roman Empire.³³⁰ The epistle to Pergamon chided the Church for growing heresies. This was the period of compromise. When Constantine outlawed persecution in the early fourth century, the Church compromised its beliefs by entering into close relations with the state. Unconverted pagans flocked into the Church with their pagan beliefs next to unchanged. This went on until the apostasy had become the official organization of the Church, the Papacy, which Miller dated to 538.³³¹ The next three epistles (Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia) covered the history of the true Church during the 1260 period of papal supremacy. This periodization followed the 1260 years of Daniel 7 and 12. In Thyatira there was a faithful minority and also the false prophetess Jezebel (Papacy). As for the identity and history of the faithful minority, Miller admitted that the history of the true Church in the early centuries of the Papacy had been lost, though the history of the Waldensians, for instance, was still known to some degree.³³² The Church in Sardis was exhorted to strengthen what still remained, and so the true Church continued to endure the papal night from the tenth century until the Reformation.³³³ The epistle to Philadelphia celebrated a church of “brotherly love” and promised that it would be kept safe during a testing time. From the Reformation onward the true Church appeared organized and active on the scene of history and was kept safe from the French dangers of atheism and Deism, which failed to destroy it.³³⁴ Instead of the demise of the true Church, it was the Papacy who suffered nearly fatal injury when France abolished the institution in 1798, and thus ended its long reign over the saints. The last letter was to Laodicea. It censured a proud, self-oblivious Church. This described the present, the Church from 1798 to the end (1843/4). After the fall of the Papacy, the Church was free to finish its mission in the world, but instead it befriended the world and boasted of its formal accomplishments, unaware of its own spiritual poverty. Granted, much good had still been done over the last decades by the Mission and Bible Societies and the reform movements, but, regretfully, this did not change the overall apathy of the Church.³³⁵ The present-day Church would remain worldly until history would close in 1843/44. Thus Miller’s interpretation of the seven epistles followed the conventional trajectory of Protestant historiography of original purity, persecution, compromise, and the rise of the true Church(es) during the Reformation, and his bleak outlook on the present Church was also not limited to him.

Historicists usually interpreted the seven seals (chs. 6–8:1) as a section or the entirety of the Christian era. Miller saw them as spanning all of church history like the seven churches, with somewhat corresponding period division, but from a more political perspective. The opening of the first four seals showed various horsemen come forth. The riders of the first

³³⁰ For Smyrna, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 135–37.

³³¹ On Pergamon, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 137–40.

³³² On Thyatira, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 140–44.

³³³ On Sardis, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 145–47.

³³⁴ On Philadelphia, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 147–51.

³³⁵ On Laodicea, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 281.

three seals corresponded to the periods of the first three churches: The victorious archer on a white horse was the glorious beginning of the Gospel Age, the red horse had the color of blood signifying the Roman persecutions, and the black horse represented the darkness of the compromise after the persecutions ceased. The fourth rider was named Death and rode forth on a pale horse. He signified the papal persecution which lasted during nearly all the reign of the Papacy, or until the eighteenth century. The fifth seal showed martyred saints crying out to God for vengeance. They were told to be patient and to wait until their number would be complete. The dialogue signified a period of respite between persecutions, the period from 1700 until the final persecution before the end. As the sixth seal was broken, there was a terrible earthquake that frightened all the kings of the earth. The quake was the French Revolution which shook the political world and made all monarchs tremble. Four angels were then seen restraining the winds from destroying the world while the servants of God were sealed, i.e. while the Church fully prepared for the end. The scene represented the providential peace and freedom which the Church had enjoyed since the close of papal rule. Next followed scenes of the Church saved in the kingdom of Christ (ch. 7). But first the seventh seal would be broken and silence would prevail when the whole world would arraigned before God in Judgment (8:1) at Christ's return in 1843/4.³³⁶

Historicists saw the seven trumpets (chs. 8–11) as a section or the entirety of church history again, though they varied on whether they referred to heresies or wars (in which case the temporal phrases were time prophecies about the duration of wars and conquest). Miller believed the trumpets symbolized a series of divine punishments upon the oppressors of God's people during the Christian era (mostly Rome). Miller mentioned the first four just in passing (the fall of the Jews, Western Rome, "the Asiatic kingdom," and paganism)³³⁷ and focused on the last three. At the blast of the fifth trumpet, locusts attacked mankind and tormented them for five months. When the sixth trumpet sounded, cavalry from the Euphrates was allowed to kill mankind "for a year, month, day, and an hour" (Rv 9:15). A common Protestant interpretation was that the fifth and the sixth trumpets symbolized the Arabs and later the Turks attacking Christendom for 150 and 391 years, respectively. Miller saw these trumpets as signifying the two phases of the Ottoman Empire. At first the Turks sought to conquer the Eastern Roman Empire for 150 years (1298–1448). It then reigned for 391 years, which would run out in 1839. At that time the Ottoman Empire would fall.³³⁸ The next prophetic scene was an angel standing on the earth and the sea who declared that time should

³³⁶ For the seven seals, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 176–89.

³³⁷ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 115.

³³⁸ For the fifth and sixth trumpet, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 115–23 Miller's calculations of the time period of the fifth and sixth trumpets were adjusted by Josiah Litch, one of the most important Millerite leaders, who eventually predicted and affirmed the downfall of the Ottoman Empire in 1840. The perceived downfall of Turkey did not commence the battle of Armageddon and it did not mark the close of probation, so Millerites uncoupled those two events from the Turks and pushed them into closer proximity to the coming of Christ. For the Millerite interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets, see Stefánsson, "From Clear Fulfillment," 13–43.

be no longer and that the mystery of God would be accomplished (ch. 10). Miller believed this was the announcement of the close of probation before Christ would return when everyone had decided for or against Christ. He conjectured it would happen at the same time as the fall of the Ottoman Empire. This made the end even more imminent, since probation might close even several years before the Second Coming in 1843/44.³³⁹ At the sounding of the seventh trumpet, Judgment was announced and that the kingdoms of the world now belonged to Christ. Christ would come to claim them as his own at the last trump at the Second Coming.³⁴⁰

The imagery in chapters 11–14 contains several mentions of time periods which historicists usually aligned with the 1260 years of papal dominion found in Daniel 7. Accordingly, they interpreted these chapters as several parallel descriptions of church history, all covering the 1260 years. Miller did the same. In chapter 11, John is told to measure the Temple except the courtyard which is given to the Gentiles for 42 months (42 months of 30 days = 1260 days = 1260 literal years). Two witnesses are then introduced who preach in sackcloth for 42 months. At the end of their testimony, a beast ascends from the abyss and kills them. They lie dead in the city called Jerusalem and Sodom for three and half days, revive and ascend to heaven. Miller adopted the rather uncommon view that the witnesses were the Old and the New Testament. They lived in obscurity during the Dark Ages. In the end of the 1260 year period, the Bible was then outlawed in atheist France for three and a half years. But Deism and atheism failed to destroy the Bible. Instead, the enemies of Scripture saw it become greatly exalted (as if lifted on a cloud to heaven) through the Bible societies and the Mission Movement. This brought the vision down to the present. The next event would be the sounding of the seventh trumpet, the last trump, at the Second Coming in 1843/4.³⁴¹

In the twelfth chapter, a dragon waits for a pregnant woman to give birth to devour her child. The child escapes him and ascends to heaven and rules the nations. The dragon then persecutes the woman who flees to the wilderness for 1260 days. The furious dragon then goes to make war with the remnant of the woman's children. Rome attempted to kill Christ when he was born but he escaped and eventually ascended to heaven. Rome (first pagan and then papal) then persecuted the Church, which was preserved by Providence during the Dark Ages. There remained one final persecution (v. 17)—Armageddon—against God's people just before Christ would return, which brought the vision down to 1843/4.³⁴²

Miller read chapters 13 and 14 as one contiguous vision. In chapter 13, Miller added his own touch by calculating the number 666 as a time period of one of the beasts found in that chapter. By doing this, Miller could align the vision with Daniel. The chapter thus outlined the duration of the fourth kingdom in its two phases as pagan and papal Rome, just as Daniel did with the two abominations ("daily sacrifice abomination" and "abomination of

³³⁹ On the seven trumpets, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 124–25.

³⁴⁰ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 125–26.

³⁴¹ On Revelation 11, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 190–203.

³⁴² For Revelation 12, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 204–18.

desolation”). The chapter showed a beast arise out of the sea which was wounded to death, healed, and then ruled for 42 months. Next the same power was depicted as a beast that arose out of the earth which made an image of the previous beast, whose number was 666. The number signified the time of the first reign. Thus from the time that Rome came into contact with God’s people with the league in 158 BC, it ruled for 666 years until 508. By that time all the barbarian kings who had conquered Western Rome had converted to Catholicism and paganism was dead. Thirty years later, the Pope was declared supreme, but since Catholicism was but paganism in disguise, it could be depicted as the same power (beast) being healed and ruling again.³⁴³ Chapter 13 ended in 1798. After a flash-forward scene of the saved in the eternal kingdom (14:1–5), chapter 14 depicted the Advent movement and the return of Christ under the symbols of a threefold angelic message declaring the judgment at hand, and the Son of Man returning in the clouds of heaven.³⁴⁴ Chapter 14 thus ended with the Judgment and the Second Coming, which would occur in 1843/4.

Historicists usually read the seven last plagues (chs. 15–16) as symbolizing the decline of the Papacy in its late career until its end at the Second Coming and Miller again followed that tradition. The first plague was “grievous sores” on those who worshipped the beast. As sores were an outward manifestation of an inward disease, this symbolized “the exposure of the corruption of the church of Rome” which took place in the time of the Reformers. Next, the sea became like the blood of a dead man. This reminded Miller of congealed blood, which stood for “massacre in cold blood.” This was fulfilled in the Bartholomew Massacre in 1572. Third, the rivers and water springs turned into blood. This plague signified “destructive war” and symbolized the wars of the European powers 1630–ca. 1680. The fourth plague caused the sun to burn people with extreme heat and they curse it and do not repent. The sun signified the Gospel which was preached openly and strongly in non-Protestant European countries in the eighteenth century despite strong opposition of the Deists. The fifth plague made the kingdom of the beast full of darkness. This was fulfilled in the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars which plunged Europe into chaos and abolished the Papacy. The sixth plague saw the Euphrates dried up and the kings of the earth gathered together for Armageddon. The Euphrates signified the Ottoman Empire, which had declined greatly since 1820 and its drying meant its destruction (dated to 1839/40 according to chapter 9). This would start the battle of Armageddon. All states would join together in one final assault on the believers before the end. The seventh vial was poured into the air and caused a tremendous earthquake and hail. This was the dissolution of all morals in the world with “political strife among all nations.” A voice from the Temple in heaven declared, “It is done.” This statement had signified the completion of Christ’s work on the Cross, and here it

³⁴³ For Revelation 13, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 76–85.

³⁴⁴ For Revelation 14, see Miller, “Lecture on the Harvest of the World,” 132–44.

signified the completion of the Church's work and her full salvation at the coming of Christ in 1843/4.³⁴⁵

Historicists usually saw chapters 17–18 as a prophecy about antitypical Babylon—the Papacy. Miller did not lecture about these chapters but wrote a pamphlet on them to disprove the preterist reading of Babylon as pagan Rome.³⁴⁶

Chapters 19–22 depicted the final events and Miller did not lecture on these chapters, with the exception of chapter 20. The last events will be treated in a following section.³⁴⁷

Miller's interpretation of Revelation was for the most part not innovative. The most important addition was that in the light of Daniel the last events of each vision could be dated. Miller could then trace each prophetic line down through its fulfillment in history down to the present—or the penultimate act so to speak before the actual end—, as was a common Protestant tradition. In and of itself it did not necessarily mean much to align the present with the second to last events in prophecy, because theoretically the penultimate act could last a long time before the end would come. But Miller could date the ultimate act, and thus he demonstrated in vision after vision that he and his contemporaries were on the threshold of eternity.

Hosea 6 and Luke 13

There were three other prophecies which Miller used to trace history to its end in 1843, although these had fewer precedents than his usage of Daniel and Revelation, and were not as much used by his coworkers. The first one was found in Hos 6:1–3 and Lk 13:32. Miller read these texts as a prophecy about the duration of the fourth kingdom or Rome. The first passage begins: “Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.” In Luke Jesus replies to the warning that Herod wants him killed by saying: “Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.” In both passages there are three days, with completion in the third day (living in the sight of God, Christ being perfected). Miller took ‘day’ here as standing for literal one thousand years in accordance with what he saw as one of the possible senses of ‘day’ in Scripture.³⁴⁸ The power that ruled over God's people (smote them while they did the works of Christ) was Rome. The two thousand years began in 158 BC with the Jews's unlawful league with the Romans and would last until 1843 when the Papacy, the latest manifestation of Roman power, would come to an end. Sometime in 1843 the two thousand years would end and the third millennium would commence. At its

³⁴⁵ On the seven last plagues, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 219–32.

³⁴⁶ Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*.

³⁴⁷ See “The Second Coming of Christ and His Reign” in section 3.5.2.

³⁴⁸ Miller, “Rules of Interpretation,” 22.

commencement the Church would be saved (healed) and Christ would establish his kingdom (and be perfected)—the third millennium was the same as the millennium of Christ’s reign.³⁴⁹

While Miller used this prophecy as an independent line of proof, the dates were the same as he used when calculating prophecies in Daniel and Revelation about Roman rule: The 666 years of pagan Rome in Revelation started in 158 BC, the league between the Jews and the Romans was seen in Daniel 11:23, and 1843 was the end of the 2300 years of Daniel 8. Miller obviously aligned this prophecy to be in harmony with his interpretation of Daniel and Revelation, but it served the purpose of reinforcing their predictions.

The 2520 Years of Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel 39

The second prophecy more peculiar to Miller was a time prophecy found in Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel 39. The former chapter contains God’s warning to Israel about the calamities which will fall upon them if they depart from God and transgress his law. God says that if they insist on their waywardness, I “will punish you yet seven times for your sins” (Lv 26:24). Miller took the “times” in the meaning of ‘year.’ That was the general Protestant historicist tradition when it came to the word “time” in Daniel and Revelation.³⁵⁰ Miller applied that understanding here. The divine warnings ended with the greatest calamity being captivity. This was the punishment alluded to by the seven times. The seven times were a time prophecy and thus were calculated on the basis that each day in the period stood for one literal years. (Seven prophetic times = seven prophetic years = 7 x 360 prophetic days = 2520 prophetic days = 2520 literal years.) The seven times were thus seven prophetic years or 2520 literal years of captivity which would result if God’s people rebelled against him. The independence of God’s people came to an end when Assyria conquered the northern kingdom and Babylon took Manasseh, king of the southern kingdom, into captivity. While Manasseh did return, Judah was under Babylonian direction ever since. His captivity and the completion of the captivity of the northern kingdom both took place in 677 BC. The captivity of God’s people then continued under the four powers mentioned in Daniel and would end in 1843, 2520 years later, when Christ would return and invite his people into the freedom of his everlasting kingdom.

Miller saw the same time period predicted in Ezekiel’s prophecy about Israel’s final battle against Gog and Magog (chs. 38–39). After describing the battle, Ezekiel stated that the Israelites would burn the weapons of their enemies for seven years (Ez 39:9). Miller

³⁴⁹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 37–40.

³⁵⁰ In historicism, the “time, times, and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25; 12:7) was regarded as three and a half years, that is, 1260 days. As a further proof for this, historicists pointed to the fact that the phrase was apparently calculated as such in Revelation 12 (compare vv. 6 and 14). Most historicists hesitated, however, in reading the “seven times” in Leviticus according to this scheme. There was no qualifying temporal noun that followed the number in the Hebrew and the number was used adverbially in the sense of ‘sevenfold,’ referring to intensity and not the length of time. Miller was probably not aware of this at first when he calculated the “seven times,” but when these difficulties were pointed out to him, he insisted, and pointed to previous authors or translators that had translated or interpreted the words as temporal.

interpreted the seven years based on the day-for-year symbolism as 2520 actual years of Israel's captivity. It commenced when Israelites "went forth" (v. 9) which referred to them being carried away into captivity, and this referred again to the year 677 BC.³⁵¹

This reading of Leviticus 26 derived from Miller's understanding of the time prophecies in Daniel and Revelation. Daniel 8 stretched over 2300 years but this did not cover the captivity that God's people experienced under all the four kingdoms, since the 2300 years started in the time of Medo-Persia. But here was a time period that covered the entire period of the captivity under the four kingdoms. Moreover, the period was two times 1260 years, echoing the 1260 year period found in Daniel and Revelation.

While there were some precedents to this reading of Leviticus 26, this was probably Miller's weakest proof. It did not appeal to a traditional historicist interpretation, and it was easy to demonstrate that it was based on a stubborn misunderstanding of the word 'time.' It shows that Miller tried to be comprehensive in his time prophecy decoding when reading the Bible. Perhaps his reading of these two chapters was convenient: Both chapters contained what Miller thought were time prophecies and they seemed to be talking about literal Israel. If Miller would not have come up with a historicist reading of these chapters, they might have been brought up as prophecies about literal Israel (even containing time prophecies) and thus an argument for postmillennialism.

The Typology of the Various Old Testament Sabbaths

Miller saw the Sabbaths in the Jewish economy as typological. He elaborated on the weekly Sabbath, the sabbatical year (or year of release), and the Jubilee Year in particular. They were all types of the salvation of God's people at the return of Christ. Christological readings of the various Israelite feasts in the Mosaic Law was an ancient Christian tradition, and some expositors had used them in prophetic calculations.

The Creation Week and the Sabbath foreshadowed earth's six thousand year history and the seventh millennium of rest following Christ's return. A day could stand for literal one thousand years (2Pet 3:8). As God created the world through Christ in six days and rested on the seventh, so he was creating a new world in six thousand years and would complete it at the commencement of the seventh millennium. The seventh millennium was the one brought to view in Revelation 20 which would commence with the return of Christ. The most known biblical world chronology still in Miller's time was the classic by James Ussher (1581–1656). According to Ussher the world was created 4004 BC.³⁵² In that scheme the year 1843 would

³⁵¹ For the 2520 years, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 250–63; Miller, "Lecture on the Battle of Gog," 79–80. On one occasion, Miller pointed out that the captivity of the Ten Tribes in the north began in the year 722 BC—the 2520 years would in that case have ended in 1798. Thus the captivity of God's people began in 722 BC and was completed in 677 BC, and in a similar way the release of God's people began in 1798 and would be fully accomplished in 1843/4. Miller, *Typical Sabbaths and Great Jubilee*, 20.

³⁵² James Ussher, *The Annals of the World Deduced from the Origin of Time, and Continued to the Beginning of the Emperour Vespasians Reign, and the Totall Destruction and Abolition of the Temple and Commonwealth of the Jews: Containing the Historie of the Old and New Testament, with That of the Macchabees*,

be AM 5847. That was close but still 153 years shy of six thousand years ending in 1843. Miller published his own chronology of world history in the *Signs of the Times* in 1840. According to Miller the age of the world would indeed be exactly 6000 years in 1843.³⁵³ Some details in the chronology generated discussion in the paper, and Miller published a revised chronology at the close of 1840³⁵⁴ and summarized the idea in a later pamphlet.³⁵⁵

Such detailed chronology was a strenuous study for both writer and reader, but it must have been convincing to many, since the idea that the Creation Week foreshadowed the length of human history as six thousand years was one of the oldest typological tropes in Christianity. It may even have been necessary for Miller to address the idea, since biblical chronologies of world history—and, implicitly, of the end, if read in the light of the six thousand year trope—were commonly known and could have been used as alternative dates to Miller's scheme.

The second typological Sabbath to be fulfilled at the Second Coming was the sabbatical year. According to Mosaic Law, every seventh year servants were to be set free and debts forgiven (Lv 25:3–4; Dt 15:1–2; Jer 34:14). Miller believed the seven year cycle was symbolical for the duration of the captivity of God's people (seven years = 2520 days = 2520 literal years) and that it was the same prophecy as Leviticus 26 and Ezekiel 39. At the close of this period, God's people would be set free when Christ would return and overthrow all earthly powers, and the true Hebrews would experience the freedom of the true sabbatical years.³⁵⁶

The third typological Sabbath was the Jubilee. At the close of seven seven-year-periods, Israel celebrated a Jubilee. On that occasion—besides what was done on a sabbatical year—trumpets were sounded and lost inheritance went back to the original owner. This was typical of the time when the saints would receive the promised inheritance of the new earth and eternal salvation at the last trump. The Jubilee cycle signified the time God's people lost their inheritance and then the time when they would receive it back. As the typical Jubilee was the fiftieth year, so the antitypical Jubilee would occur at the end of forty nine Jubilee cycles. Forty nine Jubilee cycles amounted to 2450 years. This period began when the Jews quit celebrating their Jubilees at the time of the Babylonian captivity. It is true they did return to their country but they remained a people in subjection to their sovereigns and thus their property was not fully restored. The captivity took place in 607 BC—Nebuchadnezzar's first attack on Jerusalem—and thus the 2450 years would end in 1843 with the true Jubilee when

Also the Most Memorable Affairs of Asia and Egypt, and the Rise of the Empire of the Roman Caesars Under C. Julius, and Octavianus: Collected from All History, as Well Sacred, as Prophane, and Methodically Digested (London: Printed by E. Tyler, 1658), 1; James Ussher, *The Annals of the World*, rev. ed., eds. Larry Pierce and Marion Pierce (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2003), 17.

³⁵³ Miller, "Bible Chronology," 80. While Miller's periods add up to 6000, his AM dates do not correspond to his own calculations. For instance, if the world would be 6000 years old in 1843, then the world was created in 4157 BC (6000 – 1843 = 4157) and not in 4025 BC.

³⁵⁴ Miller, "Bible Chronology from Adam to Christ. Corrected," 144.

³⁵⁵ Miller, *Typical Sabbaths and Great Jubilee*, 22–27.

³⁵⁶ On the sabbatical year, see Miller, *Typical Sabbaths and Great Jubilee*, 13–23.

God's people would inherit the earth.³⁵⁷ This may have been Miller's most innovative typological calculation, but he gave no explanation as to why he calculated the Jubilee cycle as fifty years rather than forty nine, nor why the true Jubilee would occur after forty nine cycles.

While it is hard for those not deeply acquainted with Revelation (and the other texts) or historicism to follow Miller's interpretation, it must be remembered that in his time, though it varied, biblical literacy, familiarity with the prophecies and their (often historicist) interpretation, was often high. The idea that history was presented in symbolic imagery in the Bible in "lines of prophecy" was common. Miller's main historical burden was actually prophetic. The main point of his discussions on history was that history was nearly over. This is why Miller traced the history coded in the prophecies down through the ages and to his present. Together, history and prophecy were evidence that Jesus was about to return to earth, as stated in the title of his main book. It was to this end that all history tended, to the close of Captivity at the return of the Savior.

The Second Coming of Christ and His Reign³⁵⁸

Miller began his Lectures, as noted before, about the necessity of the Second Coming of Christ. When Jesus would return, his people would finally be delivered. The Second Coming of Christ was not one doctrine among others—it was the very culmination of Christian hope, the crowning event of history. Since some contemporary ideas cast a doubting shadow on this old truth, Miller devoted the first two lectures to the Second Coming.³⁵⁹ In the first lecture, Miller demonstrated the futurity, certainty, and the object of Christ's return. The first two points were against doubters and infidels who said Jesus would never come again or read Christ's promise of return preteristically as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem. The third point was contra views like postmillennialism and Universalism that disordered the purpose and order of the last events. Miller expounded on this point in his second lecture. The lecture was on Revelation 20, which Miller believed was one of the clearest New Testament passages on the order of events surrounding Christ's return.

Sometime in 1843/44 the Son of Man would appear in the clouds of heaven with his angels in glory, seated on his throne. This event would be the fulfillment of the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 years in Daniel 8. It would also be the commencement of the Judgment, which would last for one thousand years. The Judgment would begin by separating the wicked from the righteous. This would occur in the following way. Upon his return, Jesus would bind Satan in the abyss (Rv 20:1–3). He would then resurrect the righteous dead—this

³⁵⁷ On the Jubilee, see Miller, *Typical Sabbaths and Great Jubilee*, 27–32.

³⁵⁸ There is barely a writing by Miller that does not contain a complete or partial description of the sequence and nature of the last things. Sourcing this section completely would make a very lengthy footnote. For some prime examples, see the first two Lectures in *Evidence*.

³⁵⁹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 11–38.

would be “the first resurrection” (Rv 20:4–6), glorify his saints and take them to himself. Fire from heaven would destroy the wicked. The fire would also purify the earth and renew it into paradise restored. God’s kingdom would then finally cover the entire earth and would be inherited by the righteous, who would reign with Christ for one thousand years (Rv 20:4–6) in the New Jerusalem (Rv 20:9; 21–22). At the end of the thousand years Satan would be loosened from the abyss (Rv 20:3, 7) and the wicked would be resurrected. This would be “the second resurrection” (Rv 20:5, 13). Satan would deceive the wicked and gather them together to attack the Holy City (Rv 20:8–9). But there would be no battle. The books would be opened and the wicked would be judged according to their works, found guilty of death, and would be cast into hell with the devil (Rv 20:10–15). Judgment would be over, evil conquered, and for the righteous eternity with God would ensue.

Miller’s order of events at Christ’s return was traditional premillennialist Protestant eschatology. While the spiritual reading of the millennium as a symbol of the Church Era was ancient, by Miller’s time the incorporation of a literal millennium into the last events was already centuries old. And though it was heterodox, dating the Second Coming was also not without precedent. The doctrine of a literal, premillennial Second Coming was nevertheless counter-cultural because postmillennialism and preterism, to a lesser extent, had gained much popularity. Miller’s date, which calculation was based on Daniel 8, was also only few years into the future, and seemingly supported by old historicist calculations of various time periods. Together, the teaching was like a thunderbolt in its time. Not only was the doctrine itself about momentous and serious truths, but apparently they were about to burst upon the actual scene of history when faith would turn to sight. This had significant practical ramifications, as will be seen. But before that, it is in order to look at the other options which Miller set aside in his interpretation. What were his options, and what was the theological cost of his interpretative choices?

3.5.3 Interpretative Alternatives

In his autobiographical accounts of his conversion and his study of the Bible, Miller described his theological and textual reasoning, his methodology of study, and the course of thought that led to the conclusions of his research. In this description he portrayed two alternatives he considered and why he dismissed them. To these one more can be added that, if he did not consider then, he had to combat later on against his critics. These alternatives were to let Daniel 8 lie unexplained to a lesser or a greater extent due to its obscurity or divine mystery, to read it in the light of postmillennialism (and dual covenant theology), or treat it as a preterist vision (either half or full). This section will analyze why Miller chose none of these alternatives and at what cost.

No Interpretation: The Text Is Partially or Completely Obscure or Mysterious

In Miller's time there were some, both Christians and unbelievers, who thought that the Bible was in some regards an obscure book. To the former, some passages, particularly the prophecies, were obscure forever or until after their fulfillment, and it was presumptuous for human hands to attempt to withdraw the veil put in place by divine wisdom. To the latter, the obscurity disproved the claim of inspiration, for surely God would make that which he had revealed to humanity intelligible. When Miller converted, he set out to verify whether his reclaimed Christian hope was based on sand or rock. Before he finished his systematic study of the Bible, he had already become convinced of its divine imprint. The Scriptures were clear, consistent, and harmonious.³⁶⁰ The second half of the study was no longer intended to verify whether the Bible was inspired or not, but to trace the threads of the divine harmonious system to its full conclusion. This meant that when Miller sought to understand the prophecies his working assumption was already that they were a harmonious whole, and how he interpreted Daniel 8 to harmonize with the other visions has already been covered.

After his study, Miller felt that the claims that the Bible was unintelligible were little more than stubborn unbelief and a superficial rejection of the Bible. The same held for partial claims, that a given passage or truth could not be known. Why would God give the Bible with its prophecies if he did not intend mankind to understand them? Such an idea opposed the very intention of revelation. It ran contrary to the text itself. In his Lectures Miller pointed out text after text that invited the reader to understand the prophecies. Surely such invitations were not given in vain.³⁶¹ Miller was astonished when his critics claimed that his interpretation was wrong, but instead of offering another interpretation, affirmed that the text in question was incomprehensible.³⁶² To Miller this was a proof that they did not want to face truths that they felt uncomfortable, such as the fact that the Second Coming of Jesus was imminent.

Miller likened this willful refusal to understand the prophecies to the times of Christ, when the Jewish leaders refused the clearest signs and Scriptures that could be given so they could avoid the truth that Jesus was the promised Messiah.³⁶³ That is, Miller assigned the cause of ignorance of prophecy to evil motives. By this accusation of motif Miller inadvertently admitted that there were biblical texts—prophecies in particular—that, at times, but few comprehended. His “explanation by motif”—or in the words of Daniel, “None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand” (Dn 12:11)³⁶⁴—was conventional, but it

³⁶⁰ See section 3.3.4.

³⁶¹ See for instance Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 16.

³⁶² See, for instance, Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 101; William Miller et al., “Low-Hampton Conference,” *Advent Herald*, January 15, 1845, 182.

³⁶³ See, for instance, Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 168–69, 283–84, 298–99.

³⁶⁴ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 101–2; William Miller, *Miller's Exposition on the Twenty-Fourth of Matthew, and the Sixth Chapter of Hosea. With a Scene of the Last Day*, Second Advent Library 3 (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842), 91, 96; Miller, *Reply to Stuart's "Hints"*, 30; William Miller, “Letter from Wm. Miller,” *Signs of the Times*, November 2, 1842, 56.

closed the doors to other possibilities of why so few were convinced of the right interpretation.

Miller's attempt to understand the biblical text comprehensively as a divine whole was not a new approach, but, as all such endeavors, it came at a cost. The stronger the claim is that there is a divine harmony in the Scriptures and the stronger the necessity grows that the wise understand its truths in the last days, the stronger the inclination becomes to find the system, and the temptation not to admit any ignorance or inconsistency. This could for example be seen in the fact that, while his fellow Millerite leaders accepted his main conclusions, they quietly dismissed some of his lines of proof.³⁶⁵

Postmillennialism

According to a common eschatology in nineteenth-century America, human history would lead up to a millennium of earthly and spiritual prosperity. Most or all of humanity would be converted, the Jews would return to Palestine, and the world would come under the spiritual reign of Christ for one thousand years (he would not be physically present). The traditional sequence of last events would occur after the millennium: Satan would be loosened, and the Antichrist and those he could deceive would wage war against Christ and his saints. The enemies would be defeated, the Resurrection and Judgment would take place, and the earth, completely cleansed of evil, would continue on forever.³⁶⁶ There were, of course, variations. For instance, some premillennialists believed Christ would return before the millennium and reign in actual person over the saints for one thousand years, after which the same sequence of events would occur.

Postmillennialism derived most strongly from Old Testament prophecies about Israel's glorious future prospects and Daniel was apparently not a fundamental text to this interpretation, though it was sometimes included. New Testament texts were used as well, in particular Revelation 20, since it specified the period of their glory as one thousand years. Like in amillennialism, the first resurrection was seen as a symbol of the revival that would usher in the millennium. Christ's reign was understood as that of grace rather than that of glory, that is, Christ's reign meant humanity would come under his sway so that conversion would be (nearly) universal. At the end of the millennium, the traditional sequence of last day events would take place: The resurrection (called "the second resurrection" in the text), the destruction of Antichrist and his adherents (who would rise up against the saints when the millennium would draw to a close), the Last Judgment, and the beginning of eternity.

Miller was familiar with this eschatology and had to consider it when he embarked on his systematic study of the Bible and the prophecies.³⁶⁷ Through his study he concluded that postmillennialism was an unconverted reading of the Bible which ran against the tide of

³⁶⁵ For instance, Josiah Litch, one of the leading theological voices of the movement, did not use Miller's interpretation of Leviticus 26 and Hosea 6.

³⁶⁶ For one of Miller's descriptions of postmillennialism, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 168.

³⁶⁷ Miller, *Apology and Defence*, 13–14.

sound theology, and that its two main predictions—which from Miller’s perspective were the Return of the Jews and the millennial age—were a false construction on the prophecies which adjusted them to human hopes and desires. Since Miller was constantly faced with these ideas, his writings are peppered with objections to them. He also wrote several short works aimed particularly at postmillennialism: An article on Smith’s and Campbell’s postmillennial view of Daniel 8,³⁶⁸ “The True Inheritance of the Saints” and “The Kingdom of God” on Christ’s future reign,³⁶⁹ “Lecture on the Harvest of the World” on Revelation 14,³⁷⁰ a review of a postmillennial lecture by Rev. L. F. Dimmick,³⁷¹ and the article series “Scriptural Expositions” against the future Return of the Jews.³⁷²

Miller did not use the word postmillennialism. He knew it as the twin ideas of the “temporal” millennium and the future Return of the Jews to Palestine. Because of this, Miller’s views on the two doctrines will be treated separately.

The Millennium according to Postmillennialism

Miller followed the traditional periodization of church history into two ages, the present age and the age to come, also known as the kingdom of grace and of glory, or this earthly existence and the afterlife. Miller saw the postmillennial millennium as a bastardized age which fit nowhere into the scheme. The age to come was the eternal kingdom of God, of Christ and his saints on the earth for ever and ever, free from sin and death, in a state of immortality, glory, and perfect holiness (Dn 2:44; 7:14, 27; Pss 24:7–10; 145:10–13; Isa 2:4, 10, 19, 21; 4:2–5; 24:23; Mi 4:3; Mt 8:11–12; Lk 11:2; 13:28–29; John 18:36; Rm 14:17; 1 Cor 15:50; 1 Thes 2:12; Heb 12:28; 2 Pt 1:1; Rv 11:15; 22:5). Christ would live and rule among his children in person (Jn 12:24; 14:3; 17:24; 1 Thes 4:17; Rv 5:9–10; 20:4, 6; 21:3). According to postmillennialism, however, the millennium was supposedly the kingdom of Christ and his saints, and yet he would not be physically present, his subjects would not all be there (since the dead would not be resurrected and the living would continue to die), and his kingdom would neither be perfect nor eternal. Even though postmillennialists believed that the period would see unequaled spiritual and material prosperity, the progress would be gradual, meaning that evil would not vanish right away and so the kingdom was neither holy nor perfect. Though people would live full lives, they would continue to be born, live and die, and thus it was not an immortal kingdom. So far from being free from sin and death would this period be, that at its end Antichrist himself would arise and even manage to deceive

³⁶⁸ Miller, “Miller’s Reply to Mr. Cambell;” later published as Miller, “Letter III.”

³⁶⁹ Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 7–29; William Miller, *The Kingdom of God* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1842).

³⁷⁰ Miller, “Lecture on the Harvest of the World.”

³⁷¹ William Miller, “Review of a Discourse, Delivered in the North Church, Newburyport, on the Last Evening of the Year 1841, by L. F. Dimmick, Pastor of the Church,” in Miller, *Exposition of the Twenty-Fourth of Matthew; the True Inheritance of the Saints; the Cleansing of the Sanctuary; the Typical Sabbath; and a Review of Dimmick*.

³⁷² Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. I,” 167; Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. II,” 171; Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. III,” 177–78; Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. IV,” 203–4.

some. The millennium did therefore not fit the scriptural description of the immortal, holy, glorious, and eternal kingdom.³⁷³

Christ's spiritual millennial reign did not fit the present age or its last part either. The present age was the age of grace and probation. It was true that Christ did reign spiritually as the head of the Church and in the hearts of his believers, but this did not do away with the fact that there were other lords in this world and Christ himself said that his kingdom—in the present age—was not of this world. The time would come when God's opponents would fall and Jesus would reign over the entire globe in his kingdom of glory. But until then, the life of the Christian was marked by the sorrows of this world, such as imperfection and mortality, tribulation and persecution (Mt 25:32–46; Jn 16:22; 2 Tm 3:12; 1 Pt 2:11; Heb 11:6, 13–14). The majority of mankind would always remain antagonistic towards the Gospel, and but few would heed the exhortations of Scripture to persist in the straight and narrow path. The enemies of the Church—such as the Antichrist—would exist and reign until Jesus would return and vanquish them (Dn 2:45; 7; 2 Thes 2:8; Rv 19–20). The postmillennial reign was at odds with this at every turn. Most of the world would be converted, if not the entire world. This bordered on being Universalism. It also made void the words of Christ, for if all the world were converted, would not Christ's kingdom be of this world? Unlike the Bible's testimony about life in this world, this spiritual transformation, in addition to material prosperity, would supposedly end the struggle of faith and cause the foes of the Church and all tribulation to disappear. Blessed were those who were born during such an easy time to be a Christian, and woe to those who were so unfortunate to have been born before this age of bliss, during the darkness and difficulty of all previous history! And yet, the privileged saints who lived during such an easy time to be saved, would still fall prey to temptation when the Antichrist would appear at the end of the millennium! The period simply did not fit the present age. Thus the postmillennialist reign of Christ was too spiritual to be part of the present age, and too earthly to be part of the age to come.³⁷⁴

Nor was there a place for the temporal millennium in between the present and the future age. Besides what has already been mentioned about the nature of the present age, Scripture spoke of it as continuing until the Second Coming when Christ would establish his immortal and eternal kingdom. Scripture spoke consistently about the tenor of the present age and the sequence of its events and development. The last days would be wicked, few would believe, Antichrist would remain to the very end, and then Christ would return with his saints, the resurrection would take place, the wicked would be destroyed, and the saints and the earth would be cleansed and glorified, and the eternal reign of Christ would commence. There was

³⁷³ For the incompatibility of the postmillennialist millennium and the kingdom of God, see Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 63; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 48, 171–72; Miller, *Kingdom of God*.

³⁷⁴ For the incompatibility of the “temporal” millennium with the present age, see Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 57–60, 63, 143; Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 15, 17–18.

no time for a millennium of earthly prosperity in between the two ages.³⁷⁵ Miller pointed how this tenor and sequence was found in many texts about the end times which thus disproved postmillennialism: Christ's parables of the wheat and tares³⁷⁶ and of the net³⁷⁷ in Matthew 13; his predictions on Mt. Olivet in Matthew 24;³⁷⁸ the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25;³⁷⁹ the return of the Son of Man and the harvest of the world in Revelation 14;³⁸⁰ and the return of Jesus and his reign in Revelation 19–20.³⁸¹

There were many Old Testament passages used to support the temporal millennium, but upon closer inspection Miller claimed they proved to be misapplied. Verses that were used to support global conversion (such as Genesis 28:14) showed that believers would come from all nations, but would not constitute the nations in their entirety (Rv 5:9–10). Is 2:4; 11:13; 30:26; 52:8; 65; Jeremiah 31:10; and Micah 4:3 were and would be fulfilled symbolically in the history of the Church. To read these verses as predicting that the present age would turn glorious was to put a wrong construction on them. It put them in direct conflict with the plainest teachings of the New Testament about the nature and course of the present age (Mt 13:37–42; 24; Lk 21:25–26; 1 Thes 5:1–9; 4:1–4; Jas 5:1–10; 1 Pt 4:7; 2 Pt 2–3; Jude; Rv). When the full Old Testament was taken into account, the same New Testament scenario about the present age emerged there, in texts such as Isaiah 24:17–23; 27:14–22; 30:27–30; 34:1–9; 66:15–16; Micah 1:2–5; Nahum 1:5–7; Habakkuk 2:12–14; and Zephaniah 1:14–18.³⁸² This was true as well of the flow of Daniel's prophecies. When Daniel 8 was read together with the other chapters of that book, the sequence of the rise and fall of earthly powers was shown to continue to the Second Coming. In fact, the very idea of a millennium was stated explicitly only twice—in 2 Peter 3:8 and in Revelation 20. Surely the teaching of a temporal millennium must then harmonize with those two Scriptures. As Miller explained by devoting entire lectures to the latter scripture, to read it according to postmillennialism one had to ignore most of the details of the passage.³⁸³

Miller concluded that postmillennialism was unscriptural and therefore pernicious in its influence. It turned people's eyes away from Christ's return as the hope of their salvation and pointed to the improvements of this earth. But this was the hope of the unbelievers, the hope of human progress and achievement. The Bible presented one event as the culmination of redemption from the present evil world—the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This was one of

³⁷⁵ For the seamless transition from the present to the coming age which excludes the interim millennium, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 24, 169–70; William Miller, "Lecture on the Final Judgment," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 154–55; Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 11–18.

³⁷⁶ William Miller, "Letter IV: Prefatory Remarks—Closing up of the Door of Mercy—Millennium—the Chronology," Miller, in *Views of the Prophecies*, 237; Miller, *Review of a Discourse*, 20.

³⁷⁷ Miller, "Letter IV," 237–38.

³⁷⁸ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 239–42; Miller, *Review of a Discourse*, 3.

³⁷⁹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 242–43.

³⁸⁰ Miller, "Lecture on the Harvest of the World," 141–42; Miller, "Letter IV," 238.

³⁸¹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 63–64; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 28–38.

³⁸² On the temporal millennium and Old Testament prophecy, see Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 61–63; Miller, "Review of a Discourse," 17–34.

³⁸³ See, for instance, Miller, "Lecture on the Harvest of the World," 142–43.

the most serious charges Miller laid against postmillennialism. It was nothing more than carnal desires for temporal prosperity, dressed in the garb of Scripture.³⁸⁴

Miller was also unconvinced about the contemporary optimism which was the wind in the postmillennial sails. He freely granted that his was a time of great technological advances, that the last few decades had seen great revivals, and that these two trends were fulfilment of prophecy (Dn 12:4, 1). The end to which they tended was another matter. Had revivals, the missions, the Bible societies, and other efforts drastically increased the number of true believers in the world? Far from it. It was a fact that denominational differences and disputes grew harsher every year. If they could so ill agree today, what hope was there of them all agreeing in the golden tomorrow? All the evangelistic efforts combined lagged behind the growth of the global population. At this rate, the whole world would never be converted. Conditions in the world raised other serious obstacles. The moral and political fabric of society was being torn apart. Wars were increasing and infidelity of all stripes—Deism, atheism, Islam—and Catholicism were on the rise. Looking at these prospects, Miller was incredulous about the conversion of the world.³⁸⁵

The Future Return of the Jews

Miller believed that the Return of the Jews was incompatible with the doctrine of the Church as one people. Scripture taught clearly that God's people were one, those who believed in Christ, with no difference any longer between Jew and Gentile (Jn 10:16; Acts 15:9; Rm 3:22; 10:12; Gal 6:15; Eph 1:10, 22–23; 2:12, 14, 16; Jas 1:1).³⁸⁶ Israel had once been God's people. Abraham had been called to bless all nations with the Gospel, and since this promised blessing could only be realized by faith in Christ, it meant that the promises to Abraham truly belonged to believers in Christ (Rm 3–4; Gal 3:16), starting with Abraham himself.³⁸⁷ When the Jews rejected Christ, they rejected themselves from being God's people. Thus the time of Israel as God's chosen people was over and the Gospel was given to another people (Rm 1:16; 2:7–11, 28–29).³⁸⁸ This new people was the Church, or spiritual Israel, of both Jewish and Gentile ethnicity, and what constituted them as God's people was their faith in Christ. Jews that were converted after the Jewish nation had been rejected as a body, were added to the Church (Rm 11:23).³⁸⁹ If the Jews would remain a distinct group for God apart from the Church when they turned to Christ, as postmillennialism taught, they would be special for reasons others than faith, making God a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).³⁹⁰

³⁸⁴ On the carnality of the temporal millennium, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 168, 282, 291.

³⁸⁵ On the likelihood of (near) universal conversion, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 146; Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 20–23.

³⁸⁶ William Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," *Signs of the Times*, April 15, 1840, 14, 15 Miller, "Review of Elder Levi Hathaway's," 30 William Miller, "A Short Sermon," *Signs of the Times*, October 19, 1842, 36–37.

³⁸⁷ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 14; Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. I," 167.

³⁸⁸ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 14.

³⁸⁹ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 14; William Miller, "Lecture on the Two Sticks," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 87; Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. II," 171; Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. III," 178.

³⁹⁰ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 14; Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. I," 167.

The Return of the Jews also duplicated the course of the Church. When the Gospel was given to the Gentiles they continued, like the Jews before them, to be exiles on earth, under the rule of oppressive powers—pagan and papal Rome—and this captivity would only end when Christ would return in 1843. Then God’s people would be gathered together from all countries into the promised land, the universal Kingdom of God, where Christ would rule in New Jerusalem over the saints (Is 56:8; Ez 37:21–22; Dn 7:18; Mt 13; 24:31; Jn 10:3–5, 16; 11:51–52; Rm 2:9–10; Eph 1:9–10; 2:14; 2 Thes 2:1; 1 Pt 2:25).³⁹¹ This ruled out a gathering of the Jews to a promised land at the same time. Such an idea undermined the entire course of the Church and the Gospel, for if the type still existed as true, then the antitype must be false:

If the typical priesthood is to be restored, after the more perfect Priest has entered into heaven for us; and if the ceremonial law is to be reared up again, after Christ blotted it out and nailed it to his cross; and if old Jerusalem is to be built again, after the new Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, Jew and Gentile, has been preparing more than 1800 years, John xiv. 2, 3, and if the old covenant promises are to be realized, Heb. viii. 13, after we have come to the Mediator of the new and better covenant, Heb. xii. 24: then our High Priest in heaven is not an everlasting priest, and the cross has not power to blot out the law which was against us, and we have no warrant that it can blot out our sins. Then, too, we may look in vain for a new Jerusalem, while the old is yet standing. Then how can the gospel covenant be an everlasting and a better covenant, when the Jewish is to succeed the gospel, and afterwards be restored?³⁹²

The Return of the Jews did not fit the prophecies that Miller used in his lectures—Daniel and the New Testament. Postmillennialists saw the Jews as the protagonist “host” in Daniel 8, the antagonist last “horn” as the Muslim power, and the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 years as the future restoration of the Temple. Miller went into detail how Islam did not fit the prediction, some of which can be mentioned here. The little horn came out of one of the four horns. The four Greek kingdoms had all been conquered by Rome by the first century BC and Islam did not rise until the seventh century, and hence it could not arise from one of the four kingdoms. The little horn destroyed God’s people (v. 25) but Islam was a scourge on apostate Christendom and spared true believers (Rv 9:4). Furthermore, by the time Islam rose to power, the Jews had ceased to be God’s people anyway. The little horn cast down the place of the sanctuary, i.e. Jerusalem, and this the Romans did and not the Muslims.³⁹³ The tenor of the prophecies of Daniel was to trace the successive powers that would rule over God’s people till the end of time, when they would enter the kingdom of God—and how could these prophecies then be about the Jews? Was the Kingdom of God for the Jews?³⁹⁴ Did their history reflect the description of God’s people as holy and in the faith

³⁹¹ Miller, “Letter from Miller, No. 3,” 15; Miller, “Short Sermon,” 37; Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. I,” 167; Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. II,” 171; Miller, “Scriptural Expositions. No. III,” 178.

³⁹² Miller, “Review of Elder Levi Hathaway’s,” 30.

³⁹³ For Miller’s arguments against the application of the last horn to Islam, see Miller, “Miller’s Reply to Cambell,” 1–2. This is the first article of the *Signs of the Times*.

³⁹⁴ Miller, “Review of Elder Levi Hathaway’s,” 29–30.

(Dn 8:25; 11:32–35)? Was the book of life and the resurrection only for the Jews (Dn 12:1–3)?³⁹⁵ Christ had prophesied that Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles until their time would end (Lk 21:24). But this did not imply that after this time Jerusalem would be rebuilt. On the contrary, the time of the Gentiles would end when Jesus would return to establish his eternal kingdom for all the saints (v. 27).³⁹⁶

Though Miller defended prophecies like Daniel and Revelation from postmillennialism, there were still plenty of other prophecies in Moses and the Major and Minor Prophets used to support the Return of the Jews. Such a reading of the texts was carnal and superficial to Miller. The theology of salvation and Church, as well as the historical trajectory of the prophecies of Daniel, Christ, and John, excluded it. How then were the Old Testament's prophecies that seemed to speak of the Return of the Jews to be understood? First by understanding the significance of the Jewish economy. God had given the Gospel to Abraham and it was only by faith in Christ that any Jew or Gentile had ever been saved.³⁹⁷ At the same time, the Jewish economy had been temporary and typical of the antitype to follow: People from all nations, not only Israelites, would believe in Christ, and they would be gathered from the wicked world at the return of Christ who would give them the true Promised Land, the earth made new. This brought in the second factor, hermeneutics, to "rightly divide the Word" (2 Tm 2:15), i.e. apply predictions to their proper referents. God had promised a country to Abraham, but this promise had been fulfilled with the Conquest of Canaan (Jo 21:43–45; 23:14).³⁹⁸ God had also promised to bring the Jews back from captivity to their land, but this was fulfilled with the Return from the Babylonian Captivity.³⁹⁹ When they rejected Christ they ceased to be God's people and the remaining unfulfilled promises about a gathering from captivity (now caused by Rome) was not for them but for the Church.⁴⁰⁰ The Prophets had used the history of Israel to typify the fullness of the Gospel, and thus spoke of two Returns.⁴⁰¹ Whatever fit the historical reality of the Jews until the Cross was fulfilled literally, whatever did not fit, was to be understood as symbolical or about the Gospel age.⁴⁰² Miller stated this right away in his first book:

The prophecies concerning the Jewish captivity in Babylon, and their return, are only partly accomplished in the history of those events; the description of those things in the prophets, are so august and magnificent, that if only applicable to the Jews return, the exposition would be weak, inefficient and barren. Therefore, I humbly believe, that the

³⁹⁵ Miller, "Review of Elder Levi Hathaway's," 30.

³⁹⁶ Miller, "Miller's Reply to Cambell," 2; Miller, "Review of Elder Levi Hathaway's," 30.

³⁹⁷ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. I," 167.

³⁹⁸ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. I," 167.

³⁹⁹ Miller, "Miller's Reply to Mr. Cambell," 35.

⁴⁰⁰ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. IV," 203.

⁴⁰¹ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. I," 167 Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. IV," 203–4.

⁴⁰² "Every prophecy which could not be fulfilled literally" had "a direct allusion to the new covenant, and cannot be fulfilled under the old." Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 15.

exact fulfilment can only be looked for in the captivity of the church, destruction of mystical Babylon, and find glorification of the saints in the new Jerusalem state.⁴⁰³

In this vein, Miller sought to sort out the application of many of the passages which were used to prove a future Return of the Jews. Exodus 15:17 was fulfilled in the conquest of Canaan (Jo 21:45; 23:15).⁴⁰⁴ Jeremiah 31:3–9⁴⁰⁵ and Amos 9:14–15⁴⁰⁶ referred to the Return from Babylon. Many texts that did not seem to fit the Return from Babylon actually did, because expositors overstated the difficulties, and these difficulties did not automatically prove an alternate application (the future Return of the Jews).⁴⁰⁷ There were also many texts that referred to the Church in symbolical language: Isaiah 11:6–12,⁴⁰⁸ 19:22–25,⁴⁰⁹ 21:10–12;⁴¹⁰ 25:7;⁴¹¹ 30:26;⁴¹² Jeremiah 16:15–16;⁴¹³ 23:3–8;⁴¹⁴ 30:3–20;⁴¹⁵ 32:37–40;⁴¹⁶ Ezekiel 37–39;⁴¹⁷ and Zecariah 12.⁴¹⁸

Symbolizing and typifying Old Testament prophecies was an ancient Christian tradition. And Miller made the case that in many instances it was correct to do so. But this came at a cost. It is hard to avoid seeing how different Miller's interpretation of "his" prophecies were in comparison to how he dealt with many of the Old Testament prooftexts for postmillennialism. In the books of Daniel and Revelation he saw a harmonious system, each line of prophecy tracing down the same history with consistent symbols. But when it came to the Old Testament, the Prophets seemingly switched back and forth from type to antitype, the shift being discerned mostly by theological necessity. For instance, Miller had lambasted Stuart for inconsistency when he attempted to apply some verses in Daniel 7 to the eternal kingdom of God, and some to the kingdom of the Jews in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes.⁴¹⁹ But when painted into an interpretative corner himself, Miller demonstrated a similar inconsistency. Overall, how Miller dealt with the Return of the Jews and the Millennium

⁴⁰³ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 5–6; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 7 See also Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 59.

⁴⁰⁴ Miller, "Review of Elder Levi Hathaway's," 30.

⁴⁰⁵ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. IV," 203.

⁴⁰⁶ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. IV," 203.

⁴⁰⁷ Miller wrote: "That the description given by the prophets in many places, as blessings which would follow that event [The Babylonian Captivity], are so glorious and grand, that nothing which has happened, or did happen at that time, can be called a fulfillment!: and therefore it must be a future return from another captivity than Babylon." Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. IV," 203. This was written in 1846, and sounds more dismissive than Miller's humble suggestion in the Introduction to *Evidence* in 1833.

⁴⁰⁸ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 15; Miller, *Review of a Discourse*, 24.

⁴⁰⁹ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. II," 171.

⁴¹⁰ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 15.

⁴¹¹ Miller, *Review of a Discourse*, 24.

⁴¹² Miller, *Review of a Discourse*, 24.

⁴¹³ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. II," 171.

⁴¹⁴ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. III," 177–78.

⁴¹⁵ Miller, "Scriptural Expositions. No. III," 178.

⁴¹⁶ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 15.

⁴¹⁷ Miller, "Letter from Miller, No. 3," 15; Miller, "Lecture on the Two Sticks," 85–100; Miller, "Lecture on the Battle of Gog," 67–84.

⁴¹⁸ William Miller, "Answer to the Above," *Signs of the Times*, May 11, 1842, 43–44.

⁴¹⁹ Miller, *Reply to Stuart's "Hints"*.

contradicts the simple picture that scholarship has usually painted of him as a rigid literalist.⁴²⁰

Preterism

In Miller's day preterism was still in its infancy. Some ancient preterist readings had lived through the centuries embedded within an otherwise historicist interpretation. This was, for instance, the case with Daniel 8, as was seen in the chapter on Luther, but the "double" interpretation of Daniel 8 continued as an alternative in Protestant prophetic interpretation. (By the nineteenth century many historicists had however historicized that chapter to the full as well, as was already seen in the chapter on Newton.) A full preterist reading of Daniel 8 also existed, found among the forerunners of biblical criticism, such as some Jesuits, Deists, Universalists, and other "skeptics." Common nineteenth-century American piety saw such pedigree as no recommendation for the view. As preterism was introduced with nascent biblical criticism in the early nineteenth-century United States, it was vigorously resisted as "German neology," a Trojan horse from unbelievers.

Unlike other alternative interpretations, Miller did not deign to mention preterism as an option he considered during his Bible study years. It is unknown how familiar he was with it during those early years. He must have been acquainted with at least its interpretation of Daniel 8 since the dual interpretation of that chapter had remained unchanged in the Daniel interpretation of many expositors through the centuries. A full historicist interpretation of Daniel had become widespread among historicist expositors by Miller's time and therefore he may have felt the preterist reading was disproven or outdated, unworthy of much consideration.

Miller dismissed a preterist reading of Daniel 8 because it went against what he saw as the obvious harmony of the vision system of Daniel. If the other visions were historicist and paralleled Daniel 8, that chapter had to be read along historicist lines as well. Miller soon had to defend this view against critics who held to a mixed reading (preterist and historicist), for instance in his rebuttal of Dowling.⁴²¹

A more formidable criticism against Miller was a preterist reading of all of Daniel's visions. Miller's most notable critic here was none other than the father of American biblical criticism, Moses Stuart. Stuart wrote a work on the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation in the early 1840s in which he advocated for a more preterist reading of these books. The book was not explicitly directed against the Millerites, though it did allude to them.⁴²² The stature of the author and the use of his book by Millerite opponents meant that his arguments had to be addressed. Stuart was not a fully-fledged preterist and saw, for instance, the last kingdom in

⁴²⁰ For such a depiction, see for instance Arasola, *End of Historicism*.

⁴²¹ Miller, "Brief Review of Dowling's Reply," 182–87; Miller, "Review of Dowling. No. II," 187–91. See also "Not Antiochus IV" in section 3.4.3.

⁴²² Moses Stuart, *Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy*, 2nd ed. (Andover, MA: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell, 1842), 142, 144.

the prophecies as the future Kingdom of God. Thereby he involved himself in difficulties for the prophecies seemingly traced history down to that eternal kingdom, and how could their main fulfillment have ended in the second century BC for Daniel and the first century for John? Miller exploited this discrepancy as his bulwark counterargument⁴²³ and therefore did not address or appreciate Stuart's manifold preterist reasoning.

Though Miller had little regard for preterism, he found himself responding to it more often. Some of his opponents adhered to it in part or full and to Miller it was the arsenal of the various sorts of "unbelievers." It was necessary to affirm sound interpretation against the flood of unbelief. For this reason Miller authored several works that took aim at preterism. He emphasized the futurity of the Second Coming contra the preterist application of Matthew 24 and other texts in his very first lecture.⁴²⁴ In 1838 he wrote a lecture on the seventy weeks because of (probably) preterist doubts about the passage⁴²⁵ and in 1844 he authored a pamphlet upholding a papal identification of Babylon in Revelation, in opposition to a preterist reading of Babylon as imperial Rome.⁴²⁶

Miller rejected preterism for two reasons. First, as a partial reading it jarred against the intended harmony between the prophecies and introduced long, unaccounted-for gaps in the timeline of each vision. Second, as a full system it was nothing but the subterfuge of masked unbelief. This meant that Miller took preterism very seriously when viewed as an obstacle or an objection to his prophetic interpretation, but as a school of prophetic interpretation he never acknowledged its strengths. Preterism was not up for considerate, systematic evaluation, only selective rebuttal.

3.5.4 Daniel 8 and Christian Practice

Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 interacted mostly with the doctrine of the Second Coming. In fact, to Miller the Second Coming was the heart of his message. While the date was novel, it was but part of the traditional doctrine about the object, manner, and time of the Second Coming of Christ. The doctrine was in and of itself of utmost importance to which the date added urgency. And while Miller's date for the return of Christ was a new addition to the doctrine, the practical aspect was the same: "Prepare to meet thy God." The practical aspect was embodied in Miller's ministry and in the Advent Movement as a whole: Here were people who were preparing their souls for Judgment and urged others to do the same. Thus the message translated directly into action. This call for action was also reflected in Miller's writings. He ended nearly every lecture with an appeal to his audience in the light of these weighty truths, and dedicated the last two lectures in his book to a final appeal.

⁴²³ Miller, *Reply to Stuart's "Hints"*.

⁴²⁴ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 12–19 See also Miller, "Lecture on the Final Judgment," 151–54.

⁴²⁵ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 72.

⁴²⁶ Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 45, 46.

Miller first appealed to his readers to study the doctrine of the Second Coming and the prophecies that showed when, how, and why it would occur. The solemnity of the events and the nearness of their fulfillment required of all to give the matter most serious thought.⁴²⁷ Miller then urged his audience to be candid with their souls: Were they prepared to meet their Savior and Judge? Were they right with God? Had they accepted Christ's salvation? Were they living a truly Christian life?⁴²⁸ The lateness of the hour meant that preparation was an urgent imperative.⁴²⁹

The preparation was to accept Christ's salvation and be a true Christian, and, if one was not a believer already, to repent and turn to the Savior. Christ's return would be the last act in his redemption. That time would not be for tears of repentance and change of mind; it would be the time for the soul already converted to receive the final touch of glory before it would enter the kingdom through the pearly gates. Miller therefore exhorted sinners, skeptics, unbelievers and believers alike, to believe, repent, and make sure that their works testified of a heart full of faith in Christ.⁴³⁰ Then, when they had found peace in Christ, Miller urged his audience to share the news with others.⁴³¹

As other evangelists and revivalists, Miller used all the rhetorical skills at his disposal to try to communicate the reality and solemnity of the message he presented. He assured believers that their hope would soon turn to sight and described the beauty of salvation.⁴³² He warned sinners to take heed from the examples of the Antediluvians and Sodom⁴³³ and the contemporaries of Ezekiel who said that his visions were not for them but the distant future⁴³⁴—all instances of people who were indifferent and careless of their souls until it was too late to be saved. He tried to describe the regret and despair those would experience who would be found unprepared and lost when Christ's salvation would come to a close.⁴³⁵ He sought to reason with arguments raised as obstacles to the decision of faith, often turning them upon the heads of those who raised them. There was no avoiding the fact that there

⁴²⁷ For the appeal to study, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 25, 26, 58, 114, 248, 298–300; Miller, “Lecture on the Harvest of the World,” 143–44; William Miller, “Lecture on the Great Sabbath,” in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 171; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth of Matthew*, 74–75; Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 45–47.

⁴²⁸ For the appeal to self-examination, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 57–58, 202, 248, 281, 298–300; Miller, “Lecture on the Battle of Gog,” 84; Miller, “Lecture on the Harvest of the World,” 143–44; Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 45–47.

⁴²⁹ Miller, *Evidences from Scripture & History*, 54; Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 25, 232, 249; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth of Matthew*, 43.

⁴³⁰ For the appeal of preparation, see Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 25–27, 58, 174–75, 218, 232, 248–49, 299; Miller, “Lecture on the Harvest of the World,” 143–44; Miller, “Lecture on the Final Judgment,” 156; Miller, “Lecture on the Great Sabbath,” 171; Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 29; Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 24; Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 46–47.

⁴³¹ Miller, “Lecture on the Two Sticks,” 100; Miller, *True Inheritance of the Saints*, 71–72.

⁴³² Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 173, 189, 248, 263; Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 24; Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 47.

⁴³³ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 26, 58, 249, 299; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth of Matthew*, 39–43.

⁴³⁴ William Miller, “Lecture on the Visions of Ezekiel,” in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 118–31.

⁴³⁵ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 25, 114, 124–25, 159–60, 174, 189, 249, 263; Miller, “Lecture on the Great Sabbath,” 171; Miller, *Twenty-Fourth of Matthew*, 99–115.

would be Judgment.⁴³⁶ Some said God had not revealed the time of the end, but were they certain their doubt was truer than the arguments for the date?⁴³⁷ The simple assertion of disbelief did not do away with God's truth.⁴³⁸ Miller implored his audience to give heed to the signs of the times blazing around them⁴³⁹ and less heed to scoffers and teachers who were leading them from the truth.⁴⁴⁰ Unbelievers who dismissed the end of the world cited philosophy as proof for the Flood—were the prophets of God who warned of a similar end of the age not equal to uninspired philosophers?⁴⁴¹ Even if Christ would come later, it was only biblical to heed the injunction to watch and pray.⁴⁴² Miller pointed to the revived faith and piety of those who had believed and were preparing. In contrast he pointed to the mocking and ridicule of those who did not believe—was such irreverence towards holy questions and such unchristian behavior towards believers not proof enough who was in the wrong and who in the right?⁴⁴³ Those who rejected and even hated Miller's message—surely Christians who hated the idea of the return of their Lord should examine their hearts. They were unwittingly fulfilling all the prophetic warnings about the opposition the final gospel call would receive. They claimed to be waiting for Christ but were sleeping like the foolish virgins. Or they dismissed his return altogether and pushed it into the distant future, literally echoing what Scripture had predicted the wicked would say in the end: "My Lord delayeth his coming" (Mt 24:48); "Peace and safety!" in the face of coming destruction (1 Thes 5:3); "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pt 3:4).⁴⁴⁴ But most importantly, where was the harm in heeding the biblical call to watch for the coming of the Lord, even though he were to tarry longer than Miller predicted?:

And now, Christians, if these things are so, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the day of God, "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ"? Then let our conversation be in heaven, from whence we expect our Savior, and stir up each other's pure minds by way of remembrance of these things; for the time of the promise draweth nigh, when he will come and receive us to himself, that we may be with him. How necessary, my brethren, we should examine the word of God diligently; see if it does not give some indications, some signs, by which we may know the "Son of Man is near, even at the door," and our "blessed hope" is about to be realized in the "glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ." If he comes and finds us, or some of us, in this lukewarm state, hardly having

⁴³⁶ Miller, "Lecture on the Final Judgment," 155–56.

⁴³⁷ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 74–75.

⁴³⁸ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 249.

⁴³⁹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 298–300.

⁴⁴⁰ Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 23–24.

⁴⁴¹ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 26–27.

⁴⁴² Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 25–27.

⁴⁴³ Joshua V. Himes, "Mr. Miller's Influence upon the People," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 15–19; John Hooper, "No. II," in Miller, *Views of the Prophecies*, 249–50; Miller, *Kingdom of God*, 20–23; Miller, *Remarks on Revelations*, 46–47.

⁴⁴⁴ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 263.

looked into his word, and, making our want of talents an excuse, have neglected to trim our lamps, and have been very spare in holy conversation, and are crying peace and safety when sudden destruction cometh, and perhaps have sneeringly mocked and laughingly ridiculed the idea of Christ being near at the door, and perhaps have joined the infidel and unbeliever in their unholy remarks on this subject, and although we have heard the midnight cry, “Behold, the bridegroom cometh,” yet we treat it with neglect or disdain, or some of us, perhaps, with reproach,—I ask, if the Lord of such servants come and find us so doing, what will he do with us? He will come in an hour that we think not, and cut us off, and appoint our portion among the hypocrites and unbelievers, where shall be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. But we will suppose that he will not come in so short a time as your speaker believes; still what do I ask of you, my brethren? Nothing but what Jesus Christ and the apostles required 1800 years ago, I ask you to compare these views with the Bible. Is this wrong? *No*. I ask you for holy conversation. Is this wrong? *No*. I ask you for heavenly-mindedness. Is this wrong? *No*, no. I ask you to stir up each other's pure minds, to make improvement on your one talent if no more; to come out of this cold and lukewarm state; to trim your lamps and be ready. Are these requirements wrong? Certainly not; no, no. I ask you again to compare scripture with scripture; to read the prophets; to stop your revilings; to take warning by the old world; to flee from sin and the wrath which is to come; to hide yourselves in Christ, until the indignation be over and past; to look “for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” . . . Therefore it can do you no harm to hear, and believe, and do those things which God requires of you, and which you think you would do, if you knew he would appear. First, I ask you to repent of your sins. Would this be right? Yes. Next, I ask you to believe in God. Is this right? Yes. And I ask you to be reconciled to his will, love his law, forsake sin, love holiness, practice his precepts, obey his commands. Would these things be right? Yes, yes. And last of all, and not least, I ask you to “look for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”⁴⁴⁵

Thus Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 was intertwined with an urgent call for the study of prophecy, for conversion, for piety, and evangelism. His message imbued a traditional doctrine with imminence and its duties with urgency which was radical for the times.

3.5.5 Conclusion

Daniel 8 played a crucial role in Miller's overall prophetic interpretation. Daniel 2 and 7 traced the history of the four kingdoms which would rule over God's people down to the Second Coming of Christ. Daniel 8 covered the same rise and fall of the same empires and also the same end event, described as the cleansing of the sanctuary. Miller believed its equation with the Second Coming could be independently verified, but correlating Daniel 8 with chapters 2 and 7 also served to prove the meaning of the phrase, since the Second Coming was more clearly portrayed in those earlier chapters, for instance as the Son of Man coming in the clouds to begin judgment and to establish his eternal kingdom (ch. 7). Additionally, Daniel 8 provided the date for the return of Christ. The date could be found by calculating the 2300-year period in the vision. This was one of the periods that measured the

⁴⁴⁵ Miller, *Evidence from Scripture and History*, 25–27.

duration of the captivity of God's people until the end. Its starting point was found in chapter 9, but the 490-year period in that chapter was the first part of the longer period. Miller dated that period, as many had before him, from 457 BC to AD 34. This meant the 2300 years would end in 1843/4. Because of the correlation, it meant that the visions of chapters 2 and 7 would end in the same time, and in fact, all visions that traced earth's history down to the last days. Thus Daniel 8 served as the mighty arch that bent all lines of prophecy to converge more or less in the same point of time in the future.

The doctrine that Daniel 8 interacted most with in Miller's theology was the teaching of the Second Coming. Miller saw these so intertwined that he interpreted all rejection of or hostility towards his prediction as aimed at the doctrine of the Second Coming. The Bible explained the necessity, the manner, and the timing of the Second Coming. The time was explained in general by tracing different aspects of history down to the end so that the believer could see where in the stream of time the present was and how close the end was. Christ himself taught his disciples to watch for the signs of his return so they would be ready for his return. It was therefore clearly not his intent that Christians would cease to watch, let alone ceasing to believe he would return soon or at all. Miller here tapped into traditional views of the Second Coming contra many opinions that were on the rise in his day. He even managed to avoid full collision with texts that seemed to warn against too close speculations about the end, such as that no man knoweth the day nor the hour, by pointing out that he did not overstep such cautions—he went only as far as what was written had revealed: the year, not more specific. This distinction turned out to be hard to maintain in the end, even for Miller, who accepted the prediction that swept through the rank in the late summer of 1844 that Christ would return on October 22.

It was not only Miller's views on the Second Coming that ruled out alternatives, but also his supersessionism. Miller viewed any shirking away from knowing what the prophecies meant as disguised unbelief that refused to see what God had revealed. Similarly, preterism also resisted the idea that the Second Coming was a real future event with a knowable time. It involved the text in more difficulties than it solved, and Miller therefore dismissed it, though not without involving himself in some similar discrepancies. The postmillennial beliefs that the Jews would return to Palestine at the commencement of the millennium, and that Christ would only return after its close, Miller also rejected. He saw these ideas as carnal: Attributing any special status to the Jews was to make God a respecter of persons and to deny salvation by faith; hoping for a millennium of prosperity was simply human love of this world dressed up in prophecy. Furthermore, Miller could not reconcile these ideas with the plain reading of the prophecies.

Daniel 8 prescribed a limit to the length of the history of redemption. But it interacted with Miller's views of church history in more ways. Miller saw God's people not only as pilgrims and strangers in this world, but as captives, both to sin and death, but also to the rule of their enemies to the day they would reign with Christ fully free within and without. Miller believed

the prophecies that dealt with kingdoms did so because they were tracing the captivity of God's people to its end. The various prophetic periods served the same purpose. They calculated the duration of the reigns of various powers over God's people, and on occasion the length of the punishment those powers themselves received. For the most part they were numbers of hope, counting history forward to the time of Christ's return. When it came to sources on history, Miller mostly followed conventional Protestant historiography, except he emphasized certain dates and events which not everyone agreed were pivotal in the way he thought. This he did because he believed they were the starting and ending points of the prophetic periods.

The practical implication and use of Daniel 8 was an urgent revivalist call for a full conversion and consistent life to prepare to meet the Lord. These Christian duties were not found in Daniel 8—nor directly in the Book of Daniel for that matter—but they were in harmony with the traditional understanding of what a Christian must do to be ready to meet the Lord.

3.6 Conclusion

Miller's new interpretation of Daniel 8 was colored by his personal experience. He became a Christian again after having been a Deist for more than a decade, and resolved to study the Bible to see whether it was truly a harmonious, divine revelation, or a contradictory collection of human imperfections. This meant that Miller staked his own personal faith on the biblical canon being one interwoven system, and he found what he set out to seek. The attempt itself showed the rationalism of Miller's times, because Miller accepted Deist critique of the Bible as valid arguments against Christianity, which must be answered on their own terms. The apparent facts, that Miller did not consult many commentators in his initial study of the Bible and that he reached similar conclusions, show that he and other historicist interpreters of the early nineteenth century were using similar hermeneutics though their theology varied to some degree. It is possible, as Froom has suggested, that a general consensus on the 1260-year period of Daniel 7 having ended in 1798, may explain why prophetic speculation of historicists moved to the 2300 years of Daniel 8. There do not seem to have been any particular historical events, however, that Miller began to speculate about prophetically and thus triggered his prophetic interpretation. The historical dynamics of Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 thus include his rationalist belief that the Bible and its prophecies must be harmonious, comprehensible, and decipherable, his view of human nature—and his contemporaneous age—as evil, and his familiarity of other prophetic commentators, some of which were historicists.

Miller's personality also influenced his interpretation and its development. He believed the Bible had a clear meaning, and that the prophecies were not only important but urgent and called for action. He set the example by dedicating his whole life to the effort of making the truths he had discovered known to the general populace. While it may have in one sense been

easy—revivals occurred wherever Miller preached, the people loved him, and pastors were thankful for his impact—it was also difficult. Miller was middle-aged when he became an itinerant preacher, he spent most of his time on the road away from his family, and spent his personal fortune on the undertaking. Revivals were also not the only results. After 1840, as the date setting became evermore important due to time running out, Miller was ridiculed in most of the religious and secular press of the day, and eventually Millerites were sometimes persecuted and excommunicated from their churches. Miller could have given up, but he persevered. When his original prediction failed in the spring of 1844, he continued expecting Christ's soon return. He adopted a temporary recalculation done by his followers setting the terminus in October 22, 1844, and when that failed he still persisted in the hope that he was living in the "margin of error," and died in that hope a few years later. Thus Miller's character demonstrated the dynamics of interpretative clarity, importance, urgency, and corresponding action that made his interpretation of Daniel 8 influential in his day.

There were several factors that were special in Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8. First, Miller followed Newton's growing line of thought within historicism that the vision was not a double prophecy or a typological foreshadowing and that it therefore did not have anything to do with Antiochus IV. Second, Miller accordingly saw the last horn as the Roman power only and the 2300 evenings and mornings as symbolical days, that is, as representing 2300 years. In all these moves Miller used the hermeneutics of extension. The next problem to solve was to figure out the starting point of the period. This question Miller anchored in Daniel 9. The time period of that chapter was "the seventy weeks," representing 490 literal years. Miller interpreted chapter 9 as a further explanation of chapter 8: The time period of chapter 9 was the first part of the time period of chapter 8. This meant that the periods began at the same time, and thus the starting point of the 2300 years were found. This was the hermeneutics of harmonization. Lastly, it was necessary to interpret the terminus event of the 2300 years, the cleansing of the sanctuary. Miller interpreted this event as the Second Coming of Christ. Miller surveyed the Bible's own interpretation of 'sanctuary' and concluded that the figurative or symbolical meaning of sanctuary in Daniel 8 was the Church (i.e. the saints) and the earth. The Church and the earth would be cleansed or perfected at Christ's return. This harmonized Daniel 8 further with the other chapters, but it was a common interpretation that Daniel 2, 7, and 11, ended with the Second Coming and the Judgment. The textual dynamics of Miller's interpretation are the historicist hermeneutics of extension and harmonization.

Miller's prophetic interpretation reflected many traditional Protestant theological tenets, such as belief in predictive prophecy and the Last Things, and a historicist reading of the same. Miller's theology set his interpretation apart from other historicists, and from that of prophetic commentators in general of his day. All his textual ideas were found in the exposition of other nineteenth and eighteenth century commentators, but none in Miller's particular combination. Miller adopted a premillennial view of the Second Coming, with this particularity that he gave no place to the Jews in the end-times. Thus the cleansing of the

sanctuary did not refer to the Return of the Jews or the commencement of the millennium before Christ's return. The particular theological dynamics in Miller's interpretation of Daniel 8 can be seen as premillennialism and supersessionism.

Miller's new interpretation of Daniel 8 continued, but in a much narrower circle than it had commenced in. The failed prediction of the Second Coming occurring on October 22, 1844 proved the demise of Adventism as a movement of national attention. The rise and fall of the Adventist Movement was also symptomatic of the erosion of historicism as a leading school of prophetic interpretation in Protestantism. While remaining Adventists continued to deal with the interpretative fallout of Miller's failed prediction, Protestants as a whole continued moving in other directions, such as Dispensational futurism and preterism, later known as biblical criticism. Historicism did not go fully extinct, however. Millerites came up with different solutions to Miller's failure, and consequently split into several budding denominations. One of these Adventist groups coalesced around a reinterpretation of Daniel 8 which Ellen White contributed significantly to. She and others claimed that Miller's prophetic arithmetic had indeed been correct, but the cleansing of the sanctuary was not the Second Coming but the commencement of an event which Miller had not fully understood.

4 DYNAMICS OF ELLEN G. WHITE'S INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 8

4.1 Introduction

When Miller's prediction of Christ's return in 1844 failed, his followers (called either Millerites or Adventists) dealt with the failure in different ways. Some Adventists, on further Bible study, claimed that they had misunderstood the prophecy and set forth a new interpretation. Ellen G. Harmon (later White, 1827–1915), who turned seventeen shortly after the "Great Disappointment," began to have visions that supported the reinterpretation. In 1849, she had emerged as one of three founders of a new group, the Sabbatarian Adventists. In 1858, a decade later and only a few years before the group would organize as Seventh-day Adventists (1863), White published the *Great Controversy*, a redemption history which integrated the new interpretation of Daniel 8 (and thus Sabbatarian Adventism) with theodicy. According to White, salvation history was a cosmic battle between Christ and Satan which centered on the nature of God's character as reflected in the law of God. This law, promulgated as the Ten Commandments to humanity—including the seventh-day Sabbath—was also the standard by which all would be judged, and this Judgment had begun in 1844.

While White did not write much directly on the prophecies, her theology hinged on the Sabbatarian Adventist reinterpretation of Daniel 8, which therefore played a crucial role. According to the new interpretation, the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dn 8:14) had indeed begun in 1844—not with Christ's return to earth, but with his entrance into the Most Holy in the sanctuary in heaven. The cleansing was the antitype of the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), a three-phased Judgment which had begun in 1844. To stand in the Judgment, one had to be aware of the standard of Judgment (the Ten Commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath) and the last-day deceptions Satan would use to divert people's attention from Christ's final intercession. In the *Great Controversy*, White contributed further to this new interpretation. She read redemption history in the light of the new sanctuary understanding, as a cosmic battle between Christ and Satan over the law of God, and framed the Millerite Movement, the rise of Sabbatarian Adventism, and the fulfillment of Daniel 8 as not only essential but as the final events in this story. This redemption history would become her main literary focus—she went on to write three sets of writings on the topic—which she continued to develop and mature throughout her life.

While White had contributed to the reinterpretation of Daniel 8, her main contribution to the historicizing of Daniel 8 was how she integrated it with redemption history. While the reinterpretation exonerated Adventism from failure, the great controversy motif made it not only essential but the final chapter of redemption history. As Millerism had tested whether Christians truly wanted to see Christ come again, Seventh-day Adventism would test whether Christians would acknowledge God's law in the time of a Judgment that had already begun. White's framing of redemption history imbued Adventism with continuous expectancy—the Judgment had begun, Christ was coming soon—while it also tempered it; the fact that the prophetic dates had been accurately deciphered left no room for projecting them further into

the future. The fact that White claimed to be a prophet—though she never appropriated that particular term—lent even more legitimacy to her theology. With a prophetic seal on an urgent message, Seventh-day Adventists grew from the obscurity of post-Miller Adventism in the late 1840s until they had become an institutional, international denomination by White's death in 1915. The strength of White's interpretation of Daniel 8 was also its weakness: To accept it meant to eventually accept a modern prophet, a traditional Protestant taboo. The tide of historicism also ebbed during White's lifetime. Conservative Christians turned from historicism to futurism in the latter half of the nineteenth century and historicism ceased to be the majority view of Protestants and became the sole domain of but a few new religious movements, minimizing White's impact on Protestant prophetic interpretation.

White was nevertheless a significant character in religious history. She was the co-founder of one of the new religious movements that arose in the nineteenth century, and has become the most translated female author in history. To ascertain what factors were at work in her interpretation of Daniel's vision in the citadel of Susa (Dn 8:2), this chapter will review the pertinent literature, canvass the historical context of her contribution, go through her reading of the text, and assess what role the vision played in her theology.

4.2 Literature Review

White was a prolific writer and in the later decades of her career she had a team of literary assistants who proofread syntax and grammar and helped her with editing and organizing her letters and manuscripts. On her passing a trust was formed in accordance with her last will that became responsible for the publication and preservation of her writings; it later became known as the Ellen G. White Estate.¹ With the arrival of the internet her published books and articles became available online. While visiting researchers could read her unpublished writings (and portions of them were published in edited books), it was not until 2015 that the digital transcripts² of her letters and manuscripts became fully available to the public online.³ Her whole published and digitized corpus is now accessible on the Estate's websites.⁴ The White Estate has also begun annotating her unpublished works.⁵

Some tertiary and secondary literature is particularly helpful to gain overview over White and the literature about her. The White Estate published a three-volume subject index to her

¹ On the Ellen G. White Estate, see James R. Nix, "Ellen G. White Estate, Incorporated," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 799–803.

² The handwritten and typed autographs are (still) not accessible online.

³ Andrew McChesney, "Ellen White Letters and Manuscripts to Be Released," *Adventist Review*, July 14, 2015, <https://www.adventistreview.org/church-news/story3054-ellen-white-letters-and-manuscripts-to-be-released>.

⁴ EGW Writings, Ellen G. White Estate, <https://egwwritings.org/>; Ellen G. White Estate, <http://ellenwhite.org/>; Ellen G. White Estate, <https://whiteestate.org/>. Most of White's digitized corpus is also available in the EGW Writings CD/software and app.

⁵ Ellen G. White, *The Ellen G. White Letters and Manuscripts with Annotations*, vol. 1, eds. Kenneth H. Wood and William A. Fagal, annotator Roland Karlman (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2014).

writings (1962–63).⁶ Seventh-day Adventist-focused bibliographies by Abella (1988),⁷ Hanna (1995),⁸ and Stefánsson and Robertson (2013)⁹ include either sections on White or indices or digital search options. Recently, Fortin and Moon edited the *Ellen White Encyclopedia* (2013).¹⁰ Some of the recent secondary literature serves as a good introduction to White. There is still no academic biography on White, and the latest standard work is the six-volume biography written by her grandson Arthur White (1981–85).¹¹ (Terrie D. Aamodt is writing a biography on White but planned publication date is not until 2027.)¹² Despite its believer’s perspective, it aids the reader to see the main contours of White’s busy life and extensive literary output. Church historian Knight wrote four introductory books on White (1996–99).¹³ And Aamodt, Land, and Numbers published an introductory essay collection on White (2014).¹⁴

The earliest literature about White was confessional and polemical (i.e. “for” and “against”). Early on Seventh-day Adventists began writing books about White to explain why they believed she was a true prophet, and how one should understand her works. Some of the main themes in these works were therefore the spiritual gift of prophecy and the nature of inspiration and all kinds of topics related to White. The authors addressed this literature to their members, opponents, and the world, and thus these works were confessional, apologetic, and evangelistic. Conversely, opponents also penned books about her. All facets of this literature continues to be produced to this day. Academic literature on White continued grappling with these topics to a considerable extent through the twentieth century and

⁶ *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*, 3 vols. (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962–63).

⁷ Gilbert Abella and Vera M. Schwarz, *Dissertations, Theses, and Major Research Papers Related to the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (La Sierra Campus Library, Loma Linda University, 1988), 207–18, Center for Adventist Research.

⁸ Martin Frederick Hanna, “Seventh-day Adventist Bibliography (1851–1994)” (MA project, Andrews University, 1995), 136.

⁹ Jón Hjörleifur Stefánsson and Terry D. Robertson, *Seventh-day Adventist Dissertations and Theses in Religion*, Faculty Publications 3, Digital Commons, James White Library, Andrews University, published January 1, 2015, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/library-pubs/3>.

¹⁰ Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon, eds., *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2013).

¹¹ Arthur White, *Ellen G. White*, vol. 1, *The Early Years, 1827–1862* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1985); *The Progressive Years, 1862–1876* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1986); vol. 3, *The Lonely Years, 1876–1891* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1984); vol. 4, *The Australian Years, 1891–1900* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1983); vol. 5, *The Early Elmshaven Years, 1900–1915* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1981); vol. 6, *The Later Elmshaven Years, 1905–1915* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1982).

¹² Terrie D. Aamodt, biography on Ellen G. White, Adventist Pioneer Series, estimated publication in 2027.

¹³ George R. Knight, *Meeting Ellen White: A Fresh Look at Her Life, Writings, and Major Themes* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1996); George R. Knight, *Reading Ellen White: How to Understand and Apply Her Writings* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1997); George R. Knight, *Ellen White's World: A Fascinating Look at the Times in Which She Lived* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1998); George R. Knight, *Walking with Ellen White: The Human Interest Story* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 1999).

¹⁴ Terrie D. Aamodt, Gary Land and Ronald L. Numbers, eds., *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

continues to do so in the twenty-first century.¹⁵ Thankfully, academic literature on White's theological thought in its own right has been slowly growing though she still remains underresearched in academia in general.¹⁶

Not much has been written on White's prophetic interpretation. Yamagata (1983) situated White's premillennialism within American premillennialism from 1700 to 1900. He devoted a chapter to the great controversy theme¹⁷ because of its prominence in her prophetic interpretation.¹⁸ Sills compared White's interpretation of Matthew 24 with contemporaries who may have influenced her (1981).¹⁹ Neall studied the dynamics of Christ's Second Coming—"the nearness and delay of the Parousia"—in White's thought (1982).²⁰ Interestingly, he did not mention her interpretation of Daniel and its related themes of the Sanctuary and the Judgment. Butler wrote a chapter (2014) on White's eschatology.²¹ When it comes to White's interpretation of Daniel, but few works could be found. Froom devoted a chapter to a summary of White's interpretation of Daniel and Revelation (1954).²² An unknown Adventist layperson edited a collection of her references to Daniel (1980).²³ In his bachelor thesis, Bugean surveyed her interpretation of Daniel and Revelation (2000).²⁴ Timm refuted a futurist reading of White's comments on Daniel 12 (2005).²⁵ Kaiser's master's thesis (2009) analyzed the Adventist controversy over the meaning of "the daily" in Daniel 8, which lasted decades before and after White's death, though with minimal input from her.²⁶ There are two short entries on White's interpretation of Daniel in the *Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*

¹⁵ For an overview of denominational and polemical literature on White until the early twenty-first century, see Merlin Burt, "Bibliographic Essay on Publications about Ellen G. White," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 148–81. See also Gary Land, "Biographies," in Aamodt, Land, and Numbers, *Ellen Harmon White*, 322–45.

¹⁶ This is a symptom of the general lack of academic interest in Seventh-day Adventists. This lacuna becomes notable when one compares the academic literature produced on other New Religious Movements that originated in nineteenth century America.

¹⁷ Masao Yamagata, "Ellen G. White and American Premillennialism" (PhD dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1983), 151–86.

¹⁸ Yamagata concluded that White "reinterpreted traditional premillennialism from the perspective of her great controversy theme." Yamagata, "Ellen G. White," 323. The present work will add the opposite—that White drew on early Seventh-day Adventist prophetic interpretation to formulate the Great Controversy motif.

¹⁹ Raymond H. Sills, "The Interpretation of the Olivet Discourse by Ellen G. White and Her Contemporaries" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 1981).

²⁰ Ralph E. Neall, "The Nearness and the Delay of the Parousia in the Writings of Ellen G. White" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 1982).

²¹ Jonathan M. Butler, "Second Coming," in Aamodt; Land; Numbers, *Ellen Harmon White*, 178–95.

²² LeRoy Edwin Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers: The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation*, 4 vols. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1946–54), 4:1138–51.

²³ Ellen G. White, *An Exhaustive Ellen G. White Commentary on Daniel & Revelation: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary on Daniel and Revelation from the Published and Unpublished Writings of Ellen G. White, Compiled and Meticulously Keyed to Scripture. Also Including the SDA Bible Commentary on Daniel and Revelation in Footnote Format*, vol. 1, *Daniel* (Harrah, OK: Academy Enterprises, 1980).

²⁴ Daniel Bugean, "Daniel și Apocalipsa în scrierile Ellenei White" (BA thesis, Institutul Teologic Adventist, 2000).

²⁵ Alberto R. Timm, "Os 1.290 e 1.335 dias de Daniel 12," *Kerygma* 1, no. 1 (2005): 3–8.

²⁶ Denis Kaiser, "The History of the Adventist Interpretation of the 'Daily' in the Book of Daniel from 1831 to 2008" (MA thesis, Andrews University, 2009).

(2013).²⁷ This means that to this day there is no comprehensive treatment of White's prophetic interpretation in general or of Daniel in particular.

Of the theological topics that Seventh-day Adventists see as connected to Daniel 8, the Sanctuary and the Judgment have received most attention. Short reviewed the development of the teaching of the "cleansing of the sanctuary" (1958).²⁸ Haddock (1970) traced the history of Adventist interpretation of the Sanctuary from the Millerite Movement to 1905. He devoted two chapters to White and she also features prominently in a third chapter.²⁹ Adams (1981) compared how three Seventh-day Adventists thinkers—Uriah Smith, Albion F. Ballenger, and M. L. Andreasen—interpreted the Sanctuary.³⁰ C. Mervyn Maxwell traced the development of the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine of the Judgment (1981).³¹ In Holbrook's edited volume on the Sanctuary, the history of its doctrine was traced in several articles (1989).³² Timm (1995) analyzed the development of the Adventist interpretation of the Sanctuary and "the three angels's messages" (Rv 14:6–12) from 1844 to 1863.³³ Burt (2002) wrote on the development of the three key doctrines—the Sanctuary, the Sabbath, and the prophetic gift—in early Adventism, from 1844 to 1849.³⁴ Kaiser wrote an article on Christian views of a heavenly sanctuary through church history, leading up to Seventh-day Adventism and including White (2016).³⁵ The dissertations of Timm and particularly Burt provide a helpful insight into White's theological role as a co-founder of Seventh-day Adventism during the formative years and decades. Works on the development of the Sanctuary and the Judgment in Adventist thought are helpful to the study of White because she among others was influential in shaping these concepts. Regretfully, however, apart from short entries on these

²⁷ Martin Pröbstle, "Daniel, Book of," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 754–57; Martin Hanna, "Daniel and Revelation, Study of," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 757–58.

²⁸ Donald K. Short, "A Study of the Cleansing of the Sanctuary in Relation to Current Denominational History" (MA thesis, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 1958).

²⁹ Robert Haddock, "A History of the Doctrine of the Sanctuary in the Advent Movement 1800–1905" (BD thesis, Andrews University, 1970), 130–48, 198–230, 239–70, see also 347–50, 470–94.

³⁰ Roy Adams, "The Doctrine of the Sanctuary in the Seventh-day Adventist Church: Three Approaches" (ThD dissertation, Andrews University, 1981).

³¹ C. Mervyn Maxwell, "The Investigative Judgment: Its Early Development," in *The Sanctuary and the Atonement: Biblical, Historical, and Theological Studies*, ed. Arnold V. Wallenkampf and W. R. Leshar (Washington, DC: Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1981), 545–81; republished as C. M. Maxwell, "IV. The Investigative Judgment: Its Early Development," in Holbrook, *Doctrine of the Sanctuary*, 119–57.

³² P. G. Damsteegt, "I. Historical Background (Early Nineteenth Century)," in Holbrook, *Doctrine of the Sanctuary*, 1–16; P. G. Damsteegt, "II. Among Sabbatarian Adventists (1845–1850)," in Holbrook, *Doctrine of the Sanctuary*, 17–55; P. G. Damsteegt, "III. Continued Clarification (1850–1863)," in Holbrook, *Doctrine of the Sanctuary*, 57–117.

³³ Alberto R. Timm, "The Sanctuary and the Three Angels' Messages 1844–1863: Integrating Factors in the Development of Seventh-day Adventist Doctrines" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 1995).

³⁴ Merlin 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 1849" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2003).

³⁵ Denis Kaiser, "The Biblical Sanctuary Motif in Historical Perspective." In *Scripture and Philosophy: Essays Honoring the Work and Vision of Fernando Luis Canale*, edited by Tiago Arrais, Kenneth Bergland, and Michael W. Yunker (Berrien Springs, MI: Adventist Theological Society, 2016), 154–93.

topics in the *Ellen G. White Encyclopedia* (2014),³⁶ no study has been devoted to these ideas solely in White's writings.³⁷

White's most important work on Daniel 8 was the *Great Controversy*, in which she incorporated it into her redemption history and her "great controversy motif"—probably her most significant theological contribution to Seventh-day Adventism. There is literature both on the book and the motif. The literature on the book encircled the questions of White's usage of sources, her historical context, and the nature of the prophetic gift. After White's last revision of the book in 1911 (and her death in 1915), these questions gained new life. They then lay dormant until the 1970s and 1980s, when several critical Adventist scholars began exploring these topics to a new degree. In return, more conservative scholars sought to answer the questions they raised about the legitimacy of White's prophetic gift.³⁸ The claims to

³⁶ Alberto R. Timm, "Investigative Judgment," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 903–5; Richard M. Davidson, "Sanctuary, Doctrine of the," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 1130–33.

³⁷ Some dissertations on White's soteriology discuss the salvific implications of her eschatology, such as Lee (1985) on the role of faith and works in the Judgment and Whidden (1989) on her view of perfection. This literature, however, does not treat her eschatology systematically but only one of its aspects. Jairyong Lee, "Faith and Works in Ellen G. White's Doctrine of the Last Judgment" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 1985); Woodrow W. Whidden, "The Soteriology of Ellen G. White: The Persistent Path to Perfection, 1836–1902" (PhD dissertation, Drew University, 1989).

³⁸ For the discussion on White's editions of and sources for the *Great Controversy*, see William C. White, "'Great Controversy,' New Edition: A Statement by Elder W. C. White, Made before the General Conference Council, October 30, 1911" (1911), Center for Adventist Research; William Clarence White, D. E. Robinson and Arthur L. White, *The Ellen G. White Books: The Story of the Writing and Publication of the Conflict of the Ages Series and Testimonies for the Church*, 1st ed. (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Trustees of the Ellen G. White Publications, General Conference, 1940?); Clinton W. Lee, *Historical Background of the Great Controversy* (1943), Center for Adventist Research; *The 1911 Edition of "Great Controversy": An Explanation of the Involvements of the 1911 Revision* (Ellen G. White Publications, Washington, DC, 1945), <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/issues-greatcontroversy1911.html/>; W. P. Bradley, "Ellen G. White and Her Writings," *Spectrum* 3, no. 2 (spring 1970): 43–64; William S. Peterson, "A Textual and Historical Study of Ellen White's Account of the French Revolution," *Spectrum* 2, no. 4 (Autumn 1970): 57–69; "Comments on Peterson Study: Ellen G. White's Account of the French Revolution," *Spectrum* 3, no. 2 (spring 1971): 66–72; William S. Peterson, "An Imaginary Conversation on Ellen G. White: A One-Act Play for Seventh-day Adventists," *Spectrum* 3, no. 3 (summer 1971): 84–91; William S. Peterson, "Ellen White's Literary Indebtedness," *Spectrum* 3, no. 4 (autumn 1971): 73–84; John W. Wood, "The Bible and the French Revolution: An Answer," *Spectrum* 3, no. 4 (autumn 1971): 55–72; Ronald D. Graybill, "How Did Ellen White Choose and Use Historical Sources? The French Revolution Chapter of the Great Controversy," *Spectrum* 4, no. 3 (summer 1972): 49–53; Donald R. McAdams, *Ellen G. White and the Protestant Historians: The Evidence from an Unpublished Manuscript on John Huss* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1974), Center for Adventist Research; Ronald D. Graybill, *Analysis of E. G. White's Luther Manuscript* (Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, 1977?), Center for Adventist Research; Donald R. McAdams, *Ellen G. White and the Protestant Historians: A Study of the Treatment of John Huss in Great Controversy, Chapter Six 'Huss and Jerome,'* rev. ed. (Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, 1977), Center for Adventist Research; Ronald D. Graybill, *Historical Difficulties in the Great Controversy*, 1st ed. (Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, 1978), Center for Adventist Research; Gerhard F. Hasel, *A Review of the White Estate Paper, "The Role of Visions and the Use of Historical Sources in the Writings of the Great Controversy"* (1978), Center for Adventist Research; Arthur L. White, *Toward a Factual Concept of Inspiration II: The Role of the Visions and the Use of Historical Sources in the "Great Controversy"* (Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, 1978), Center for Adventist Research; Eric D. Anderson, "Ellen White and Reformation Historians," *Spectrum* 9, no. 3 (July 1978): 23–26; Arthur L. White, "Ellen G. White's Sources for the Conflict Series Books," *Adventist Review*, July 12, 1979, 4–7; Arthur L. White, "Rewriting and Amplifying the Controversy Story," *Adventist Review*, July 19, 1979, 7–9; Arthur L. White, "Historical Sources and the Conflict Series," *Adventist Review*, July 26, 1979, 5–10; Donald R. McAdams, "Shifting Views of Inspiration: Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970s," *Spectrum* 10, no. 4 (March 1980): 27–41; Harold E. Fagal

inspiration will not be theologically evaluated and in that respect this literature is not of direct concern to the present study. The question of White's historical context and her usage of sources, however, is pertinent. Then there is the literature on the great controversy motif. Battistone analyzed the great controversy motif in White's redemption history work, *The Great Conflict of the Ages Series* (1978).³⁹ His work contains a helpful analysis of and insights into the motif. Gulley defined the great controversy in an article (1996). Though it was a believer's analysis on the theme per se and not on the theme in the thought of White, White was his main source, and thus he indirectly summed up her ideas.⁴⁰ Douglass canvassed the theme in a systematic collection of quotes from White (2010).⁴¹ Though the collection is somewhat helpful, much of the quotes are, however, not directly on the theme, and the work reflects Douglass's own views of redemption history.⁴² Duah (2012) compared the "warfare theodicy" of Ellen White and Gregory A. Boyd.⁴³ Whidden wrote an article on

et al., "Butler on Ellen White's Eschatology," *Spectrum* 11, no. 1 (July 1980): 24–34; Vincent L. Ramik, *The Ramik Report: Memorandum of Law, Literary Property Rights, 1790–1915* (Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd., Washington, DC, 1981); Arthur L. White, *W. W. Prescott and the 1911 Edition of the Great Controversy* (Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, 1981), <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/issues-gc-prescott-html/>; Donald Casebolt, "Ellen White, the Waldenses, and Historical Interpretation," *Spectrum* 11, no. 3 (February 1981): 37–43; Ronald D. Graybill, *Historical Difficulties in the Great Controversy*, rev. ed. (Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, 1982), Center for Adventist Research; Walter T. Rea, *The White Lie* (Turlock, CA: M. and R. Publications, 1982); *The Truth About the White Lie: Prepared by the Staff of the Ellen G. White Estate in Cooperation with the Biblical Research Institute and the Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, DC: Ellen G. White Estate, 1982), <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/issues-whitelie-html/>; Robert W. Olson, "Ellen G. White's Use of Historical Sources in the Great Controversy," *Adventist Review*, February 23, 1984, 3–5; Jean Zurcher, "A Vindication of Ellen White as Historian," *Spectrum* 16, no. 3 (August 1985): 21–31; Donald Casebolt, "Ellen White on Waldenses, Albigenses," *Spectrum* 16, no. 5 (February 1986): 62; Jan Voerman, "Errors in Inspired Writings?—Part 1: How Ancient Were the Waldenses?," *Adventists Affirm* 15 (spring 2001): 25–35; Jan Voerman, "Errors in Inspired Writings?—Part 2: Historical, Chronological, and Theological 'Errors'?", *Adventists Affirm* 15 (spring 2001): 36–43; Jan Voerman, "Ellen White and the French Revolution," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 45, no. 2 (2007): 247–59; Michael W. Campbell, "The 1919 Bible Conference and Its Significance for Seventh-day Adventist History and Theology" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2008), 11–12; Denis Kaiser, "Ellen G. White on the French Revolution: A Critical Analysis of the Criticism" (Term paper, Andrews University, 2009); Denis Kaiser, "Trust and Doubt: Perceptions of Divine Inspiration in Seventh-day Adventist History (1880–1930)" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2016), 220–348 (= ch. 3), 392–470).

³⁹ Joseph Battistone, *The Great Controversy Theme in E. G. White Writings* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1978).

⁴⁰ Norman R. Gulley, "The Cosmic Controversy: World View for Theology and Life," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 7, no. 2 (1996).

⁴¹ Herbert E. Douglass, comp., *The Heartbeat of Adventism: The Great Controversy Theme in the Writings of Ellen White* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010).

⁴² Douglass adhered to a strand of a theological school in Adventism known as Last Generation Theology. While some of its tenets are orthodox and found in White's writings, some are disputed or rejected by the majority of Adventist academia, in particular the claim that the victorious life of the last generation of believers is necessary to vindicate God's character. Milian Lauritz Andreassen (1876–1982) was the first to set forth a developed Last Generation Theology. See Milian Lauritz Andreassen, *The Sanctuary Service* (Takoma Park, Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1937), ch. 21. For more on Last Generation Theology, see Paul M. Evans, "A Historical-Contextual Analysis of the Final-Generation Theology of M. L. Andreassen" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2010).

⁴³ Martha Duah, "A Study of Warfare Theodicy in the Writings of Ellen G. White and Gregory A. Boyd" (PhD dissertation, Andrews University, 2012).

the great controversy as White's "optimistic" theodicy about God's love (2015).⁴⁴ Miller suggested White's motif had roots in free-will theology, more specifically in Grotius's idea of God's moral government over the universe, an idea she might have gotten to know through reading Methodist Albert Barnes's (1798–1870) biblical commentary while growing up (2016).⁴⁵ There is as of yet no thorough academic work on White's great controversy motif that extends beyond Battistone's analysis.

White herself spoke about the great controversy and the Sanctuary as central truths of the Bible and organizing principles of theology (and hence as implicitly interwoven or connected).⁴⁶ In introductions on White, the great controversy theme is often pointed out as central in her writings.⁴⁷ Recently, some scholars have started to explore the connections of these two themes and to even see them as facets of the same concept. Davidson's article (2000) demonstrated how these two themes interweave in (Adventist understanding of) Scripture to form redemption history and also asserted the two themes were similarly combined in White.⁴⁸ Fortin's article (2000) on the Sanctuary in White's theology suggested the same integration,⁴⁹ as well as Kaiser in his article on the history of the sanctuary doctrine (2016).⁵⁰ MacPherson affirms the connection of the two themes in his book on White's great controversy theodicy (2021).⁵¹ The present study intends to demonstrate this interconnection further.

⁴⁴ Woodrow W. Whidden, "The Triumph of God's Love: The Optimistic, Theological Theodicy of Ellen G. White," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 53, no. 1 (2015): 197–214.

⁴⁵ Nicholas P. Miller, *The Reformation and the Remnant: Why the Ideas That Shaped the Church Still Matter* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2016), 35–44 (= ch. 2).

⁴⁶ "[The student of the Bible] should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found." Ellen G. White, *Education* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), 190. "From the creation and fall of man to the present time, there has been a continual unfolding of the plan of God for the redemption, through Christ, of the fallen race. The tabernacle and temple of God on earth were patterned after the original in heaven. Around the sanctuary and its solemn services mystically gathered the grand truths which were to be developed through succeeding generations." Ellen G. White, "The Two Dispensations," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 2, 1886, 129.

⁴⁷ See, for instance, Knight, *Meeting Ellen White*, 111–13.

⁴⁸ Richard M. Davidson, "Cosmic Metanarrative for the Coming Millennium," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 11, nos. 1–2 (2000): 102–19.

⁴⁹ Denis Fortin, "Ellen G. White's Conceptual Understanding of the Sanctuary and Hermeneutics," *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 9, no. 1 (1998): 166.

⁵⁰ Kaiser, "Sanctuary Motif in Historical Perspective," 173.

⁵¹ "The Great Controversy understanding of atonement . . . is structured around the sanctuary system which is seen as typologically revealing a comprehensive program of atonement. The context for the atonement process is the Great Controversy metanarrative. This narratively-situated and sanctuary-structured atonement process unifies the various [atonement] models. . . . Christ the mediator (sanctuary) and protagonist (Great Controversy narrative) is the unifying center to atonement and theodicy." Anthony MacPherson, *The Redeemed Good Defense: The Great Controversy as a Theodicy Response to the Evidential Problem of Evil* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2021), 112–13.

4.3 Historical Dynamics

4.3.1 Introduction

The late 1840s and 50s in the United States were a period of simmering unrest between the Northern and Southern States, the calm before the Civil War broke out in 1861. The Second Great Awakening had passed and with it much of the positive sentiments that had characterized the religious sphere. Social reform movements continued, but some of them grew sterner in the face of inadequate change. This was the case of abolitionism in the face of Northern reticence to deal squarely with slavery. Political maneuvers like the Compromise of 1850 only had the effect of delaying a war of two uncompromising sides. The westward expansion of the Union continued, accelerated by the California Gold Rush (1848–55), and was seen by pious Americans as characterized by worldly greed and the necessity of evangelism in the West. To Sabbatarian Adventists, the immediate historical concern was the fallout after the Millerite Movement and the difficult task of building up a new group in the face of few numbers and dire poverty.

Adventism was not only a large arc of the historical but also the theological horizon of Sabbatarian Adventists. They reconfigured their prophetic interpretation within the context of the Millerite Movement which they had been a part of. Even as late as 1858, when White published the *Great Controversy*, the title was lifted from a homonymous mainline Adventist publication,⁵² that also served as the catalyst for White to publish an entire redemption history according to her own theology (which differed significantly from the other work). Sabbatarian Adventists were, however, in no way confined to previously established Adventism in general. While Adventists had developed a dark view of American Protestantism during the Millerite Movement, Sabbatarian Adventists developed this view further by adding the United States as one of the end-time “beasts” of Revelation into their eschatology. While White did not refer directly to this idea in the 1858 edition of the *Great Controversy*, it was the implicit background, having been already developed by other fellow Adventist believers in the years prior.

The period of White’s new interpretation can be demarcated by her conversion experience and the publication of the *Great Controversy*. White’s personal religious awakening began when an accident brought her to death’s door at the age of nine. The injury caused her temporary but serious disability and she had to drop out of school, for which she resented providence. Attending Miller’s meetings in her hometown Portland convinced her of Adventism and also played an important part in her conversion. White was one of the Adventists who reinterpreted Daniel 8: A few weeks after the “Great Disappointment,” shortly after she had turned seventeen, White began to have visions. They served more the purpose of supporting the radical reinterpretation by means of consoling the disappointed believers rather than providing the original ideas. Nevertheless, her ministry was crucial in

⁵² H. L. Hastings, *The Great Controversy between God and Man: Its Origin, Progress, and End* (Rochester, NY: Published by the Author, 1858).

forming a new group upon the new view—the Sabbatarian Adventists. During the 1850s, she and her husband, as well as other pioneering Sabbatarian Adventists, spent much time in developing the emerging denomination—starting their own magazines, buying a press, organizing the ministry—but they also worked out their nascent theology further. In 1858, White published the *Great Controversy*, in which she framed redemption history with the great controversy motif, developed from Daniel 8. While she published more mature works on redemption history in the following decades—which took in further eschatological developments—, it already contained the basic ideas of the later renditions, and will be the close of the period of investigation.

This section will attempt to extract the historical factors which influenced White’s contribution to the historicizing of Daniel 8.

4.3.2 Birth and Childhood (1827–36)

On November 26, 1827, Ellen and her twin Elizabeth were born to Robert and Eunice Harmon in Gorham, ME.⁵³ The sisters were the youngest of eight children, and growing up in a devout Methodist home all the siblings became converted and were baptized into the Methodist Church.⁵⁴ Robert was “a hatter and sometimes farmer” and it was probably because of his work⁵⁵ that the family moved between towns in Maine, to Poland in 1829 and to Portland in 1834.⁵⁶ Portland was an important seaport⁵⁷ and William Miller would lecture there in 1840 and 1842. In this city, Harmon grew up to be a teenager and became a converted Christian—an Advent-believing Methodist.

Religion was interwoven with Harmon’s upbringing. Her parents brought their children up in the faith and at home there must have been regular prayers, Bible readings, and Christian teaching. Her parents were also active members in their church so Harmon attended church and Methodist “class meetings” regularly as well. At night she would sometimes hear her parents pray for their children.⁵⁸ As was common at the time, Harmon was a postmillennialist,⁵⁹ and was impressed and terrified when she first came across premillennialist dating schemes in 1836: The prediction swooped the Second Coming from the distant future to her lifetime. The remaining time seemed too short in which to accomplish

⁵³ Ellen G. White, “Biographical Sketch” (1885), in Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1885–1909), 1:9; Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White: Being a Narrative of Her Experience to 1881 as Written by Herself; with a Sketch of Her Subsequent Labors and of Her Last Sickness Compiled from Original Sources*, 3rd ed., ed. Clarence C. Crisler (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1915), 17. It is possible that the twin sisters were born in 1826 instead of 1827. Jerry Moon and Denis Kaiser, “For Jesus and Scripture: The Life of Ellen G. White,” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 84n9.

⁵⁴ White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:9; White, *Life Sketches*, 17.

⁵⁵ Arthur L. White, *White*, 1:22.

⁵⁶ For Robert’s occupation and the dates of the family’s residence, see Merlin Burt, “Harmon, Robert and Eunice (G.),” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 399.

⁵⁷ White, *White*, 1:22.

⁵⁸ Moon and Kaiser, “For Jesus and Scripture,” 20.

⁵⁹ “I had been taught that a temporal millennium would take place prior to the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven.” White, *Life Sketches*, 21.

the conversion of the world and she felt unprepared for the event.⁶⁰ Premillennialist sentiments, however, seem to have passed away.

Harmon was a sensitive, conscientious, and timid child. She was also intelligent and ambitious. In later life she was sure that had it not been for adversity early in life, she would not have turned to religion personally, because of pride and ambition.⁶¹ Too little is known about her childhood to evaluate just how religious she was. But she became religious early enough; the misfortune happened when she was only nine years old. And then, drawing on her conscientiousness and drive, spirituality would come to define her life.

4.3.3 Conversion and Millerism (1836–44)

When Harmon was about nine years old—probably late in winter 1836⁶²—she suffered a nearly fatal accident that transformed her life. She was “crossing a common”⁶³ with her twin and a girl from school when another girl in the park got “angry at some trifle”⁶⁴ and threatened to hit them. As the three girls hurried home, Ellen Harmon turned around so see how close the girl was who was following them. But as she did, the girl threw a rock after them, and it hit her in the face with such force that she fell unconscious to the ground. When she came to, she was in a nearby store. Blood was pouring down her face and over her clothes and onto the floor. She declined a stranger’s offer to take her home because she did not want to stain his carriage with blood and underestimated how grave her injuries were. She set out to walk but soon grew faint. Her two companions carried her about a kilometer to the Harmon home. There Harmon passed out again and remained unconscious for most of the next three weeks. During that time she lost so much weight she was “reduced almost to a skeleton.”⁶⁵ Medicine was still in its infancy so a full assessment of the injury—which was more extensive than a fracture—and an appropriate treatment were not available. Physicians removed some of the broken nasal bone but had no methods at their disposal to retain the shape of the nose, which left Harmon disfigured. Once she regained full consciousness she soon realized the seriousness of her situation: When she looked into a mirror she barely recognized herself; neither did her father when he returned from a business trip that had begun before the accident; she overheard conversations between her parents and visiting neighbors and physicians in which none expected her to survive except her mother; visiting Christian friends asked her mother if she had talked with her daughter about death. Harmon realized she was

⁶⁰ James White and Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches: Ancestry, Early Life, Christian Experience, and Extensive Labors of Elder James White and His Wife, Mrs. Ellen G. White*, 2nd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1888), 136–37; White, *Life Sketches*, 20–21.

⁶¹ “This misfortune, which for a time seemed so bitter and was so hard to bear, has proved to be a blessing in disguise. The cruel blow which blighted the joys of earth, was the means of turning my eyes to heaven. I might never have known Jesus, had not the sorrow that clouded my early years led me to seek comfort in him.” Ellen G. White, “Notes of Travel,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 25, 1884, 737; White, *White*, 1:30.

⁶² Moon and Kaiser, “For Jesus and Scripture,” 84–85n19.

⁶³ White, *Life Sketches*, 17.

⁶⁴ White, *Life Sketches*, 17.

⁶⁵ White, *Life Sketches*, 18.

dying and the need to make her salvation sure came up vividly before her. She “desired to become a Christian, and prayed earnestly for the forgiveness of [her] sins.”⁶⁶ She made her peace with God, found joy in Jesus, and was prepared to die.⁶⁷ Harmon, however, did not die, and slowly regained some strength.

The injury altered Harmon’s life in two significant ways. First, it impaired her over-all health permanently. Though she at times enjoyed good health, in general her health was fragile and she was often sick. She herself stated that the accident made her “a life-long invalid.”⁶⁸ Second, the accident impacted Harmon’s social life and education detrimentally, and eventually her spiritual life as well. Harmon had accepted the providence of the accident when she sought Jesus on her deathbed.⁶⁹ But accepting a life of apparently permanent disability proved to be much harder. In the end, however, the accident became the initial catalyst in her conversion experience.

As Harmon got strong enough to go out and play and attend school she quickly learned that her changed appearance changed other children’s attitude towards her. She was “feeble, underweight, and unattractive”⁷⁰ and this made her unpopular. In her loneliness she found solace in the belief that Jesus loved her. But that did not change how hard schooling had become. Harmon could not breathe through her nose, and she also developed a chronic cough that persisted for several years. Her hand trembled so she did not advance much in writing. When she tried to read and concentrate, the letters would “run together,”⁷¹ she started to perspire and became dizzy and fainting. After two years of irregular attendance, the teacher eventually advised her to quit school until her health would improve. In the fall of 1839, Harmon attempted once more to resume her schooling and attended a girl school, but had to quit again. The prospect of receiving no further education and remaining disabled for life drove Harmon to despair. She was “unreconciled”⁷² to her lot and resented God for allowing something in his providence that appeared “cruel and mysterious.”⁷³ This in turn made her feel guilty for her thoughts towards God and again she became unsure about her salvation. To

⁶⁶ Ellen G. White, *My Christian Experience, Views and Labors in Connection with the Rise and Progress of the Third Angel’s Message* (Battle Creek, MI: James White, 1860), 9; James White and Ellen G. White, *Life Sketches: Ancestry, Early Life, Christian Experience, and Extensive Labors of Elder James White and His Wife, Mrs. Ellen G. White*, 1st ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1880), 133; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:11; White, *Life Sketches*, 18.

⁶⁷ For Ellen’s injury and its immediate aftermath, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 7–9; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 131–33; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:9–11; White, *Life Sketches*, 17–18.

⁶⁸ White, “Notes of Travel,” 737.

⁶⁹ Merlin Burt, “Ellen G. Harmon’s Three-Step Conversion between 1836 and 1843 and the Harmon Family Methodist Experience” (Term paper, Andrews University, 1998), 9.

⁷⁰ Moon and Kaiser, “For Jesus and Scripture,” 22.

⁷¹ White, *Life Sketches*, 19.

⁷² White and White, *Life Sketches*, 135.

⁷³ White and White, *Life Sketches*, 158.

make matters worse, Harmon kept all her post-accident struggles to herself, afraid that if she would open up to someone, they might confirm her fears about the state of her soul.⁷⁴

It was about this time that Harmon learned of Adventism. After the accident, the imminence of Christ's return became the next major influence in her conversion experience. In March 11–23, 1840, Miller lectured in Portland. The meetings were the talk of town and had an audience of two thousand. Harmon attended with her parents and they all became convinced of Miller's prediction. They continued attending Adventist meetings in Portland after Miller left. The imminence of Christ's return in 1843/44 filled Harmon with dread because she felt she was not ready for the Last Day. She had idealistic thoughts of what it meant to be a Christian and worried that she would not truly become one even if she would publicly profess religion—but Harmon was still unbaptized and therefore not a church member.⁷⁵

These feelings of unpreparedness and uncertainty about her ability to become a Christian were sufficiently alleviated in the following year for Harmon to declare herself one. Late in the summer of 1841, probably in August or September, she attended a Methodist camp meeting in Buxton, ME. One of the sermons preached there urged the hesitating to trust in Jesus and to yield to him and Harmon resolved to find a way through her doubts to God. Charismatic testimonies of attendees who had found the Lord confused her. She neither had nor liked their experience but worried that without it she was perhaps not a Christian. On one occasion, praying at the "altar"—in front of the platform—she was surprised by an emotional experience: Her worries and burdens were lifted, and she was filled with peace and assurance of God's acceptance.⁷⁶ She now wanted to be baptized. She was accepted into her local Methodist church on probation that fall, on September 20, 1841. Next spring, on May 23, 1842, she was recommended for baptism, and she was then baptized on June 26, by immersion upon her request.⁷⁷ The assurance and joy Harmon had found at the camp meeting only lasted for six months. By the time Miller lectured for the second time in Portland, June 4–12, 1842, Harmon had become discouraged again and again she felt she was not ready for the Second Coming. She attended the meetings with great earnestness. She was now an ardent believer in the Advent and a baptized Christian, but her faith was still unsettled.⁷⁸ There were some underlying theological concerns that Harmon had not resolved.

⁷⁴ For the accident's influence on Ellen's health and education, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 10–12, 14; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 133–36, 148; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:11–13; White, *Life Sketches*, 18–19.

⁷⁵ For the Whites attending Miller's lectures, and White's response, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 12; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 136–39; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:14–16; White, *Life Sketches*, 20–22. For the timing of Miller's lecturing tour, see Sylvester Bliss, Apollos Hale and Joshua V. Himes, *Memoirs of William Miller, Generally Known as a Lecturer on the Prophecies, and the Second Coming of Christ* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1853), 147–49.

⁷⁶ On the Buxton camp meeting, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 12–13; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 139–45; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:16–19; White, *Life Sketches*, 22–25.

⁷⁷ For the three dates, see Burt, "Harmon's Three-Step Conversion," 20–21.

⁷⁸ On attending Miller's second lectures, see Ellen G. White, *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White* (Saratoga Springs, NY: James White, 1851), 3; White, *My Christian Experience*, 14–15;

There were two doctrines that troubled Harmon's early Christian experience. The first was how to become and remain a Christian—justification and sanctification—and the second, the fate of the lost in hellfire. Christianity taught that salvation comprised being forgiven or justified, and becoming a better person or sanctified. Both Adventists and Methodists—the two groups to which Harmon belonged—emphasized making sure personal religion was genuine. Adventists did so because they believed Jesus was returning and believers had to set their hearts right to meet their Lord. Methodists did so not only with their traditional emphasis on practical Christianity or a life of holiness (hence the name method-ism). They also believed in “the second blessing,” an immediate and full surrender of the heart to God, which was also termed instantaneous sanctification or Christian perfection.⁷⁹ This state was not irreversible, but it could be maintained, or regained. All in all, the theological nuances and differences confused Harmon, who, while she wanted to be ready for the Second Coming, neither understood what the difference between justification and sanctification was, nor how to attain the latter. The second teaching that perplexed Harmon was the fate of the lost. Harmon had heard many preachers—probably both Methodists and Adventists—describe hell in vivid detail. The thought of such a place and condition was particularly painful to Harmon, who was a sensitive young girl, unsure about the state of her soul. The thought stole upon her, with growing conviction, that if God tortured his own creatures for all eternity, and if this formed a part of his plan, surely he must be a cruel being, and if such, hardly one to be counted on to save a sinner like her.⁸⁰

As it turned out, the questions afflicting Harmon were resolved. Harmon had two vivid religious dreams that seemed to symbolize that God loved her and wanted her to be saved. Having those dreams gave her enough confidence about her case to finally confide in someone. She opened up to her mother about her religious troubles. After listening to her, her mother counseled Harmon to talk with Levi Stockman, the Adventist preacher who was leading the Adventist meetings that the Harmons attended. Stockman was moved by the sorrows of the young person. He told Harmon that her experience was remarkable for someone that young, and that God must be preparing her for some ministry in the future. He comforted Harmon and told her to trust in God's love for her. Harmon later wrote that her short interview with the pastor changed her views of God. She now saw him “as a kind and tender parent, rather than a stern tyrant.”⁸¹ The other issue was settled some time later (probably in late 1843 or early 1844), when Harmon overheard her mother expressing belief in conditional mortality, one of the beliefs that was circulating within Adventism. At first

White and White, *Life Sketches*, 148–49; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:21–22; White, *Life Sketches*, 27–28.

⁷⁹ For “the second blessing,” see Kenneth Joseph Grider, *Entire Sanctification: The Distinctive Doctrine of Wesleyanism* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 1980).

⁸⁰ On White's difficulty with sanctification and hell, see White and White, *Life Sketches*, 149–53; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:22–26; White, *Life Sketches*, 28–31; Burt, “Harmon's Three-Step Conversion,” 34–36.

⁸¹ White, *Life Sketches*, 39.

Harmon was shocked at such an idea and thought such an error would only serve to make the sinner less inclined to seek God since there was no hell to fear. But as she pondered the idea, she became convinced it fit God's character and accepted it as truth. When these matters resolved and Harmon felt she was truly right with God, Harmon's inner struggle disappeared and she was filled with peace. After praying publicly in a meeting and relating her experience, she began doing so more frequently. She also labored for the salvation of her friends, and despite her broken health did what she could to raise money to finance the Adventist publication efforts.⁸²

The hope of Jesus's imminent return as presented by Adventism had become the keynote of Harmon's faith. Not only was she more active in Adventism than Methodism, but when the Harmon family was put on a church trial for their Adventist belief, they chose rather to be expelled from the Methodist Church than to give up Adventism.⁸³ Harmon would remember her experience during the final year of waiting for Christ as the happiest year of her life.⁸⁴ Together with other Adventists, she went through the initial disappointment when Miller's terminus passed in the spring of 1844, then the "seventh-month movement"—the lay-led excitement that spread through Adventism with a new terminus on October 22—and the second disappointment when that date passed as well. After the "Great Disappointment" as the later failure came to be known, Harmon's health worsened again to the point that it was uncertain whether she would survive. It affected her lungs and her voice failed. She could barely breathe when lying down, so at night she "was bolstered almost in a sitting posture." She "would often awake with [her] mouth full of blood."⁸⁵

4.3.4 Ministry during the Fragmentation of Adventism (1844–49)

Schism of Adventism into Mainline and Radical (1844–45)

When Jesus did not return on October 22, 1844, the Advent Movement came to an end and Adventism began its inevitable disintegration into factions. Some believers immediately gave up Adventism and left.⁸⁶ Those who remained waited with bated breath to see whether the disappointment was perhaps a final test of their faith before Jesus would return in but a short time. As the weeks passed by, two different opinions emerged. The majority view was that a better explanation for the non-event was an overlooked error in chronology. Adventists had always been aware of a potential margin of errors of a few years and the non-event had demonstrated it must be taken into account. That meant the 2300 years had not fully expired,

⁸² On how the difficulties were solved, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 15–21; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 154–61, 170–72; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:26–32, 39–40; White, *Life Sketches*, 32–40, 48–51.

⁸³ On White's Adventist labors, and her family's expulsion from the Methodist Church, see White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 4–5; White, *My Christian Experience*, 21–25; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 161–70, 172–75; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:32–39, 40–44; White, *Life Sketches*, 40–48, 51–53.

⁸⁴ White, *Life Sketches*, 59.

⁸⁵ White, *My Christian Experience*, 30.

⁸⁶ White and White, *Life Sketches*, 189–90; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:56; White, *Life Sketches*, 61.

and with an indeterminable date of the terminus, the believers would have to “watch and wait” until Christ would return at any time within a few years. Harmon had embraced this opinion already in December 1844.⁸⁷ The second group believed that prophecy had indeed been fulfilled at the predicted time: The 2300 years had passed as predicted, only what occurred then had been an event which Adventists had hitherto overlooked in their prophetic interpretation. Unlike the other Millerite leaders, Miller was of the second opinion until March 1845. This fact added greatly to the second opinion’s credibility and currency among Adventists during the first months after the Disappointment. The nomenclature for the minority view reflects the ideas that set them apart—“Shut Door Adventism” or “Bridegroom Adventism”—but since the majority saw these emerging ideas as extreme and even fanatical, the minority will here be called radical Adventists.

The fault-lines between majority Adventism and the radicals had existed during the Movement (1840–44), but were barely perceived and did not develop much because of the common focus of all on the Second Coming. In general, there were more theological variations and creativity among the ranks than in the leadership, though the latter was not impermeable to suggestions—for instance, the exact date of October 22 was a lay development that the leadership eventually accepted. But in general, the leaders saw Adventism as the restoration of one major neglected truth—the premillennial nature of Christ’s return—and the deciphering of one major prophetic prediction—the dating of that event. They were averse to other theological discussions because they felt they diverted attention from preparing oneself for the Second Coming, when all disputed questions would be settled anyway. To many in the ranks, the Advent Movement assumed greater proportions: The end of the world was nigh and they were open to accept more truths that had been neglected or forgotten. This restorationist tendency is understandable, since it was at least a part of the appeal of Adventism to begin with. Among the doctrines discussed were conditional immortality⁸⁸ and the seventh-day Sabbath.⁸⁹ There were also charismatic

⁸⁷ Ellen G. White to Joseph Bates, July 13, 1847, lt. 3, 1847, par. 3; James White, “[Some of Our Friends],” in *A Word to the “Little Flock,”* ed. James White (Gorham, ME: Published by the Editor, 1847), 22.

⁸⁸ “Conditional immortality” is the belief that a human does not *have* a soul but rather *is* a soul, i.e. the human being—including both mind and body—and the human soul are synonyms. According to this belief, the human soul is therefore mortal, since it is but a synonym for the human individual. Immortality is conditional in the sense that at the Resurrection, the saved receive eternal life, whereas the lost are annihilated (both their mind and body, i.e. their whole being or soul) and cease to exist. For early Millerite and Adventist views on conditional immortality, cf. LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers: The Conflict of the Ages over the Nature and Destiny of Man*, 2 vols. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1965–66), 2:646–701; Merlin Burt, *CHIS 674 Development of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Berrien Springs, MI, 2017), 40–41; Donny Chrissutianto, “The State of the Dead and Its Relationship to the Sanctuary Doctrine in Seventh-day Adventist Theology (1844–1874): A Historical and Theological Study,” (PhD dissertation, Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies, 2018); Denis Kaiser, “Early Sabbatarian Adventists on Immortality and Hell,” in Jiri Moskala and John W. Reeve, eds., *God and Life After Death: Hell, Punishment, Resurrection, and Heaven* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press), forthcoming.

⁸⁹ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 45–54.

behavior and dreams and visions.⁹⁰ All of these would resurge or continue in radical Adventism after the Great Disappointment.

Harmon appeared early on the scene of emerging radicalism and began speaking, traveling, and opposing “fanaticism” (things that went too far for the radicals). After the disappointment, Harmon initially accepted the failed prediction, but then changed her mind when she received her first vision in mid-December 1844, which labeled her as a radical on two accounts. First, Adventist leadership saw visions as the fanatical periphery, and, secondly, Harmon taught the radical reinterpretation of the failed prediction of October 22. During the first months of her ministry, she traveled among the Adventist community, mostly in Maine, to confirm and promote the radical reinterpretation, and to oppose “fanaticism.” In the early months of 1845, she went on a three-month tour in eastern Maine, where she spoke in Poland, Orrington, Garland, Exeter, and Atkinson.⁹¹ She also visited New Hampshire and worked much in and around her hometown Portland, ME,⁹² which was one of the most important Adventist centers in the state. Early in 1845, she got to know James White, a young school teacher who had become an Advent preacher.⁹³ He became one of her chaperons—they were needed for protection and decency since she was a seventeen year old girl traveling without her family among strangers. The fanaticism seems to have been an at least somewhat dangerous scene. Joseph Turner, a local leader, began practicing hypnosis (“mesmerism”) after January and to visit young women in private;⁹⁴ some people declared it a sin to labor and neglected earthly matters—Harmon saw some children clothed in “dirty rags”—⁹⁵ others became like children to enter the kingdom (Mt 18:3) by crawling;⁹⁶ others followed impressions above reason;⁹⁷ some claimed they could not sin;⁹⁸ at worship services there was much “excitement and noise.”⁹⁹ To her chagrin, Harmon’s opponents accused her of the very fanaticism she condemned: They claimed she was under the influence of hypnosis, that she set new dates for the Second Coming, and that she was in fact one of the leaders of these ideas.¹⁰⁰ This opposition throws some light on Harmon’s character. In her autobiographical accounts, Harmon emphasized the many reasons why she was reluctant to share her visions

⁹⁰ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 6–18.

⁹¹ On the Maine tour, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 38–42; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 197–98; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:65–66; White, *Life Sketches*, 73; White, *White*, 1:77–82; Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 127–41.

⁹² White, *My Christian Experience*, 46–56; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 202–19; White, *Life Sketches*, 77–88; White, *White*, 1:83–89; Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 141–52.

⁹³ Moon and Kaiser, “For Jesus and Scripture,” 32.

⁹⁴ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 141–43.

⁹⁵ White and White, *Life Sketches*, 206–7; White, *Life Sketches*, 79–81.

⁹⁶ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 148, 405.

⁹⁷ White and White, *Life Sketches*, 201.

⁹⁸ White, *Life Sketches*, 82.

⁹⁹ White and White, *Life Sketches*, 215.

¹⁰⁰ White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 6–7; White, *My Christian Experience*, 57–58; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 219–22; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:71–73; White, *Life Sketches*, 88–89.

with others, such as being only a timid seventeen year old girl.¹⁰¹ But traveling in the middle of cold New England winter, teaching controversial ideas, and opposing even prominent leaders such as Turner, does not show lack of nerve, but rather theological creativity, drive, and resilience remarkable for a teenager.¹⁰²

To know what Harmon was teaching during these early months, it is necessary to look at the account of her visions, in tandem with the development of radical Adventism. Harmon received her first vision in mid-December, 1844. She had the vision when she was at morning prayers with three other young girls in a friend's house where she was staying. The vision depicted the Adventists walking on the straight and narrow path, "cast up high above the world." Jesus was in front of the traveling group, leading them along the path to the celestial city. A brilliant light had been stationed where the path began and it lighted up the entire way to the city. If some grew weary and complained they thought they should have reached their destination already, Jesus comforted them. Some denied the light behind them and that God had been leading them. To them the light behind them went out, leaving them in darkness, and they stumbled off the path into the darkness below. Soon the travelers heard the voice of God declaring the day and hour of Christ's return. The wicked tried in vain to slay the believers, now portrayed as the sealed 144 000 (Rv 7; 14). Jesus then returned and resurrected the righteous dead and took all the believers back to heaven. Harmon concluded the vision by describing the saved in white robes and with crowns, and the surroundings in New Jerusalem, such as the river flowing through the city and the tree of life.¹⁰³

The allegory was straightforward: Adventism had been divinely guided, including its final time setting of October 22, 1844 and the experience attending its proclamation. Though Harmon did not explain why the prediction had failed, she portrayed "the Midnight Cry" as a light that could not be dismissed as Adventists took their theological bearings; those who "rashly" rejected the calculations and their former religious experience did so at their own peril. The second part of the vision showed the exploring tendrils of radical Adventism entering into new theological ground: First, instead of a new date setting, God himself would declare the exact time of Christ's return to the believers from the sky. Second, the final persecution (Armageddon, implicitly¹⁰⁴) would indeed take place before Jesus would come back (whereas Millerites had not minded its non-happening before the fall date). And third, when Jesus would return, instead of setting up his kingdom on earth as Miller had derived from the prophecies, he would take his people back to heaven, which Harmon described as a real, physical place.

¹⁰¹ White, *My Christian Experience*, 35–36; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 193–94; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:62–63; White, *Life Sketches*, 69–70.

¹⁰² Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 171–72.

¹⁰³ For White's first vision, see White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 5, 9–15; White, *My Christian Experience*, 30–34; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 193; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:58–61; White, *Life Sketches*, 64–68.

¹⁰⁴ Millerites had depicted Armageddon, in part, as the final persecution of believers that would occur before Christ's return.

In January 1845, Apollos Hale and Joseph Turner, two prominent editors, published *Advent Mirror*, a new radical periodical. It became very influential despite being a single issue, because it was the first printed reinterpretation of the failed prediction. Using one of the main texts of Adventism, Matthew 25, the editors suggested tentatively that Jesus had begun a final phase of his work in heaven before coming to earth. Adventists had believed that the Bridegroom coming to the marriage in Matthew 25 signified the Second Coming. But the Second Coming was more properly described as the marriage supper (Rv 19) which would follow the wedding. The wedding was Christ's reception of his kingdom, his inauguration, before he would come to earth to rule. This change in Christ's work coincided with the "door being shut" (Mt 25:10) or the close of probation for most people, for that event would have to take place a short time before his return, since at his return it was already decided who were his believers and who his enemies, and it could therefore be said that the Judgment had or was occurring.¹⁰⁵ The idea of probation having closed for most corresponded with the Adventist experience that the world had heard and rejected their message. The editors concluded that the Judgment had begun though they did not explain in what way.

Harmon followed suit in mid-February, when she had her second major vision ("the Bridegroom Vision") in Exeter, ME. She described the Father and the Son sitting enthroned in the Temple of heaven, and the church and the world before them praying. The Father then mounted a chariot and entered the Most Holy Place. The Son arose to enter as well, and a few faithful followed him. As he entered the Most Holy Place and left the faithful, he told them he was going to receive his kingdom and would return in a little while. Those who did not follow Christ remained praying at the throne in the Holy Place, oblivious to the fact that the Father and Son had left and entered the Most Holy Place, and to the fact that Satan now seemed to assume the throne in the Holy Place.¹⁰⁶ With this vision, Harmon took a similar stance as the *Advent Mirror*: Daniel 7 and Matthew 25 pointed to Christ's inauguration before his return; and those who had heard and rejected the Advent truth had rejected Christ and the Gospel. But Harmon went further. She connected Daniel 7 to an actual sanctuary in heaven. The movement described in vv. 13–14 depicted the Son of Man moving from the outer to the inner compartment of that temple—from the Holy to the Most Holy Place—, there to meet the Ancient of Days and commence the Judgment. Harmon furthermore emphasized that both persons had "a form." An actual sanctuary in heaven and the form of the Father were instances of literalism that the *Advent Mirror* had implied, but which she made explicit.

By spring 1845, radical Adventism showed signs of non-stop expansion. Some Adventist periodicals had already adopted radical Adventism, such as Enoch Jacob's *Day-Star*

¹⁰⁵ For the *Advent Mirror*, see Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 77–82. As to the unexplained Judgment the editors simply stated that "*The Judgment is here!*" Apollos Hale and Joseph Turner, "Has Not the Savior Come as the Bridegroom?," *Advent Mirror*, January, 1845, [3].

¹⁰⁶ For White's "Bridegroom Vision," see White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 43–44; White, *White*, 1:78–79; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 130–31.

(Cincinnati, OH)¹⁰⁷ and John Pearson Jr.'s *Hope of Israel* (Topsham, ME),¹⁰⁸ with Joseph Marsh's *Voice of Truth* (Rochester, NY) being at least sympathetic.¹⁰⁹ Other radical Adventists started entire new papers, with three appearing in March: O. R. L. Crosier's irregular *Day-Dawn* (Canandaigua, NY), Samuel Snow's *Jubilee Standard*, and Orlando Squires's *Voice of the Shepherd* (Utica, NY).¹¹⁰ In May, Charles H. Pearson and Emily Catherine Clemons were allowed to take over John Pearson's press to publish yet another new radical paper, *Hope within the Veil* (Portland, ME).¹¹¹ John Pearson "worked closely" with James White for some time during 1844–45¹¹² so Harmon may have known some of the new radical editors personally (the Pearsons and Clemons). In the spring, Harmon also had her third large vision, in which she saw the glories of the new earth as a literal reality.¹¹³ This was Adventist doctrine, but she emphasized it because of the spiritualizing wing within radical Adventism.

Of the radical editors, Crosier contributed most significantly to radical Adventism. Adventists had calculated the date of October 22, 1844, by seeing the feast of the Day of Atonement as the type for Christ's return and by finding the 1844 date for that feast in what Adventists viewed as the most accurate Jewish calendar (Karaite). Crosier refined this typology. He interpreted the work of the priests in the earthly sanctuary as typifying Christ's work in the heavenly sanctuary. To clarify this a short summary of the priestly work was in order. The priestly service was divided into two parts: The daily ministry in the outer compartment of the sanctuary (the Holy Place), and the annual ministry in the inner compartment (the Most Holy Place) on the Day of Atonement. During the daily service, the priests sacrificed animals and brought their blood into the sanctuary. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest entered into the Most Holy Place and cleansed the sanctuary of the sins of the people. This two-phased work had foreshadowed the two periods of Christ's priestly work. When he had ascended to heaven, Christ had entered upon his priestly office in the Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary. There he had interceded for sinners through the centuries. Then, on October 22, 1844, Jesus had entered the Most Holy Place to cleanse the sanctuary of the sins of his people. When he would finish this cleansing, his priestly work would be completed, and he would return to earth, just as the high priest exited the sanctuary after his service on the Day of Atonement and appeared to the waiting people.¹¹⁴

By April, Himes had become concerned enough, as mentioned in the last chapter, to take action against radicalism. He played a large part in dissuading Miller from going fully radical

¹⁰⁷ Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 72, 98–102.

¹⁰⁸ Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 117–18.

¹⁰⁹ Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 70, 95–97.

¹¹⁰ Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 103, 108, 115.

¹¹¹ Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 185.

¹¹² Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 118.

¹¹³ For White's "New Earth" vision, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 52–55; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 216–18; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:68–70; White, *White*, 1:88, 89; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 149–52.

¹¹⁴ For Crosier's contribution, see Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 103–7.

and organized a general conference for Adventists at Albany in late April, to assess their situation now that it was plainly obvious that their prediction had been wrong, at least chronologically.¹¹⁵ Radical believers were not invited,¹¹⁶ and in subsequent official declarations of Adventist faith, their ideas were explicitly excluded as anathema. Harmon had not interacted directly with the main Adventist leaders, and in the cacophony of voices and periodicals that mushroomed after the fall disappointment, they probably took little notice of her. And after Albany, the schism in Adventism between radicals and mainliners had been formalized, and Harmon and other radicals found themselves outside the fold.¹¹⁷

Collapse of Radical Adventism (1845–46)

The mainline Millerite leaders had officially denounced radical Adventism when they convened to decide the future course of Adventism at a conference in Albany in April 1845. (Mainline Adventism was called Albany Adventism because of this conference.) Yet radical Adventism continued to consolidate and expand through the spring and summer of 1845.¹¹⁸ With at least five periodicals spread over several states, radical Adventists had a platform to develop and promote their ideas within Adventism. Their common message was that prophecy had been fulfilled on October 22, last year, and that this validated the seventh-month movement and Adventism in general, and the Advent expectation—for Christ’s return was now more imminent than ever before. Apparently most of the radicals set forth new dates for that event, with most focusing on either the spring or fall of 1845.¹¹⁹ Date setting was not the sole province of the radical wing of Adventists, and it seems that the expectation of the Lord’s return momentarily hid the widening rifts within the minority that proved its demise.

In the fall months of 1845, after a short-lived expansion, radical Adventism suffered a near total collapse, with the cessation of all but one regular periodical. The insignia of radical Adventists was that prophecy had been fulfilled on October 22, 1844, but they could not agree on the nature of that fulfillment, and the disagreements proved fatal to the radical wing. First, most believed that Christ had entered into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary to finish his work of atonement before his return, while a minority—the spiritualizers¹²⁰—believed that he had indeed returned to earth in the sense that he now reigned supreme in the hearts of his people.¹²¹ (In this regard, the spiritualizers echoed the popular postmillennial concept of a spiritual return of Christ at the commencement of the millennium.) Second, the

¹¹⁵ Miller had predicted that Christ would come sometime in the last year of the 2300 year period of Daniel 8. According to his calculation, the last year reached from April 1844 to April 1845.

¹¹⁶ For the lack of invitation and the official rejection of “Bridegroom Adventism,” see Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 155–58.

¹¹⁷ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 159.

¹¹⁸ For the spring and summer expansion of radical Adventism, see Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 177–78.

¹¹⁹ For the time setting of the radical Adventists, see for instance Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 71, 100, 102, 116–17, 201–5, 305–7.

¹²⁰ At the time, they were called “spiritualists.” This term is not used in the present work to avoid confusing the Adventist spiritualizers with Spiritists (also known as Spiritualists), i.e. believers in communication with the deceased.

¹²¹ For the spiritualizing radicals, see Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 107–12, 210–14.

majority of the radicals differed on the extent—and hence on what should be the present emphasis—of Christ’s work. Snow, who had narrowed Miller’s prediction down to the date of October 22 and set in motion the seventh-month movement, believed Christ had both commenced and completed this work on that selfsame day. Others like Crosier and Clemons believed that Christ’s final ministry was ongoing and would last until shortly before his return.¹²² Eventually radical faith gave way. Marsh became increasingly antagonistic towards radicalism over the summer,¹²³ the Pearson brothers and Clemons turned back to Albany Adventism in the fall,¹²⁴ and by the fall Snow had begun to view himself as the prophesied returned Elijah.¹²⁵ Spiritualizing views spread through radical Adventism in the fall and through the winter with various extreme behaviors.¹²⁶ By the late fall Jacobs was the only remaining radical Adventist editor.¹²⁷

After the schism in April 1845, Harmon continued her ministry unabated, traveling with James White and others among Adventists, sharing her visions, exhorting believers, and opposing fanaticism. There is no datable record of Harmon’s ministry during the summer of 1845.¹²⁸ In the autumn she worked both at home in Maine and moved out still further, going on tours to Massachusetts, the epicenter state of the Adventist Movement, in August and October.¹²⁹ (In October, she also received her fourth early main vision, in which she described “the time of trouble,” the time between the close of probation and the Second Coming, during which the seven last plagues would fall and the wicked would persecute the saints.)¹³⁰ As fanaticism took over radical Adventism, it must have been a chaotic time. Yet Harmon did not flinch. Despite being still just a teenager, she opposed openly and successfully the most prominent Adventist leader in Maine, Joseph Turner, who had turned to mesmerism and eventually adopted the spiritualizing view.¹³¹ There were also at least five women who claimed to be visionaries whom Harmon met and opposed this year.¹³² Harmon was emerging as a force to be reckoned with.

A couple of important radical Adventist publications appeared in early 1846. First, Harmon’s visions were published for the first time. These were her four main visions so far.

¹²² In the present work, the division into one-day and longer ministry will not be dealt with. For present purposes, suffice to say that those radical Adventists who accepted the seventh-day Sabbath were mostly of the longer-atonement opinion, and that it was from the longer-ministry group that Sabbatarian Adventists emerged, i.e. the group to which Ellen White belonged. On the disagreement over the extent of Christ’s cleansing of the sanctuary, see Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 185–92. While not all these subtleties are discussed in the present work, they are noted in Figure 4 of the various Adventist groups in Appendix 7.

¹²³ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 191.

¹²⁴ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 196–200.

¹²⁵ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 194–96.

¹²⁶ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 210–14, 231.

¹²⁷ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 200.

¹²⁸ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 214.

¹²⁹ For White’s labors in the fall and early winter of 1845, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 67–79; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 227–34; White, *White*, 1:97–105; Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 214–25.

¹³⁰ White, *White*, 1:99–100; Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 223–25.

¹³¹ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 214.

¹³² Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 147.

She sent them as letters to the editor the *Day-Star* and they appeared in the January 24 and March 14 issues.¹³³ On April 6 the letters were republished as a broadside.¹³⁴ The other significant publication was the extra issue of *Day-Star*, published February 14 and devoted entirely to an article by O. R. L. Crosier.¹³⁵ It was his most comprehensive biblical study setting forth the radical Adventist interpretation of the fulfillment of Daniel 8 since his publication of the one issue *Day-Dawn* in March, 1845.¹³⁶

The first half of 1846 also saw the demise of the sole-remaining regular radical Adventist periodical, the *Day-Star*. What Harmon, and perhaps Crosier too, were unaware of in the early months of 1846, was that Jacobs had become a spiritualizer in early January.¹³⁷ From then on he devoted increasingly more space in his paper to spiritualizing views that became more and more sympathetic to Shakerism, but Shakers agreed with Adventist spiritualizers that the Second Coming was a spiritual event. (The Shakers, originating in seventeenth-century England, were a small Protestant denomination known for celibacy, a communal, simple, egalitarian way of life, ecstatic dancing [i.e., “shaking”], and their founding propheticess, Mother Ann Lee.) By April Jacobs refused to publish material that went against spiritualizing. This is probably the reason why Harmon, when she republished her visions on April 6, did so in the form of an independent broadside. By March radical Adventists had begun moving to Shaker settlements, with Jacobs himself doing so later in the year.¹³⁸ Radical Adventism had practically fallen apart. The editorial leadership had disappeared, for all of them had lost faith in their theological enterprise in one way or another. Most radical believers had returned to majority Adventism or turned spiritualizers, fanatics, or Shakers. The remaining radical Adventists were few, scattered, and confused.

Besides her publications, there are few datable events in Harmon’s life in 1846 up to August. Radical Adventist meetings she attended in early 1846 were disturbed by a mob, and some neighbors vainly tried to send the police against them.¹³⁹ She probably continued ministering among radical believers. During this time the upheaval within radical Adventism continued. To the young visionary who felt she was called to affirm radical Adventism and encourage its believers, it must have been traumatic to see the already declining group finally fall to pieces.

¹³³ Ellen G. White, “Letter from Sister Harmon,” *Day-Star*, January 24, 1846, 31–32; Ellen G. White, “Letter from Sister Harmon,” *Day-Star*, March 14, 1846, 7–8.

¹³⁴ Ellen G. White, “To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad,” broadside, April 6, 1846.

¹³⁵ O. R. L. Crosier, “The Law of Moses,” *Day-Star*, extra issue, February 7, 1846, 37–44.

¹³⁶ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 244–50.

¹³⁷ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 231–36.

¹³⁸ For the shift in remaining radical Adventism towards Shakerism, see Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 237–42; George R. Knight, *William Miller and the Rise of Adventism* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010), 219–24.

¹³⁹ For White’s labors in 1846 until the fall, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 79–82; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 234–36.

4.3.5 Sabbatarian Adventism Emerges (1846–49)

Sabbatarianism and New Leadership

When all the regular radical papers had vanished, new leadership was needed if the remaining scattered radical Adventism was to continue. In 1846, several active promoters interacted and eventually accepted each other's new ideas. A new leadership emerged with an augmented nexus of radical theology, which became known as Sabbatarian Adventism. The leaders were the Whites—Ellen and James having married on August 30, 1846¹⁴⁰—, Joseph Bates, and O. R. L. Crosier. Bates was a retired sea captain¹⁴¹ who had been a prominent leader in the Advent Movement.¹⁴² When he accepted radical Adventism he became also active in its promotion and wrote his first tract in May 1846, against the spiritualizers.¹⁴³ In March 1845, he read an Adventist tract on the seventh-day Sabbath—a belief that circulated among Adventists from Seventh Day Baptists since 1842—and was convinced of its immutability by arguments drawn from Creation (Gen 2:1–4) and the Decalogue or the Law of God.¹⁴⁴ Harmon met Bates at a radical Adventist meeting sometime early in 1846. They respected each other but were nevertheless initially skeptical of each other's ideas: Bates of her purported gift of prophecy, and Harmon of his insistence of the validity of the seventh-day Sabbath.¹⁴⁵ In August, Bates published a tract on the Sabbath.¹⁴⁶ The Whites read the tract and this time became convinced Sabbath-keepers.¹⁴⁷ In November, Bates was present at a meeting where White went into vision and its content convinced Bates that White's visions were genuine.¹⁴⁸ Late in the year Bates visited Crosier in western New York, the editor of the irregular *Day Dawn*, who had been influential in shaping the radical reinterpretation. Bates brought his Sabbath tract with him and shared his views. Crosier's associates accepted the seventh-day Sabbath and probably Crosier himself in part for a while.¹⁴⁹ The Whites, Bates, and Crosier, had all published and promoted radical Adventism and now they had for the most

¹⁴⁰ White, *My Christian Experience*, 83; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 238; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:75; White, *Life Sketches*, 97; White, *White*, 1:110–13.

¹⁴¹ George R. Knight, *Joseph Bates: The Real Founder of Seventh-day Adventism*, [Adventist Pioneers Series], (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2004), 15–24.

¹⁴² Knight, *Joseph Bates*, 58–64.

¹⁴³ Joseph Bates, *The Opening Heavens, or a Connected View of the Testimony of the Prophets and Apostles, Concerning the Opening Heavens, Compared with Astronomical Observations, and of the Present and Future Location of the New Jerusalem, the Paradise of God* (New Bedford, MA: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1846).

¹⁴⁴ For Bates's acceptance of the Sabbath, see Knight, *Joseph Bates*, 79–80.

¹⁴⁵ On White's and Bates's first meeting and initial disagreements, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 82, 83; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 236–37, 238; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:75–76, 79; White, *Life Sketches*, 95, 97; White, *White*, 1:105–7.

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Bates, *The Seventh Day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign, from the Beginning, to the Entering into the Gates of the Holy City, According to the Commandment*, 1st ed. (New Bedford, MA: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1846).

¹⁴⁷ White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:75; White, *White*, 1:116–17; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 283.

¹⁴⁸ White, *My Christian Experience*, 83; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 238–39; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:79–80; White, *Life Sketches*, 97–98; White, *White*, 1:113–14; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 286–90; Knight, *Joseph Bates*, 97–99.

¹⁴⁹ Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 290–92; Knight, *Joseph Bates*, 99–101.

part accepted each other's additional doctrines. They were emerging as the new leadership of the scattered remains of radicalism.

It is perhaps pertinent to mention that White claimed (later in life) that during the early period of Sabbatarian Adventism her mind was confused about the developing doctrinal issues that were being discussed for two-three years. This was seen by White and Seventh-day Adventists as a providential interference of God, a line divinely drawn between inspired White in vision and uninspired White out of vision, and between the Bible-study-derived doctrines and visionary confirmation.¹⁵⁰ If this is an accurate recollection, it could also be seen unconfessionally as an insight into how visionaries experience their visions as quite distinct from the rest of their daily cognitive lives and how they feel they discover things in vision that they themselves are unsure of how to interpret and that may even counter their own opinions. Whatever White's experience was and regardless of how her messages were perceived (as creative or confirmatory) by her fellow believers, it is unmistakable that she was one of the intellectual leaders of early Sabbatarian Adventism.

Sabbath discussions lingered in mainline Adventism until early 1848,¹⁵¹ but the doctrine became a defining mark of radical Adventism and was soon woven into the fabric of its theology. In January 1847, Bates published a revised edition of his Sabbath tract in which he lent covenantal and eschatological significance to the Sabbath and tied it more directly to radical Adventism. The reinterpretation taught that Jesus went into the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary on October 22, 1844. In Revelation 11:19, it was stated that at the blast of the seventh trumpet—which Adventists believed had sounded at that date—"the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." Bates claimed this text showed that, like its earthly model, the heavenly sanctuary had an actual Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place. The Ark was brought to the readers's or believers's attention when "the temple of God was opened"—i.e., when Jesus entered the Most Holy Place in 1844. It contained the Ten Commandments, which included the fourth commandment about the seventh-day Sabbath. Thus the heavenly sanctuary pointed to the fact that the Sabbath was still to be kept. Another text showed that God's people after 1844 would indeed keep the Sabbath. Revelation 14:6–12 symbolized the last Gospel proclamation before the Advent in the message of three angels. Adventists had early on come to view their proclamation as a fulfillment of that text (proclaiming the imminent Judgment as the first angel and denouncing the other churches as Babylon like the second angel). Bates pointed out that these end-time believers were described as "they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (v. 12). Since the text stated that God's end-time people would keep the Ten Commandments, and since they included the Sabbath, this meant that the text stated

¹⁵⁰ White, *White*, 1:145–47.

¹⁵¹ For the final major Sabbath discussion within majority Adventism, see Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 326–52.

that God's end-time people would keep the Sabbath as well as the other commandments.¹⁵² On April 3, White had a vision with similar ideas, and Bates published it with comments as a broadside on April 7.¹⁵³

The new leadership and their views had coalesced by early 1847, when the Whites and Bates published *Word to the Little Flock* in April, a pamphlet with articles summarizing their beliefs.¹⁵⁴ They had intended to publish the articles in Crosier's periodical,¹⁵⁵ but he had in the meantime gone a different path.¹⁵⁶ Radical Adventism was now completely bereft of any periodical in which to publish so the Whites and Bates decided to print their articles as a tract. It was the first joint Sabbatarian Adventist publication and summarized the eschatology that the radical and now Sabbatarian Adventists had built on the radical reinterpretation of Daniel 8.

Unlike periodicals, pamphlets had no subscribers. To spread their views among the scattered remaining radical Adventists and other Adventists open to their views, the three emerging leaders had to continue to travel to spread their pamphlet and promote their views.

Gathering Scattered Believers into a New Group

To gather believers into Sabbatarian Adventism, the Whites and Bates organized or attended a series of conferences in 1848. At these meetings, the three leaders lectured, discussed, and studied with their fellow believers, with the results that a Sabbatarian Adventist group emerged. To attend the Whites had to make some sacrifices. After they had married in the fall of 1846, the Whites had ministered and traveled constantly with no steady income. The first year of their married life they stayed with Ellen's parents in Gorham, ME.¹⁵⁷ On August 26, 1847, their first son, Henry Nichols, was born.¹⁵⁸ In October, the Whites began making house and moved into a part of the Howland's home in Topsham, ME.¹⁵⁹ James began to work, first at "handling stone" at the railroad, then at lumbering. It was hard work for little money, but the Whites persisted through dire poverty.¹⁶⁰ Despite their struggles, they managed to attend and speak at the first conference at Rocky Hill, CT on April 20–24, 1848.¹⁶¹ During the

¹⁵² Joseph Bates, *The Seventh Day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign, from the Beginning, to the Entering into the Gates of the Holy City, According to the Commandment*, 2nd ed. (New Bedford, MA: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1847).

¹⁵³ Ellen G. White, "A Vision," broadside, April 7, 1847.

¹⁵⁴ James White, ed., *A Word to the "Little Flock"* (Gorham, ME: Published by the Editor, 1847).

¹⁵⁵ White, *Word to the "Little Flock"*, 1.

¹⁵⁶ He had waited for Christ to return at Passover 1847—one of the many new dates in Adventism—and when the time passed, he set his eyes on 1877 and left radical Adventism. Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 305–7.

¹⁵⁷ White, *White*, 1:117, 134; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 282–83.

¹⁵⁸ White, *My Christian Experience*, 87; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 241; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:82; White, *Life Sketches*, 105; White, *White*, 1:133.

¹⁵⁹ White, *My Christian Experience*, 87; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 241–42; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:82; White, *Life Sketches*, 105; White, *White*, 1:134–35.

¹⁶⁰ White, *My Christian Experience*, 87–90; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 242–44; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:82–84; White, *Life Sketches*, 105–7; White, *White*, 1:134–36.

¹⁶¹ White, *My Christian Experience*, 93; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 245; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:85; White, *Life Sketches*, 108; White, *White*, 1:137–38; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 354–56; Merlin

summer of 1848, James then worked at mowing grass to save up money for conferences that had been organized subsequently.¹⁶² After the summer, the couple was nearly constantly on the road until the spring of 1849, attending and speaking at a string of conferences in the fall of 1848, and then traveling among believers in the early months of 1849. These conferences became known as the Sabbath Conferences, and were held at Volney, NY, on August 18–20;¹⁶³ Port Gibson, NY, August 27–28;¹⁶⁴ Rocky Hill, CT, September 8–9;¹⁶⁵ Topsham, ME, October 20–22;¹⁶⁶ and Dorchester, MA, November 11–18.¹⁶⁷ After attending several of these conferences, the Whites realized that the constant traveling was not good for infant Henry, nearly one and a half years old. They decided to leave him in the temporary care of their friends, the Howlands, in Topsham. It was difficult for the young parents to leave their child, and it proved to be a source of constant pain and depression for Ellen. They visited as often as they could, but Henry would remain in foster care for five years.¹⁶⁸

During the Sabbath Conferences, the leaders developed another eschatological aspect of the Sabbath and published these views in early 1849. They identified the seal of the living God (Rv 7:1–3) as the Sabbath. In Revelation, “the four winds” which are to destroy the earth are kept in check while God’s people are being sealed. By interpreting the seal as the Sabbath, the leaders gave a further eschatological character to their Sabbath belief: Accepting the Sabbath fully (being sealed) was vital in the end-times and the Second Coming had not occurred, not only because Christ was completing his work in heaven, but also because his people were being given time (the winds being held in check) to accept and share the Sabbath message. Bates published a pamphlet on the topic in January, 1849,¹⁶⁹ and a broadside with a vision by White on the same on January 31.¹⁷⁰ Moreover, at the last Sabbath Conference, she had a vision urging her husband to start a regular periodical for the Sabbatarian Adventists.¹⁷¹ This James would do in the summer.

Burt, *Development of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 4th ed. (Berrien Springs, MI: Center for Adventist Research, 2017), 86–88.

¹⁶² White, *My Christian Experience*, 93–96; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 245–46; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:85–86; White, *Life Sketches*, 108–9; White, *White*, 1:139–40.

¹⁶³ White, *My Christian Experience*, 97–99; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 247–49; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:86; White, *Life Sketches*, 110–11; White, *White*, 1:140–42; Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 357–58; Burt, *Development*, 88–89.

¹⁶⁴ White, *My Christian Experience*, 99; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 249; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:86; White, *Life Sketches*, 112; White, *White*, 1:142–44; Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 359; Burt, *Development*, 89–90.

¹⁶⁵ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 359–60; Burt, *Development*, 91.

¹⁶⁶ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 360; Burt, *Development*, 91–92.

¹⁶⁷ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 361–62; Burt, *Development*, 92–94.

¹⁶⁸ On the Whites’s decision to leave Henry with the Howlands, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 107–8; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 255; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:87; White, *Life Sketches*, 120; White, *White*, 1:152–53.

¹⁶⁹ Joseph Bates, *Seal of the Living God: A Hundred Forty-Four Thousand, of the Servants of God Being Sealed, in 1849* (New Bedford, MA: Press of Benjamin Lindsey, 1849).

¹⁷⁰ Ellen G. White, “To Those Who Are Receiveing the Seal of the Living God,” broadside, January 31, 1849.

¹⁷¹ White, *Life Sketches*, 125; White, *White*, 1:150–51.

4.3.6 Towards Seventh-day Adventism (1849–58)

During the 1850s, Sabbatarian Adventists with the Whites in the lead developed their message further and the means to spread it, not only to Adventists but to the general public.¹⁷² To share the message, the Whites built up the publishing medium of the group, from starting the first regular magazine in the summer of 1849 to buying a steam press for their own publishing house in Battle Creek, where they settled (for a time) with their family in 1855. When it came to developing their eschatological message, the Whites were aided by a growing group of theological voices among Sabbatarian Adventists. The most significant contribution to eschatology and theology in general during the 1850s was White's *Great Controversy* published in 1858. It was her crowning contribution to Sabbatarian Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8. In the book she wove together redemption history and the reinterpretation of Daniel 8 so that they were to be understood most fully in the light of each other. The *Great Controversy*—and its later reiterations—became the most influential theological work within Sabbatarian Adventism and later Seventh-day Adventism.

Publishing and Ministry

In July 1849, White urged her husband to publish a regular paper, which James did, and Sabbatarian Adventism finally had a regular printed voice. He named the magazine *Present Truth* and the focus of its eleven issues was the Sabbath and its relation to Sabbatarian Adventist doctrines.¹⁷³ That same month, on July 28, White gave birth to their second son, James Edson.¹⁷⁴ The Whites did not have the means to start a periodical, but instead of James working to save money, White counseled him to dedicate himself entirely to the project and trust that revenue would come.¹⁷⁵ In March, the Beldens had offered to share a part of their house with them in Rocky Hill, CT, and Clarissa M. Bonfoye, another friend of theirs, moved in with them to assist with housekeeping.¹⁷⁶ As the paper continued, sufficient donations came in from readers for the growing family to get by and continue their publishing efforts. The Whites also continued public speaking and traveled among believers from September to December 1849, mostly in Maine and New York.¹⁷⁷ In New York, they took up residence in

¹⁷² The theological and publishing developments of the 1850s were part of the overall denominationalization of Sabbatarian Adventists, who organized their church in 1863 and chose the official name Seventh-day Adventists, but that history lies outside of the scope of the current work.

¹⁷³ White, *My Christian Experience*, 115–16; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 260; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:88; White, *Life Sketches*, 126–27; White, *White*, 1:164–68; Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Present Truth, the,” 1052–53.

¹⁷⁴ White, *My Christian Experience*, 116; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 260; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:87; White, *Life Sketches*, 127; White, *White*, 1:167.

¹⁷⁵ White, *My Christian Experience*, 114–15; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 259–60; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:87–88; White, *Life Sketches*, 125; White, *White*, 1:164.

¹⁷⁶ White, *My Christian Experience*, 113; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 258; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:87; White, *Life Sketches*, 123; White, *White*, 1:161–63.

¹⁷⁷ For the work from September to December, 1849, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 116–22; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 260–65; White, *Life Sketches*, 128; White, *White*, 1:170, 196–97.

Oswego and continued publishing the magazine there.¹⁷⁸ May to July 1850, they were on the road again and traveled in Vermont, Canada, New Hampshire, and Maine.¹⁷⁹

In August 1850, White suggested to her husband that he publish a second magazine, this one with reprinted material from the leaders of the Advent Movement, to disprove their present theological positions—their rejection of the October 22 date and other changes in prophetic interpretation—with their own words, as well as to show Sabbatarian Adventism as the true continuation of their previous positions. The idea shows that Adventists in general remained a great focus for the fledgling Sabbatarians. James named the magazine *Advent Review*, and to publish it the Whites took up residence from August to November with Harris, a Sabbatarian Adventist who lived in Port Byron, NY.¹⁸⁰

In November 1850, James merged the two magazines into one paper which he renamed the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. That same month they had moved yet again and now stayed with Edward and Sarah L. Andrews in Paris, ME.¹⁸¹ The new magazine became the official mouthpiece of Sabbatarian Adventists. With a regular periodical, the Whites now looked to expand the publishing effort further.

The Whites decided to gather a team to help them with work on the magazine, and to locate somewhere near a press where they could have the paper printed. With this purpose, in July 1851, the Whites moved to Saratoga Springs, NY. Several other believers moved in with them as part of the little publishing family: The Beldens, Clarissa M. Bonfoye, and Annie Smith.¹⁸² The Whites could now divide their time between publication work and ministry in the field since the people at home could continue the paper while they were away. October to November 1851, they went on a tour east attending conferences in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont,¹⁸³ and then from December to the following March they went on a tour through western New York.¹⁸⁴

At a conference of believers held close to Saratoga Springs, in March 1852, Sabbatarian Adventists decided to advance and stabilize their publishing work. The Whites had had to run the entire effort on their own, without their own press, taking care of all the finances in their name, moving from place to place. The believers now decided to purchase their own printing press and to set it up in Rochester, NY. They also established a publishing committee to deal

¹⁷⁸ White, *My Christian Experience*, 122; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 265; White, *Life Sketches*, 128; White, *White*, 1:170–73.

¹⁷⁹ White, *My Christian Experience*, 127–36; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 268–72; White, *Life Sketches*, 131–35; White, *White*, 1:177–78, 190–91.

¹⁸⁰ For the publication of the *Advent Review* and the Whites's stay in Port Byron, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 136; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 272; White, *Life Sketches*, 136; White, *White*, 1:179–81.

¹⁸¹ For the publication of the new paper and relocating to Paris, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 143–44; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 278; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:89; White, *Life Sketches*, 139–40; White, *White*, 1:203–5, 206.

¹⁸² For relocating to Saratoga and the publishing team, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 152; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 282; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:90; White, *Life Sketches*, 141; White, *White*, 1:214–15.

¹⁸³ White, *White*, 1:215–23.

¹⁸⁴ White, *White*, 1:224–26.

with the finances and planned to have local agents for the paper.¹⁸⁵ With a newly bought press, the Whites and their crew moved to Rochester in April 1852. The publishing family grew, with the addition of a cook, pressman, type setting assistant, and a superintendent.¹⁸⁶ In October 1852, the group had the means to move the press from their home to an office in town.¹⁸⁷ In 1853, the group began printing some book titles off the press and Uriah Smith joined the team.¹⁸⁸ He would become one of the foremost theologians of Sabbatarian Adventism.¹⁸⁹ The Whites continued their traveling ministry, going on a tour east in the fall of 1852,¹⁹⁰ to Michigan in the summer of 1853,¹⁹¹ and east again in August–November, 1853. They returned from that tour with their older son Henry, finally reunited after five years.¹⁹² The next tour was to northeastern New York in early 1854.¹⁹³ They then went on a tour west to Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin in the summer, where they escaped a train accident by a fluke.¹⁹⁴ In the summer, on August 29, 1854, White gave birth to their third son, William Clarence.¹⁹⁵

The years in Rochester were a difficult time for the Whites, both financially and emotionally. The publishing effort—the main mission of the Whites—got little support from either local or general believers. Both of their sons were temporarily in the care of their close friends.¹⁹⁶ Three of their siblings died from tuberculosis: Robert Harmon¹⁹⁷ and Nathaniel White in 1853,¹⁹⁸ and Anna White in 1854.¹⁹⁹ Annie Smith, a close friend and co-worker,

¹⁸⁵ For the Conference and its decisions, see White, *White*, 1:226–29.

¹⁸⁶ White, *My Christian Experience*, 160–61; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 287–88; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:90–91; White, *Life Sketches*, 142; White, *White*, 1:229–31.

¹⁸⁷ White, *White*, 1:271–72.

¹⁸⁸ White, *White*, 1:230; Gary Land, *Uriah Smith: Apologist and Biblical Commentator*, [Adventist Pioneer Series] (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald, 2014), 24. The oldest titles in Schomburg’s bibliography are from 1853. William M. Schomburg, “Check List of Seventh-day Adventist Publications in the United States, 1850–1900, with a Historical Introduction” (MS thesis, Catholic University of America, 1972), 125–33.

¹⁸⁹ Eugene F. Durand, “Smith, Uriah,” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 515.

¹⁹⁰ White, *My Christian Experience*, 166–71; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 291–95; White, *Life Sketches*, 144–45; White, *White*, 1:232–36, 271.

¹⁹¹ White, *My Christian Experience*, 179–83; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 301–4; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:91–92; White, *Life Sketches*, 148–50; White, *White*, 1:273–81.

¹⁹² White, *My Christian Experience*, 184; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 304; White, *Life Sketches*, 150–51; White, *White*, 1:282–83.

¹⁹³ White, *White*, 1:289–92.

¹⁹⁴ White, *My Christian Experience*, 188–91; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 307–9; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:94–95; White, *Life Sketches*, 153–54; White, *White*, 1:293–301.

¹⁹⁵ White, *My Christian Experience*, 192; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 310; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:95; White, *Life Sketches*, 155; White, *White*, 1:301.

¹⁹⁶ For White’s feelings about being away from her sons, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 211; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 323.

¹⁹⁷ White, *My Christian Experience*, 161–65; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 288–90; White, *Life Sketches*, 143; White, *White*, 1:231, 234; Merlin Burt, “Harmon, Robert F., Jr.” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 400.

¹⁹⁸ White, *My Christian Experience*, 174–79; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 297–301; White, *Life Sketches*, 147; Howard Krug, “White, Nathaniel,” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 563–64.

¹⁹⁹ White, *My Christian Experience*, 193–94; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 310–11; White, *Life Sketches*, 155–56; White, *White*, 1:304, 305; Howard Krug, “White, Anna,” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 547.

grew fatally ill with consumption as well in late 1854.²⁰⁰ A splinter group of Sabbatarian Adventists arose and fought against the Whites.²⁰¹ White suffered from severe health complications in early 1854²⁰² and James was near death from stress and overwork.²⁰³ Finally, James voiced his concerns about the paper in the paper and asked the believers what they wanted to do with the printing press. The believers in Michigan, who had been the strongest supporters, responded most favorably and after financial questions had been solved, the printing press was moved to Battle Creek, Michigan in November 1855.²⁰⁴

The move to Michigan proved to be a happy one for the Whites in many ways. The community of believers had finally shouldered some of the financial burden of the publishing effort, and the Whites had their local interest and support in the work too.²⁰⁵ The Whites also lived with their three children in a home all by themselves for the first time in their married life.²⁰⁶ In April 1857, at the General Conference of Sabbatarian Adventists, it was decided to buy a steam press, and the Whites traveled to New York to buy it and ship it home. They used the opportunity to speak at conferences along the itinerary, in New York, Maine, and Vermont.²⁰⁷ Adventist evangelism had strengthened through the decade, which meant that when White now lectured, she was addressing large audiences of non-believers for the first time.²⁰⁸

Once they had a regular paper and press in the 1850s, White wrote and published steadily more. In August 1851, her first book was published, which contained an autobiographical account and several visions.²⁰⁹ She added a supplement in January 1854.²¹⁰ White also wrote semi-regularly in the Sabbatarian Adventist magazines, the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* and the *Youth's Instructor*.²¹¹ In December 1855, she published the first

²⁰⁰ She died shortly after the move to Battle Creek. Michael W. Campbell, "Smith, Annie Rebekah," in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 512–13.

²⁰¹ For the Messenger Party, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 192–93, 194–96; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 310, 311–12; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:95–97; White, *Life Sketches*, 155; White, *White*, 1:305–10, 314–15.

²⁰² White, *My Christian Experience*, 184–88; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 304–7; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:92–94; White, *Life Sketches*, 151–53; White, *White*, 1:292–93.

²⁰³ White, *My Christian Experience*, 194–96, 197–98; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 311–12, 313–14; White, "Biographical Sketch," 96–98; White, *White*, 1:316.

²⁰⁴ For the financial straits of the publishing enterprise and the relocation to Battle Creek, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 196–97; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 312–13; White, *White*, 1:316–20.

²⁰⁵ White, *My Christian Experience*, 203–4; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 317; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:100–101; White, *Life Sketches*, 159.

²⁰⁶ White, *White*, 1:333.

²⁰⁷ White, *My Christian Experience*, 222–23; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 333; White, *White*, 1:354–59.

²⁰⁸ White, *White*, 1:357.

²⁰⁹ Ellen G. White, *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White* (Saratoga Springs, NY: James White, 1851).

²¹⁰ Ellen G. White, *Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White* (Rochester, NY: James White, 1854).

²¹¹ Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Present Truth*, August 1849, 21–24; Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Present Truth*, September 1849, 31–32; Ellen G. White, "My Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Present Truth*, March 1850, 64; Ellen G. White, "To the 'Little Flock,'" *Present Truth*, April 1850, 71–72; Ellen G. White, "Message to Eli Curtis," *Present Truth*, May 1850, 80; Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Present Truth*, November 1850, 86–87; Ellen G. White, "Eli Curtis," *Second Advent*

number in a series of pamphlets addressed to the believers, entitled a *Testimony for the Church*.²¹² Further numbers appeared in August 1856,²¹³ April 1857,²¹⁴ and November 1857.²¹⁵ Then in 1858, she wrote and published the *Great Controversy*,²¹⁶ her most significant contribution to the reinterpretation of Daniel 8. To contextualize that work, the next section will trace how Sabbatarian Adventists had developed their eschatology (which had been based on their reinterpretation of Daniel 8) during the 1850s before the book was published.

Developing the Message of Daniel 8

By 1850, Sabbatarian Adventists under the leadership of Bates and the Whites had reinterpreted Miller's failure and believed they were advancing the same cause as the Millerites had done—announcing the imminent Second Coming—in a more developed form. They knew why Christ had not arrived yet: First, Christ had tested the churches by the mistaken dated announcement of his arrival to see whether they would revive or reject him.

Review and Sabbath Herald, April 7, 1851, 64; Ellen G. White, "Experience and Views," *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 21, 1851, [1–2]; Ellen G. White, "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad," *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 21, 1851, [2]; Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren," *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 21, 1851, [4]; Ellen G. White, "To the Brethren and Sisters," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 10, 1852, 21; Ellen G. White, "Dear Young Friends," *Youth's Instructor*, August 1852, 6–7; Ellen G. White, "Beauties of the New Earth," *Youth's Instructor*, October 1852, 12–13; Ellen G. White, "Dear Young Friends," *Youth's Instructor*, December 1852, 20–22; Ellen G. White, "Keep the Sabbath Holy," *Youth's Instructor*, February 1853, 37; Ellen G. White, "To the Saints Scattered Abroad," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 17, 1853, 155–56; Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 14, 1853, 192; Ellen G. White, "Dear Brethren and Sisters," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 11, 1853, 53; Ellen G. White, "Exhortation to the Young," *Youth's Instructor*, January 1854, 5–6; Ellen G. White, "He Will Come Again," *Youth's Instructor*, May 1854, 28–29; Ellen G. White, "To the Young," *Youth's Instructor*, May 1854, 37–38; Ellen G. White, "To the Young," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 25, 1854, 197; Ellen G. White, "Duty of Parents to Their Children," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, September 19, 1854, 45–46; Ellen G. White, "To the Church," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, June 12, 1855, 246; Ellen G. White, "Watch and Pray," *Youth's Instructor*, October 1855, 81; Ellen G. White, "The New Year," *Youth's Instructor*, January 1856, 5; Ellen G. White, "Communication from Sister White," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 10, 1856, 118; Ellen G. White, "Thankfulness, and the True Object of Our Faith," *Youth's Instructor*, February 1856, 13; Ellen G. White, "Bro. Smith," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 21, 1856, 166; Ellen G. White, "Brethren and Sisters," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 21, 1856, 167; Ellen G. White, "Watch and Pray," *Youth's Instructor*, March 1856, 21; Ellen G. White, "The Lord Is Good," *Youth's Instructor*, May 1856, 37–38; Ellen G. White, "Search the Scriptures," *Youth's Instructor*, June 1856, 44; Ellen G. White, "Jesus Says," *Youth's Instructor*, July 1856, 52; Ellen G. White, "Salvation through Christ," *Youth's Instructor*, August 1856, 62–63; Ellen G. White, "Jesus Calls," *Youth's Instructor*, October 1857, 76; Ellen G. White, "'It's Natural,'" *Youth's Instructor*, November 1857, 84; Ellen G. White, "'He Went Away Sorrowful, for He Had Great Possessions,'" *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, November 26, 1857, 18–19; Ellen G. White, "The Future," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 31, 1857, 59; Ellen G. White, "Bereavement," *Youth's Instructor*, April 1858, 29; Ellen G. White, "A Warning," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 15, 1858, 174.

²¹² Ellen G. White, *Testimony for the Church* (Battle Creek, MI: Advent Review Office, 1855). For the month date, see White, *White*, 1:331–33.

²¹³ Ellen G. White, *Testimony for the Church*, No. 2 (Battle Creek, MI: Advent Review Office, 1856). For the month date, see Poirier, *The Ellen G.*, 494.

²¹⁴ Ellen G. White, *Testimony for the Church*: No. 3 (Battle Creek, MI: Advent Review Office, 1857). For the month date, see White, *White*, 1:344.

²¹⁵ Ellen G. White, *Testimony for the Church*: No. 4 (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Review & Herald Office, 1857). For the month date, see White, *White*, 1:363–64.

²¹⁶ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, *The Great Controversy, between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels* (Battle Creek, MI: Published by James White, 1858).

Second, Christ must cleanse the sanctuary in heaven before his arrival. During that time, the believers were to seek the Lord and make sure of their salvation, as the people of Israel had done during the typical Day of Atonement. Third, his people had overlooked some truths necessary for preparation, such as keeping the true Sabbath (brought to view by Christ's ministry in the Most Holy Place, where the Ark with the Ten Commandments was). Fourth, his people had to preach this more developed form of Adventism to the world so that all would have a chance to prepare for the Second Coming.

Sabbatarian Adventists explained their reformulation of Millerism in prophetic terms. They were preaching the three angels's messages of Revelation 14: (1) Christ had begun cleansing the sanctuary in 1844 ("the hour of his judgment is come," v. 6) and the announcement of this commencement had begun, albeit incompletely, with the Millerite announcement of its timing, (2) Protestantism had become apostate ("Babylon is fallen," v. 8) by rejecting the Millerite message, and (3) the sign of true Christianity in the end-times was not only to have faith but to keep the Ten Commandments ("Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus," v. 12). The third message warned of apostate powers whose false worship would be the opposite of genuine worship, faith, and obedience—the text spoke of the beasts, image, and mark of the beast found in chapter 13 (Rv 14:9–11). Sabbatarian Adventists believed this would be the opposition of the wicked world and churches to their message—their Sabbath-keeping in particular—which would escalate into persecution, which would be cut short when Christ would return and deliver his people. Thus the "third angel's message" was central to Sabbatarian Adventist self-conception. James White made Revelation 14:12 the motto of his magazine and named their early hymnals *Hymns for God's Peculiar People That Keep the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus*.²¹⁷ The third angel's message was directly related to Daniel 8, the earthly dimension of its heavenly eschatology: Daniel 8 showed what Christ was doing in heaven (cleansing the sanctuary), and Revelation 14 showed what his people (and their opponents) would be doing on earth during that time.

There were several reasons which made it inevitable that this nascent theology would develop. First, Sabbatarian Adventist theology was only few years old and was hardly a finished project. Second, while believers felt they were on the brink of the end, short and concise eschatology was all that was needed for the final times. As time continued to pass, there was time (and need) to explain in more detail what was waiting in the wings of the future. Third, it is likely that having brought the Judgment into the present, Sabbatarian Adventists had pulled on a thread in the fabric of traditional Christianity that required nothing less than rethinking of much or all of theology.

This section will focus on three theological developments of the Sabbatarian Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8 or its satellite doctrines. It is necessary to take a quick look at them,

²¹⁷ P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 193.

because they give a fuller picture of the eschatology that White then incorporated into the *Great Controversy* of 1858. The writing of the book will be explored in the next section, and its content (as also expressed in later editions) is the bulk material for White's redemption history (analyzed in 5.5.2).

Christ's Work in Heaven: The Sanctuary Cleansing as Judgment

In the 1850s, Sabbatarian Adventists analyzed Christ's special work in heaven further. They aligned his cleansing of the celestial sanctuary more explicitly with the idea that this work was the pre-Advent phase of the Judgment. By 1850, the cleansing of the sanctuary which commenced in 1844 had been reinterpreted as not Christ's return but his final intercession in the heavenly sanctuary. This final work was part of the Judgment because it determined who his people were whom he would return to save: Christ cleansed the sins of those who were truly repentant and demonstrated their faith by their works, whereas those who only professed religion or had abandoned their faith would not have their sins cleansed on the Day of Atonement. This interpretation did not explain what was meant precisely by this cleansing. This changed in the 1850s, when Sabbatarian Adventists interpreted *how* Christ was cleansing the sanctuary. This they did by reading Daniel 8:14 in the light of the Judgment scene of Daniel 7: Christ entered the Most Holy Place (Dn 7:13–14) on October 22, 1844 (at the close of the 2300 years, Dn 8) to cleanse the sanctuary (Dn 8:14) by reviewing the books of his people and blotting out the sins of genuine believers (Judgment scene, Dn 7). Thus the cleansing of the sanctuary was the pre-Advent Judgment: Christ opened the books of professed believers to investigate their lives, and it was from the books that their sins were potentially blotted out. The investigating of the records and blotting out forgiven sins was how Christ was cleansing the sanctuary.²¹⁸

The Group's Lack of Momentum: "The Laodicean Message" (Rv 3:14–22)

In the 1850s, Sabbatarian Adventists began to come to terms with the fact that while they claimed to be the continuation of Millerism, the continuum was not as strong as they wanted to believe. They had become a different group with a different experience. During the late 1840s, radical and later Sabbatarian Adventists had been occupied with navigating theologically out of the Millerite failure. Reorienting their theology and regrouping took several years for those few believers who insisted on continuing based on Miller's prediction. In the early 1850s, Sabbatarian Adventists began their mission as a semi-organized group.

²¹⁸ For the development of the pre-Advent Judgment doctrine in the 1850s, see Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message*, 165–76. Sabbatarian Adventists had already consigned Revelation's Judgment scene with the books (Rv 20:11–15) to the postmillennial Judgment, and in time they would explain all three phases of their Judgment doctrine with the book motif: (1) Before his return, Christ reviewed the records of the professed believers and blotted out forgiven sins; (2) at his Second Coming, Christ would take his saints with him to heaven, where they would during the millennium review the records of the wicked and determine their punishment; (3) Christ would return to earth with the redeemed, open the books, and announce his sentence over the wicked and execute it.

Once the group was out of the theological thicket of former years and had begun its own existence, it became clear to the leaders that they had little of the momentum or attraction that Adventists had had during the Millerite Movement. Yet Sabbatarian Adventists claimed to be the bearers of God's last message to the world and had thought they would finish the Millerite Movement by declaring this message quickly and in power before Christ's imminent return. When they compared the present with their former religious experience, however, the contrast was not promising. There seemed to be no end in sight to their mission. If Sabbatarian Adventists were ever to accomplish their mission, they were in dire need of a revival. To explain this unhappy state and the urgent need for change, in the winter 1856–57 James and then Ellen White declared that the epistle to the listless church in Laodicea (Rv 3) had been written to Sabbatarian Adventists as the last period of the true Church, albeit in a deplorable condition.²¹⁹ This interpretation served several goals. First, it set forth the urgent need for a revival. Second, it defended the group's lofty claims of being God's Church in face of their low estate. Third, it tied the group's life closer to the end. Not only did the end hinge on them participating in Christ's work in heaven by seeking the Lord, and preaching to others; not doing so delayed the Lord's work. Fourth, this interpretation excused the unforeseen "gap" between the Millerite movement and the future work of the Sabbatarian Adventists, making the present into a temporary pause before the movement would go forth in power.

The Group's Message and Future Opponents: "The Third Angel's Message" (Rv 14:9–12)
In the 1850s, Sabbatarian Adventists began to elaborate on the role of the wicked during the end times by explaining Revelation 13 in more detail. Late in the decade they had reached the following scenario: The United States was the second beast, rising to power after the 1260 year reign of the Papacy, the first beast. Despite good apparent principles of power (horns like a lamb, v. 10), the United States would legislate draconian laws (speak like a dragon, v. 10). Churches would gain so much political power that the United States would eventually resemble the Papacy (become an image of the first beast, vv. 14–15). Great miracles would happen to convince the population that God was behind these religio-political measures (v. 13). Eventually the United States would legislate Sunday-keeping (and eventually Sabbath-breaking) by nationwide blue laws (mark of the beast, vv. 16–17). They would first enforce these laws by individual economic sanctions (no man can buy or sell without the mark, vv. 16–17), and eventually with the death penalty (v. 15). The apostasy of earthly powers and satanic deceptions would obscure Christ's work in heaven from people's view, and it was therefore necessary to warn people against the coming apostasy of the United States and expose it. By this more fully developed eschatology Sabbatarian Adventists had grounded their message not only in what Christ was doing in heaven above but also in the projection of earthly events. Similarly, the imminence of Christ's return was now not only tied to his

²¹⁹ Felix A. Lorenz, *The Only Hope* (N.p.: TEACH Services, 2003), 32–37 (= ch. 4).

invisible ministry in heaven, but to the unfolding of religio-political developments in this world.

This interpretation of Revelation 13 had several roots. First, Sabbatarian Adventists already viewed American Christianity as apostate for having rejected Miller's message. Second, as Kevin Burton has demonstrated, Millerites, as well as Sabbatarian Adventists, were abolitionists, and therefore viewed the American government with skepticism for its reluctant measures towards abolishing slavery. The 1850s were a decade of building tension between the North and the South in the Union, the calm before the storm of the American Civil War (1861–1865). One of the main causes for this tension was slavery. In the 1850s, the government compromised legally with the slave-keeping South, for instance by writing fugitive slave laws. The identification of the United States as the second beast of Revelation occurred as a direct reaction to one of these laws.²²⁰ Third, Sabbatarian Adventists disliked the Sunday-keeping of American Protestantism and the government's blue laws. For these reasons combined, it was a small step to identify American state and churches as the apocalyptic powers who would fight against the saints.

The *Great Controversy* (1858)

In 1858, White wrote a book on redemption history which would become her major contribution to the Sabbatarian Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8. The history of the book began early in the year with a vision. In February and March 1858, the Whites went on a tour to Ohio where they spoke at several conferences. One of the meetings was held in the public school building in Lovett's Grove, the weekend of March 13–14. On Sunday there was a funeral and James delivered the sermon, on the hope of the resurrection. It was followed by White's testimony. During her talk, she went into a vision that lasted for two hours. After it, some of the attendants carried the coffin to the cemetery. The rest stayed behind and listened

²²⁰ See Kevin M. Burton, PhD dissertation, Florida State University, forthcoming.

During the following decades, Seventh-day Adventists came to see the Papacy as playing an end-time role as the associate of the United States in enforcing Sunday laws. This development, while outside the time frame of the present dissertation, is incorporated into the section on White's redemption history (4.5.2), and a few footnoted words on its causes are in order. Sabbatarian Adventists here drew on their former Millerism as well as the general sentiment in America towards the Papacy and Catholicism. Negative views towards the Papacy were still a strong norm in the nineteenth century in America. Miller had depicted the Papacy as mortally wounded in 1798 when it was abolished, but had predicted it would play a role in the last days. That of course did not happen in 1844, but Sabbatarian Adventists—who had a renewed interest in its history because of the role they believed it had played in changing the fourth commandment—slowly came to believe it would regain all its former power and become an associate of the United States in enforcing the blue laws. Bruinsma believed the historical context played a large role in forming Seventh-day Adventist end-time views of the Papacy and Sunday laws. He pointed to factors such as the influx of Catholic immigrants to the United States in the nineteenth century and American fears concerning this demographic changes, the slow but sure rise of the Papacy during the same time, an effort to legislate nationwide blue laws in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and other factors. While these historical realities no doubt factored into the development of Seventh-day Adventist eschatology, they seem to have had more to do with its development and finalizing than its origin: Adventists had started speculating about blue laws and the role of the Papacy in the end times before most of the factors Bruinsma mentioned fully materialized. For Bruinsma, see Reinder Bruinsma, *Seventh-day Adventist Attitudes toward Roman Catholicism 1844–1965* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1994).

to White share what she had seen in the vision. It was the story of the conflict between Christ and Satan, along with personal instructions to some of the believers in Ohio. In the train on the way back home, the Whites discussed the topic and made plans to write and publish it as a book. They had decided to stay the night in Jackson, and there White had a stroke which paralyzed her left side temporarily. When they were home in Battle Creek, she nevertheless commenced writing at once. She could only write a page a day, and then had to rest for several days before continuing, but she slowly recuperated completely from the stroke. She wrote through the summer and had finished the manuscript by mid-August. The book was then printed and advertised for sale in September.²²¹

White published the book as the first volume in a larger work, *Spiritual Gifts*. The book also came to be known by the first phrase in its volume title, the *Great Controversy*. It set forth the controversy between Christ and Satan as the center of redemption history and integrated Sabbatarian Adventist distinctives—such as its Daniel 8-based eschatology—into this controversy and thus into the heart of the Christian faith. This strengthened the appeal of Sabbatarian Adventists both to believers and outsiders. White borrowed part of the title from a mainline Adventist book that had been published early in 1858, the *Great Controversy between God and Man* by H. L. Hastings.²²² White apparently read the book and while she was appalled at the way Hastings treated the subject matter, she was intrigued at the idea, and the book obviously served as the catalyst for her to write her own take on redemption history.²²³

²²¹ On the historical context of the great controversy vision, and the writing of the book, see White, *My Christian Experience*, 265–72; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 334–39; White, *Life Sketches*, 161–63; White, *White*, 1:366–75.

²²² H. L. Hastings, *The Great Controversy between God and Man: Its Origin, Progress, and End* (Rochester, NY: Published by the Author, 1858).

²²³ That White was intrigued is obvious from the fact that she wrote a redemption history on the controversy between good and evil with the very same title later the same year as she read Hastings. While White took a different approach than Hastings, she found some of his textual devices agreeable: The idea of a redemption history from the perspective of the war between good and evil, as well as his book title. Hastings's final paragraph is about the controversy concluded and God's relation with his Creation. It is echoed in White's concluding paragraph in the 1884 version of her *Great Controversy*, though their differences appear as well. "The Lord hath now a controversy with the nations no longer. . . . And so the scenes of bliss and blessedness stretch away and fill the fair landscape of futurity, through all the ages of eternity—and God shall be 'ALL AND ALL IN ALL.'" Hastings, *Great Controversy*, 167. "The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. . . . From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan during the Christian Dispensation* (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1888), 678.

White's differences from Hastings appeared already in the subtitles: According to Hastings, the controversy was between God and man; according to White, it was between Christ and Satan. This meant that White set out to write a very different book from Hastings. Hastings barely mentioned Satan and imputed much to God that White attributed to the devil. This difference is glaring throughout the book, e.g. in their description of the Fall of Jerusalem as God's righteous punishment (Hastings) or as the cruelty of Satan over those who forsake God (White). The Jews "had so far defied the Almighty, that now he determined to lay heavily upon them his chastening hand; to crush that outbreaking wickedness which was kindled in the city which was called by his name; and to blot out, in blood and flame, the mad opposition of those who professed to be his friends, but were in truth his inveterate enemies." Hastings, *Great Controversy*, 90. "Their sufferings are often represented as a punishment visited upon them by the direct decree of God. It

When White first thought of redemption history in the terms of the great controversy is unknown. She herself later claimed to have had a similar vision ten years before (c. 1848).²²⁴ Ideas can take long to germinate and develop, especially those that serve as organizing principles or conceptual frameworks, so it is not unlikely that White had thought about the issue for quite some time. One earlier example can be found in an article on the plan of salvation she penned in 1852.²²⁵

Millerites had been forward looking and had not had time to ponder church history except for how it related to the fulfillment of prophecy. Finding solid theological ground after the failed prediction had been a time-consuming effort for the remainder of the 1840s, and complicated and delayed by the variety of opinions that were suggested. Once the Sabbatarian Adventist solution had been established in the late 1840s, the believers could expand and elaborate on it in the following decade. The three founders had published a summary of their new eschatological solution in 1847 in their first joint publication, *Word to the Little Flock*. A decade later, White's *Great Controversy* served the same purpose, only the synthesis was more mature and far-reaching, because it situated Adventist beliefs in the overarching Christian faith and history. It became one of the defining works of Sabbatarian, and later Seventh-day, Adventism.

4.3.7 Conclusion

White's thoughts were turned to religion after a dangerous accident when she was nine nearly killed her and left permanent disfiguration. A religious struggle of several years was exasperated when she attended Miller's lectures and became convinced that Christ would return in 1843, for she felt she was unprepared. After some pastoral counsel and further struggle, she experienced conversion and participated wholeheartedly in Millerite evangelism. Shortly after the prediction failed, White began to claim to have visions. She was only seventeen years old, but had enough grit to go through the chaotic fallout of the Millerite Movement and emerge as one of the leaders of a new group. During these years, White supported the effort to reinterpret Miller's prediction so as to keep the date valid while keeping the Second Coming in the future. This was done by reinterpreting the event that took

is thus that the great deceiver seeks to conceal his own work. By stubborn rejection of divine love and mercy, the Jews had caused the protection of God to be withdrawn from them, and Satan was permitted to rule them according to his will. The horrible cruelties enacted in the destruction of Jerusalem are a demonstration of Satan's vindictive power over those who yield to his control." Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1911), 35–36. The difference stemmed from their definition of the controversy itself. Hastings defined it in terms of obedience or disobedience to God; White agreed, but emphasized that the nature of the law in question was love, and the only true obedience—like love—was free, coming from a heart that admired God. "Two ways only remain for the adjustment of this great controversy. First: By the submission of man to the will of God; or second: By the destruction of the rebellious by the power of God. In one or the other of these ways this controversy must find its issue." Hastings, *The Great Controversy*, 115–16. Compare with the first section of 4.5.2.

²²⁴ White, *My Christian Experience*, 270; White and White, *Life Sketches*, 338; White, *Life Sketches*, 162.

²²⁵ White, "Dear Young Friends," 6–7.

place in 1844 and by introducing further eschatology to bridge that date to the yet-future Second Coming: Christ had entered the Most Holy in the celestial sanctuary to commence the Judgment. Believers were to continue to prepare themselves for his return, now with the advanced understanding that they were to keep the fourth commandment literally. This resulted in the formation of a new group, the Sabbatarian Adventists, late 1846–49. During the next decade, White was one of the main drivers in developing all dimensions of the new group—its publishing effort, ministry, organization, and developing theology. In 1858, White published her first work on redemption history, which built on these further theological developments, but also contributed significantly to them, by organizing history around the great controversy motif which she developed from and built on the Sabbatarian Adventist view of Daniel 8.

It seems that the great controversy motif was an original idea of White. It was her way of reading all of redemption history in the light of the experience which she had participated in, namely Millerism and Sabbatarian Adventism. These religious movements emphasized the importance of the Second Coming and the Judgment, and Sabbatarian Adventism emphasized the law and mortalism as well. Continuing the restorationist spirit of Adventism, White read redemption history from the viewpoint of these doctrines. The reinterpretation of the sanctuary, on which Sabbatarian Adventism was founded, seems to have originated from radical Adventism with little outside input. Its seeds were probably found already in Miller's usage of the Old Testament in his prophetic interpretation. The final date—October 22, 1844—was also built on sanctuary typology, being the date of the festival Day of Atonement. White's incorporating of cosmic pluralism—which will feature in the theological section—was characteristic of her day, and can be seen as an outside influence, even though it cannot be traced to any particular book or author which she may have read or heard of.

The main historical event that influenced Sabbatarian Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8 was the Millerite failure in 1844. Broader developments also played a role in Sabbatarian Adventism's inclusion of the United States as an apostate power in the end-time which would enforce nationwide blue laws; besides their negative view of the world as corrupt and wicked in the end-time, Sabbatarianism deepened this view, and Adventist abolitionism aided its further eschatological expression. When it comes to the great controversy motif, no particular historical event seems to have caused this original idea, though of course further studies may succeed in identifying its tributaries.

White's personality had a molding influence on the development of Sabbatarian Adventism. As a whole, the theological project of reinterpreting the Millerite failure fell apart in less than two years. It is hardly a coincidence that the only group that emerged from that attempt—Sabbatarian Adventism—had a prophet among its leaders. Prophetic authority is weighty, and served as a ballast to the group's bold theological venture. This included more than having visions; despite White's portrayal of herself as a timid, sensitive invalid, she turned out to be a talented leader, and with others she managed to reinvent Millerism

theologically, in times of poverty, little assistance, and active opposition. White not only claimed that the new interpretation was accurate and important; it was urgent and called for immediate action: The celestial Judgment was already in session, and all were to prepare and share these truths with others so they could prepare as well.

4.4 Textual Dynamics

4.4.1 Introduction

Sabbatarian Adventism developed in the wake of the failure of the Millerite Movement, and the preceding chapter therefore serves as a summary on the historicist interpretation of Daniel 8 before White's contribution.

Miller had interpreted the 2300 days in Daniel 8 as 2300 years that would end in 1844. Then the sanctuary—the earth and God's people—would be cleansed: Christ would return and perfect the saints and purify the earth. In the late summer of that year, his followers refined the date to October 22, 1844. The majority of Adventists acknowledged the mistake and set out to recalculate the time periods or to reinterpret prophecy. Some Adventists, however—White among them—were unconvinced that the date was mistaken and reinterpreted the terminus event, the cleansing of the sanctuary. The pinpointed date of October 22 had been arrived at by identifying the festival Day of Atonement, during which the sanctuary had been cleansed each year, as a type of the antitype—the Second Coming. The minority Adventists explored this typology further. They expanded the ritual of the Day of Atonement to be a type so that it did not prefigure the Second Coming in particular but all eschatology from 1844 to the close of time. This eschatology consisted of a three-phased Judgment, which had begun in 1844. It was synonymous with the cleansing of the sanctuary because, just like the typical sanctuary cleansing, it took place in the Most Holy Place of the celestial sanctuary above, and because during it the sins of God's people would be cleansed (blotted out) from the judgment records. This interpretation was not widely influential within Adventism—it was one of the smallest Adventist groups to emerge from the fragmentation of Millerism. It was resilient enough, however, to outgrow all the other ones into an evangelistic denomination, the Seventh-day Adventists, and appealing enough that their emphasis on prophecy in their evangelism helped them to grow continuously, albeit modestly. With the decline of historicism through the nineteenth century, however, Seventh-day Adventists became outliers, with little influence on Protestant prophetic interpretation in general, and their prophetic views intransigent to further historicizing.

This section will go through White's interpretation of the text of Daniel 8 to identify the dynamics she used in her historicizing of the chapter. Since White did not spearhead the Sabbatarian Adventist reinterpretation, but worked with others on it, to gain a fuller picture their interpretation will be used to fill in gaps where White did not comment on the text. The section will start with an overview of White's writings on Daniel, then analyze her interpretation of the text, and how she harmonized it with the other visions of Daniel.

4.4.2 Writings on Daniel

After the Advent Movement failed in 1844, some Adventists, including White, further developed their understanding of the prophecies of Daniel and of chapter 8 in particular. This new reading of Daniel 8 became foundational to the message of Seventh-day Adventists, the most resilient group that emerged from the Advent Movement. White was one of the three founders of this new denomination. The Book of Daniel played a significant role in her writings, and even though she did not write much directly on Daniel, some of her most important and influential works were colored by Danielic interpretation.

White's writings on Daniel are mostly on the historical aspect of the book with a focus on the practical lessons found in the lives of the main figures—Daniel and his three friends, Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar—and their application to the Christian life.²²⁶ Most noticeable of these writings are a section of an article series on sanctification,²²⁷ another article series on “lessons from the life of Daniel” (1903–1907),²²⁸ and six of sixty chapters in

²²⁶ The historical aspect is not limited to chapters 1–6. White also draws practical lessons from Daniel's life in the later chapters (his prayers, reaction to the visions, and so forth).

²²⁷ Ellen G. White, “Sanctification: The Life of Daniel an Illustration of True Sanctification,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 25, 1881, 49–51; Ellen G. White, “Sanctification: The Life of Daniel an Illustration of True Sanctification,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 1, 1881, 65–66; Ellen G. White, “Sanctification: The Life of Daniel an Illustration of True Sanctification,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 8, 1881, 81–82. The entire series was republished as a booklet in 1889 and posthumously in 1937 and 1956. See Ellen G. White, *Bible Sanctification: A Contrast of True and False Theories* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1889); Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life*, [2nd ed.] (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1937); Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life*, [3rd ed.] (Washington, DC: Review & Herald). Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Sanctified Life, the,” 1130.

²²⁸ Ellen G. White, “A Lesson from Daniel's Experience,” *Youth's Instructor*, September 6, 1900, 276; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—II: Causes of the Babylonish Captivity,” *Youth's Instructor*, May 14, 1903, 2; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—III: Early Training of Daniel and His Companions,” *Youth's Instructor*, May 21, 1903, 6; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—IV: Daniel's Temperance Principles—I,” *Youth's Instructor*, June 4, 1903, 2; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—V: Daniel's Temperance Principles (Concluded),” *Youth's Instructor*, June 25, 1903, 6; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—VI: The Reward of Temperance,” *Youth's Instructor*, July 9, 1903, 8; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—VII: A Warfare against Intemperance,” *Youth's Instructor*, July 16, 1903, 6; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—VIII: Success in Education,” *Youth's Instructor*, August 6, 1903, 6; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—IX: Earnestness of Purpose,” *Youth's Instructor*, August 20, 1903, 8; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—X: The Vision of the Great Image,” *Youth's Instructor*, September 1, 1903, 1; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—XI: The Interpretation of the Vision of the Great Image,” *Youth's Instructor*, September 8, 1903, 8; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—XII: The Moral Deterioration of the Nation,” *Youth's Instructor*, September 22, 1903, 6; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—XIII: Obedience the Condition of God's Favor,” *Youth's Instructor*, September 29, 1903, 6–7; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—XV: True Wisdom,” *Youth's Instructor*, November 24, 1903, 6; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—XVI: God's Prophetic Word,” *Youth's Instructor*, December 1, 1903, 1–2; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel—XVIII: A Perversion of Truth,” *Youth's Instructor*, February 2, 1904, 2; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel: The Fiery Furnace,” *Youth's Instructor*, March 8, 1904, 4; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel: The Fiery Furnace,” *Youth's Instructor*, April 26, 1904, 3–4; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel: Self-Exaltation,” *Youth's Instructor*, April 4, 1905, 1–2; Ellen G. White, “Lessons from the Life of Daniel: A Warfare against Intemperance,” *Youth's Instructor*, September 24, 1907, 3. The issue with article numbered fourteen has been lost.

Prophets and Kings (1916, 1917),²²⁹ the latter book on Old Testament history in her redemption history Conflict of the Ages Series. In addition, White wrote almost fifty articles, letters, manuscripts, and some book sections on practical lessons drawn from Daniel.²³⁰ Additionally, she referred to such themes hundreds of times in her writings.

²²⁹ Ellen G. White, *The Story of Prophets and Kings as Illustrated in the Captivity and Restoration of Israel* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1917), 452–548. Since she did not explain the fulfillment of Daniel’s visions in the chapters on his history, two pages (written by someone else) were added into the chapter on Daniel 2 to explain that vision, presumably for readers curious to know the historical fulfillment of the dream. White, *Prophets and Kings*, 495–96 White oversaw the editing process of her books and the inclusion of these pages were most likely approved by her. Their presence in the book yet again implies her agreement with the Seventh-day Adventist consensus of the interpretation of Daniel.

²³⁰ On chapter 1: Ellen G. White, “Daniel a Temperance Reformer,” *Signs of the Times*, March 2, 1882, 97–98; Ellen G. White, “Temperance Reform from a Bible Standpoint,” *Signs of the Times*, February 11, 1886, 81–82; Ellen G. White, “A Peculiar People (Concluded),” *Signs of the Times*, November 4, 1889, 657–58; Ellen G. White and James White, *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene* (Battle Creek, MI: Good Health, 1890), 25–28; Ellen G. White, Ms. 35, 1890; Ellen G. White, “I Have Written Unto You, Young Men,” *Youth’s Instructor*, October 25, 1894, 332–33; Ellen G. White, Ms. 122, 1897, March 10, 1897; Ellen G. White, Ms. 51, 1898, May 1, 1898; Ellen G. White, “Prayer Our Stronghold,” *Youth’s Instructor*, August 18, 1898, 644–45; Ellen G. White, Ms. 132, 1901; Ellen G. White, Ms. 110, 1904, March 19, 1904; Ellen G. White, “With Full Purpose of Heart,” *Youth’s Instructor*, October 29, 1907, 1; Ellen G. White, “With Full Purpose of Heart,” *Youth’s Instructor*, November 12, 1907, 3–4; Ellen G. White, ““Them That Honor Me, I Will Honor”” *Youth’s Instructor*, December 31, 1907, 2–3; Ellen G. White, Ms. 73, 1909, August 27, 1909; Ellen G. White, “A Lesson in Health Reform,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 10, 1910, 7–8; Ellen G. White, Ms. 33, 1909, May 26, 1909; Ellen G. White, Ms. 85, 1910, August 20, 1910; Ellen G. White, “Daniel,” *Bible Training School*, November 1, 1912, 81–82.

On chapter 2: Ellen G. White, “Words to the Young,” *Youth’s Instructor*, November 22, 1894, 1; Ellen G. White, Ms. 8, 1896, March 26, 1896; Ellen G. White, “A Lesson from the King of Babylon,” *Signs of the Times*, April 29, 1897, 4–5; Ellen G. White, “Loyalty or Disloyalty?,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 6, 1900, 81–82.

On chapter 3: White, “King of Babylon,” 4–5; Ellen G. White, “God’s Care for His Children,” *Signs of the Times*, May 6, 1897, 4–6; Ellen G. White, “We Ought to Obey God Rather than Men,” *Signs of the Times*, May 13, 1897, 3–4; Ellen G. White, “A Lesson from the Three Hebrew Children,” *Signs of the Times*, September 2, 1897, 3–4; Ellen G. White, “Knowing God,” *Youth’s Instructor*, April 7, 1908, 13, 8; Ellen G. White to Brother and Sister Lindsay, August 18, 1897, lt. 90, 1897; Ellen G. White to Stephen Nelson Haskell and Hetty (Hurd) Haskell, October 7, 1901, lt. 132, 1901.

On chapter 4: Ellen G. White, Ms. 15, April 27, 1896; White, *Education*, 174–77; “The Value of Trial” (1904), Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1885–1909), 8:126–27; Ellen G. White, Ms. 169, 1904, February 7, 1904; Ellen G. White, “The Power and Splendor of Babylon during Nebuchadnezzar’s Reign,” *Youth’s Instructor*, October 10, 1904, 6; Ellen G. White, “Nebuchadnezzar’s Second Dream,” *Youth’s Instructor*, November 1, 1904, 7; Ellen G. White, “Nebuchadnezzar’s Restoration,” *Youth’s Instructor*, December 13, 1904, 7; Ellen G. White, “Nebuchadnezzar’s Humiliation,” *Youth’s Instructor*, March 28, 1905, 4.

On chapter 5: Ellen G. White, “A Symbol of the Final Destruction,” *Signs of the Times*, December 29, 1890, 605; Ellen G. White, “Results of Refusing to Walk in the Light,” *Signs of the Times*, July 20, 1891, 229; Ellen G. White, “Words to the Young,” *Youth’s Instructor*, November 9, 1893, 349; Ellen G. White, “Results of Refusing to Walk in the Light,” *Bible Echo*, September 17, 1894, 291; Ellen G. White, “The Unseen Watcher—No. 1,” *Youth’s Instructor*, May 19, 1898, 384–85; Ellen G. White, “The Unseen Watcher—No. 2,” *Youth’s Instructor*, May 26, 1898, 404–5.

On chapter 6: Ellen G. White, “Daniel an Example of Faithfulness,” *Signs of the Times*, November 4, 1886, 657–58; White, “A Peculiar People,” 657–58; Ellen G. White, “God’s Care for His Children,” *Youth’s Instructor*, November 1, 1900, 338.

On chapter 9: Ellen G. White, “The Prayer That God Accepts,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 9, 1897, 81–82

On example in general or from many chapters: Ellen G. White, “The Source of Our Strength,” *Bible Echo*, January 15, 1893, 18–19; Ellen G. White, “Daniel a Statesman in Babylon,” *Bible Echo*, July 2, 1900, 427–28; Ellen G. White, Ms. 71, 1910, February 19, 1910; White, *Education*, 54–58.

White penned much fewer pages on the prophecies of Daniel. While she had, as one of the co-founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, agreed with the radical Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8 and helped to affirm and proclaim it, she did not write commentaries on the prophecies. Such works which set forth the consensus of the fledgling denomination were written by other pioneering Seventh-day Adventists, such as her husband James White, Uriah Smith, John Nevins Andrews, and others. White agreed with the consensus set forth,²³¹ lauding some of these works in particular,²³² and thus felt no burden to add to this genre of books. Her agreement can further be seen from the fact that when she needed to expound on prophecy in the books she choose to write she would even quote her fellow workers and incorporated their insights into her own writings.²³³ Since White did not write systematically on the prophecies, and since she agreed with the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Daniel, this means that when her interpretation will be set forth it will have to be supplemented by other early Seventh-day Adventist writers to fill in the gaps where she left no comment on Daniel.

White's sparse comments on the particulars in Daniel's visions did not mean that these prophecies were of less interest or importance to her than the historical aspects of the book. Rather, the apparent scarcity was in line with the genres she practiced the most. When White expounded on the meaning of Scripture in her writings, her aims were usually either ministry—counseling, exhorting, warning, encouraging—or to outline the history of redemption. She would write about the historical aspects for the former aim and the prophecies for the latter. Her most important use of the prophecies of Daniel is found in her works with the latter aim. These books were her *magnum opus* and she worked on them throughout her entire career, rewriting and expanding her redemption history three times. She first published *Spiritual Gifts* (1858–64),²³⁴ then *Spirit of Prophecy* (1870–84)²³⁵ and finally

²³¹ E.g. White's interpretation of Daniel and Revelation in the *Great Controversy* corresponds nearly completely to that of Uriah Smith's commentary on Daniel and Revelation. Smith's commentaries on Daniel and Revelation set forth the Seventh-day Adventist consensus in prophetic interpretation in the latter half of the nineteenth century. For the correspondence between White's interpretation of Daniel and that of other pioneering Seventh-day Adventist writers, see section 4.4.4.

²³² White lauded Smith's Daniel-and-Revelation commentary several times, even recommending it in the same breath as her own titles. "The important books containing the light . . . should be given a wide circulation just now; for through them the truth will reach many minds. 'Patriarchs and Prophets,' 'Daniel and the Revelation,' and 'Great Controversy' are needed now as never before. They should be widely circulated because the truths they emphasize will open many blind eyes." Ellen G. White, "A Call for Active Work," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 16, 1905, 12.

²³³ E.g. citation from John Nevins Andrews's *History of the Sabbath* and a reference to Uriah Smith's Daniel-and-Revelation commentary in White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 437–38, 687.

²³⁴ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts*, vol. 1, *The Great Controversy, between Christ and His Angels, and Satan and His Angels* (Battle Creek, MI: James White, 1858); vol. 3, *Important Facts of Faith, in Connection with the History of Holy Men of Old* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864); vol. 4, *Important Facts of Faith: Laws of Health, and Testimonies Nos. 1–10* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864), 5–119. Volumes 2 and 4b are not part of the redemption history series.

²³⁵ Ellen G. White, *Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, *The Great Controversy between Christ and His Angels and Satan and His Angels* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1870); vol. 2, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan: Life, Teachings and Miracles of Our Lord Jesus*

the series known colloquially as the Conflict of the Ages Series²³⁶ (1888–1917).²³⁷ In these works, White made use of several of Daniel’s visions: The little horn and its 1260 year reign (chapter 7),²³⁸ the Judgment (chapter 7),²³⁹ the 2300 years and the events attending their close (chapter 8),²⁴⁰ the seventy weeks (chapter 9),²⁴¹ and the time of trouble (chapter 12:1–4).²⁴²

Analysis of White’s interpretation of Daniel 8 will now be set forth, drawing mainly from her redemption history series (the last volume of each series in particular), but her writings in general as well.

4.4.3 Exposition of Daniel 8

Introduction to the Vision (vv. 1–2)

In the introduction it is stated that Daniel was at the river Ulai (v. 2, see also v. 16). White referred once to chapter 8 by this geographical marker: “The visions [Daniel] saw by the banks of the Ulai [ch. 8] and the Hiddekel [10–12], the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass.”²⁴³ Apart from the location the remark did not have to do with the introduction to the vision (vv. 1–2) but with the chapter as a whole. Which portion of Daniel 8 she believed was “in process of fulfillment,” soon to come to its end, will be clear once her interpretation of the entire chapter has been covered.

Christ (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1877); vol. 3, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan: The Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1878); vol. 4, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of the Controversy* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1884).

²³⁶ George R. Knight, “Conflict of the Ages Series,” in Fortin and Moon, *White Encyclopedia*, 730–1.

²³⁷ Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan during the Christian Dispensation*, rev. ed. [referring to the 1884 ed.] [Great Conflict of Ages Series 5] (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1888); Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets or the Great Conflict between Good and Evil as Illustrated in the Lives of Holy Men of Old* [Great Conflict of Ages Series 2] (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1890); Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages* [Great Conflict of Ages Series 3] (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1898); Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy: The Conflict of the Ages in the Christian Dispensation*, rev. ed. [Great Conflict of Ages Series 5] (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1911); Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles in the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ* [Conflict of the Ages Series 4] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911); Ellen G. White, *The Story of Prophets and Kings as Illustrated in the Captivity and Restoration of Israel*. [Great Conflict of Ages Series 2] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1917). The last volume she wrote was published posthumously. Vol. 1 was also published under slightly varying titles: Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy between Christ and Satan, as Illustrated in the Lives of Patriarchs and Prophets* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1890); Ellen G. White, *The Story of Patriarchs and Prophets: The Conflict of the Ages Illustrated in the Lives of Holy Men of Old* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, c. 1890). Vol. 2 was also published under the title Ellen G. White, *The Captivity and Restoration: The Conflict of the Ages Illustrated in the Lives of Prophets and Kings*. [Great Conflict of Ages Series 2] Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1917.

²³⁸ Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 54–58, 279–81, 388; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 51–56, 306, 356, 439, 446–49, 571.

²³⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 307–15; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 479–91.

²⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 128–68; White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 202–72; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 317–432.

²⁴¹ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 607–17, 698–99; White, *Desire of Ages*, 232–34; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 345–51.

²⁴² White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 431–69; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 613–52.

²⁴³ Ellen G. White to John H. Kellogg, May 27, 1896, Lt. 57, 1896; Ellen G. White, Ms. 142, 1901.

The Ram, the Goat, and the Horns (vv. 3–12, 20–25)

Seventh-day Adventists followed the Millerite interpretation on the two beasts of Daniel 8 and their horns.²⁴⁴ The two-horned ram symbolized the empire of the Medes and the Persians. The goat signified Greece. The first horn represented Alexander the Great. The four horns which sprung up after it broke symbolized the four generals which carved up his territory between themselves: Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander. The little horn which came out from one of the four horns and grew tremendously great depicted Rome which came into contact with God's people (the Jews at the time) after it conquered Macedonia. The horn symbolized the entire career of Rome thereafter in its "pagan" and "papal phases": The first being Rome the Republic and later the Empire, and the second phase Rome the Catholic Church.

The details of the horn's career were interpreted following Millerism as well. After describing Rome's directions of conquest (v. 9), the text told how it conquered God's people and their land ("the pleasant land" and the host or the stars in vv. 9–10). The horn magnified itself against the Prince of host (v. 11a) when Rome crucified Christ. "The place of its sanctuary" (v. 11) was the Roman capital and the Roman Empire cast it down (v. 11c) when it transferred its capital to Constantinople in 330. The interpretation of "the daily sacrifice" (vv. 11–13) mentioned in the description of the Roman horn will be taken up in the next section.

White did not comment directly on the animals, the horns, and their meaning. The only exception is a single reference to the description that the little horn "cast down the truth to the ground" (v. 12). White used the clause when she discussed the history of the Papacy: "As foretold by prophecy, the papal power cast truth to the ground."²⁴⁵ By thus identifying the last horn as the Papacy, her interpretation of the preceding imagery in the chapter was implied.

The 2300 Days (v. 14)

Seventh-day Adventists affirmed the interpretation of the 2300 days as 2300 actual years and the final Millerite calculation of them before the Great Disappointment. Thus, the 2300 years commenced with the proclamation of Artaxerxes's decree in the seventh Jewish month in 457 BC, and ended 2300 years later on the Day of Atonement or the tenth day of the Jewish seventh month, i.e. on October 22, 1844. White explained this calculation and its development in some of her longer comments on Daniel 8.²⁴⁶ The calculation's integrity was crucial on at

²⁴⁴ For the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the beast and horns in Daniel 8, as well as the early view of "the daily" discussed in a later section, see Uriah Smith, *The Warning Voice of Time and Prophecy* (Rochester, NY: James White, 1853), 24–27; James White, *The Prophecy of Daniel: The Four Kingdoms, the Sanctuary, and the 2300 Days* (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Review & Herald Office, 1859), 33–51; Uriah Smith, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Daniel*, 1st ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1873), 148–68; Uriah Smith, *Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Daniel*, 2nd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1881), 178–88.

²⁴⁵ White, *Great Controversy* (1888), 64; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 64.

²⁴⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 324–29, 398–400, 409–10; White, *Desire of Ages*, 233–34.

least two accounts. First, it verified the Advent Movement as divinely guided, but if the date was incorrect Seventh-day Adventists believed their prophetic interpretation and experience could not be thus described. Second, it demonstrated the need to reinterpret the terminus event: Since Christ had not returned and the date was correct, the terminus event must be something else than the Second Coming. White emphasized the exact veracity of the calculation:

The preaching of a definite time for the judgment, in the giving of the first [angel's] message [of Revelation 14:6–7, by the Millerites proclaiming the Judgment to occur in 1844] was ordered by God. The computation of the prophetic periods on which that message was based, placing the close of the 2300 days in the autumn of 1844, stands without impeachment.²⁴⁷

The calculation of the 2300 years led to the explanation of their terminus event: “Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (v. 14).

The Sanctuary and Its Cleansing (v. 14)

Seventh-day Adventists differed from Millerites in how they interpreted the terminus event of the 2300 years, namely, the cleansing of the sanctuary. The majority of the Millerites believed that the sanctuary was the Church (i.e. the saints) and the earth, and that it would be cleansed (transformed to a perfect state) when Jesus would return and establish his kingdom. When the terminus passed without the Second Coming taking place, some Adventists—who eventually became the Seventh-day Adventists—began to reinterpret Daniel 8. They maintained the date was correct but that the sanctuary was not a symbol for the earth. Rather, it was literally God’s sanctuary in heaven and its cleansing was the final phase of Christ’s ministry. This final phase had begun on the set date of October 22, 1844. It would soon be over, and then Christ would indeed return to earth.

White was among those who set forth the reinterpretation.²⁴⁸ This she did in her earliest writings during the late 1840s. When she and the two other founders had gathered those Millerites who were convinced of the reinterpretation and the new group had coalesced into Sabbatarian Adventists, more authors joined in explicating prophecy in the early 1850s.²⁴⁹ White’s most mature writings on the cleansing of the sanctuary therefore have roots in radical Adventist writings from the latter half of the 1840s (by her and others), and in the writings of the pioneering Sabbatarian/Seventh-day Adventists. While she herself contributed to the interpretation, others did too, and she benefited from their insights and followed the order of their arguments to some extent.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 457.

²⁴⁸ See section 4.3.

²⁴⁹ For the early Sabbatarian Adventist writings on the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8, see Smith, *Warning Voice*, 66–68; White, *Prophecy of Daniel*, 51–112. See also “The Judgment” in section 4.5.2.

²⁵⁰ No full study has been done on White’s indebtedness to other pioneering Sabbatarian/Seventh-day Adventists. The influence is implicit in the believer’s approach of Seventh-day Adventists, i.e. that White

The Sanctuary

What was the sanctuary in Daniel 8? To answer this question, the radical and Sabbatarian Adventists studied everything about the sanctuary in the Scriptures. White wrote that the Bible presented “a full explanation of the subject of the sanctuary, its nature, location, and services; the testimony of the sacred writers being so clear and ample as to place the matter beyond all question”²⁵¹

The sanctuary was described by Paul in Hebrews 9:1–5. The sanctuary Paul here described was the tabernacle which Moses built following God’s instructions so that God might dwell among his people (Ex 25:8). White gave a summary description of the tabernacle’s structure (with its divisions and furniture) and history:

The Israelites were journeying through the wilderness, and the tabernacle was so constructed that it could be removed from place to place; yet it was a structure of great magnificence. Its walls consisted of upright boards heavily plated with gold and set in sockets of silver, while the roof was formed of a series of curtains, or coverings, the outer of skins, the innermost of fine linen beautifully wrought with figures of cherubim. Besides the outer court, which contained the altar of burnt offering, the tabernacle itself consisted of two apartments called the holy and the Most Holy Place, separated by a rich and beautiful curtain, or veil; a similar veil closed the entrance to the first apartment.

In the holy place was the candlestick, on the south, with its seven lamps giving light to the sanctuary both by day and by night; on the north stood the table of shewbread; and before the veil separating the holy from the most holy was the golden altar of incense, from which the cloud of fragrance, with the prayers of Israel, was daily ascending before God.

In the most holy place stood the ark, a chest of precious wood overlaid with gold, the depository of the two tables of stone upon which God had inscribed the law of Ten Commandments. Above the ark, and forming the cover to the sacred chest, was the mercy seat, a magnificent piece of workmanship, surmounted by two cherubim, one at each end, and all wrought of solid gold. In this apartment the divine presence was manifested in the cloud of glory between the cherubim.

After the settlement of the Hebrews in Canaan, the tabernacle was replaced by the temple of Solomon, which, though a permanent structure and upon a larger scale, observed the same proportions, and was similarly furnished. In this form the sanctuary existed—except while it lay in ruins in Daniel’s time—until its destruction by the Romans, in A.D. 70.²⁵²

White continued by stating that “this is the only sanctuary that ever existed on earth, of which the Bible gives any information.”²⁵³ In this statement (and the one above), by earthly sanctuary she referred to the Israelite sanctuary, comprising its different architectural

“confirmed” or “disapproved” of doctrinal developments, which is to say that she participated in the theological project of others and was indebted to them, as they were to her.

²⁵¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 411.

²⁵² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 411–12.

²⁵³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 412.

manifestations as the wilderness tabernacle, Solomon's Temple, and the Second Temple. However, this earthly sanctuary was not the only sanctuary for God's people presented in the Bible. In the passage where Paul described the sanctuary (Heb 9:1–5) he called it the sanctuary of the first covenant (v. 1). White therefore asked rhetorically whether the new covenant had no sanctuary then.²⁵⁴ Indeed it did, and Paul taught so in Hebrews.

To demonstrate that there was a second sanctuary, White presented three lines of Scripture. First, in Hebrews Paul stated that there was a sanctuary in heaven. Paul wrote that “the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary” (Heb 9:1). The word “also” implied that he had already mentioned another sanctuary. That other sanctuary was indeed mentioned in the previous chapter: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb 8:1–2). Thus Paul taught that each covenant had its own sanctuary. White commented on Hebrews 8:

Here is revealed the sanctuary of the new covenant. The sanctuary of the first covenant was pitched by man, built by Moses; this is pitched by the Lord, not by man. In that sanctuary the earthly priests performed their service; in this, Christ, our great High Priest, ministers at God's right hand. One sanctuary was on earth, the other is in heaven.²⁵⁵

The second line of proof for a heavenly sanctuary was that the tabernacle had been built after a heavenly pattern. God had instructed Moses to make the tabernacle and its vessels “after the pattern” which God showed him on Mount Sinai (Ex 25:9, 40). Paul taught that this pattern was the sanctuary in heaven: The tabernacle was “a figure for the time then present” (Heb 9:9), its holy places were “patterns of things in the heavens” (v. 23), the priests offering sacrifices served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly things” (Heb 8:5), and Christ, upon his Ascension, “is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb 9:24). Thus “the sanctuary in heaven, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy.”²⁵⁶ White foresaw the argument that heavenly realities could not possibly be presented by earthly structures. God had gifted the builders of the sanctuary with artistic abilities and the beauty of the tabernacle “reflected to human vision the glories of that heavenly temple”²⁵⁷ where Christ ministered. While it was inevitably but a “faint reflection of its vastness and glory”²⁵⁸ where God himself presided

²⁵⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 412–13.

²⁵⁵ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 413.

²⁵⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 414.

²⁵⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 414.

²⁵⁸ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 414.

encircled by millions of celestial angels, the earthly tabernacle still taught vital lessons about the temple above.²⁵⁹

The third demonstration of a celestial Temple was John's visions of a heavenly sanctuary in Revelation. His descriptions of it were so rich in details of similarities with the earthly sanctuary, that his visions established that the earthly sanctuary corresponded to a heavenly antitype:

The holy places of the sanctuary in heaven are represented by the two apartments in the sanctuary on earth. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne." Revelation 4:5. He saw an angel "having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Revelation 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the "seven lamps of fire" and "the golden altar," represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, "the temple of God was opened" (Revelation 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld "the ark of His testament," represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God.²⁶⁰

These three strands of Scriptures were "indisputable proof of the existence of a sanctuary in heaven. Moses made the earthly sanctuary after a pattern which was shown him. Paul teaches that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in heaven. And John testifies that he saw it in heaven."²⁶¹ This clear—though hitherto entirely overlooked—teaching about a sanctuary in heaven explained what sanctuary Daniel 8:14 referred to:

The question, What is the sanctuary? is clearly answered in the Scriptures. The term "sanctuary," as used in the Bible, refers, first, to the tabernacle built by Moses, as a pattern of heavenly things; and, secondly, to the "true tabernacle" in heaven, to which the earthly sanctuary pointed. At the death of Christ the typical service ended. The "true tabernacle" in heaven is the sanctuary of the new covenant. And as the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 is fulfilled in this dispensation, the sanctuary to which it refers must be the sanctuary of the new covenant. At the termination of the 2300 days, in 1844, there had been no sanctuary on earth for many centuries. Thus the prophecy, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," unquestionably points to the sanctuary in heaven.²⁶²

Thus Seventh-day Adventists read the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 as the sanctuary in heaven. The next question to explain was what it meant to cleanse that sanctuary (v. 14).

²⁵⁹ For the second argument for a heavenly sanctuary, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 413.

²⁶⁰ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 414–15.

²⁶¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 415.

²⁶² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 417.

The Cleansing of the Sanctuary

At the end of the 2300 days, the sanctuary was to be cleansed (Dan 8:14). In the ritual calendar of Israel, one feast was devoted to the cleansing of the sanctuary—the Day of Atonement (Lev 16; 23:26–32). But did that service have an antitype? This seemed problematic, for surely heavenly things did not need to be cleansed. According to Paul, however, they actually did:

In Hebrews 9 the cleansing of both the earthly and the heavenly sanctuary is plainly taught. “Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these [the blood of animals]; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these” (Hebrews 9:22, 23), even the precious blood of Christ.²⁶³

Thus Paul explained both the medium and purpose of the cleansing. The cleansing was to be performed via blood, both of the earthly and heavenly sanctuary, and the reason for the cleansing was that “without the shedding of blood is no remission” of sin (v. 22). “Remission, or putting away of sin, is the work to be accomplished.”²⁶⁴ This purpose raised another question: “How could there be sin connected with the sanctuary, either in heaven or upon the earth?”²⁶⁵ To explain that connection White had recourse to the type.

To understand the cleansing of the sanctuary, White believed one had to understand the sanctuary service in general. The sanctuary service comprised two phases: The daily work of the priest in the Holy Place, and “the special work of atonement in the [M]ost [H]oly” Place which the high priest conducted once a year to cleanse the sanctuary of all the sins that had been brought in. White read the daily rituals as a transfer of the sin from the sinner to the sanctuary, where they remained until the close of the year when they were removed (and the sanctuary cleansed):

Day by day the repentant sinner brought his offering to the door of the tabernacle and, placing his hand upon the victim’s head, confessed his sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the innocent sacrifice. The animal was then slain. “Without shedding of blood,” says the apostle, there is no remission of sin. “The life of the flesh is in the blood.” Leviticus 17:11. The broken law of God demanded the life of the transgressor. The blood, representing the forfeited life of the sinner, whose guilt the victim bore, was carried by the priest into the holy place and sprinkled before the veil, behind which was the ark containing the law that the sinner had transgressed. By this ceremony the sin was, through the blood, transferred in figure to the sanctuary. In some cases the blood was not taken into the holy place; but the flesh was then to be eaten by the priest, as Moses directed the sons of Aaron, saying: “God hath given it you to bear the iniquity of the congregation.” Leviticus 10:17. Both ceremonies alike symbolized the transfer of the sin from the penitent to the sanctuary.

²⁶³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 417, author’s brackets.

²⁶⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 418.

²⁶⁵ For White’s introductory questions into the topic of the sanctuary and its cleansing, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 417–18.

Such was the work that went on, day by day, throughout the year. The sins of Israel were thus transferred to the sanctuary, and a special work became necessary for their removal. God commanded that an atonement be made for each of the sacred apartments. “He shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.” An atonement was also to be made for the altar, to “cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.” Leviticus 16:16, 19.²⁶⁶

This cleansing work took place on the Day of Atonement and was described in Leviticus 16. Two young goats were brought to the entrance of the Tabernacle and lots were cast to determine which goat would be the Lord’s and which would be assigned as the scapegoat (vv. 5, 7–8). The Lord’s goat was sacrificed as a sin offering for the people (v. 9). The priest brought its blood into the sanctuary and sprinkled it on and before the mercy seat in the Most Holy Place, as well as on the altar of incense in the Holy Place (vv. 15–19). The priest then exited the sanctuary, placed his hands on the scapegoat, confessed the sins of Israel over it and thus placed the sins on the scapegoat, which was then led “into the wilderness,” never to return to the camp (vv. 20–22). During the whole solemn ceremony, the people ceased all work (since it was an annual Sabbath) and “afflicted their souls” (vv. 29–31).²⁶⁷

Before explaining the antitypical fulfillment of the ritual Day of Atonement, White underscored the lessons it taught about the nature and course of salvation:

Important truths concerning the atonement are taught by the typical service. A substitute was accepted in the sinner’s stead; but the sin was not canceled by the blood of the victim. A means was thus provided by which it was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed his guilt in transgression, and expressed his desire for pardon through faith in a Redeemer to come; but he was not yet entirely released from the condemnation of the law. On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering from the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood of this offering, and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims. Then, in his character of mediator, he took the sins upon himself and bore them from the sanctuary. Placing his hands upon the head of the scapegoat, he confessed over him all these sins, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the goat. The goat then bore them away, and they were regarded as forever separated from the people.²⁶⁸

Thus the two phases of the sanctuary service—the daily and the annual ministrations—were not synonymous symbols, but illustrated two distinct steps in God’s plan of salvation. This idea was clarified further in the antitype.

The two phases in the service of the earthly priests were also found in Christ’s priestly ministry for his people. The earthly sanctuary with its services was a type, and “what was done in type in the ministration of the earthly sanctuary is done in reality in the ministration

²⁶⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 418–19.

²⁶⁷ For White’s description of the Day of Atonement service, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 419–20.

²⁶⁸ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 420.

of the heavenly sanctuary.”²⁶⁹ When Christ ascended to heaven he entered the true sanctuary there as Priest (Heb 6:19–20; 9:12, 24). As the priests on earth had offered blood and incense with Israel’s prayers, “so Christ did plead his blood before the Father in behalf of sinners” and presented their prayers perfected by his own righteousness.²⁷⁰ This work continued for eighteen centuries in the Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. For “penitent believers,” it “secured their pardon and acceptance with the Father,” but Christ’s work for them was not thereby completed. As the true high priest he would complete his work by cleansing the sanctuary of sin, and this he began when he entered the Most Holy Place in 1844 at the end of the 2300 years, as Daniel had prophesied (Dn 8:14).²⁷¹

White explained Christ’s cleansing of the sanctuary by the two-phased ministry Adventists saw as occurring in the earthly sanctuary.²⁷² In the earthly service, by faith the sinner placed their sin on the sacrifice and via blood that sin was transferred into the sanctuary. This entrance of sin polluted the sanctuary, and the priest cleansed the sanctuary by removing all sin thence on the Day of Atonement. These two phases represented the two phases of Christ’s intercession. In the heavenly service of the new covenant, the repentant sinner placed their sin on Christ in faith and that sin was then “transferred, in fact, to the heavenly sanctuary,” from which it would be removed during the cleansing of the sanctuary. The antitypical reality of “sins in the sanctuary” was explained by interpreting the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8 as the same event as the Judgment in Daniel 7: The sins were in the sanctuary by being on record in the books (v. 10) that contain the works of all mankind. To remove the sins from the sanctuary was to blot them out of the record. White explained:

The actual cleansing of the heavenly is to be accomplished by the removal, or blotting out, of the sins which are there recorded. But before this can be accomplished, there must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works. Revelation 22:12.²⁷³

The typical Day of Atonement shadowed forth what would occur after Christ finished his work in the sanctuary. As the priest exited the sanctuary in the sight of the people, so Christ would return to his people on earth. And as the scapegoat had to carry the sins to a desert place, nevermore to be seen, so Christ would hold Satan accountable for all the evils he had led others to commit, and he would “be forever banished from the presence of God and his

²⁶⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 420.

²⁷⁰ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 421.

²⁷¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 421.

²⁷² For White’s following views on the antitypical fulfillment of the cleansing of the sanctuary, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 421–22.

²⁷³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 421–22.

people” and eventually “blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners.”²⁷⁴ Thus the Day of Atonement would conclude with the establishment of God’s kingdom.

Gabriel’s Explanation and the Close of the Vision (vv. 15–27)

Seventh-day Adventists followed the Millerite understanding of Gabriel’s but partial success in explaining the vision to the prophet in chapter 8. White commented on this point as well:

Gabriel, though commanded to make Daniel understand the vision [v. 16], gave him only a partial explanation. As the terrible persecution to befall the church was unfolded to the prophet’s vision, physical strength gave way. He could endure no more, and the angel left him for a time. Daniel “fainted, and was sick certain days.” “And I was astonished at the vision,” he says, “but none understood it [v. 27].”²⁷⁵

Gabriel’s explanation was incomplete because he explained the meaning of the beasts and their horns (vv. 20–25), but “there was one important point in the vision of chapter eight which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time,—the period of the 2300 days.”²⁷⁶ It was indeed not only the unfolding of future persecution, but its duration that filled Daniel with dread, because he apparently sensed its referent as 2300 actual years:

“Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed” (verse 14), filled him with perplexity. Earnestly he sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years’ captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare should elapse before the cleansing of God’s sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, “The vision ... shall be for many days,” he fainted away. “I Daniel fainted,” he records of his experience, “and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.” Verses 26, 27.²⁷⁷

This reading of the text set up the connection between chapters 8 and 9, which will be discussed in the section on the harmonizing of the visions of Daniel.

Excursus 2: Dispute over “the Daily” (vv. 11–13)

Around 1900, a disagreement arose in Seventh-day Adventism over the meaning and referent of the phrase “the daily” in Daniel. The disagreement became a bitter dispute which lasted several decades (until at least 1930) and involved “almost all major figures of Adventist leadership.”²⁷⁸ Since White was involved in the debate, it is included in the present work, but since her involvement mostly consisted of refusing to engage, this section is an excursus.

To understand the debate over “the daily” and its relation to White’s interpretation of Daniel 8, it is pertinent to look at its context in that chapter. In the description of the last horn,

²⁷⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 422.

²⁷⁵ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 325, brackets supplied.

²⁷⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 325.

²⁷⁷ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 554.

²⁷⁸ Kaiser, “Adventist Interpretation of the ‘Daily,’” 2.

“the daily sacrifice” is mentioned several times. The last horn removes it (v. 11), receives “an host” against it (v. 12), and when, at the end of the vision, the celestial beings discuss how long it shall last, one asks the other: “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation?” (v. 13). Seventh-day Adventists continued at first the Millerite interpretation of this phrase in the following way. First, the word was rightly seen as a substantivized adjective or a case of nominal ellipsis. The Hebrew text reads simply *הַתָּמִיד* (‘the daily, regular, continual’) and elides the qualified noun, which has to be inferred from context and added in translation. This was clear in the Bible of the time (the King James Version) which italicizes translative additions. There “sacrifice” is in italics. Second, the addition “sacrifice” was seen as erroneous. Instead, the addition should be “desolation,” since the clause was presenting the two desolating phases of Rome: The “daily desolation” being the pagan phase, and the “transgression of abomination” (v. 13)—or “abomination of desolation” in later chapters (11:31; 12:11)—being the papal phase. The removal of the daily (abomination) therefore referred to the removal of paganism. Rome removed paganism (v. 11b) in 508, when the Pope, with the help of Clovis king of the Franks, had finally brought all the barbaric kingdoms of Western Rome into the Catholic fold. Later chapters then added that this removal of paganism was succeeded by the setting up of the abomination of desolation (11:31; 12:11)—the Papacy—when the Bishop of Rome was acknowledged by the state as the supreme head over the churches in 538.

White agreed with some of the points in the Millerite interpretation, such as that the word “sacrifice” was supplied and that it was related to the time prophecies (cf. e.g. Dan 12:11), and that they had been fulfilled. When the Millerite movement fragmented after the Great Disappointment, some groups claimed “sacrifice” was a right insertion and set new end dates for the time prophecies connected to it in light of their new reading of the “the daily”: Some expected the return of the Jews to the Promised Land and the restoration of the sacrificial system to occur at the end of the time prophecies.²⁷⁹ Addressing these developments, White wrote in 1850:

Then I saw in relation to the “Daily,” that the word “sacrifice” was supplied by man’s wisdom, and does not belong to the text; and that the Lord gave the correct view of it to those who gave the judgment hour cry. When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the “Daily;” but since 1844, in the confusion, other views have been embraced, and darkness and confusion has followed.²⁸⁰

In the beginning of the twentieth century, a new interpretation of “the daily” emerged in Seventh-day Adventism. According to this new view, the word *תָּמִיד* was an adjectival noun. It was therefore mistaken to supply another noun. As an adverb or adjective, this word was used

²⁷⁹ These developments had a direct impact on the Sabbatarian Adventist interpretation of “the daily” in the late 1840s and 1850s. See Denis Kaiser, “Guilt by Association: Why Sabbatarian Adventists Rejected O. R. L. Crosier’s Interpretation of the *TĀMĪD* in Dan 8,” *Journal of Asia Adventist Seminary* 16, no. 1 (2013): 33–49.

²⁸⁰ White, “Dear Brethren,” 87.

in the Old Testament to describe the various aspects of the priestly service in the sanctuary as “continual” or always ongoing, day after day.²⁸¹ The adjectival noun referred to this ministry. In Daniel’s visions, however, “the daily” was introduced long after the typical priesthood had come to an end with Christ’s death and the destruction of the Temple. It therefore could not refer to “the daily” ministry of that sanctuary. Instead, it referred to Christ’s antitypical ministry as the true Priest in the heavenly sanctuary above. Christ’s work in heaven for mankind (“the daily”) was removed when the Catholic Church replaced it with a human priesthood, rite, and mediation. This removal did not mean Christ had ceased his work in actuality but rather in effect since his ministry was removed or made void in the teachings and worship of the Church. The casting down of the place of the sanctuary in v. 11 referred to the same development: Instead of pointing people to God’s Temple above, worshipers were taught to look to the Church as the Temple of their salvation.²⁸²

The different views on “the daily” clashed almost immediately. Those who defended the old view used White’s 1850 statement as one of the proofs that their interpretation was correct. White, however, refused to get involved. She stated that she did not know whether “the daily” referred to paganism or Christ’s ministry and that God had not shown her which view was the right interpretation. This implied she had not had the precise identity of “the daily” in mind when she commented on it in 1850. Furthermore, White deplored the hostile feelings involved in the disagreement and the unchristian spirit in which the two sides argued. She believed the issue was a minor point and urged the factions to study the issue together in Christian spirit, but to no avail.²⁸³

Despite White’s dismissive attitude to the issue as of minor importance, the interpretation of the “daily” had a direct influence on several points in the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8. The new view re-interpreted yet another point in the chapter in the light of the foundational re-interpretation of v. 14: The “daily” referred to Christ’s ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Furthermore, the new view interpreted the sanctuary consistently throughout the chapter, whereas the old view did not. On both accounts, the new view strengthened the Adventist sanctuary-reinterpretation of v. 14. Conversely, the new understanding of “the daily” changed the meaning of the question in v. 13. The old view saw the question as asking how long the vision would last, by asking how long the daily abomination and the transgressing abomination—summarizing all the kingdoms in the chapter as pagan and papal powers—would oppress God’s people. The answer could then be given: From the time that God’s people are officially a state again (457 BC), they shall be oppressed

²⁸¹ The word is used to describe the priestly service related to the breads of the presence (Ex 25:30; Lv 24:8; Nm 4:7; 2 Chr 2:4), the lampstand (Ex 27:20; Lv 24:2–4), the high priest regalia (Ex 28:29–30, 38), the sacrifice, offering, and the altar (Ex 29:38; 29:42; Lv 6:13; Nm 4:16; 28:3, 6, 10, 15, 23–24, 31; 29:6, 11, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 38; 1 Chr 16:40; 23:31; 2 Chr 24:14; Ezr 3:5; Neh 10:33; Ez 46:14, 15), and the altar of incense (Ex 30:8).

²⁸² For the new view of “the daily,” see Kaiser, “Adventist Interpretation of the ‘Daily,’” 40–49, 86–92.

²⁸³ For White’s writings on “the daily” and the debate surrounding it, see Kaiser, “Adventist Interpretation of the ‘Daily.’”

until 1844 when the judgment over their enemies begins and Christ receives his kingdom. But if “the daily” referred to Christ’s ministry in heaven only, the question would seem to mean: “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily [ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary], and the transgression of desolation [the Papacy]?” It seems problematic how the answer to that question would give a time period starting in 457 BC rather than in AD 34, when Christ ascended and became a heavenly priest. Apparently these implications were not raised in White’s time or even perceived by her and her contemporaries.²⁸⁴

The fact that such a miniscule matter in Daniel 8 received so much attention says much about what lay outside the debate—namely, everything else in the chapter. The debate over “the daily” revealed many things about Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of prophecy: The bitter dispute over apparent trivia implied an otherwise strong consensus, as well as resistance against any further development of interpretation, and disagreement over how to navigate prophetic authority in the denomination. The debate cast some light on White’s prophetic interpretation as well: She had a strong distaste for debates, especially over matters she deemed trivial, and refused to be used as a divine arbiter in matters she had no opinion on. The debate may also have demarcated the limits of her understanding of the finer points in prophetic interpretation.

4.4.4 Harmonizing Daniel 8 and the Other Danielic Visions

Millerites had seen all the visions of Daniel as ending with the Second Coming in 1844. Seventh-day Adventists reinterpreted Daniel 8 and extended it. They therefore also had to extend and reinterpret the last scenes of the other visions in tandem with chapter 8.

Adventists interpreted Daniel 2 and 7 in a traditional way, in the context of the four kingdom scheme. The four metals of the statue represented the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The feet of iron and clay represented Rome divided into the Barbarian successor states, which lasted until the present day as Western Europe.²⁸⁵ Their unsuccessful attempt to unite (“they shall mingle themselves . . . but they shall not cleave,” v. 43) referred to Europe’s attempts to unite via intermarriages and conquest. The stone smashing the statue represented Christ’s Second Coming. Here Seventh-day Adventists extended the Millerite interpretation. The Millerites had taught Christ would set up his kingdom (the stone would grow into a mountain covering the earth, vv. 35, 44) at his Second Coming at the commencement of the millennium. Seventh-day Adventists, however, believed

²⁸⁴ It is possible that some advocates of the dispute over “the daily” had some concerns, but browsing all their literature was outside the scope of the present research. Even if they did have qualms, however, they did not impact the over-all debate or its outcome. A possible (or foreseeable) Seventh-day Adventist rebuttal to this problem would be to include the earthly ministry in the Holy Place before AD 34 in “the daily,” which would then change the intent and paraphrasing of the question of Daniel 8:14.

²⁸⁵ Smith’s list of the ten kingdoms became the accepted stance for a while. He followed Niccolò Machiavelli’s list of Rome’s Western division: The Anglo-Saxons, Burgundians, Franks, Heruli, Huns, Lombards, Ostrogoths, Suevi, Vandals, and the Visigoths. Smith, *Book of Daniel* (1st ed.), 62; Smith, *Book of Daniel* (2nd ed.), 63. Jones dropped the Huns from the list and added the Alemanni in their place. Alonzo Trevier Jones, *The Great Nations of Today* (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1901), 56–57.

Christ would return, the millennium would pass, and then God's kingdom would be established upon the earth.²⁸⁶

White only identified one of the kingdoms in Daniel 2 directly, Babylon as the head of gold.²⁸⁷ Her agreement with the identification of the kingdoms in Daniel 2 and 7 is implicit in her understanding of chapter 8. She also mentioned the successive kingdoms of Daniel 2 and 7 on one occasion explicitly: "Prophecy has traced the rise and fall of the world's great empires—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome."²⁸⁸ White referred to the iron and clay as the present, and connected its symbolic meaning to disunity of nations, without specifying which ones.²⁸⁹ On another occasion, however, she imbued the two elements and their mixture with another meaning, that of "the mingling of churchcraft and statecraft." She believed this "mingling" was gradually happening in her time and that it would mature into religious legislation in the future, linking the world's governments with the churches (the Papacy and the Protestant churches).²⁹⁰ Some followed her in this interpretation,²⁹¹ though the first reading remained the norm. By bringing out the ecclesiastic and future aspects of the iron and the clay—and therefore the Papacy—, White tied Daniel 2 closer to later chapters in which the Papacy always succeeded Rome.

According to Seventh-day Adventists, the four kingdoms in Daniel 7 represented the same kingdoms as the four metals in Daniel 2. Furthermore, the ten horns on the fourth beast were the same kingdoms as the ten toes in the statue. The eleventh horn was the Papacy, the three horns torn up before it were the three Arian kingdoms—Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Vandals—which opposed Catholicism and were destroyed. The "time, times, and the dividing of time" (v. 25) were the 1260 years during which the Papacy reigned supreme over God's people, from 538 until 1798. Seventh-day Adventists read one phrase in v. 25 in the light of their Sabbath-keeping: The little horn "thought," that is, attempted, to "change [God's] times and laws" (v. 25). This phrase was seen as referring to God's Law—the Decalogue—and singling out the Commandment that has to do with time, namely the fourth one.²⁹² According to Adventist historiography, the Papacy had willfully changed this commandment by putting its

²⁸⁶ For the Seventh-day Adventist teaching on the millennium, see "The Second Session of Judgment" in section 4.5.2.

²⁸⁷ White, "A Symbol" White, "King of Babylon," 5; White, *Education*, 175.

²⁸⁸ White, *Education*, 177.

²⁸⁹ "We need not, and cannot, expect union among the nations of the earth. Our position in the image of Nebuchadnezzar is represented by the toes, in a divided state, and of a crumbling material, that will not hold together." Ellen G. White, "The Rebellion" (1863), in White, *Testimonies*, 1:360–61.

²⁹⁰ Ellen G. White, Ms. 63, 1899, April 22, 1899, pars. 30–31. This was not entirely new. Before his Daniel commentary, Smith had suggested that the iron was the continuation of Rome in the form of the Papacy, and the clay was the Western kingdoms. This was either close to or the equivalent of identifying the iron and clay as church and state. Smith, *Warning Voice*, 27–28.

²⁹¹ See for instance, Stephen Nelson Haskell, *The Story of Daniel the Prophet* (New York: Bible Training School, 1904), 35–36.

²⁹² Among Jews and Christians, there are several slightly various enumerations of the Ten Commandments. In the enumeration which Sabbatarian and later Seventh-day Adventists have followed, the Sabbath commandment is the fourth one.

seal of authority to the transfer of the sanctity of the seventh day to the first day of the week.²⁹³

As with Daniel 2, White did not discuss the first four kingdoms of Daniel 7, though she did indirectly identify them as has been noted.²⁹⁴ She did, however, comment on the identity of the last horn as the Papacy, and the nature and dating of the 1260 years.²⁹⁵ She also frequently referred to the papal changing of the fourth commandment.²⁹⁶

When it came to the later scenes of the vision, Seventh-day Adventists reinterpreted them and extended their fulfillment. The Millerites had taught that all these scenes would be fulfilled in 1844 when Christ would return (the coming Son of Man in the clouds, vv. 13–14), judge (vv. 9–10), and reign (v. 14). Their interpretation had been traditional besides the date of the eschaton. Seventh-day Adventists kept the date but parted ways with tradition. This they did to extend chapter 7 in tandem with the reinterpretation of Daniel 8. First, they rejected the idea that vv. 13–14 depicted Christ's return. Second, they taught that the Judgment was not a singular event at Christ's return, but a process which had begun in 1844. The Judgment was divided into three phases, all of which were brought to view in Daniel 7. Third, the Judgment corresponded to the antitypical cleansing of the sanctuary, or Day of Atonement, brought to view in Daniel 8:14. Thus the Judgment and the Day of Atonement were synonymous and spanned the same time period: The Day of Atonement began in 1844 when Christ entered the Most Holy Place in the sanctuary in heaven to cleanse it, and it would end after the millennium when the kingdom of God would be established on earth (the camp of Israel cleansed of sin). Similarly, the Judgment began when the books were opened in 1844 when Christ entered the Most Holy Place and it would conclude when Christ would return to earth and establish his eternal kingdom.²⁹⁷ Since White commented more fully on the Judgment in Daniel 7 than the first part, there is no need to first explain what the denomination believed before moving to her comments.

²⁹³ For the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the beasts in Daniel 7, see Smith, *Book of Daniel* (1st ed.), 120–30.

²⁹⁴ White, *Education*, 177. She also wrote: “The great kingdoms that have ruled the world were presented to the prophet Daniel as beasts of prey, rising when ‘the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.’ Daniel 7:2.” White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 439–40.

²⁹⁵ For White's treatment of the papal horn and its reign, see White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 57–58; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 54–56, 306, 356, 439, 571.

²⁹⁶ White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 16, 53 = Ellen G. White, *Early Writings of Mrs. White: Experience and Views, and Spiritual Gifts, Volume One*, [3rd ed.] (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1906), 33, 65; White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 279; Ellen G. White, “The Sabbath Reformation under Nehemiah,” *Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1884, 34; Ellen G. White, “An Address in Regard to the Sunday Movement,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 24, 1889, 2–3; Ellen G. White, “Build the Old Waste Places,” *Signs of the Times*, June 12, 1893, 488; Ellen G. White, “A Perpetual Memorial (Concluded),” *Signs of the Times*, November 19, 1894, 851; White, *Desire of Ages*, 763; Ellen G. White, “Words of Warning—No. 2,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, December 20, 1898, 810; Ellen G. White, “For a Perpetual Covenant,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 17, 1900, 241; Ellen G. White to “brother,” July 10, 1900, lt. 98, 1900, par. 11; Ellen G. White, Ms. 135, 1902, October 31, 1902, par. 16; White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 54–57; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 51–54, 446–49; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 76; Ellen G. White, “The Religious Liberty Work” (1909), in White, *Testimonies*, 9:230.

²⁹⁷ For the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the Judgment in Daniel 7, see Smith, *Book of Daniel* (1st ed.), 130–32.

White explained the Judgment in Daniel 7 in the following way. Since his ascension, Christ had been ministering in the Holy Place of the sanctuary before God the Father. In 1844, the Judgment began. The Father (the Ancient of Days) moved on his throne (its mobility demonstrated by its wheels, v. 9) into the Most Holy Place. The Son of Man followed after and thus came to the Ancient of Days and not the earth in 1844 (v. 13).²⁹⁸ With the Father and the Son relocated to the Most Holy Place, “the judgment did sit, and the books were opened” (v. 10). Thus commenced the first phase of the Judgment, “the investigative judgment”—the judgment of professed believers (just like only Israel was part of the Day of Atonement). During this phase, the record of their lives (books) were investigated to see whether they genuinely believed or had abandoned their faith. If their faith was genuine, their sins were blotted out from the record; if not, their names were blotted from the book of life.²⁹⁹ When all the professed believers had been investigated, all who constituted Christ’s eternal kingdom had been accounted for and thus Christ had received his kingdom legally and officially (v. 14). When Christ would return his brightness would destroy the wicked, he would resurrect the righteous dead and take all the saints to heaven. There “judgment” would be “given to the saints” (v. 22), not in the sense of them being judged, but them judging. This would be the second phase of the Judgment: The judgment of the wicked. The righteous would review the record of the wicked and determine the extent of their punishment. This phase would take one thousand years (the millennium).³⁰⁰ At the end of the millennium, Christ with the saints and the angels would go to earth. The wicked would be resurrected, the books would be opened again, and they would be pronounced guilty. This would commence the third phase of the Judgment, the executive judgment.³⁰¹ The Antichrist and all the wicked, along with Satan,

²⁹⁸ White, *Early Writings*, 55; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 479.

²⁹⁹ For the investigative judgment in Daniel 7, see White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 159; Ellen G. White, “Christ’s Closing Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary,” *Southern Watchman*, January 24, 1905, 49–50; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 480–85.

³⁰⁰ For the judgment of the wicked in Daniel 7, see Ellen G. White, “The Restoration of Eden,” *Southern Watchman*, March 14, 1905, 169–70; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 661. See also “The Second Session of Judgment” in section 4.5.2.

³⁰¹ According to Seventh-day Adventists, the executive judgment is found in Daniel 7 in vv. 11 and 26. White never quotes these verses. When she discussed the executive judgment, she utilized other texts that Seventh-day Adventists saw as describing that event, such as Revelation 20:11–15. See “The Third Session of Judgment” in section 4.5.2. She did, however, often apply Dan 7:10 to the executive judgment, probably because the beginning of the investigative and executive judgment would be similar: Books would be opened in the presence of God (compare Dn 7:9–10 with Rv 20:11–12). See Ellen G. White, “The Judgment” (1881), in White, *Testimonies*, 4:384; Ellen G. White, “Our Publishing Houses” (1881) in White, *Testimonies*, 4:453; Ellen G. White, “Wills and Legacies” (1881), in White, *Testimonies*, 4:481; Ellen G. White, “A Letter” (1889), in White, *Testimonies*, 5:626; White, “Biographical Sketch,” 1:100; White, *Great Controversy* (1888), 488; Ellen G. White, “The Christian’s Work,” *Signs of the Times*, July 13, 1888, 418; Ellen G. White, “Care of the Mites,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 11, 1891, 497; Ellen G. White, “The Remnant Church Not Babylon (Continued),” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, August 29, 1893, ?; Ellen G. White, “The Perfect Law,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 5, 1898, 214; Ellen G. White, “The Great Standard of Righteousness,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, May 7, 1901, 289; Ellen G. White, “A Message to Our Churches,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 28, 1909, 8.

would be destroyed by fire from heaven (vv. 11, 26), and God's kingdom would be established on the earth (vv. 14, 18, 22, 27).³⁰²

Millerites had seen the visions of chapter 9 and chapters 10–12 as further explanations of chapter 8. Seventh-day Adventists added to this line of thought by making chapter 8 an explanation of chapter 7. They also fleshed out further the idea that the historical background brought to light why it had been necessary to give successive visions with increasingly more explanations to the prophet. White wrote that as a captive, Daniel often meditated on the promises of return from the exile (Isa 44:28; 45:1–3, 13; Jer 25:12; 29:14; 29:10–13) and prayed for their fulfillment.³⁰³ (Thus, the reason for Daniel's prayer in chapter 9 with its vision-answer is assumed to represent the background of all his visions.) In answer to his prayers, "a series of visions was given him concerning the rise and fall of kingdoms."³⁰⁴ The first vision along with its interpretation was given in chapter 7. Its conclusion, however, showed that "not all was made clear to the prophet":³⁰⁵ "My cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart" (v. 28). This meant further explanation was necessary, and it was given in chapter 8.³⁰⁶

Seventh-day Adventists read Daniel 8 as parallel to the other visions. For the first part of Daniel 8, this was familiar tradition: Daniel 8 covered the same kingdoms as the other chapters and reached to the end. But that end had been extended, and to keep the harmonization, the final parts of the other visions were also extended. Here Daniel 8 took precedence. The final event of that chapter—the cleansing of the sanctuary—was in fact a shorthand for the antitypical Day of Atonement, a process and sequence of events that organized all of Seventh-day Adventist eschatology. It was the Judgment of Daniel 7, at the end of which Michael would stand up (Dn 12) and earthly powers would be vanquished (statue broken, Dn 2) and God's kingdom would be set up (mountain in Dn 2, eternal kingdom in Daniel 7, glorified state in Dn 12:1–3). This precedence of Daniel 8 is implicit in White's redemption history writings, where it became the organizing principle for eschatology (the end of Daniel's other visions included), as will be seen in the theological section.

Seventh-day Adventists followed the final version of the Millerite calculation of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9. The seventy weeks or the actual 490 years extended from

³⁰² For the establishment of God's kingdom in Daniel 7, see White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 25, 198, 219; Ellen G. White, *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing* (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1896), 108; Ellen G. White, Ms. 57, 1907, May 20, 1907, par. 14; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 347, 613; White, *Prophets and Kings*, 169; Ellen G. White, "A Time of Preparation" (1909), in White, *Testimonies*, 9:219.

³⁰³ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 551–53. That Daniel did indeed study such prophecies and pray over them is explicit in chapter 9. White extrapolated from that passage (as well as the established Millerite teaching of the incremental and linked explanation in chapters 8–12) that the circumstances and purpose of the other visions was the same.

³⁰⁴ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 553.

³⁰⁵ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 553.

³⁰⁶ "Through another vision [Dn 8] further light was thrown upon the events of the future." White, *Prophets and Kings*, 554.

Artaxerxes's decree going into effect in 457 BC to 34, when Stephen was stoned and the Gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles. Seventh-day Adventists also agreed with Millerites that the vision of Daniel 9 was given to explain the 2300 years in Daniel 8: The 490 years were the first part of the 2300 years and thus gave their commencement date.³⁰⁷

White wrote on all the basic points in the calculation and the fulfillment of this prophetic period of Daniel 9.³⁰⁸ She also wrote on the connection between chapters 8 and 9 in the following way. When Daniel saw the future persecution of God's people in the vision of chapter 8, Gabriel saw that the prophet would not be able to endure more at this time so he wrapped up his explanation by saying the 2300 days for which the vision would last would "be for many days" (v. 26). This increased Daniel's trouble. He could not reconcile this ominous period about the afflictions of his people with Jeremiah's prediction that the captivity would last seventy years. The whole experience caused him to faint (Dn 8:26–27).³⁰⁹ Yet the matter was not at an end. Gabriel had been told to make Daniel understand the vision (v. 16) and this he had not finished to do. Daniel, on the other hand, turned to the prophecy he did understand, Jeremiah's seventy years of Babylonian captivity (Dn 9:1–2), and prayed that the return from exile might be fulfilled as promised (vv. 3–19).³¹⁰ Gabriel was sent to answer Daniel's prayer (v. 21) and picked up from where he had left off his explanation in chapter 8—namely, the time element or the 2300 days. This he did by stating when that period would begin (with the decree to fully restore Jerusalem) and by detailing the events that would occur during the first seventy weeks (or 490 years) of the period. Finishing the explanation of the vision in chapter 8 thus also addressed Daniel's concern for the return and prosperity of his people—the decree starting the 2300 days saw God's people restored in their own country.³¹¹ This was essentially the Millerite connection between the two chapters, but with more psychological depth.

In the main, Seventh-day Adventists followed the latest Millerite interpretation of chapters 10–12, the one presented by Josiah Litch in his latest commentary.³¹² The vision was yet a further explanation of the previous visions and covered the same kingdoms as them: Medo-Persia (v. 2), Greece and its successor states (vv. 3–16), Rome (vv. 14–31), the Papacy (vv. 31–35), and atheist France (vv. 36–39).³¹³ At this juncture, Seventh-day Adventists extended

³⁰⁷ This final version varied but slightly from that of Miller's. For the Seventh-day Adventist exposition of the seventy weeks, see Haskell, *Story of Daniel the Prophet*, 118–31.

³⁰⁸ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 313, 326–28, 345, 378; White, *Desire of Ages*, 232–34; White, *Prophets and Kings*, 698–99; Ellen G. White to "our ministering brethren," December 5, 1899, par. 12; Ellen G. White, Ms. 8, 1874, par. 5; Ellen G. White, "Justification by Faith (Concluded)," *Signs of the Times*, March 20, 1893, 310.

³⁰⁹ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 554; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 325.

³¹⁰ White, *Prophets and Kings*, 554–56.

³¹¹ For the connection between Gabriel's mission in chapters 8 and 9, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 325–26; White, *Prophets and Kings*, 556.

³¹² 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), 2:3–131.

³¹³ According to Millerites and Seventh-day Adventists, France had been mentioned (or implied) in the visions previous to chapter 11 in several ways: The Franks were one of the ten kingdoms arising out of Western

the vision and added a new power to the stage: The final verses focused on Turkey (the king of the north) from 1798 to the time when Turkey would lose its European territory and fleeing eastward would move its capital (“the tabernacles of its palace”, v. 45) to Jerusalem (“the glorious holy mountain,” v. 45), where the Turk would be vanquished (come to his end, v. 45).³¹⁴ “At that time” (12:1) Christ would cease his ministry in the sanctuary above (Michael standing up, v. 1), the time of trouble would occur on earth (v. 1), and Christ would return and resurrect his people (vv. 1–2) and the saints would be glorified (v. 3) preparatory to enter God’s kingdom. Thus the interpretation aligned chapter 11 with the sanctuary interpretation of chapter 8: Chapter 11 showed what event would occur on earth just before Christ would finish his sanctuary ministry in heaven.

Seventh-day Adventists followed Millerites in their explanation of the last section of chapter 12 as well. After Gabriel’s detailed exposition, Christ (“the man clothed in linen,” 12:6) gave some further explanation. His explanation served to harmonize chapters 7 and 8 and to justify the reinterpretation of chapter 8. First, the two new time periods that were given connected the 1260 years of Daniel 7 and the 2300 years of Daniel 8 together: 1290 years (v. 11) dating from 508 to 1798, and 1335 years (v. 12) starting at the same time and extending to 1843/4. Second, Gabriel’s command to Daniel to seal up his book until the time of the end (v. 4) was read as a prediction about the Adventist reinterpretation of Daniel 8. The reasoning for this was the following. After Gabriel’s speech, Christ stated that after the 1260 years (“time, times, and an half,” v. 7) the final events would occur (then “all these things shall be finished,” v. 7). When Daniel asked for further explanation, the admonition of v. 4 was repeated: “The words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end” (vv. 8–9). This phraseology harkened back to chapter 8, where Gabriel told Daniel concerning the 2300 days: “The vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days” (Dan 8:26). This part of Daniel’s visions—the 2300 years—would remain “shut up,” “closed up and sealed” until “the time of the end.” At that time the visions would be unsealed. The “time of the end” referred to the end of the 1260

Rome (the ten toes of the statue in Daniel 2 and the ten horns of the fourth beast in Daniel 7); the taking away of the daily (paganism) occurred in 508 when the Franks had succeeded in subjugating the pagan nations of the west to the Papacy; and the 1260 years ended in 1798 when France abolished the Papacy.

³¹⁴ The Turkish interpretation of Daniel 11:40–45 was set forth by Uriah Smith in the article series that was the precursor to his commentary on Daniel. James White argued against this interpretation and asserted that Daniel 11 ended with the Papacy as the previous visions had done. Ellen White refused to take sides and urged them as two leaders in the denomination not to debate this in public which would confuse the members. Smith and James White apparently never studied the matter together. James acquiesced to Ellen’s counsel and did not promote his view. Shortly after he died and with him his view on vv. 40–45 disappeared until the dawn of the twentieth century. See Jón H. Stefánsson, “Approaching Armageddon: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire in Adventist Eschatology, 1833–1922,” in *The Impact of World War I on Seventh-day Adventism: Prophetic Discontinuation and Conscientious Objection*, ed. Rolf J. Pöhler, Adventistica, New Series 4 (Friedensau: Institute of Adventist Studies, 2021), ch. 2. Before that article was published, the most recent works on the history of the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Daniel 11 were Kaiser’s term paper and Donald Ernest Mansell’s sometimes incorrect book on Armageddon. See Denis Kaiser, “Daniel 11:40–45 in Adventist Perspective: A Historical Survey and Evaluation” (term paper, Andrews University, 2008); Donald Ernest Mansell, *Adventists and Armageddon: Have We Misinterpreted Prophecy?* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 1999).

years (12:7). That period ended in 1798. Since then, there had been an explosion in studies on Daniel, with research on chapter 8 front and center. The prediction “many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased” referred to the same: Many were traveling around proclaiming the truths of Daniel’s visions, and knowledge concerning that book had been increasing. The text was also applied to the increase of knowledge and travel in society in general.³¹⁵

White, however, had next to nothing to say about Daniel’s last vision (chapters 10–12). She agreed that it was a further explanation on the previous visions. She stated that Daniel had been fasting and praying (Dan 10:1–4) for further light on what he had already seen.³¹⁶ Apart from this, White said little about the meaning or fulfillment of the vision. She stated that the prophecy was nearly fulfilled and soon the “time of trouble” (12:1) would begin, which meant that only the last verse(s) previous to that verse remained unfulfilled.³¹⁷ In another comment she aligned the visions in chapters 8 and 10–12 by stating that both were being fulfilled and would soon be completely fulfilled.³¹⁸ White spoke much about the time of trouble, but this will be covered in the theological section.³¹⁹ She hardly said anything about the 1290 and the 1335 days,³²⁰ but from other statements it is clear she believed those periods were past³²¹ (implying agreement with the denominational dating). She commented more fully on the understanding of the 2300 years and the end-time events in Daniel being sealed until they were unsealed by the Millerite and Seventh-day Adventist interpretation.³²² That is the extent of White’s usage of Daniel 10–12.

³¹⁵ For the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation on Daniel 12:4–13, see Smith, *Book of Daniel* (1st ed.), 344–60; Haskell, *Story of Daniel the Prophet*, 250–62.

³¹⁶ “Upon the occasion just described [Daniel 9], the angel Gabriel imparted to Daniel all the instruction which he was then able to receive. A few years afterwards, however, the prophet desired to learn more of subjects not yet fully explained, and again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God.” Ellen G. White, *The Sanctified Life* (Washington, DC: Review & Herald, 1956), 49.

³¹⁷ The context of her comments on Daniel 11 shows that she may have been at variance with the dominant view. For instance, Seventh-day Adventists applied vv. 31–35 to the Papacy and vv. 36–39 to France, whereas White said that the power described in vv. 31–36 would commit similar acts (most likely speaking about the Papacy). Ellen G. White to Hiram A. Crow, February 24, 1904, lt. 103, 1904, pars. 17–21; Ellen G. White, “The Last Crisis” (1909) in White, *Testimonies*, 9:14.

³¹⁸ “The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai [Dn 8:2, 16] and the Hiddekel [Dn 10:4], the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass.” Ellen G. White to John H. Kellogg, May 27, 1896, par. 7 = White, Ms. 142, 1901, par. 6.

³¹⁹ See “The First Session of Judgment” in section 4.5.2.

³²⁰ Ellen G. White to “the church in [Leonard W.] Hastings’s house,” November 27, 1850, lt. 28, 1850, par. 11; Ellen G. White, Ms. 6, 1876, par. 5.

³²¹ White noted that after the Millerite Movement and the ending of the 2300 years, believers would “not have another message upon definite time.” After that movement, there could “be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844.” Ellen G. White, Ms 59, 1900, August 16, 1900, par. 24.

³²² Ellen G. White, Ms. 50, 1893, September, 1893, pars. 40–41; Ellen G. White, “The Great Need of the Holy Spirit,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 16, 1895, 450; Ellen G. White, Ms. 32, 1896, December 6, 1896, par. 3; White, *Desire of Ages*, 234–35; White, Ms 59, 1900, pars. 22–23; White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 585; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 355–56.

4.4.5 Conclusion

White's interpretation of Daniel 8 followed that of Miller until the terminus event of the 2300 years. She therefore commented on little else besides the time period and the cleansing of the sanctuary. It can safely be assumed that she agreed with her fellow Sabbatarian Adventist expositors on the former part of the prophecy: The ram was Medo-Persia, the goat Greece, its four horns the kingdoms of Alexander's successors, and the last horn, Rome, both pagan and papal. White followed Miller's last date before the disappointment, i.e. October 22, 1844, as the terminus of the 2300 years. This date saw the commencement of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven, with Christ entering its Most Holy Place, just as the high priests of Israel had done in type on the Day of Atonement. The date was therefore not the end, but the beginning of the end: The Day of Atonement was typical of the entirety of eschatology from Christ's entering the Most Holy Place until the time he would commence his reign over a cleansed people on the new earth after the millennium.

The textual conventions White used were as follows. First, White used typology to reinterpret the terminus event of the 2300 years. The antitype to the Day of Atonement, occurring on its antitypical date on October 22, 1844, was not the Second Coming, but the commencement of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven. Second, White harmonized the chapters further to allow for this reinterpretation: The Judgment scene in Daniel 7 was not the last Judgment at Christ's return, but this first phase of the Judgment which commenced in 1844. Third, White lent a prophetic authority to this interpretation by stating she had seen these celestial events taking place in visions, which was no ordinary commentary on the text. Fourth, the effect of this reinterpretation was again to extend the historical scope of the vision: It now did not end in 1844, but rather continued to the conclusion of Christ's cleansing work in the sanctuary at some future point in time.

4.5 Theological Dynamics

4.5.1 Introduction

The theological and prophetic horizons during the time in which White arrived at her reinterpretation of Daniel 8 were, for the most part, the Advent Movement and its aftermath, which has been covered in the historical section of this chapter. It is therefore not needed to summarize long periods which intervened between White and the preceding interpreter in this dissertation, as was the case between the other chapters. It must, however, be mentioned, that while White had arrived at the basic premise of her most important contribution to the historicizing of Daniel—the great controversy motif—in 1858, she continued to mature and develop this idea throughout her life. To gain an even fuller understanding of how historical and theological contexts influenced that process, studies on the latter half of White's life during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (1858–1915) would be helpful. This study limits itself to 1858 because the basic premise was already laid out in that year.

White changed the theological focus of Daniel 8 from the Second Coming to the Judgment. The terminus event commenced on October 22, 1844, but was not the Second Coming but the Judgment. This Judgment was foreshadowed by the ritual Day of Atonement. As the high priest entered the Most Holy Place of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, to cleanse the sanctuary of all the sins of God's people, so Christ entered the Most Holy Place of the celestial sanctuary on the Day of Atonement (which in 1844 fell on October 22), to cleanse the sanctuary of all the sins of his people. The cleansing was that of the judicial records of the lives of all people. These records were reviewed during the Judgment. If the individual was deemed to have truly believed, their sins were blotted (cleansed) from the records; if their faith was found to have been abandoned, or to have been hypocritical, their sins remained on record, they were therefore guilty in the Judgment, and their names accordingly blotted out of the Book of Life. Once this cleansing would be finished, Christ would return to earth, only to return with his saved people to heaven for the second phase of the Judgment, that of the wicked. He would then return to earth with his people at the close of the millennium in heaven and judge the wicked and execute them (the third phase).

White, despite being a prolific author, did not write much directly on the prophecies, and yet Daniel 8 was at the center of her theology. To her the ongoing, immanent Judgment, cast a new light on the history of redemption. While the law of God (the Ten Commandments) was brought to view during the Judgment—being the standard of Judgment—it had always been at the heart of the controversy between good and evil. With this in mind, White wrote a redemption history which integrated the threefold Judgment—the reinterpretation of Daniel 8—into redemption history as the conclusion of Christ's and Satan's long battle over the law of God. In other words, she used the motif of this "great controversy" as the organizing principle for redemption history. White also believed that the Judgment would be a catalyst for revival and reformation—probably because of its solemn bearing on salvation—and therefore read the Adventists (and later Sabbatarian Adventists) as the last chapter in the long history of reforming the Church. Of her literary output, her series on redemption history are her most important works. Since they hinge on a motif she extracted from Daniel 8, the chapter is therefore a central weight-bearing wall in the sanctuary of her theology.

This chapter section will analyze the dynamics between White's interpretation of Daniel 8 and her theology. This will be done by looking at how her views of Daniel 8 and redemption history interacted, what alternative interpretations of Daniel 8 she ruled out and why, and how her interpretation impacted Christian theology in action.

4.5.2 Daniel 8 in Redemption History

The Origin and Nature of the Great Controversy

White began her redemption history with the doctrine of God's love and the doctrinal aspects most closely related to it—the issues debated in the great controversy—:

“God is love.” 1 John 4:16. His nature, His law, is love. It ever has been; it ever will be. “The high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity,” whose “ways are everlasting,” changeth not. With Him “is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Isaiah 57:15; Habakkuk 3:6; James 1:17.

Every manifestation of creative power is an expression of infinite love. The sovereignty of God involves fullness of blessing to all created beings. . . . The history of the great conflict between good and evil, from the time it first began in heaven to the final overthrow of rebellion and the total eradication of sin, is also a demonstration of God’s unchanging love.³²³

Thus White interconnected God’s character, his Law, and his government. God is love, and his reign and statutes reflect his character, and are therefore as unchangeable as himself. This interconnectedness had implications for obedience: “The law of love being the foundation of the government of God, the happiness of all intelligent beings depends upon their perfect accord with its great principles of righteousness.”³²⁴ White was of Wesley-Arminian soteriological persuasion, and she believed that love and obedience required freedom to exist and be genuine: “God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character. He takes no pleasure in a forced obedience; and to all He grants freedom of will, that they may render Him voluntary service.”³²⁵ Having the capacity to love—the freedom to do so—implied that intelligent beings had the capacity to choose not to love, and to disobey. This is how the story of Lucifer’s fall began.

White augmented the traditional account of pre-Creation events. Traditionally, the entrance hall of the biblical story was seen as having but few and ancient wall reliefs. There was the series of pictures on Lucifer, the highest angel in the courts of heaven: How he had become proud, rebelled against God and had been exiled from heaven with his angelic followers. This traditional account was built from an antitypical reading of Isaiah 14:1–23 and Ezekiel 28:1–19 and from other more straightforward texts such as Luke 10:18 and Revelation 12:1–9. Besides this “war in heaven,” traditional Christianity was nearly silent on pre-creation events, since the only other history prior to it consisted of creation of the angels and their perfect existence, and before that the eternal glory of God. White augmented the narrative in two significant ways. First, she added cosmic pluralism, i.e. she believed that a long time before he created mankind on earth, God had created innumerable worlds (or planets)³²⁶ inhabited by intelligent beings.³²⁷ These additional characters brought in a new cosmic and dramatic dimension to the redemption history. Second, as a visionary, White allowed herself to add details and motives when retelling the scriptural narrative, to bring to light what she believed

³²³ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 33.

³²⁴ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.

³²⁵ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 34.

³²⁶ White’s first printed mention of other worlds dates to 1849 and shows that by “worlds” she most likely meant planets: “Then I was taken to a world which had seven moons.” White, “Dear Brethren and Sisters,” *Present Truth*, August 1849, 24.

³²⁷ On White and cosmic pluralism, see Michael J. Crowe, *The Extraterrestrial Life Debate, 1750–1900* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1999), 239–41, 246.

was its often overlooked importance or intentions—or to mend or bend the story, depending on one’s views of her claims to prophecy.

White’s description of Lucifer’s fall can be summarized as follows. Lucifer was the highest being God created, the leader of the angelic hosts, full of wisdom and beauty. There was no evil in him. Yet “little by little Lucifer came to indulge the desire for self-exaltation.”³²⁸ While White explained the potentiality of evil inherent in the freedom of creatures, she affirmed its rise was neither God’s plan nor fault, and to explain its existence would be to excuse evil, since it has no reason. The “only definition of sin” was that of the Bible: “The transgression of the law” (1 Jn 3:4)—“the outworking of a principle at war with the great law of love which is the foundation of the divine government.”³²⁹ Lucifer’s pride led him to question God’s character, his mode of government, and the necessity of his laws. He claimed his reign and laws would be better and coveted a higher position than the Son of God as rightfully his. Claiming to be advocating for the rights of the angels, he convinced nearly half the heavenly host of his cause. After this success, he next hoped to sway the rest of the universe to join him.³³⁰

God “bore long with Lucifer.”³³¹ Divine wisdom and love convinced Lucifer he was in the wrong, but instead of admitting his error and seeking forgiveness, he insisted on his path until he made his final choice to oppose God and thus became Satan or the adversary of the Most High. “The spirit of disaffection ripened into active revolt”³³² and as war broke out, Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven. Yet God did not destroy Satan even then. Evil was new and unknown and Satan’s words and acts “were clothed with mystery”³³³ and deception. It was difficult for the angels and the inhabitants to fully realize what evil was and whereto it tended. Had God destroyed Satan in heaven, they would not have understood God’s justice in doing so. And “since the service of love can alone be acceptable to God, the allegiance of His creatures must rest upon a conviction of his justice and benevolence.”³³⁴ Satan was therefore given time to “more fully develop his principles, that his charges against the divine government might be seen in their true light by all created beings, that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of His law might forever be placed beyond all question.”³³⁵

According to White, the Creation and the Fall of mankind were intimately associated with these celestial events. It was shortly after Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven that the

³²⁸ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 35.

³²⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 493.

³³⁰ Satan’s accusations in heaven are found strewn through the first chapter of the final version of White’s redemption history. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 35–43.

For White, cosmic pluralism played a role from the start in the great controversy. “Lucifer had concluded that if he could carry the angels of heaven with him in rebellion, he could carry also all the worlds.” White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 41. White believed Satan entertained this hope until the death of Christ, by which Satan realized he had lost. White, *Desire of Ages*, 37; White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 61.

³³¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 495; White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 39.

³³² White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 41; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 497.

³³³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 497.

³³⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 498.

³³⁵ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 499.

earth was created. Humans were new species of intelligent beings³³⁶ and God intended to fill the vacancy left in heaven with mankind. But first, they were to choose between Satan and God—and thus, to be tried. Once humans showed that they, unlike the fallen angels, would be true to their purpose, they were to be admitted to the courts above.³³⁷ The two trees in Paradise were similar to the two trees found in all the other worlds.³³⁸ But while Satan could roam the universe and tempt all the worlds,³³⁹ he singled in on the world of the people who were to replace him. He managed to cause them to transgress the law of God just as he himself had done. The deceitful arguments he used to tempt Eve he continued to develop through the course of history: God did not have the good of his creatures at heart; there was a higher experience possible than following God’s law; and transgressing the law—or sinning—did not lead to death (Gn 3:1–5).³⁴⁰ Thus Satan’s charges against God continued here on earth and through human history.³⁴¹ Thus White equated the issues in the fall of Satan with the issues in the fall of mankind—the controversy or question about God’s law.

After the Fall, God announced his offer of salvation to Adam and Eve (Gn 3:15). Mankind was in a different position than Satan. Unlike Satan, humans did not know the depths of God’s love. A fuller manifestation of God’s love could convince them to return to him.³⁴² This manifestation would be expressed most fully through God’s gift of his Son to mankind. Since God’s law was unchangeable, and the judgment for its transgression inevitable, God would offer his Son to die in their place.³⁴³ When Christ died for sinners, his death was a revelation of God’s love to the universe. That he would give his Son to become forever united with the race that rebelled against him showed the infinite love of God to his creatures. And that God did not change the law that had been transgressed—in order to annul the transgression and punishment—and that no way of escape for sinners was sound but the substitutionary death of their Creator, showed that the law was as unchangeable as God himself. Christ’s death also unmasked Satan’s true character to the unfallen universe. The other worlds could see that Satan had been “a murderer from the beginning” (Jn 8:43)—though they had not perceived it when he first rebelled. God stood vindicated of his charges which were proven to be false. Yet Satan was still not annihilated. The issues at stake in the great controversy between good and evil had not fully unfolded, and thus God allowed Satan to continue his warfare still. It also remained for mankind to choose whom they would serve.

³³⁶ Ellen G. White, “Purpose of Man’s Creation,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, February 11, 1902, 81.

³³⁷ “God created man for His own glory, that after test and trial the human family might become one with the heavenly family. . . . It was God’s purpose to repopulate heaven with the human family, if they would show themselves obedient to His every word.” Ellen G. White to “Brethren,” June 24, 1900, *lt.* 91, 1900, par. 3.

³³⁸ White, “Dear Brethren and Sisters,” *Present Truth*, August 1849, 23–24.

³³⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 212; White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 475; White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 332; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 659.

³⁴⁰ On the Fall, see White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 52–62 (= ch. 3).

³⁴¹ Gulley gave a helpful summary of Satan’s case against God according to White, i.e. the issues in the great controversy. Gulley, “Cosmic Controversy,” 84.

³⁴² White, *Desire of Ages*, 761–62.

³⁴³ White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 63; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 539–40.

This they could only if they were cognizant of the two sides and of what God had done for them. It was the Church's role to inform them of this by declaring the Gospel to the entire world.³⁴⁴

The Roman Persecutions and the Church's Subsequent Prosperity: Satan's Several Strategies

After Satan failed to bring Christ into temptation, he turned his wrath against the Church. The early centuries of church history demonstrated two of his most used tactics. First Satan tried to wipe out the Church with sword and fire. Here White followed traditional Christian historiography of Roman persecution. For nearly two hundred years, nearly relentless persecution was waged against Christians in the Roman Empire. Thus Christ's prediction of the trials of his disciples in Matthew 24 began to be fulfilled. Persecution proved to be a counterproductive strategy. The more relentlessly Satan persecuted the Church, the more people were convinced by the courage of martyrs that the Christian cause was truth. As Tertullian stated: "The blood of Christians [was] seed" and the harvest a growing Church.³⁴⁵

White explained the changed attitude of the Roman Empire and the cessation of persecution in the time of Constantine as Satan's new strategy: If he could not annihilate it, he would infiltrate, corrupt, and rule it. This he had tried to do already during the persecutions but with relatively little success. But it was now a time of peace and pagans accosted Christians with an offer of compromise: If the believers would yield on some aspects of their faiths, they would adopt Christianity. Persecution and torture "were blessings in comparison with this"³⁴⁶ beguiling temptation. Most believers agreed to compromise and unconverted pagans flooded into the Church. Eventually, the semi-pagan majority turned on the faithful minority. The Bible was rejected as the rule of faith and religious liberty was denounced as heresy. In the end the faithful remnant separated all ties with the apostate Church.³⁴⁷ White did not identify these sides with known group names, so it is difficult to know where or how she read this narrative in(to) church history. In any case, White believed that Satan's new methodology proved successful: The devil had taken over the official Church and ruled it through his vicegerent, the Antichrist, the self-proclaimed head of Christianity, the Pope.³⁴⁸

Apostasy of the Church

According to White, Satan continued his rebellion against God's law by entering into the Church and leading it apostate. In Protestant fashion, she saw the history of the Roman-

³⁴⁴ For the cosmic significance of Christ's death, see White, *Desire of Ages*, 758–64.

³⁴⁵ For the Roman persecutions, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 39–42.

³⁴⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 42.

³⁴⁷ For the Church's compromise with paganism and its division into an apostate church and a faithful minority, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 42–45.

³⁴⁸ "This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the "man of sin" foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. That gigantic system of false religion is a masterpiece of Satan's power,—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne to rule the earth according to his will." White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 50.

Catholic Church as the fulfillment of the prophecies about the Antichrist, including that of the last horn in Daniel 8: “As foretold by prophecy, the papal power cast down the truth to the ground” (v. 12).³⁴⁹ She also saw the Papacy as a continuation of Satan’s controversy against Christ. Since paganism had not sufficed to extinguish the light of the Gospel among mankind, Satan decided to take over the Church to accomplish his purposes. By distorting Christianity from the inside, Satan could cause mankind to look at God in the wrong light as a tyrant rather than as a God of love, and by burying the divine law under human traditions to make them think it could easily be broken, or that to keep it one must observe a multitude of detailed burdens. The apostasy slowed down the Gospel mission of the Church during the medieval period, and though it was partially overcome during and after the Reformation, it continued to exist and would feature prominently again in the last days.³⁵⁰

The Roman Catholic Church

White sketched the Papacy’s rise to ecclesiastical power and the development of its heretical doctrines according to Protestant historiography and prophetic interpretation. The apostasy which would culminate in the Papacy began already in the days of the apostles (2 Thes 2:7). It advanced slowly during the ages of persecution. When the Church entered peace and prosperity, the simplicity of the Gospel was lost and replaced by worldly glory and “human theories and traditions.” Pagan thought and sentiment, ritual and doctrine, became interwoven with the Christian faith. This compromise with the pagan world resulted eventually in the reign of the Antichrist, the bishop of Rome, over the Church. In 538, “the Papacy had become firmly established” and had replaced paganism in the Roman Empire (Rv 13:2). The date marked the beginning of its 1260 years of oppression (Dn 7:25; Rv 13:5–7). The persecution of true Christians became fiercer than under the Papacy, and for centuries true Christians “found refuge in seclusion and obscurity” (Rv 12:6). The date also marked the commencement of the Dark Ages. True Christianity endarkened: Faith, forgiveness, and obedience was moved from Christ to the Pope, the false mediator and tyrannical ruler; the Gospel was lost in the multitudinal requirements of burdensome formalism; grace was replaced by trust in one’s own works. Despite the vice of the church leadership, their power and influence increased century after century. Forged decrees—e.g. the Donation of Constantine and the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals—were used to assert that the Pope had always

³⁴⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 65.

³⁵⁰ “It is Satan’s constant effort to misrepresent the character of God, the nature of sin, and the real issues at stake in the great controversy. His sophistry lessens the obligation of the divine law, and gives men license to sin. At the same time he causes them to cherish false conceptions of God, so that they regard him with fear and hate, rather than with love. The cruelty inherent in his own character is attributed to the Creator; it is embodied in systems of religion, and expressed in modes of worship.” This he did through paganism and then in Roman-Catholicism. “If we desire to understand the determined cruelty of Satan . . . we have only to look at the history of Romanism. Through this mammoth system of deception the prince of evil achieves his purpose of bringing dishonor to God and wretchedness to man.” “The worship of images and relics, the invocation of saints, and the exaltation of the pope, are devices of Satan to attract the minds of the people from God and from his Son.” White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 569, 570, 568.

had supremacy over Christendom. In the eleventh century, Gregory VII declared the Church infallible and claimed it had power to dethrone emperors. His tyranny could be seen in his humiliating treatment of Henry IV. False doctrines also blossomed in the papal darkness. The belief in the immortality of the soul—already sprouting in the early centuries—became dogma. This teaching developed into the veneration of the saints, the adoration of Mary, eternal hell, and purgatory. Purgatory then gave rise to indulgences, yet another way to fleece the ignorant public in the name of religion. The Lord’s Supper was deformed into the blasphemy of transubstantiation. And in the thirteenth century, the Inquisition was established to further ensure obedience and root out dissidence. Immorality was prevalent in the highest echelons of power so that emperors sometimes sought to remove popes out of abhorrence for their crimes. For centuries there was “a moral and intellectual paralysis in Christendom”³⁵¹ that ground the advances of civilization to nearly a halt.³⁵²

What White emphasized in papal history, however, was its change of the Decalogue. She described the history of this change in the following steps. Satan’s first work in the apostasy, once it gained momentum in the perilous time of prosperity, was to get rid of the Bible because it revealed the truth about God’s love and Christ’s salvation, in addition to specifically exposing his deceptions. Church leaders were also eager to suppress the Scripture and its truths, for by exalting God and placing “finite men in their true position” it checked their ambition. “For hundreds of years the circulation of the Bible was prohibited.”³⁵³

Suppressing the Bible paved the way for Satan to undermine God’s law, which was exactly what prophecy had foretold the Papacy would attempt: It would “think to change [God’s] times and laws” (Dn 7:25).³⁵⁴ First, the Apostasy changed the second commandment forbidding idolatry. To ease the way of unconverted pagans into Christianity, idolatry in the form of adoring icons and relics was slowly introduced into the Christian faith. The Second Council of Nicæa established this Christian idolatry as orthodoxy in 787. Rome went even so far as to delete the second commandment from the Decalogue and split the tenth commandment to keep the same enumeration.³⁵⁵ But a more crucial change was the change of the fourth commandment about the Sabbath.

Seventh-day Adventism taught that the Christian Church had willfully changed the fourth commandment and that this was the complete fulfillment of Daniel 7:25. White traced the highlights of this process. According to her, Satan had aimed at this change for a very long time. By leading the Jews into legalistic Sabbath-keeping, he had prepared the pendulum swing of Christianity into the other direction of doing away with the Sabbath as a despised

³⁵¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 60.

³⁵² For the Papacy’s power and teachings, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 49–51, 54–60.

³⁵³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 51 White did not provide sources for this statement, but it was traditional Protestant historiography.

³⁵⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 51.

³⁵⁵ On the introduction of image worship and the change of the second commandment, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 52, 679–80.

Jewish statute.³⁵⁶ First, Sunday was made a feast day in commemoration of Christ's resurrection. The seventh-day Sabbath was still kept, but to show their hatred of Judaism, Christians made it into "a fast, a day of sadness and gloom" while Sunday became "a joyous festival."³⁵⁷ Throughout the centuries, the Church Councils gradually deemphasized the Sabbath and exalted Sunday.³⁵⁸ Civil authorities also played a role. The first legal step towards the change of the fourth commandment occurred with Constantine's edict of 321. At the behest of the bishops, he decreed Sunday an official holiday in all his domain, but both he and they hoped that a common day of celebration would be conducive to the unification of Christians and pagans. Urban residents were commanded to rest but agricultural laborers were allowed to work.³⁵⁹ Eusebius of Cæsarea (260/265–339/340), the emperor's close friend, set forth the claim that Christ had moved the Sabbath to Sunday, but failed to give any scriptural proof for this claim. The seventh-day Sabbath was still kept, but authorities increasingly legislated Sunday rest as well.³⁶⁰ Ecclesiasts also advanced accounts of miraculous calamities and natural calamities visiting those who disregarded the Sunday rest—and their neighbor—as argument for their further Sunday legislations.³⁶¹ At the Roman Council of 853, all previous Sunday legislation was reaffirmed and enhanced; it was also added to the canon law and enforced by the state.³⁶² Where royal and papal laws were insufficient to convince the population of Sunday without scriptural proof, the Church resorted to downright forgery. The roll of Abbot Eustace, missionary to England in the twelfth century, exemplified this: It purportedly fell from heaven in Jerusalem and contained divine commands to keep Sunday holy.³⁶³ Brute force was also employed when necessary, as could be seen in Rome's persecutions of Sabbath-keeping Waldenses and the churches of Ethiopia and Abyssinia.³⁶⁴ Thus the Papacy set up Sunday as Sabbath by imperial edicts, Church Councils, canon law, spurious miracles, and forgeries. By changing the fourth commandment the Antichrist "succeeded in exalting himself" above God and to change his law (2 Thes 2:4; Dn 7:25).³⁶⁵ Nor was this done out of ignorance. White claimed that from the words of Eusebius to the Council of Trent, it could be seen that the tamperers of the eternal law were aware of their

³⁵⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 52.

³⁵⁷ For the Christian keeping of Sundays and Saturdays, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 52–53.

³⁵⁸ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 53.

³⁵⁹ For Constantine's edict, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 53, 574, 680.

³⁶⁰ White mentioned several examples: "Those in holy office were forbidden to pass a judgment in any civil controversy on the Sunday. Soon after, all persons, of whatever rank, were commanded to refrain from common labor, on pain of a fine for freemen, and stripes in the case of servants. Later it was decreed that rich men should be punished with the loss of half of their estates; and finally, that if still obstinate they should be made slaves. The lower classes were to suffer perpetual banishment." White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 574–75.

³⁶¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 575.

³⁶² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 575.

³⁶³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 576–77.

³⁶⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 577–78.

³⁶⁵ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 53.

enterprise.³⁶⁶ This was in harmony with the words of prophecy: “An intentional, deliberate change is presented: ‘He shall *think* to change the times and the law.’”³⁶⁷

The True Church during the Medieval Period

Following the historiography of Protestant pedigree, White believed that the “true Church” was not fully annihilated during the rise and reign of the Papacy. There was a line of a faithful minority that continued down through the ages. White acknowledged that there were few records about the history of the medieval true Church but claimed it was the responsibility of Rome, which had sought to eradicate the sources.³⁶⁸ As the Church compromised with paganism in the early centuries, faithful Christians refused to yield to error, and were eventually persecuted. True Christians eventually separated all ties with the apostate Church. “Among the leading causes” that resulted in this separation was Rome’s hatred “toward the Bible Sabbath.”³⁶⁹ The faithful who retreated into the Alps became known as the Waldenses and Albigenses. White characterized them as pious and evangelic people who retained much of the Bible and some kept Sabbath for a long time. Disguised as university students and merchants, they traveled Europe as missionaries of righteousness by faith and secretly handed out Bible manuscripts. “The very existence of this people, holding the faith of the ancient church, was a constant testimony of Rome’s apostasy.”³⁷⁰ Yet despite persecutions and crusades against them—cf. the bull *Id nostri cordis*, issued by Innocent VIII in 1487—they survived through the night of the Papacy. The Britons were persecuted by the Saxons at the Pope’s behest, and the Armenians and some African churches were fortunate to live far away and thus did not come under Catholic control.³⁷¹

In addition to the Waldenses, there were Reformers who prepared the way for the sixteenth century Reformation. First, there was John Wycliffe (c. 1330–84) in the fourteenth century in England. White described Wycliffe as a man of piety and erudition. The midnight of the Dark Ages had passed and the time had come to bring the Bible from the scholarly isolation of

³⁶⁶ Eusebius “advanced the claim that Christ had transferred the Sabbath to Sunday. Not a single testimony of the Scriptures was produced in proof of the new doctrine. Eusebius himself unwittingly acknowledges its falsity, and points to the real authors of the change. ‘All things,’ he says, ‘whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these *we* have transferred to the Lord’s day.’” White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 574, author’s emphasis. “In the sixteenth century [1584] a papal council declared: ‘Let all Christians remember that the seventh day was consecrated by God, and hath been received and observed, not only by the Jews, but by all others who pretend to worship God; though we Christians have changed their Sabbath into the Lord’s day.’” White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 577.

³⁶⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 446, author’s emphasis. In the quotation White paraphrased Daniel 7:25.

³⁶⁸ “The history of God’s people during the ages of darkness . . . is written in heaven, but they have little place in human records. Few traces of their existence can be found, except in the accusations of their persecutors. It was the policy of Rome to obliterate every trace of dissent from her doctrines or decrees. Everything heretical, whether persons or writings, she sought to destroy. . . . Rome endeavored also to destroy every record of her cruelty toward dissenters.” White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 61.

³⁶⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 65.

³⁷⁰ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 76.

³⁷¹ For the faithful minorities in the medieval period, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 61–78.

Latin to the people. As “the first of the Reformers,”³⁷² Wycliffe heralded these new times. Wycliffe was an eminent scholar and theologian who even influenced politics. He advocated for the Bible’s central role in religion instead of tradition and for civic and religious liberty. He also fought against many papal ills, such as the monastic orders, the tribute England paid to Rome, ecclesiastic corruption, and eventually the doctrine of transubstantiation. He came to believe in “the distinctive doctrines of Protestantism,—salvation through faith in Christ, and the sole infallibility of the Scriptures.”³⁷³ To promote the Gospel in England, he organized his followers or the Lollards to preach throughout the land and translated the Bible for the first time into English. “The new faith was accepted by nearly one half of the people of England.”³⁷⁴ The Catholic Church tried repeatedly to get him convicted for heresy, but the attempts were always miscarried, once because two popes ruled at once and their divisions violently fought each other, and at last because of Wycliffe’s premature death. He had been summoned to Rome and thus could not go. Yet so great was the hatred of the Papacy towards the heretic that decades after his death, his bones were exhumed and burnt. But his influence spread throughout many countries in Europe, and influenced amongst others Jan Hus (c. 1370–1415).³⁷⁵

After Wycliffe, Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague (Jeroným Pražský, c. 1365–1416) arose in the fifteenth century in Bohemia. Hus was the rector of the University of Prague and a renowned scholar in Europe; he was also a chapel priest. He preached in the vernacular—an old Bohemian norm which had nearly vanished because of Gregory VII’s ban—and opened its truths to the people. Hus also read Wycliffe and slowly became convinced of his reformatory theology. Hus’s preaching led Rome to place the entire city of Prague under an interdict and when the country refused to give him up he was tried in absentia. After Hus resumed his preaching, Jerome became his close associate, but he had studied in England and accepted Wycliffe’s teachings. Prague was placed under interdict again. Hus was then summoned to the Council of Constance (convened 1414–18). Despite the Emperor’s safe-conduct, shortly after his arrival he was imprisoned in a dungeon. The Council had two goals: To solve the situation of three simultaneous Popes and the Bohemian heresy. All the Popes were deposed, the last one convicted of multiple immoral crimes. Hus refused to recant and was burned at the stake. His death was “the first great sacrifice in the long struggle by which liberty of conscience was to be secured.”³⁷⁶ Shortly after his execution, Jerome met the same fate. To crush the heresy completely, Pope and Emperor sent out the armies of “the most powerful nations of Europe”³⁷⁷ against the small country. When they could not defeat the Bohemians after years of war and several mighty crusades, the papists resorted to an offer of

³⁷² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 94.

³⁷³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 89.

³⁷⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 89.

³⁷⁵ On Wycliffe, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 79–96.

³⁷⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 108.

³⁷⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 117.

compromise. Some Bohemians refused to mitigate the truth and Bohemia descended into the chaos of civil war. Yet the faithful minority continued in the form of the church of the United Brethren, which managed, despite some persecution, to increase.³⁷⁸

The Ongoing Reformation

God's true believers grew from the faithful few during the medieval period into a reformatory movement that was destined to restore the truths that had been lost in the apostasy. White followed that traditional Protestant view of the Reformation that saw it as ongoing. This view had been adopted by any Protestant group that believed that the churches before them had not gone far enough in their Reformation; this concept began already in the sixteenth century, and had been continued by various groups until the time of White. She continued it by adding two groups as the latest torchbearers of truth in the ongoing Reformation: The Millerites and the Seventh-day Adventists. To this she added as well the future revival of Seventh-day Adventists, for she believed that in their present state, they had not and could not come close to finish their reformatory role. Thus the Adventists—first the Millerites, then the Seventh-day Adventists, both now but more so in the future—were the latest and final phase of the ongoing Reformation. White was aware of some of the differences between all the pre-Protestant and Protestant figures and groups she included in her narrative, but reconciled these differences with her view of truth as an unfolding principle: The Apostasy had been so great that God could lead people into the full light of day only step by step.³⁷⁹

Continental Reformers

“Foremost” among the Reformers who lead the Church “from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith” was Martin Luther.³⁸⁰ During his studies he discovered the Bible and as he began to preach the Gospel and condemn the errors of the Church, the doctrine of justification by faith dawned on him. His critique of indulgences brought him into conflict with the ecclesiastic hierarchy. His teachings became so popular that though he refused to recant at the hearing at Augsburg and before the imperial Diet of Worms, where the papal excommunication of him was ratified by the state, the Church could not crush the Reformation, which spread like wildfire through Germany and other countries, uplifting the morality, intelligence, and the spirituality of the people. Satan then brought forth fanatics and false prophets, who claimed that they needed not the Bible or the restraint of its laws for God led them directly. The unrest and chaos they created, with Thomas Müntzer as their leader,

³⁷⁸ On White's treatment of Hus and Jerome and the Hussite Wars, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 97–119.

³⁷⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 103.

³⁸⁰ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 120 Accordingly, White dedicated more space to Luther than any other sixteenth century Reformer; three chapters are mostly about him, and all in all four chapters are about the Reformation in Germany. For White's depiction of Luther, see Denis Kaiser, “‘God Is Our Refuge and Strength’: Martin Luther in the Perception of Ellen G. White,” in *Perceptions of the Protestant Reformation in Seventh-Day Adventism*, ed. Rolf J. Pöhler, *Adventistica*, new series 1 (Möckern: Theologische Hochschule Friedensau, 2018), 47–63.

eventually led to the Peasant Revolt. Luther condemned the fanatical ideas as having no place in the Reformation. Believers were not to attack Catholicism, the state, or fanaticism with worldly weapons, for these could not protect or advance the Gospel. Only the Bible—which Luther translated and spread through Germany—and prayer could further the light. The religious freedom which had been won at the Diet in 1526 was to be cancelled at the Diet of Speyer in 1529. The reformed Princes refused the compromises put forth and protested, whence Protestantism derived its name. At the Diet of Augsburg in the following year, where the Emperor hoped yet to bring them to submission, they presented the Augsburg Confession and valiantly stood for the truth. Thus in the span of but few years Luther's teachings had transformed Germany.³⁸¹ But the Reformation was not bound to Germany alone, it influenced great swaths of Europe.

Around the same time Luther became a Reformer in Germany, Ulrich Zwingli began his work as the Reformer of Switzerland, without knowledge of Luther. Zwingli became a prominent pastor in Zürich and preached the Gospel of Christ's free forgiveness and opened the truths of the Bible to the public. He also denounced the corruption and errors of the Church. In the predominantly Catholic cantons, reformed believers were burned at the stake. To stop the Reformer himself as well, a delegation from the Bishop of Constance tried to intimidate the Council of Zürich into taking action against Zwingli, but they refused. Since persecution in Germany had proved mostly fruitless, the Church decided to meet the Reformation on its own grounds with a disputation. The disputation was held in Baden in 1526 where the pompous Johann Eck debated Johannes Œcolampadius (1482–1531). Though Eck was declared victorious, the Reformation continued to spread and soon Bern and Basel became reformed. The Catholic cantons began persecuting the Reformed and a civil war broke out. Zwingli was killed on the battlefield and Œcolampadius died soon after. While the Papacy seemed to have won over Switzerland, the Reformation was already growing in other countries.³⁸²

In some countries, the Reformation was welcomed, in others, it was rejected before it entered, but in France the Reformation arrived, only to be extinguished. After several centuries of war between good and evil, it was extinguished with terrible consequences. In France, reformers began to arise before Luther. White depicted the work of University of Paris professor Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (c. 1455–1536), who translated the New Testament into French, his student Guillaume Farel (1489–1565), the Bishop of Meaux Guillaume Briçonnet (c. 1472–1534), and the knight Louis de Berquin (c. 1490–1529), whom White portrayed as one who could have become France's Luther. After imprisoning Berquin several times—who was then released by the king—the monks finally managed to sentence and execute Berquin on the same day in 1529. They also raised persecution against the reformed believers, who spread through France or fled into neighboring countries. Queen Margaret

³⁸¹ For Luther and the Reformation in Germany, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 120–170, 185–210.

³⁸² On Zwingli and the Reformation in Switzerland, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 171–84, 211–12.

commanded that the reformed be allowed to preach in Paris, but this was cut short after a couple of years. The overzealous decision of the believers to protest against the Mass in posters (the Affair of the Placards in 1534) enraged the king who turned fully against the Reformation. Jean Calvin was among those who fled and settled in Geneva, a city which became a beacon of the Reformation to many countries. After the Affair, believers were systematically arrested and in 1535 they were ceremonially burned at intervals of a royal procession. For 250 years France fought against the Bible and the Reformation—the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in 1572 being but a chapter in a long bloody story—but the effect proved opposite to the intention. Outrooting of heresy did not cause France to prosper but tightened the Church’s grip on the state. The Society of Jesus, the most wicked of the orders, was founded in 1540 and the Inquisition was reestablished to give them more power. They alone flourished in the decaying country. As France rejected the Reformation, morality and intelligence fled with the persecuted believers. Eventually the nation turned against the Church and rejected God and the Bible altogether. The French Revolution showed the inevitable results of banishing the Gospel altogether from a society and of making God’s law null and void. This terrible development was also a fulfillment of prophecy: The revolutionary regime was depicted as the beast from the abyss in Revelation 11 and its terrors were described, in particular, its outlawing of the Bible (the two witnesses) for three and a half years.³⁸³

In the Netherlands, reformatory efforts had punctuated the centuries. In the eighth century, archbishop Gunther of Cologne and archbishop Tetgaud of Trier, appalled at the godlessness they saw upon visiting Rome, denounced it as Babylon. Through the centuries the Waldenses and other reformatory groups taught in the Netherlands. They translated their Bible in verse into Dutch in the twelfth century. Persecution began but believers multiplied and asserted that religion could not be compulsory. When Luther’s message spread in Europe in the sixteenth century, “nowhere were the reformed doctrines more generally received than in the Netherlands.”³⁸⁴ One prominent Dutch Reformer was Menno Simons (1496–1561). After witnessing an Anabaptist being executed for his faith, he studied baptism and came to accept adult baptism. His Gospel message was widely received, though his followers had the infortune to be confused or equated with the fanatics that plagued the Reformation. Charles V had more power in the Low Countries than in Germany, and the Dutch suffered “more terrible persecution” than most nations.³⁸⁵ It was forbidden to read the Bible and under the reigns of Charles and Philip II thousands were slaughtered. Yet persecution only extended the Reformation, and when William of Orange rebelled against his Catholic overlords the country finally secured religious freedom.³⁸⁶

³⁸³ On the French Reformation and the French Revolution, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 211–36, 265–88.

³⁸⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 239.

³⁸⁵ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 239.

³⁸⁶ On the Reformation in the Netherlands, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 237–40.

In Scandinavia, “the simple, hardy people of the North” accepted the reformed Gospel peacefully. Hans Tausen (1494–1561), a Wittenberg graduate, became the Reformer of Denmark. He and others preached the reformed faith in Denmark, the New Testament was translated into Danish, and soon the country officially accepted the new belief. The brothers Olaf (Lat. Olaus Petri, 1493–1552) and Lars Persson (Lat. Laurentius Petri, 1499–1573), also Wittenberg graduates, preached in Sweden. The Catholic Church incited the mob to riot against them. The king, however, asked for a disputation between the two sides. The nation, unsatisfied with Catholic formalism, was turning back to ancestral paganism, and in the new faith the king saw a promise of a betterment of his people. After the disputation he was convinced of Protestantism which soon became the official faith. A full Bible translation into Swedish was completed and school children were taught to read it. A century later, the little nation had prospered to the point that when the papists threatened to overwhelm all northern Europe, it was Sweden that came to the aid of the embattled Protestant nations and helped to ensure liberty of conscience in their countries by driving the Catholic armies back.³⁸⁷

As a conservative American Protestant, to continue the history of the ongoing Reformation, White turned from continental Europe to the British Isles.

English Reformers

Shortly after Luther began his work, William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536) began preaching the truth in England. He also translated the Bible from the original languages, a project for which he suffered martyrdom. After him, his friends Robert Barnes (c. 1495–1540) and John Frith (1503–1533) appeared for the cause of truth, and afterwards the Oxford Martyrs, while John Knox (c. 1514–1572) arose for the Reformation in Scotland. Though England made Protestantism into the state religion, persecution was not fully extinguished. Religious liberty was not yet fully comprehended by the best of men. The Anglican Church still retained some of Catholic rite and reformatory efforts continued, which the Church did not tolerate.

“Dissenters suffered persecution, to a greater or lesser extent, for hundreds of years.”³⁸⁸

Thousands of dissenting pastors were defrocked for dissent in the seventeenth century; many fled the country. Others continued to hold the torch of truth aloft, such as John Bunyan (1628–1688), Richard Baxter (1615–1691), John Flavel (c. 1627–1691), and Joseph Alleine (1634–1668). Again, in the eighteenth century, when the Church had again lapsed into “great spiritual darkness,”³⁸⁹ and formalism, antinomianism, and natural religion constituted the theology of the day, God raised others for the cause of the Gospel. After a long struggle with the legalism of the day, John Wesley (1703–1791) and Charles Wesley (1707–1788) rediscovered justification by faith and the true keeping of the law as fruit and not the root of that faith. Together with George Whitefield (1714–1770), they led one of England’s greatest

³⁸⁷ For the Reformation in Denmark and Sweden, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 240–44.

³⁸⁸ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 252.

³⁸⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 253.

revivals. For this they suffered persecution and their followers eventually left the Anglican Church and formed the Methodist denomination.³⁹⁰

White did not see the future center of the ongoing Reformation in England. Because the Church relentlessly opposed all reformatory efforts, the cause would be continued elsewhere. Many of the dissenting Puritans that fled the country first found asylum in the Netherlands. Some, known later as the Pilgrim Fathers, set sail to the New World in 1620 in search of religious freedom.

American Reformers

White followed American Protestant historiography in the sense that she saw American Christianity as the providential continuation of English dissent and the American political system as divinely guided. The Puritans had covenanted to follow all the truth that God would show them and thus not to limit the advance of the Reformation. These sentiments were made clear in the farewell address of John Robinson to the Pilgrims, and was the true spirit of Protestantism. But though the Puritans desired religious liberty, they had only a partial understanding of the principle: Like most Reformers before them, they believed they should have freedom to worship according to their conscience not because it was a basic principle, but because they were right, and hence did not extend this freedom to others. In the New World they made “a kind of state church.”³⁹¹ Roger Williams (1603–1683) protested against this union of church and state and argued that church attendance should not be mandatory. For this he was persecuted and fled to Rhode Island. There he established the first government that enshrined religious liberty as a general principle. Rhode Island became the safe haven of all who were persecuted and “prospered until its foundation principles—civil and religious liberty—became the corner-stones of the American Republic.”³⁹² These principles were set in law in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. The unique prosperity of the American nation had its origin in the Protestant faith. From the time of the Mayflower, multitudes had continued to arrive from the Old World in search for religious freedom. The piety of people living in accordance with the teachings of the Bible led to national prosperity and demonstrated the transforming effect the Gospel has on society.³⁹³

White then followed the historiography of minority groups in America that saw American Christianity as having declined. This she explained in terms of the great controversy. Satan had not been able to persecute Protestantism to extinction, so he reverted again to the tactic of compromise. Many of those who came to American shores did so in hopes of worldly comforts. As their numbers grew, piety faded from society and the principle of progressive truth was forgotten. The Church became worldly, ceased to unlearn traditional errors. Though God inspired the soaring increase of Bible production and distribution of the Bible societies in

³⁹⁰ For the ongoing Reformation in England, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 245–64.

³⁹¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 293.

³⁹² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 295.

³⁹³ On the ongoing Reformation in America, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 289–296, 441.

the early nineteenth century, it did not lead to a corresponding increase in its study. Since Satan could not destroy the Word of God, he led the Church to neglect its study. The Church was in dire need of reformation, especially so because it must make itself and the world ready for the Second Coming, which was drawing close.³⁹⁴ Thus White interpreted church history as leading up to the Millerite movement, which God raised for precisely that task.

To awaken the Church, White believed God had done two things. First, in fulfillment of prophecy, God had given the Church signs that indicated that Christ's return was at hand. The signs were foretold in Revelation 6 and Matthew 24 as a great earthquake, the darkening of the sun, the moon turning red, and the falling of the stars. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century these signs passed one after the other: The Lisbon earthquake of 1755, the Dark Day of May 19, 1780 (when the sun turned dark in the daytime and the moon became red), and the breathtaking meteor shower of November 13, 1833. This Millerite interpretation of the signs, which Seventh-day Adventists continued to use, had served the purpose of validating their movement as indeed the last Gospel call before the close of time. But these signs passed by the Church mostly unnoticed.³⁹⁵ Second, God therefore needed to give the Church a message to shake it from its worldly slumber. This message had been foretold in Revelation 14:6–12 as three angels flying over the world with the last gospel call before the Second Coming. So Providence raised an American Reformer,³⁹⁶ William Miller, to correct the doctrinal errors surrounding the Second Coming and to awaken the Church from its sleep. Miller reached the conclusion that the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14 would run out in 1844 and then the sanctuary would be cleansed, i.e. Christ would return and glorify the earth and his Church. He and his followers proclaimed that the hour of Judgment was at hand ("the first angel's message," Rv 14:6–7), and when the churches rejected their message, they denounced their fall as Babylon for refusing, like the Catholic Church, to be corrected or advance in truth ("the second angel's message," Rv 14:8). Though the Millerites in the United States were the center of the Advent Movement, it was worldwide in scope. Like the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the movement began simultaneously in many places: Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752) and his followers in Germany, Jesuit Manuel Lacunza (1731–1801) in South America (and in England via his writings), François Samuel Robert Louis Gaussen (1790–1863) in Switzerland and France, Joseph Wolff (1795–1862), "the missionary of the world," the children preachers in Sweden, and the Adventists in Britain, all proclaimed in word and writing that Christ would return in the mid-nineteenth century, until the message "was carried to every missionary station in the world, and in some countries there was the

³⁹⁴ On the decline of Christianity in the United States, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 296–98.

³⁹⁵ On the signs heralding Christ's return, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 299–309, 333–34.

³⁹⁶ The chapter on William Miller in the *Great Controversy* is entitled "An American Reformer." White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 317.

greatest religious interest which has been witnessed in any land since the Reformation of the sixteenth century.”³⁹⁷

Before we continue with White’s redemption history, it is important to note the historiography of early Sabbatarian (and later Seventh-day) Adventists which she integrated into her redemption history. The Millerite movement had failed and giving it a prominent place in church history—as nothing less than the final reformatory effort of the Church—was only possible if its failure was explained and its eventual success ensured. This some of the post-Millerites did and by doing so eventually became the Seventh-day Adventists. By reinterpreting the terminus event of Daniel 8, they transformed the Millerite movement and its failure into crucial events in redemption history that also justified the continuation of their movement. This they did in the following way: God had overruled the Millerite misinterpretation of the terminus event as the Second Coming to serve his purposes. The churches were tested to see whether the message of Christ’s return would awaken them to reform before the Judgment, or whether they would receive the news of their coming Lord as unpleasant and thus reveal their lack of love for him. The disappointment when Christ did not come also served to test the believers. They were not yet ready to meet the Lord and the disappointment revealed whether they held to the Word in faith, or were relieved that Christ did not come. Those who did not let go of their faith were led by God to realize that the Millerite message had indeed been true but in a way they had not realized: On October 22, 1844, Christ had begun the Judgment in preparation of his imminent return to the earth. This was the full portent of the “first angel’s message.” Furthermore, the believers (Millerites) had overlooked “the third angel’s message” which they (now Sabbatarian and later Seventh-day Adventists) were to proclaim to the world and then Jesus would come. Thus the Millerite movement and Seventh-day Adventism were one and the same movement, which would finish the Gospel work of the Church.

White followed this Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the Millerite movement but integrated it into a larger context of her redemption history: The Millerites had not only proclaimed the advent near; they had been raised to finish the Reformation and to prepare the Church and world for the Judgment and Second Coming. The true interpretation of Daniel 8 was not only that Judgment had commenced; Daniel 8 revealed the Judgment as the final phase of redemption history that would conclude the great controversy between Christ and Satan over the law of God. Seventh-day Adventists did not only correct the Millerite understanding of prophecy to proclaim the imminent final events to the world; they were preaching the truths that people needed to hear to understand the great controversy so they could truly prepare for the Judgment and the Second Coming. To see how White integrated Sabbatarian Adventism into her great controversy in this way, the next section will explain her eschatology.

³⁹⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 611. On the Advent Movement, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 309–403.

The Judgment: The Great Controversy Concluded

According to Seventh-day Adventists, the terminus event of the 2300 years of Daniel 8—“then shall the sanctuary be cleansed”—did not signify the commencement of the Judgment by Christ returning to earth on October 22, 1844, as the Millerites had predicted, but the commencement of Judgment in heaven by Christ entering the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary. The Millerites had seen the terminus event as the Judgment because they equated it with Christ’s return. The Seventh-day Adventists saw it as the Judgment because they interpreted it as the antitypical fulfillment of the Day of Atonement—the ritual during which the sanctuary was cleansed—which was synonymous with the Judgment. Thus Seventh-day Adventists kept the validity of the predicted date as the commencement of the Judgment, and also the imminence of Christ’s return, by separating the two. Furthermore, the antitypical Day of Atonement would last until the establishment of the Kingdom of God and thus comprised and organized all remaining eschatology.

White integrated this eschatology into her great controversy motif. The Judgment would not only end the war between good and evil by ensuring the salvation of the believers and by annihilating unrepentant sinners; it would end the controversy by demonstrating to all the participants in the cosmos—to the unfallen worlds, the angels, and all humans—that God is love and so is his law and government.

The First Session of Judgment: The Pre-Advent³⁹⁸ Judgment

On October 22, 1844, at the expiration of the 2300 years in Daniel 8, the antitypical Day of Atonement—the Judgment—began with the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dn 8:14). This was the first phase of the Judgment which would finish before the Second Coming. During this phase Christ would judge who his true followers were by ascertaining the faith of all who had professed belief in him. Christ would claim them as his (save them) and thus all things would be ready for God’s kingdom: Christ could return to earth and claim his citizens and establish the kingdom of God. This judgment over the professed believers was shadowed forth by the Day of Atonement, a feast which only Israel kept and during which it was ascertained who was truly Israel. This Judgment took place in the heavenly sanctuary, in its holy of holies. On October 22, 1844, God the Father—“the Ancient of Days”—entered into the Most Holy Place in the Temple in heaven. Christ—“the Son of Man”—was brought before him by a retinue of angels (“clouds of heaven”); they sat down on thrones and the judgment officially began (Dn 7). The judgment proceeded by reviewing the records of the lives of professed believers. In the book of life the names of all who had professed faith in Christ were written (Lk 10:20; Phil 4:3; Dn 12:1; Rv 21:27). Their books—containing a record of their good and evil thoughts and deeds (Neh 13:14; Ps 56:8; Eccl 12:14; Is 65:6–7; Mal 3:16; Mt 12:36–37; 1 Cor 4:5)—were opened (Dn 7:9; Rv 21:27) to be reviewed. The law of God was the standard of

³⁹⁸ Traditionally called “investigative judgment” in Seventh-day Adventism.

the judgment (Eccl 12:13–14; Jas 2:12) and Jesus was the advocate (Heb 7:25; 9:24; 1 Jn 2:1). When an individual's record was found to contain unrepented sins and their faith was thus either insincere or abandoned, the person's name was blotted from the book of life (Ex 32:33; Ez 18:24). When the record contained no unrepented sins, Christ advocated for that person's salvation in the name of his death, and the person's sins were blotted out of the record (Is 43:25; Mt 10:32–33; Rv 3:5). The Father and the Son and the angels went through the books in a chronological order, starting with Adam, until they had reviewed the books of the last generation of believers still alive. When this phase of Judgment would conclude, Christ's intercession would be over, for all cases would have been decided. He would then leave the sanctuary and heaven and return to earth to gather his people to himself and save them.³⁹⁹

As the pre-advent Judgment would proceed in heaven, the controversy between Christ and Satan would continue on earth: "The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God."⁴⁰⁰ To declare the Judgment to mankind so they could understand their situation in the great controversy and prepare themselves for the Second Coming, God raised the American Reformers—the Advent Movement. Their incomplete understanding of their own proclamation God overruled for good: The declaration that Jesus would arrive tested whether the Church loved him and would assent to continue the Reformation; the disappointment when he did not return did the same for the Advent believers. The Advent believers were not as prepared for meeting their Lord as they thought. Their misinterpretation of prophecy was an error rooted in tradition and was emblematic of the fact they still held on to many unscriptural traditions and practices.⁴⁰¹ These would have to be relinquished. The pre-advent Judgment was exactly the preparation they needed. Christ's final work for believers in heaven was to call forth a corresponding reformation on the part of his believers on earth, just as the people on the Day of Atonement focused on the work of the high priest in the sanctuary by "afflicting their souls" and fasting that day.⁴⁰² So God led the believers into the truth about the Judgment and the law by which all mankind would be judged.⁴⁰³ This led them to discover the most egregious of the errors that had kept them unprepared, which was nothing less than the transgression of the Ten Commandments by which they would be judged—their failure to keep the seventh day Sabbath of the fourth commandment. This commandment was "the seal of the living God" (Rv 7:1–3), the sign of his authority, and the sign of true end-time believers. By proclaiming the unchanged law of God, the believers would not promote legalism but be end-time Reformers⁴⁰⁴ of "justification by faith" and true obedience which were inseparable (Rv

³⁹⁹ For the pre-Advent Judgment, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 409–32, 479–91 (= chs. 23–24, 28).

⁴⁰⁰ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 582.

⁴⁰¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 424–25.

⁴⁰² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 419–20, 425, 489–90.

⁴⁰³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 436.

⁴⁰⁴ The chapter on end-time Sabbath promotion is entitled "A Work of Reform" and begins thus: "The work of Sabbath reform to be accomplished in the last days is foretold in the prophecy of Isaiah [56:1–7; 58:1–2, 12–13 quoted on next pages]." White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 451, see also 452–53.

14:12), vis-à-vis those who wrongly claimed that God's law had been changed or abolished.⁴⁰⁵ White decried the believers's failure to do this with power as their half-heartedness (or Laodicean state, see Rv 3:14–22),⁴⁰⁶ but predicted that eventually a great revival would take place that would outshine both the first and the sixteenth century revivals, during which most believers would apostatize,⁴⁰⁷ but those who remained would preach the “three angels's messages” swiftly to the entire earth—and some would be convinced and join them⁴⁰⁸—after which Christ would return. The first angel's message proclaimed the pre-advent Judgment (“the hour of his judgment has come”), the second angel's message warned that the Church (the Protestant churches) had become apostate (“Babylon is fallen”) by rejecting this truth proclaimed by the Millerite Movement, and the third angel's message warned against Satan's final effort to obscure Christ's work in heaven from the minds of people (the beasts, the image, and the mark).

For his final effort against Christ's redeeming work, Satan would combine three powers against the saints: The Papacy, apostate Protestantism, and Spiritualism. Though the Papacy had been abolished in 1798, it survived, and was to regain all its former powers (deadly wound healed, Rv 13:3). This it would accomplish through the United States. Their relationship was depicted in Revelation 13: The Papacy was the first beast that reigned for 1260 years, seemed to be obliterated, but then regained its power. The United States were the second beast that was described after the Papacy and its 1260 years. They were described as innocent-like (with lamblike horns) and arising in another and less populous place (earth vs. sea, vv. 1, 10). The United States, however, would go through a transformation. They would exercise “all the power of the first beast” and order mankind “to worship the first beast” (v. 12). This meant that the United States would have similar religious and civil power as the Papacy before them, and they would use this power to enforce obedience to the Papacy. This could only happen if the United States would give political power to the churches, i.e. unite church and state, and thus become a religio-political power, and in that sense like the Papacy before them. This change was depicted as the second beast making an image of and for the first beast, i.e. making a new power that would be like and for the Papacy (vv. 14, 15). Thus the United States would violate all its founding principles, and this would be the result of the

⁴⁰⁵ For the doctrinal development from Millerism to Seventh-day Adventism—i.e. the reinterpretation of Daniel 8, the sanctuary, the pre-Advent judgment, and Sabbathkeeping—, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 409–50 (= chs. 23–25).

⁴⁰⁶ White only tacitly referred to this “Laodicean state” between the Millerite Movement and the final revival in her redemption history. White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 458. In her in-group writings, however, which were addressed to Seventh-day Adventists, the Laodicean message was one of her continuous themes. For White and the Laodicean message, see Felix A. Lorenzo, “A Study of Early Adventist Interpretations of the Laodicean Message with Emphasis on the Writings of Mrs. E. G. White” (BD thesis, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, 1951); Lorenz, *Only Hope*.

⁴⁰⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 608. In Seventh-day Adventist eschatology this apostasy is termed “the shaking.” See White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 183–88.

⁴⁰⁸ For the eschatological revival and global Gospel work, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 603–12 (= ch. 38). In Seventh-day Adventist terminology the revival is referred to as “the latter rain” and the global missionary work as “the loud cry” (Rv 14:9; 18:2). See White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 193–96; White, *Great Controversy* (1884), 421–30.

ongoing decline of the churches and their seeking political power. To ensure their power and legislate morality, they would enforce church attendance with national blue laws. Sunday-keeping, however, was contrary to the Bible, and the very symbol of papal supremacy, and thus by enforcing people to keep it, the United States would be creating the mark of the beast (vv. 16–17) and demanding homage to the Papacy (worshipping the first beast). To accomplish these developments and cement the relation between the Papacy and the churches in the United States, Satan would perform miracles (vv. 13–14) through the third agency of Spiritualism. Demons in the disguise of good angels or dead loved ones would appear and perform supernatural miracles. They would speak against the Bible and its law and in favor of these developments. They would denounce those who refused to obey. All countries would follow in the footsteps of the United States and would ultimately forbid the keeping of the true Sabbath. Those who would resist would be persecuted (Rv 12:16) and martyred (20:4). Thus the whole world would choose for or against Christ, the Bible, and the law of God.⁴⁰⁹ All cases would be settled and Christ's intercession in heaven would cease and the time of trouble would begin (Dn 12:1). The wrath of God would fall on the wicked in the seven last plagues (Rv 15–16). The world would enter a chaotic time of warfare and natural catastrophes. Satan would appear impersonating Christ and the wicked, enraged at their misfortunes, would blame the believers and issue a death decree against them (13:15).⁴¹⁰

At that time Christ would return to earth. At his brightness all the wicked would perish, the righteous would be resurrected, and together with the living saints, would be gathered by the angels to meet their Lord in the air and go with him to heaven.⁴¹¹ Christ would not at this time establish his kingdom on the earth. While he had saved his people, neither they nor the wicked had fully understood the great controversy. He would therefore take the saints with him to heaven for the second phase of the Judgment.

The Second Session of Judgment: The Millennial Judgment

Seventh-day Adventism taught a unique view of the millennium, built on the old historicist idea that it was a period of Judgment, demarcated by the two resurrections. Seventh-day Adventists transformed the millennium into a second phase of the Judgment and located the reign of the saints during this time in heaven rather than on the earth renewed. The teaching was as follows. At his Second Coming Christ would take the saved to heaven. There Christ and the righteous would judge the wicked and this phase of the Judgment would last for a millennium (1 Co 4:5; Dn 7:22; Rv 20:4, 6). The righteous would review the books containing the lives of the wicked and evaluate them in the light of the “statute book, the Bible” to determine their sentence. The extent of their punishment would be “recorded against their names in the book of death”—the opposite of the book of life. The redeemed would not

⁴⁰⁹ For the eschatological agency of the Papacy, apostate Protestantism, and Spiritualism, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 551–92 (= chs. 34–36).

⁴¹⁰ For the time of trouble, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 613–34 (= ch. 39).

⁴¹¹ For the Second Coming, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 635–52 (= ch. 40).

only judge the wicked humans, but also the fallen angels and Satan (1 Cor 6:2–3).⁴¹² Thus by acquainting themselves with the cases of the wicked, it was also implied by White that the redeemed would understand why the wicked were lost, what God’s dealing with them had been, and that it was just.

In the rite of the Day of Atonement, once the High Priest exited the Sanctuary, he placed the sins of the forgiven people on the scapegoat and sent it into a desolate place (Lv 16:20–22). This foreshadowed the fate of Satan during the millennium. After the Second Coming the earth would be desolate. (This state was described in Revelation 20 as ἄβυσσος, the word used for the earth’s primordial state of desolation in the Septuagint rendering of Gn 1:2.) Satan would be bound to the desolate earth (Rv 20:1–3) and thus have no access to other worlds. With the wicked slain by Christ’s brightness, and the righteous transported to heaven, he would remain alone with his angels in the ruins of this world for one thousand years. The millennium would be a time of intense agony for Satan. Since his banishment from heaven, he had been active in his rebellion against God and in deceiving mankind, but during the millennium he would have nothing to do but to “wander to and fro in the desolate earth, to behold the results of his rebellion against the law of God”⁴¹³ and to await his final sentence.⁴¹⁴ Thus the self-reflecting Satan is also brought into White’s view of the Judgment as a time for all to ponder their part in the great controversy.

At the end of the second phase of the Judgment, the righteous would have seen God’s justice in his condemnation of the wicked via their participation in his Judgment (determining the punishment). Satan would also have had time to reflect on his rebellion. What would remain would be to announce the verdict and execute the sentence arrived at by Christ and the redeemed.

The Third Session of Judgement: The Executive Judgment

Once the second phase of the Judgment would be completed, what would remain would be to execute the Judgment and to establish God’s kingdom on the earth. For this purpose Christ with all the redeemed and the angels would descend with New Jerusalem to the earth. Christ would descend on Mt Olives from whence he had ascended and change it into a plain upon which the Holy City would land (Ze 14:4–5, 9; Rv 21:2). As Christ descended, he would also resurrect all the wicked for their Judgment (Rv 20:5a, 13). Their resurrection, however, would loosen Satan for he would recommence his work of deception (Rv 20:3, 7). He would pretend to be a prince who had resurrected them, who had been unlawfully robbed of his kingdom, and would gather them to reclaim the kingdom that was rightfully theirs from their common enemy. The wicked would prepare for war and besiege New Jerusalem (Rv 20:8–9a).⁴¹⁵ Thus all humanity would be for the first and only time in one place—the redeemed inside the City,

⁴¹² White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 660–61.

⁴¹³ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 660.

⁴¹⁴ For Satan bound on the earth during the millennium, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 658–60.

⁴¹⁵ For the second resurrection and attending events, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 661–64.

the lost surrounding it. Just as Satan engaged in open warfare against Christ and God in heaven at the commencement, he would attempt the very same thing at the end of the millennium on earth. Thus the history of the great controversy would be brought full circle. Satan would show what he had been in the beginning, and that he had not changed. By uniting with Satan again after their resurrection, the wicked would also demonstrate the side they had chosen. This would be the moment when the third session of the Judgment would commence.

High above New Jerusalem, the throne of Christ would appear (Rv 20:11), and in the presence of all humanity his final coronation as the rightful ruler of the earth would take place. His divine position and rule is fully acknowledged. The books of the lives of the wicked and the book of life would be opened (Rv 20:12). As the books would be opened, each lost soul would be conscious of their entire life and see it in its true colors. More than this, above the throne, “like a panoramic view” the most important scenes from the history of redemption would appear one after the other in the sight of all. All the wicked would stand accused of the transgression of the law of God at the Judgment bar. “They have none to plead their case; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them.”⁴¹⁶ Aware of the glory of the redeemed, their own ruined characters, the efforts of God to save them, the wicked would be fully undeceived and realize their lost state. They had not wanted to be saved from sin, and as evil beings who do not want to be changed—they would not enjoy eternal life with God. Satan’s accusations against God’s government, character, and his law are seen by all, wicked and good, as groundless lies. All see God in a true light. Satan and all the wicked kneel and acknowledge the justice of their sentence. Then fire will descend from heaven and from the earth and devour the wicked. Some vaporize in an instant, others burn for longer, according to their deeds. The whole surface of the earth becomes a “lake of fire.” When the fire is out the wicked are but ashes⁴¹⁷ and God renews the earth into its original Edenic state, and the kingdom of Christ and his saints is established forever.⁴¹⁸

Thus the Judgment concludes the controversy and everyone is brought to see God in his true light, whether they love him or not: The loyal angels and the unfallen worlds; the redeemed; the lost, both humans and angels, and even Satan himself. At that point God is able to satisfy righteousness and execute judgment for all see why he does that. And thus “the great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. . . . [And all creatures] declare that God is love.”⁴¹⁹

4.5.3 Interpretative Alternatives

Adjusted or Additional Set Times for the Second Coming

When the Second Coming did not take place on October 22, 1844, most Millerites set a new time for the event. No comprehensive study has been done on all the various dates set forth by

⁴¹⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 668.

⁴¹⁷ On the executive judgment, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 665–73.

⁴¹⁸ On the renewal of the earth, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 674–78.

⁴¹⁹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 678.

Adventists, but the practice continued for decades. For the present purposes, it is enough to know that both mainline and radical Adventists engaged in the endeavor, although they based their calculations on different premises. Mainline Adventists affirmed Christ would come at the end of the 2300 years in Daniel 8, and since he had not come, their calculation was obviously in error, and they would have to wait out the margin of error to see their hope realized. Other dating schemes also followed. The radical Adventists, however, were convinced that the calculation of the 2300 years was correct, that the period had closed, but with another event than had been expected. Most of them still believed that the date for the Lord's return could be found in the prophecies. To find the date, they either adjusted their application of another prophetic period to make it extend further into the future than the 2300 years, or they used typology to bridge the gap from the end of one period to the Second Coming. Some of the dates set by Adventists in the years 1845–47 can be mentioned to give the reader some feeling for the ongoing practice: (1) Spring 1845: At the end of the Jewish year, the true Jubilee—announced on the Day of Atonement, October 22, 1844—would begin;⁴²⁰ (2) fall 1845: The Jubilee would begin a year after it had been announced;⁴²¹ (3) spring 1847: The 1335 years of Daniel 12 recalculated to end then;⁴²² (4) 1877 (perhaps based on typology: As Christ was born but announced his messiahship thirty years later, so he would return thirty years after the close of the 1335 years).⁴²³

White, like other radical Adventists, denounced the mainline recalculation of the 2300 years on two grounds. First, the Adventist calculation of the 2300 years had been impeccable. To adjust the interpretation of Daniel 8 was therefore to cut the knot without solving it. (White did not mention, however, that Millerites had always cautioned that their calculation had a slight margin of error of several years, and that the majority were consistent in falling back on that possibility when Jesus did not return at the expected time. Apparently she disagreed with this option and believed the dates were solid.) Second, to renounce the terminus—October 22, 1844—was to deny that God had led the movement that hailed it. This White found impossible to do. Many Adventists felt that their experience in the Advent Movement—particularly in the last months or “the seventh-month movement” when the date of the Second Coming had been pinpointed—had been the brightest and holiest chapter in their Christian lives. Thus White was convinced that prophetic interpretation and personal experience meant that the majority Millerites were not honestly acknowledging their failure, but rejecting biblical truths and the guiding hand of Providence.⁴²⁴

White also disagreed strongly with any further attempts to date the Second Coming, regardless what Adventist group was in question: The mainline, the radicals, or the Sabbatarians, and later Seventh-day Adventists. While she did not reject time setting directly

⁴²⁰ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 94.

⁴²¹ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 116–17.

⁴²² Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 306.

⁴²³ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 307.

⁴²⁴ On White's reasons for retaining Miller's date prediction, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 405–8.

in print until 1851,⁴²⁵ the sentiment was already clear from the eschatology of her earliest published visions. During the persecution of the saints in the upcoming time of trouble, miraculous occurrences would convince all mankind that Jesus was coming soon. Then the voice of God the Father would announce the day and hour of Christ's coming, apparently just days or hours before.⁴²⁶ Inserting this event into eschatology implied nobody would know the exact timing of Christ's return until God himself would announce the immediate arrival of his Son.

There were several reasons for White's aversion to further time setting. First, she believed that the Adventist application of the prophetic periods in history was correct. All these prophetic periods had expired, the latest being the 2300 years which ended on October 22, 1844. There were therefore no prophetic periods that ended with Christ's return.⁴²⁷ Second, prophecy showed when Christ's return was close so that Christians might be prepared (Mt 24:33; Lk 21:28; 1 Thes 5:4; 2 Thes 2; Ti 2:12–13).⁴²⁸ Prophecy did, however, not disclose the exact timing of Jesus's return. Scripture was explicit on this point (Mt 24:26; Acts 1:6–8) and "warned" its readers "off the ground" of speculating about that which God had not revealed (De 29:29).⁴²⁹ Third, the fruit of date setting was demoralizing. It created unhealthy excitement, it would inevitably disappoint and discourage believers, and even ruin their faith, and it would cause the world to look at this fanaticism with contempt and be less inclined to study prophecy at all or become Christian.⁴³⁰ Fourth, in his wisdom, God kept the exact time secret, that believers might not fall into the temptation of putting off preparation for the future;

⁴²⁵ White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 48.

⁴²⁶ White, "To the Little Remnant," pars. 2, 8. James White claimed Ellen had advised against time setting already in 1845. At that time, James and others were expecting Christ on a certain date in 1845, and before the time expired, "she saw a vision, that we should be disappointed." James White, comments on Ellen G. White's previous vision, in *Word to the "Little Flock,"* 22; Burt, "Sabbatarian Adventism," 224. This part of the vision was, however, not printed, so James's claim cannot be substantiated.

⁴²⁷ White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 148; White, *Great Controversy 1884*, 290; Ellen G. White, *An Exposure of Fanaticism and Wickedness* (N.p.: N.p., 1885), 9; Ellen G. White to "sister," August 11, 1888, lt. 38, 1888, pars. 11, 16; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 456; Ellen G. White, "'It Is Not for You to Know the Times and the Seasons' [I]," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 22, 1892, 177–78; White, Ms 59, 1900, par. 24.

⁴²⁸ Ellen G. White, "Looking for That Blessed Hope," *Signs of the Times*, June 24, 1889, 370; White, *Great Controversy 1884*, 290–91; Ellen G. White, *Special Testimony on Education* (N.p.: N.p., 1897), 107.

⁴²⁹ Ellen G. White, "Preparation for Christ's Coming" (1879), in White, *Testimonies*, 4:307; White, "Looking for That Blessed Hope," 370; White, "'It Is Not' [I]," 177; Ellen G. White, "'It Is Not for You to Know the Times and the Seasons' (Continued) [II]," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 29, 1892, 193; Ellen G. White, "The Remnant Church Not Babylon (Concluded)," *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, September 12, 1893, 578; Ellen G. White, "Our Duty and Responsibility," *General Conference Session Bulletin*, October 1, 1896, 764, 767; White, *Special Testimony on*, 106–7; White, *Desire of Ages*, 632.

⁴³⁰ White, *Early Writings*, 75; White, "Preparation for Christ's Coming," 4:307–8; White, *Great Controversy 1884*, 290–91; White, "Biographical Sketch," 1:72; Ellen G. White to J. N. Loughborough, February 5, 1887, lt. 34, 1887, par. 10; Ellen G. White to Sister, pars. 13, 15–16; White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 456–57; White, "'It Is Not' [I]" 177; White, *Special Testimony on*, 106–7; Ellen G. White to Brother and Sister Belden, July 29, 1897, lt. 28, 1897, par. 15.

not knowing the time meant that believers would feel the urgency of preparing their soul and “watch and pray” as Christ had commanded them.⁴³¹

There were costs and benefits to rejecting further date settings. The benefits were that White could keep her belief in the Advent movement as divinely guided revival, and she could maintain its apocalyptic outlook by attaching it to undated events and processes (Christ’s final ministry in heaven and so forth), stripping it of the excitement and disappointment that would continue to be repeated by further date settings. There were also costs: Sabbatarian Adventism built its eschatology and church history on the Advent movement and its failed prediction. To make such a foundation secure, White and Sabbatarian Adventists exempted Miller’s prediction from their date setting critique: God, in his providence, had allowed Miller to proclaim a prophecy whose interpretation he only partially understood. God overruled the error concerning the terminus event of the 2300 years and used Millerism as a test for Christendom: Did Christians rejoice at the prospect of Christ’s return or did they dread his return? Thus White and Sabbatarian Adventists framed people’s rejection of Miller’s dated Second Coming as a rejection of premillennialism and the doctrine of the Second Advent. It was then God’s will that further Bible study would demonstrate the overlooked truth of Christ’s final ministry in heaven before his return so that Christians could complete their preparation. To outsiders, this exemption may seem strange, but White and

⁴³¹ “Since we know not the hour of Christ’s coming, we must live soberly and godly in this present world, ‘looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.’” White, “Looking for That Blessed Hope,” 370. “The times and the seasons God has put in his own power, and why has not God given us this knowledge?—Because we would not make a right use of it if he did. . . . Jesus has told his disciples to ‘watch,’ but not for definite time. . . . You will not be able to say that he will come in one, two, or five years, neither are you to put off his coming by stating that it may not be for ten or twenty years.” White, “‘It Is Not’ [I],” 178. “God gives no man a message that it will be five or ten or twenty years before this earth’s history shall close. If it were forty or one hundred years, the Lord would not authorize men to proclaim it. He would not give any living being an excuse for delaying the preparation for His appearing. He would have no one say, as did the unfaithful servant, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming’ [Matthew 24:48] for this leads to reckless neglect of opportunities and privileges to prepare for that great day. Every soul who claims to be a servant of God is called to do His service as if every day might be the last.” Ellen G. White, Ms. 32a, 1896, par. 4. “We are nearing the great day of God. The signs are fulfilling. And yet we have no message to tell us of the day and hour of Christ’s appearing. The Lord has wisely concealed this from us that we may always be in a state of expectancy and preparation for the second appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven.” Ellen G. White to Brother and Sister Belden, par. 17. See also Ellen G. White to “Sister,” par. 17; White, “‘It Is Not’ [II],” 178; White, “‘It Is Not’ [II],” 194; Ellen G. White, “‘It Is Not for You to Know the Times and the Seasons’ (Concluded) [III],” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 5, 1892, 209.

The imminence of Christ’s return *per se* was not meant to be the only motivation for piety, but Christ himself, as White pointed out: “One brother said to me, ‘Sr. White, do you think the Lord will come in ten years?’ ‘What difference does it make to you whether He shall come in two, four, or ten years?’ ‘Why,’ said he, ‘I think I would do differently in some things than I now do if I knew the Lord were to come in ten years.’ ‘What would you do?’ said I. ‘Why,’ said he, ‘I would sell my property and begin to search the Word of God and try to warn the people and get them to prepare for His coming, and I would plead with God that I might be ready to meet Him.’ Then said I, ‘If you know that the Lord were not coming for twenty years, you would live differently[?]’ Said he, ‘I think I would.’ Then said I, ‘You know your Master’s will, and it is your duty to do just as though you knew that He were coming in twenty years.’ . . . How selfish was that expression that he would live a different life if he knew His Lord were to come in ten years. Why, Enoch walked with God 300 years, and this is a lesson for us, that we shall walk with God every day, and we are not safe unless we are waiting and watching.” Ellen G. White, Ms 10, 1886, July 24, 1886, pars. 12–13.

other Sabbatarians were convinced that such an exemption was justified by the fruits. Millerism had resulted in revival in all the churches at the time, whereas subsequent date settings had different and detrimental results. Thus White enshrined the apparent cost of exempting Millerism from her time setting criticism by giving it a special status in church history.

Christ Returned Spiritually in 1844 (Spiritualizing Radical Adventism)

In 1845, some radical Adventists solved the tension between what they saw as correct calculation but a non-event, by spiritualizing the terminus event of the 2300 years: Jesus had come, as expected, but in a spiritual way, into the hearts of his waiting children. Thus they could believe that both the calculation of the 2300 years and their terminus event—the cleansing of the sanctuary (Dn 8:14) at Christ’s return—had been correctly interpreted.

White rejected this interpretative alternative as well, again for many reasons. First, radicals had already solved the tension between text and happening by reinterpreting what Daniel 8 said would happen on October 22, 1844: There was a heavenly sanctuary which Christ had ministered in as the true Priest of his people since his ascension, and its cleansing was the final phase of Christ’s ministry there. Spiritualizing radicalism undermined this reinterpretation. If heaven, the future kingdom, Christ, and even God, were all “spiritual,” i.e. not actual and distinct realities, but rather metaphors for a mystical experience, then obviously there was no need for a physical sanctuary located in an actual heaven. Second, spiritualizing the return of Christ and his reign was more in line with Christian mysticism than mainstream Protestantism. It undid a fundamental doctrine of traditional Christianity—the second Advent—and went against Millerite insistence that this doctrine should be taken as literally pointing to Christ’s personal and visible return to reign as such over his literal kingdom here on earth. Spiritualizing radicals applied the same interpretation to other basic Christian teachings: The personality of the Father and the Son was denied.⁴³² Third, since spiritualizing views led away from Scripture, they also led away from piety. During the years of the fallout of the Millerite failure, White spent much time opposing both the teachings and practices of spiritualizing radicalism.⁴³³ She would ever after oppose anything that came remotely close to such views.⁴³⁴

⁴³² White expressed her consternation that “the spiritual view took away all the glory of heaven, and that in many minds the throne of David and the lovely person of Jesus have been burned up in the fire of Spiritualism.” White, *Christian Experience and Views*, 64. Her critique on this issue may have gone too far. Believing in a spiritual return of Christ did not per se deny the physical return. Postmillennials in general believed that Christ would arrive spiritually at the commencement of the millennium and physically at its close. Perhaps some spiritualizing radicals were reverting back to the commonly accepted postmillennialism, though many of them, granted, spiritualized entire doctrines.

⁴³³ Burt, “Sabbatarian Adventism,” 146–47, 153, 214–21, 260–64, 270–71.

⁴³⁴ A case in point is Dr. John Kellogg’s panentheism in 1903. See White, *White*, 6:280–306. White felt that his emphasis on God’s immanence undermined his transcendence, and in this way she viewed his teachings as similar to those of the spiritualizing Adventists in the late 1840s.

Preterist or Critical Interpretation of Daniel 8

White was familiar with preterism. It had offered a sustained criticism of Millerism during the entire Advent movement. It is not known how much she read of Millerite publications during the movement, but she certainly learned of preterism from the written and spoken discourse for and against Adventism. While she did know something of biblical criticism and liberal theology, she consciously refused to become intimately acquainted with these disciplines. Her personal library contained no work on biblical criticism or liberal theology.⁴³⁵

Preterist critique of Adventist prophetic interpretation held little appeal for Adventists, because it not only rejected Millerite and Adventist interpretation of prophecy, but they felt it did not offer anything in its place, except, depending on its promoter, either postmillennial eschatology—which Adventists believed was a wrong reading of Scripture—or absolute preterism which stated that most or all prophecy had been fulfilled and that the future was unknown and probably very long. For traditional Christians, preterism might point out perplexities in prophetic interpretation, but even this had little bite, since it was the nature of doubt to question everything. This Adventists saw as the true nature of biblical criticism: It was learned unbelief. On this Adventists reflected the sentiment of the larger part of the American population in the nineteenth century. Traditional Christians saw biblical criticism and liberal theology as the modern mask of infidelity, which barely hid the face of Unitarianism, Universalism, Deism, and “German unbelief.” And while “higher criticism” (as biblical criticism was called) advanced steadily, it would not win over American academia until the turn of the century.⁴³⁶

It is therefore unsurprising that White reviled and avoided biblical criticism. The presumption of fallible humans to sit in judgment over their divine Judge and his Word, declaring parts or the whole of the Bible uninspired, showed their pride and blindness: They did not realize that God was infinitely wiser than they, no matter their educational attainments, so that they would never fathom the depths of the Word of God.⁴³⁷ Their critical attitude towards the Bible reminded White of the scholars in the days of Christ and his apostles, who “disputed over insignificant technicalities” in the text while they “practically

⁴³⁵ Warren H. Johns, Tim Poirier, and Ron Graybill, compilers, *A Bibliography of Ellen G. White's Private and Office Libraries*, 3rd ed. (Ellen G. White Estate, 1993), <http://www.ellenwhitecenter.org/sites/default/files/bibliotheque-privee-ellen-white.pdf>.

⁴³⁶ White died in 1915 and biblical criticism was still not the undisputed academic norm in the New World. After the Fundamentalist–Modernist Controversy of the 1920s and 1930s, much of academia was won over to modern biblical criticism and liberal theology, yet not entirely, and therefore split. Conservative colleges and universities, some of which were founded because of the rupture, continued conservative academia. On their twentieth century history, see Adam Laats, *Fundamentalist U: Keeping the Faith in American Higher Education* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). For a summary of the rise of biblical criticism and the early Adventist response or lack thereof, see Kaiser, “Trust and Doubt,” 79–86.

⁴³⁷ Ellen G. White, Ms. 62, 1893, c. 1893, par. 8; Ellen G. White, Ms. 43a, 1894, October 28, 1894, par. 12; Ellen G. White to Arthur G. Daniells and W. D. Salisbury, January 21, 1897, lt. 48, 1897, pars. 36–37; Ellen G. White, “The Perils of the Last Days,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, March 16, 1897, 161; White, *Desire of Ages*, 257–58; Ellen G. White, Ms. 125, 1901, December 9, 1901, par. 20.

denied the most essential truths.”⁴³⁸ The result was that modern scholars obscured the plain meaning of Scripture⁴³⁹ or adjusted it to their preconceived beliefs.⁴⁴⁰ The “dissecting, conjecturing, reconstructing”⁴⁴¹ did not explain the Bible, but by it “the word of God [was] wrested, divided, and distorted.”⁴⁴² The dismissal of divine inspiration and dissecting the text was “destroying faith in the Bible as a divine revelation.”⁴⁴³ Not seeing the Bible for the saving Word it was, the critics and their followers could not benefit from its saving power.⁴⁴⁴ With no Word from God, and a ruined faith, God’s salvation and his law were set aside, and the gate was opened to iniquity and false belief systems.⁴⁴⁵ White did teach that Adventist ministers should be capable to answer the most difficult questions raised by their opponents,⁴⁴⁶ but she did not see apologetics as her work. She also believed that the best remedy against biblical criticism was to uplift the truths of the Bible and manifest their power in a genuine, Christian piety.⁴⁴⁷ This meant that White barely engaged any of the preterist criticism that had been leveled at the Adventist interpretation of Daniel 8.

The traditional belief in the Bible as the Word of God did not mean that White did not see at least some of the issues that preterism raised, but rather that she saw them in a different light. Paradoxically, this meant that when the text seemed to go counter belief, it did not lead to doubt but instead became an even stronger proof for the necessity of faith. When her early apocalyptic statements were said to be wrong, since decades had passed since then, she replied: “Am I accused of falsehood because time has continued longer than my testimony seemed to indicate? How is it with the testimonies of Christ and His disciples? Were they deceived?” She then cited apocalyptic New Testament verses that sounded as if the end was imminent (1 Cor 7:29–30; Rm 13:12; Rv 1:3; 22:6–7). The implied answer to her question was that of course Christ and the Apostles were not deceived, and that while these texts *seemed* to present too much imminence, they were nevertheless true.⁴⁴⁸ Preterists would of

⁴³⁸ White, *Desire of Ages*, 257. See also White, Ms. 62, 1893, par. 8; White, *Desire of Ages*, 258; Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1905), 142; White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 473–74.

⁴³⁹ Ellen G. White, Ms. 53, 1898, May 11, 1898, par. 9.

⁴⁴⁰ Ellen G. White to Arthur G. Daniells and W. D. Salisbury, pars. 36–37; White, *Desire of Ages*, 257–58; White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 474.

⁴⁴¹ White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 474; White, *Education*, 227. See also White, “The Perils of the Last Days,” 161; White, *Desire of Ages*, 258.

⁴⁴² White, “The Perils of the Last Days,” 161.

⁴⁴³ White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 474; White, *Education*, 227.

⁴⁴⁴ White, *Desire of Ages*, 258; White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 474; White, *Education*, 227.

⁴⁴⁵ Ellen G. White to Arthur G. Daniells and W. D. Salisbury, par. 36; White, *Desire of Ages*, 258; White, *Ministry of Healing*, 142; White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 473–74.

⁴⁴⁶ Ellen G. White, “The Mysteries of the Bible a Proof of Its Inspiration” (1889), in White, *Testimonies*, 5:707–8; Ellen G. White to John H. Kellogg, December 30, 1886, lt. 6, 1886, pars. 10–11.

⁴⁴⁷ White, Ms 53, 1898, par. 9.

⁴⁴⁸ Ellen G. White, Ms 4, 1883, pars. 46–49. White went even further and seems to have suggested that the apocalyptic statements in the New Testament had been conditional, just like hers were: “The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me. It is true that time has continued longer than we expected in the early days of this message. Our Saviour did not appear as soon as we hoped. But has the word of the Lord failed? Never! It should be remembered that the promises and the threatenings of God are alike conditional.” White, Ms 4, 1883, par. 50. If that was her meaning, then,

course have pointed to these texts as a former example of the same mistaken apocalypticism White adopted; but she used these very texts to defend her apocalypticism. Her reasoning shows that she rejected the preterist argument out of hand because of her beliefs about the Bible. On other occasions, she referred to textual difficulties as allowed by the wisdom of God, and not worthy of much consideration.⁴⁴⁹

The cost of rejecting biblical criticism was that White staked her theology on traditional Christian beliefs about the Bible. This limited the grounds for dialogue with “unbelievers” and also the apologetics of Adventism. These costs were not perceived during White’s lifetime, for it was regarded as a virtue not to parley with skepticism and try to satisfy all doubts. During her lifelong ministry, White could use traditional answers to explain textual obscurities and theological dilemmas to the satisfaction, for the most part, of her audience. She affirmed that perceived textual and theological problems did not cast a shadow upon the inspiration of the Infallible Word, but rather originated in human frailty: The lack of spirituality could dim the perception of divine truths, the human mind, even when willing, could only partially comprehend divine thoughts, or unbelief and desire to sin failed or refused to see and know that which God had revealed.⁴⁵⁰

4.5.4 Daniel 8 and Christian Practice

With its interpretation of Daniel 8:14 as the commencement of the antitypical Day of Atonement in 1844, Seventh-day Adventism brought the Judgment into the present. According to White, all the sentiments and thoughts associated traditionally with that event—sobering awe, sincere searching of heart, and earnest turning to the Lord—were to characterize the lives of the believers in these end-times. The last and awful Judgment was already in session, and he from whose eyes nothing could be hidden, was weighing the lives of each human soul in the balances of the sanctuary above. As the people of Israel fasted and afflicted their souls on the Day of Atonement, while the sanctuary was being cleansed of their sins, so in the antitype all Christians should deal honestly with their own hearts, make sure

as far as I am aware, she did not expound on that alternative scenario and what that would have meant for the fulfillment of prophecy. See also: “I have also been pronounced a deceiver because I have said, ‘The Lord will soon come; get ready, get ready that ye may be found waiting, watching, and loving his appearing.’ But in the Revelation I read this statement [Rv 22:12, 7; 3:11 cited]. Was the One who bore this testimony a deceiver because the ‘quickly’ has been protracted longer than our finite minds could anticipate? It is the faithful and true Witness that speaks. His words are verity and truth.” Ellen G. White to “Sister,” par. 18. See also Ellen G. White, “Cast Not Away Your Confidence,” *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 31, 1888, 481–82.

⁴⁴⁹ “Many feel that a responsibility rests upon them to explain every seeming difficulty in the Bible in order to meet the cavils of skeptics and infidels. But in trying to explain that which they but imperfectly understand, they are in danger of confusing the minds of others in reference to points that are clear and easy to be understood. This is not our work. Nor should we lament that these difficulties exist, but accept them as permitted by the wisdom of God. It is our duty to receive His word, which is plain on every point essential to the salvation of the soul, and practice its principles in our life, teaching them to others both by precept and example.” White, “Mysteries of the Bible,” 5:705–6.

⁴⁵⁰ On White’s views of doubt, see Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, 2nd ed. (Battle Creek, MI: Review & Herald, 1896), 105–13 (= ch. 12).

they had truly accepted Christ's salvation and repented of their sins. In the Judgment, forgiven sins would be blotted out, and believers on earth were to participate in this work by making sure their sins had been laid on Christ and were not unforgiven, unrepented of, and ongoing in their lives. Thus the present Judgment called for piety as the traditional Judgment Day did—only it did it continuously and now.⁴⁵¹

In the Judgment, the lives of the professed believers in Christ throughout all time were judged in accordance with the law of God, the Ten Commandments. This brought the standard of piety to the view of those who would be judged. It also brought to view the fourth commandment of the seventh-day Sabbath, which was still in effect. Believers were to learn to keep the Sabbath in its fullness.⁴⁵² Christians were, however, neither to keep the Ten Commandments in their own might, nor to hope that obedience was the grounds of their salvation, nor to think faith abolished the law.⁴⁵³ It was Catholicism that taught people “could be saved by their merits” or “saved in their sins.”⁴⁵⁴ To break the law was what constituted sin, and Christ had died to save sinners from sin, which meant that that he would not only forgive their sins, but also bring their hearts into harmony with the law. It was therefore a Christian duty, made more urgent by the Judgment, to co-operate with God in the work of sanctification.⁴⁵⁵

The Judgment also brought Christ's final work to view, and therefore the whole work of salvation. Christ's work in heaven was not an addition to his sacrifice, but its ultimate application. Christ had offered forgiveness as a promise before Golgotha, he had made it possible by his death on the Cross, and had administered it to his believers as their Intercessor in heaven, and as their Advocate in Judgment he would ratify their full salvation by blotting out their sins from their records and their hearts. They would then be free from the guilt and power of sin, and would be ready for translation into his kingdom. The whole salvific process was foreshadowed in the daily and annual ritual of the sanctuary. White therefore said that the Judgment revealed “atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful Mediator.”⁴⁵⁶ Thus the Judgment

⁴⁵¹ On the solemnity of the Judgment and its call for soul-searching, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 486–88, 601.

⁴⁵² For White's views on practical Sabbathkeeping, see Ellen G. White, “Proper Observance of the Sabbath” (1867) in White, *Testimonies*, 1:531–33; Ellen G. White, “How Shall We Keep the Sabbath?” (1871), in White, *Testimonies*, 2:582–85; Ellen G. White, “The Observance of the Sabbath” (1890), in White, *Testimonies*, 6:349–68.

⁴⁵³ “There are two errors against which the children of God—particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace—especially need to guard. The first, already dwelt upon, is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy. The opposite and no less dangerous error is that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.” White, *Steps to Christ*, 59–60.

⁴⁵⁴ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 572.

⁴⁵⁵ On the role of the law in salvation, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 461–78 (= ch. 27). On the practical aspect of the Judgment, see White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 479–91 (= ch. 28)

⁴⁵⁶ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 488.

was supposed to lead people to seek their Savior. White urged believers to meditate on Christ's death and forgiveness regularly.⁴⁵⁷

According to White, the Judgment also brought the great controversy between Christ and Satan⁴⁵⁸ and the issues at stake in it to view. The practical effect of this, as has been noted, was to tie beliefs distinctive to Seventh-day Adventism into the heart of Christianity, such as Sabbath-keeping. The great controversy motif manifested itself in a more general sense as well. First, through it White endeavored to portray God and his law in an attractive light, as seen in the previous section, and so to encourage obedience. Second, emphasizing the reality of Satan—in the face of growing skepticism within Protestantism of his existence—served as another motivation for piety. The realization that they had to contend with a malignant, powerful foe, believers were to be on the alert and rely on their Savior. They were to understand that the great controversy was happening in all areas of life⁴⁵⁹ and see temptations as not simply circumstances of life but as active attacks from the devil.⁴⁶⁰

The Judgment and the concluding great controversy also called for evangelizing. Since these events were not believed by other Christians and yet concerned them, and the entire world, it was the duty of Seventh-day Adventists to share these truths with others.⁴⁶¹ All their warnings about what was going to happen on earth—the apostasies and so on—was to direct people's attention to Christ's work in heaven.⁴⁶²

4.5.5 Conclusion

Daniel 8 was an important prophecy to White. It dated the commencement of the three-phased Judgment and thus served as a framework for all unfilled prophecies which would take place

⁴⁵⁷ "It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross." White, *Desire of Ages*, 83.

⁴⁵⁸ "The sanctuary in heaven . . . opens to view the plan of redemption, bringing us down to the very close of time, and revealing the triumphant issue of the contest between righteousness and sin." White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 488.

⁴⁵⁹ "The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found." White, *Education*, 190.

⁴⁶⁰ This can be seen in the literary structure of the Great Controversy. White spent three chapters on establishing the existence of Satan, which were then followed by the chapter "Snares of Satan," delineating various common temptations as his special devices to ensnare believers in the end-times. White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 490–530 (= chs. 29–32).

⁴⁶¹ White, *Great Controversy* (1911), 488–89.

⁴⁶² White described this connection in the following way: Her angel interpreter showed her the third angel and explained its message. He then "pointed to the heavenly sanctuary" because "the minds of all who embrace this message [of the third angel] are directed to the most holy place, where Jesus stands before the ark, making His final intercession for all those for whom mercy still lingers and for those who have ignorantly broken the law of God." White, *Great Controversy* (1858), 163.

during the Judgment until its close. The remaining prophecies described both what took place in heaven and on earth during the Judgment. On earth, God's people, which were in bad spiritual condition (Laodicea in Rv 3; still unsealed, Rv 7:1–4), would experience a great revival and preach the final Gospel warning (the three angels in Rv 14) in full power to a corrupt Church and the world (Rv 18:1–4). Satan's agencies would try to counteract this message. The Papacy, which was abolished in 1798 would eventually gain all its former power (deadly wound of the first beast healed). The United States (the second beast in Revelation 13) would give the churches so much political power that they would transform from being a democracy with separated church and state into a new religio-political power (the image of the beast, Rv 13). The transformed States, with the aid of the Papacy, would enforce national blue laws in honor of the papal Sunday (and thus enforce the mark of the beast, Rv 13). Spiritist miracles would take place to convince people that God was sanctioning these laws (Rv 13:13–14). All nations would follow suit by enforcing similar laws; all would decide whether to follow the laws of God or the traditions of men. Christ would then finish his ministry in heaven. The seven plagues would fall on the wicked (Rv 15–16), Christ would return (Rv 19) and take all the saints to heaven for the second phase of the Judgment (the millennium, Rv 20). After that he would return to earth with the righteous in New Jerusalem (Rv 21), and execute the judgment over the wicked (the third judgment phase).

Daniel 8 was also crucial to White's theology in the sense that it provided her with her central theme: The great controversy between Christ and Satan over God's law. White saw the Judgment as the last chapter in this controversy. From the very beginning of evil, Satan had questioned God's character, government, and law, and portrayed God as evil, which manifested itself in an unjust and unloving law. The law, however, was just and good, and was manifest as such in God's dealings with mankind, particularly in the life and death of Christ. Christ showed that the law could be kept, that it was good, and by dying in place of the sinner, that the law could not be changed to cancel sin. White's most important works were on this redemption history: While she published the first work in 1858, she continued working on this theme till the year of his death, with the final work being published posthumously. This great controversy motif sprung from the belief that Judgment had begun and that mankind was already reigned before the bar of God, to be judged according to his law. So while White did not write extensively on the prophecies per se, the main themes of her theology had vital roots in her interpretation of Daniel 8.

Various theological considerations helped White to rule out alternative interpretations of Daniel 8. As an Adventists, she had already rejected preterism, and that became her life-long stance. An appreciation of the religious experience during the Millerite movement, and an unshakable trust in their prophetic interpretation, caused White to rule out acknowledging the prediction as a failure as most Adventists did, who continued to set future dates for the Second Coming. Instead, she sought an alternative interpretation that would salvage the

prediction while also moving forward theologically since Christ had not yet returned. A spiritualizing radical view that claimed that Christ had returned spiritually in 1844 went against the literal tone of Millerism, and therefore did not appeal to White, who further saw it as connected to fanatical behavior. White also rejected combining further date setting with her new interpretation, because she believed that the Millerite experience had been a unique test; any further date setting would be fanaticism that would tend to undermine the focus on Christ's ongoing ministry in heaven.

White's interpretation of Daniel 8 also informed her redemption history. The new interpretation which saw the close of the 2300 years as the commencement of a three-phased Judgment, involved other doctrinal distinctives, such as Sabbath-keeping and mortalism. New doctrines call for a new look at redemption history, since traditionally Protestants believed that there was one true faith, that had been lost during the medieval period, and which had been restored in Protestantism (at a different time and place, depending on the historian's denomination). White therefore re-read redemption history in the light of the new doctrines of Sabbatarian Adventism: The three-phased Judgment, the seventh-day Sabbath, mortalism, and so forth. She followed a traditional view of the Roman persecutions, the period of compromise, the medieval period, and the Reformation, with certain additions. First, Christians had been Sabbath-keepers and mortalists, and these truths were lost in the apostasy. Second, the Reformation did not end in the sixteenth century, but was to continue to the Second Coming: First through the magisterial and some radical Reformers, then through the Puritans, the Pilgrims, and finally through Millerites and Sabbatarian Adventists. This meant that Sabbatarian Adventism was not a Protestant denomination that varied from others; instead, they were *the* Protestant denomination, who in the spirit of former heroes of faith continued re-discovering the original faith of the Bible, the law of God and its role in particular. Third, by reinterpreting the Judgment and equating the Ten Commandments as the human adaptation of the eternal, unchangeable law of God, White imbued Adventism with a cosmic significance: The Millerite movement had hailed the commencement of the Judgment, and Sabbatarian Adventists reminded Christendom of the nature and role of the law by which all would be judged. Remaining eschatology would in fact consist of Christendom's controversy over the Sabbath, again making Sabbatarian Adventism integral to history.

White's reinterpretation of Daniel 8 was intended as a call to urgent piety: The Judgment was already in session, and while the date of Christ's return would remain unknown, his appearance was imminent. The first phase of the Judgment would conclude before his arrival and determine who was saved and not saved. It was therefore of the greatest importance for Christians to familiarize themselves with Christ's final intercession going on in the heavenly temple, and its attendant truths, such as Sabbath, so that they would benefit from his ministry and be saved. Christians were to understand the cosmic controversy over the law of God and therefore resist the countless attempts of the devil to get them to transgress it, whether through acceptance of the papal Sunday, antinomianism, reliance on self, or the belief in salvation by

works. They were also to proclaim these final truths to Christendom and the world and encourage people to protect their democratic and religious rights and freedoms, which would soon be abolished. Thus the Judgment gave the seventh-day Sabbath a manifold eschatological significance and underscored the importance of keeping it.

4.6 Conclusion

The historical dynamics at work in White's interpretation were several. First, White's personal religious experience was bound up with the Advent movement. Though she grew up in a Methodist household, her full conversion experience occurred after she heard Miller preach and believed she needed to get ready for the Second Coming and the Judgment. She remembered her participation in the Millerite movement for the rest of her life as the happiest year of her life. Second, the failure of Miller's prediction was a traumatic experience for the believers, who had wholeheartedly believed Christ would return on the set date. It seemed an impossibility to reject the divine guidance of their experience and their clear prophetic calculation without leaving faith altogether, so some believers, White among them, sought an alternative interpretation that would reconcile Millerism with the failed prediction. This attempt turned into radical Adventism, centered on a reinterpretation of Daniel 8. Third, in the process of reinterpreting Daniel 8, believers were obviously looking for answers and a new way forward. The doctrinal openness of the general Adventist believer—which had already resulted in discussions about heterodox views such as mortalism and seventh-day Sabbath during the movement—, combined with the importance of finding meaning in the failed prediction, resulted in incorporating these heterodox views into the reinterpretation. This gave rise to the Sabbatarian Adventists (who, after the period under discussion, became the Seventh-day Adventists.) Fourth, Sabbatarianism and abolitionism darkened the already negative view Sabbatarian Adventists held about the United States: Not only had the churches rejected the ongoing Reformation when they closed their ears to Miller; Protestants refused to even keep all the Ten Commandments because of Catholic Sunday tradition; and not only were there already some blue laws in the United States, in the 1850s the government produced compromise legislation on the issue of slavery instead of abolishing it altogether. This impacted the eschatological views Sabbatarian Adventists held of their own country and of the importance of civil and religious freedom.

White's character also factored into the development of the new interpretation of Daniel 8. A prophet's mantle, notwithstanding the visionary's self-description to the contrary, speaks of self-confidence on some level, and a pioneering spirit. It is not a coincidence that while most of the pioneering theological thinkers of radical Adventism left the project, the only remaining group had a prophet among their initial leaders. It stands to reason that had a visionary like White not arisen, radical Adventism would have died out as a whole. White was also persistent. Despite financial and family hardships, she was determined to devote her life to the cause she had chosen and to advance it theologically. She was certain that the

reinterpretation was true, and that it was not only important, but that it must be followed in practice because of the urgency of the times.

The textual dynamics in White's reinterpretation were several. First, White endorsed and advocated the extended typological reading of the cleansing of the sanctuary. The type was still the Day of Atonement, but the antitype was not the Second Coming, but rather the Judgment, which encompassed all of eschatology from 1844 to the restoration of all things. Second, in this reinterpretation Daniel 8 was harmonized further with the other vision: The Judgment scene in chapter 7 indeed portrayed the cleansing of the sanctuary predicted in Daniel 8:14. Third, this extended the vision, which did not end in 1844, but pointed towards the close of human history. Fourth, White's prophetic authority may be seen as an extraordinary commentary on the text—and therefore as a textual or hermeneutic device—for she claimed to have actually seen that Christ entered the Most Holy Place, the Judgment in session, and so forth.

The theological dynamics that played a role in White's reinterpretation were several. Some of these have already been mentioned in the review of the theological factors. First, White felt that to acknowledge Miller's prediction as an entire failure would have repudiated the religious experience she and other Millerites had during the movement as spurious and the divine guidance they had felt in their prophetic interpretation and proclamation as a delusion. This she was not willing to do. Second, White saw no fault in the prophetic calculation, and this overruled the non-event in 1844 as a concern for reevaluating it. Third, White imbued Adventist heterodoxy, such as Sabbath-keeping and mortalism, with eschatological significance: These and other doctrines were truths that had been overlooked and their absence had prevented God's people from being fully prepared for the Judgment. Fourth, White developed Arminianism into the so-called great controversy motif that consisted of the doctrinal circle of God's law and government, and human freedom. The time of Judgment was a time to become aware of the fundamental issues at stake in mankind's salvation so one could accept Christ and reject Satan. Thus White wove a pattern of theodicy from the threads of Daniel 8's new meaning. Using that as a paradigm for redemption history, Adventism was seen as a call to mankind to finish the ongoing Reformation so as to be found prepared in the Judgment and ready for Christ's imminent return.

White's interpretation and prophetic authority also served as a lid on any further speculation about the meaning of Daniel 8. By claiming that all prophetic periods had been fulfilled and that the pre-Advent Judgment would soon be over, White ensured a sustained apocalyptic theology, while she also stifled further historicizing of Daniel 8. Taking the chapter further or reinterpreting it would be an acknowledgement of Miller's failure and thus the undoing of Adventism's significance (and of White's prophetic mission). It remains for the future to see whether further historicizing of Daniel 8 will take place, and whether that takes place within Adventism or within a new group.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Dynamics in the Authors's Interpretation of Daniel 8

5.1.1 Historical Dynamics

The historical dynamics at play in the historicizing reading of Daniel 8 in the interpretation of the four authors can be summarized as the macro-influences of their general historical context, particular historical events, religious experience, historical research, and personality traits and character.

The historical context of the four authors lent its hue to their interpretation of prophecy. Some influential elements in their historical surroundings were mentioned in the previous chapters. There was great dissatisfaction with the Roman-Catholic Church in Luther's day and she became part of his reading of the chapter. Newton's systematic approach to interpretation of prophecy, as well as his antitrinitarian views, reflected the dawning of the Enlightenment. Miller's premillennialism ran counter the ruling eschatology of his day, postmillennialism, and yet it reflected, in its own way, the widespread sentiment that humanity was on the threshold of momentous changes. His insistence that the Bible and its prophecies must be a clear, harmonious whole also showed Enlightenment influences, Miller himself being a former Deist. The fact that many other non-Millerite expositors reached similar conclusions on both sides of the Atlantic in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century surely also points towards some common historical context. White claimed the prophetic mantle, and interestingly more people did so in the first half of the nineteenth century than in the century before. Cosmic pluralism (belief in extraterrestrial life) had become somewhat common in her time, and it played a crucial role in her overall theology. So did Arminianism, which had gained ground in the United States with the rise of Methodism and had even colored American Calvinism. It is also worthy of notice that White and her fellow Sabbatarian Adventists incorporated the United States into its set of eschatological antagonists on the eve of the Civil War. While that war was unexpected, it was preceded by a rising tension between the North and the South, and between abolitionists and pro-slavery; Burton has found a direct link between new slavery-laws and the earliest Sabbatarian Adventist eschatological conjectures concerning the United States. And last but not least, American Protestant attitudes towards Catholicism were still very negative at the time and are reflected in Adventist eschatology.

It is clear that the interpretation the four authors reached bears the tincture of their times. Some caveats must be mentioned, however, concerning the influence of historical context. First, by definition any human is primarily influenced by the time and place in which they live, meaning that all are; yet people have different opinions, so in that sense historical context is not very helpful in explaining different opinions. Overemphasizing outside influence also reduces people into passive recipients, and surely one is not only conditioned by history, one also conditions history. Newton's research methods reflected the direction of the tide, and yet he also influenced the tide by being one of the early figures of the

Enlightenment. This web of causality makes it often hard to differentiate between cause and effect; in human affairs, such distinction is probably often impossible. All that one can do is to point out patterns in the web and accept them as interactive. It is clear that the four authors reflected their milieu in their interpretation of prophecy; at the same time, their interpretation was also countercultural. Luther, Miller, and White all caused a schism in their respective religious landscapes, and Newton would have done the same had he gone public with his antitrinitarian-prophetic opinions. Something more specific than the general historical context is needed to explain individual interpretations.

Specific historical events may have influenced the interpretation of the four authors, though it is of course hard to distinguish where historical influences crystallize into historical events, or the latter blur into the former. In the particular case of the four authors and Daniel 8, however, it proved hard to pinpoint any specific historical events as causative. (In Newton's case, of course, this difficulty arises from the fact that it is hard to date the development of his views.) The picture changes completely when historical events are narrowed down to events in which the authors themselves participated, i.e. their personal experience. Since all the authors were religious and inhabited a religious or semi-religious world, this can be narrowed down even further to their religious experience.

Events associated with the religious experience, or events that constituted that experience, were the historical events that influenced the interpretation of the authors the most. Luther's budding new reformed theology, and his conflict with Roman-Catholic orthodoxy caused him great cognitive dissonance. He resolved this paradox between one faith (which he believed he had found) and one church (which he believed was in the wrong) by casting the Pope as the Antichrist. The expectation of a future Antichrist or one even already on the rise or already come (Islam) was standard orthodox eschatology and Luther used this framework but put the rise of the Antichrist already in the past with the rise of the Papacy. Thus he reinterpreted Daniel 8 and other antichrist prophecies in accordance with his new understanding of the Papacy, which itself was molded initially by his personal religious experience. Newton's religious experience and theological quest is shrouded in undatable, sourceless fog. From the manuscripts that remain, it is clear that antitrinitarianism was foundational to his religious convictions, since it was the key to the first doctrine of all, the doctrine of God.

Antitrinitarianism was stigmatic enough in seventeenth century England to make one a social outcast, and to lose one's position, which most certainly would have happened to Newton, had he made his beliefs public. Newton's antitrinitarianism became the substance of his reading of Daniel 8. When Miller found Christianity again after a decade of unhappy Deism, it was crucial to him to be able to demonstrate that the Bible was a clear, harmonious whole. It seems that the prophecies were prominent in what Miller felt constituted the obscurity of the Bible when he abandoned faith; consequently, their interpretation must have been pressing when he set out to read the Bible systematically as a new Christian. This quest continued even after he had been satisfied, so that his prophetic arithmetic was not a way to prove that the

Bible was clear, but emerged from the conviction that it was indeed clear. This distinction is subtle and perhaps not even necessary, because in either case Miller's interpretation of prophecy grew out of his personal quest for truth. White also went through a long conversion experience, in which Miller's prediction of 1844 as the year in which Christ would return played a crucial part, as well as White's participation in Adventism leading up to the most popular date-prediction of October 22, 1844. White's visions, if not a conscious fabrication, must also have been a deciding experience for her (whatever one makes of such a visionary experience). The struggle or controversy that any innovative religious belief causes deeply impressed White: The controversy between Millerites and "unbelievers," between radical Adventists and the majority Adventists, between Sabbatarian Adventists and all the other Adventists and most other Christians, and so forth. Incorporating struggle into the basic fabric of her theology, along with the distinctive doctrines of her emerging group, ensured that her religious experience—from the days of Miller to the dawning of Seventh-day Adventists—was theologically significant. In summary, all the authors had in common that their interpretation of Daniel 8 incorporated beliefs that were the golden thread of their religious experience. Their reinterpretation of Daniel 8 was intertwined with the validation of their experience; to renounce the one was to renounce the other. Religious experience is of course historical events, but its roots are not only found in the sequence of events and the historical milieu. It draws sap from theology and hermeneutic. These will be discussed under their respective sections.

There are some significant differences though in the religious experiences when viewed as a historical dynamic. Luther's religious experience was in many senses very public. It was also very famous and known. The same can be said to a lesser extent about the religious experience of the Millerites—the failure of their prediction was just as public and highlighted as their movement had been. This is quite different from the religious experiences of Newton and Miller: They arrived at their new understanding of Daniel 8 in their private lives. Luther arrived at it in the spotlight of history and White, in part, after the movement which she was a member of met with apparent failure. Another difference is White's visions. In Christianity, such a claimed experience is pregnant with meaning and consequences. Though Luther and Miller believed dreams could be significant in the Christian's experience, they saw claims to visions as fanatical. White's experience is therefore quite unique in this regard among the four authors.

There is yet another dynamic which is related to personal religious experience: Personality traits and individual character. For the present purposes, this dissertation trimmed human psychology down to four ways in which the author's personality interacted with Daniel 8: Certainty, importance, urgency, and action. Luther, Miller, and White were fully convinced in their reading of the chapter. It was a clear prophecy, or clear enough to be certain of its main contours and message. Newton here lagged behind, being uncertain on the precise identity and timing of the final Roman horn. All four authors felt the passage carried an important

truth. Luther, Miller, and White furthermore believed this prophecy was urgent and called for immediate action. Newton wavered here again: Sometimes he wrote as if Daniel 8 was urgent enough to proclaim its truths; in practice he never published his manuscripts. Thus at least three of the authors were forceful characters and charismatic enough to transform their new readings of the chapter into the rallying cry of a new religious movement. (William Whiston made up for Newton's deficiency here by going public with an antitrinitarian view of the Antichrist in Daniel 8, but while his views were similar to Newton's, Whiston's activity only cost him his position and did not become a catalyst for a religious movement.) The character of the authors is not the sole explanation for their interpretation; this is demonstrated by the fact that their followers, who did not have the very same religious experience or even necessarily a similar one, were convinced of their prophetic schema. Yet for the discussed authors, their personality and their interpretation were of course related, and their personality was not only formative for their views, but the catalyst that made their views into a new theology adhered to by many others.

Another dynamic was historical research. Since the authors believed that the prophecy delineated history, interpreting prophecy required knowledge of history and hence historical research. Even when historical research was not undertaken directly because of prophecy, it influenced the authors's views of prophecy for the same reason. When Luther had begun diverging with the Catholic Church, reading Valla, Hus, and canon law and papal decretals made him reassess his understanding of the past, and, eventually, of prophecy. Newton seems to have read prophecy and history in tandem, and thus either confirmed or arrived at his conclusion that the original faith had been antitrinitarian. Miller set out to explore the veracity of the Bible and read prophecy and history together to see if the prophecies had indeed come true. This led him eventually to predict the conclusion of the longest prophetic period, based on the common consensus of theologians and Christian historians on how the "seventy weeks" (Dn 9) had been fulfilled in late antiquity. White and her colleagues were soon driven to historical research to prove the ancient lineage of their new theological views such as seventh-day Sabbath-keeping and mortalism. For White herself, historical research played a prominent role in laying out her views of the great controversy. There were of course differences. To Luther and Newton, historical research went hand in hand with their new theological views. Miller's historical research went hand in hand with his new interpretation of Daniel 8, but unlike Luther, Newton, and White, he did not drastically change traditional historiography of his time; at the most he over-emphasized the significance of some dates, and disagreed with some about the minutiae of biblical chronology. White's historical research was not done so much by her as by her colleagues and later literary assistants; it also came after the new theological convictions (such as the seventh-day Sabbath and mortalism), not before or in tandem.

5.1.2 Textual Dynamics

By definition, to historicize a vision is to read it as a sweeping depiction of history from the time of the prophet down to the end of time. The four theological thinkers all historicized Daniel 8 to a degree and in a way that had not been done before. Thus they worked within the historicist school of prophetic interpretation and contributed to its development. Each of the four readings built on a previous one and used similar textual dynamics to historicize the chapter further.

The first dynamic was an insistence on the precise nature of prophecy. The visions were not vague but forecast history accurately, so that the fulfillment was an exact match that corresponded in every detail with the prediction. Luther seems to have struggled with the fact that Antiochus did not seem to match the prediction perfectly. He first flirted with emphasizing how the antitype (the papal Antichrist) of the last horn matched it perfectly, apparently and perhaps unknowingly at the expense of the type (Antiochus). Later he backed from this idea and was satisfied with chalking up the lack of correspondence to the fact that the prophecy was dual, and even stated that Daniel intentionally mixed the type and the antitype in his prediction. By retaining the type-antitype reading Luther could live with some apparent discrepancies. Newton and Miller could not abide by that. They stated explicitly that prophecy was precise, and since they believed Antiochus's history did not square with the prediction, they rejected it as a wrong reading of the prophecy. White did not make this point explicitly, though her carefulness in calculating time prophecies accurately showed she agreed that prophetic details were important. Yet this point was not nearly as important to her as to Miller. She dismissed the debate over the significance of the word "the daily" in Daniel as trivial and could live with the fact that her fellow believers disagreed on some points in prophecy.

The second dynamic, related to the first, was an insistence on interpreting symbols consistently. Luther insisted that a horn must always have the same referent, that of a kingdom, rather than sometimes a kingdom and sometimes a king. Thus the last horn in Daniel 8 had to signify Antichrist in the sense of a dynasty rather than a single ruler. While Luther backed away from this idea, Newton and Miller used that argument to reject Antiochus as a referent of the last horn. Newton and Miller also insisted on a consistent interpretation of the prophetic periods. Since each day in the time prophecies stood for an actual year in other visions of Daniel and Revelation, they applied this calculation to the 2300 days of Daniel 8. White implicitly agreed to this consistency of symbol interpretation, but did not comment on it per se.

The third dynamic was the belief that the visions of Daniel were a system. All the visions covered the same history under different and yet related imagery. Each vision built on the previous ones, expounding and adding details. In interpretative praxis, this meant that the authors tended to read the visions together and to harmonize their supposed meaning. While Luther eventually remained by the traditional type-antitype interpretation—jumping from the

end of the vision, Antiochus, to a future end-time Antichrist—he inserted the entire history of the Papacy into the antitype. This meant that Daniel 8 covered nearly the same long history of the four kingdoms as the other chapters. At the same time, however, it shows that Luther’s system-building was not as prominent as that of the other three authors. Newton rejected a preterist reading altogether and saw the last horn as Rome/Antichrist. This extension aligned the historical scope of Daniel 8 with that of the other visions. Newton also saw Rome/Antichrist in the fourth beast of Daniel 7 rather than Islam. This meant that the visions all traced the history of the same four kingdoms. Miller went a couple of steps further. He connected the 2300 years of Daniel 8 with the 490 years of Daniel 9 to find a clearer starting point for the longer period. He also aligned the end event of Daniel 8 and the other visions so they all concluded with the Second Coming and subsequent events. White, picking up a Millerite theme, connected the visions as episodes in a single explanation to Daniel: Daniel misunderstood the vision of chapter 8, and this misunderstanding was clarified in the following angelic visitations.

The fourth dynamic was the belief that the visions extended to the end of human history. This was the traditional and later conservative understanding of the final scenes in chapters 7 and 11–12, and sometimes chapter 2. In praxis, as time passed on, the authors had to account for the passing of time by revising, updating, and extending what history was included in the visions. This is clearly seen in Daniel 8, a chapter which was traditionally seen as reaching only to the demise of Antiochus in the second century, and then as covering the career of the Antichrist in the future (and nothing in between). Luther believed the antitypical fulfillment of the last horn was not a single individual Antichrist, but the entire history of the Papacy, and thus he believed the vision covered history until Antiochus, then from the early medieval period to the end of time. His extension of the chapter was therefore indirect. Newton went further and saw the chapter as covering unbroken history down to the end. The chapter depicted the rise of the antitrinitarian apostasy of Christianity, which would last until the 2300 years would end sometime in the third millennium. At that time the Jews would return to Israel and the Church would be reformed and soon after Christ would return. Miller started the 2300 years much earlier and believed the chapter would end in 1843/4 with the Second Coming. White kept his terminus date but reinterpreted the cleansing of the sanctuary as the commencement of a heavenly judgment which would continue until Christ would return. While all four authors extended the chapter, how it related to their own contemporaneous age differed. To Luther, the chapter only extended to the imminent future. To Newton, it extended centuries into the future. To Miller, the vision extended to an exact and imminent date. To White, the chapter ended with announcing present and ongoing reality (Christ’s final work in heaven), which could end soon, but could also be delayed to some degree.

The fifth dynamic was translation and new readings. Some of Luther’s main arguments for his new understanding of the chapter were based on his novel translation of vv. 23–25. He later backed from the translation and translated the verses much better later on, and did not

rely on these points for his new understanding. Newton knew some Hebrew, and while it came to play in other places in his interpretation of Daniel, it did not play a role in chapter 8. Miller's new readings went in places against the conventional understanding of the literal meaning of the text, such as what the scope of the question in v. 13 was (Miller believed it referred to the duration of the entire vision, not the activities of the last horn alone). White also accepted some Millerite-inherited new readings which influenced the understanding of chapter 8, such as the translation of the first verb in Daniel 9:24 as 'cut off' rather than 'determine,' indicating that the seventy-week period was "cut off" the longer 2300-day period in chapter 8. While Miller and White did not know any Hebrew, some of their colleagues did. Thus again there is a difference among the authors: Luther knew Hebrew so well he translated the entire Old Testament. Newton knew but little and accepted the conventional translation of his time (KJV). Miller did not know Hebrew and some of his new readings were based on the system of Daniel; some he accepted eventually from his more learned co-workers (such as the cut-off-argument). White had very little formal education and did not know any Hebrew either, but accepted insights from her colleagues and the contributions of the more learned Millerites.

The textual dynamics in the historicizing of Daniel 8 were therefore traditional assumptions about prophecy as real and decipherable predictions about the future scope of history from the assumed time of the prophet to the end of history. These prophecies were furthermore believed to be both accurate and interconnected. To interpret the chapter the authors tried to do away with interpretative discrepancies, to give attention to detail, to interpret symbols consistently, to harmonize it with the other visions, to extend and revise its historical referent, and to assess the most correct reading of the text.

5.1.3 Theological Dynamics

The main theological dynamics in the historicizing of Daniel 8 in the reading of the four authors can be summarized as new and revivalist understanding of orthodoxy (with an adhering call for increased, practical piety), restorational doctrinal innovation, remnantism, narrating redemption history, historical research, and belief in the crucial meaning of the present.

The first theological dynamic in the authors's reading of Daniel 8 was an emphasis on piety and personal experience. All four authors discovered what they believed was the true Christian faith. Three authors found it through a deep, personal religious experience. (Too little is known about Newton's personal religious experience to include or exclude him on this point.) Luther believed he rediscovered the true Gospel after it had been lost during centuries of apostasy and formalism. Miller found the Savior after an unfulfilling decade of Deism. After a near-fatal injury and associating with Millerites, White felt she was ready for the Lord's return, and was willing to salvage Millerism after its apparent failure in part because her Millerite experience felt so genuine. And Newton found the original, simple, and fully

monotheistic faith of Scripture, so unlike the warlike, metaphysical, and factious Christianity of his age. To all the authors this new-found faith was more demanding and more vibrant than the accepted orthodoxy of their day. It called for personal experience, heartfelt piety, to be lived out in daily life. Luther felt called to rebuke the Christianity of his day on myriad accounts. Newton longed for simple, civil brotherhood of all believers, and struggled with the idea of proclaiming his ideas publicly. Miller felt called to wake Christians up to the imminent return of Jesus. White felt called to warn Christians that they must ready their souls during the ongoing Judgment so that their faith might be found not wanting. And most importantly, to all the four authors, their religious experience and their new-found Gospel was bound inextricably with truths they believed were rooted in Daniel 8.

In the theology of the four authors, emphasis on piety was entwined with (semi-) restorational doctrinal innovation, the second dynamic in their reading of Daniel 8. Innovation here does not mean that the authors developed doctrines fully original in the history of Christianity. Rather, these “new” doctrines were new to the authors or, if based on old ideas, were full of newly-discovered importance. The authors did not see themselves as developing new ideas, but believed they were discovering or unearthing truths that had been lost in medieval times of apostasy, or had been hidden providentially until the time God saw fit to reveal these truths to his people. This latter point goes beyond restorationism, the theology which wants to “return” to a supposed scripturally correct (and since lost) apostolic Christianity: If some truths were unfolding throughout the ages after the apostolic age, there is no perfect apostolic Christianity to return to, but rather there is an ongoing strife or “unfolding” of an ever-more-correct form of Christianity. The doctrines that were interwoven with the authors’s reading of Daniel 8 were as follows. Luther believed Catholicism was apostate and that the Pope was the Antichrist, prophesied of in Daniel 8. To be a true Christian, one had to renounce the Antichrist and embrace the new theology. Newton believed the apostasy foretold in Daniel 8 was deeper than Luther had expected: Trinitarianism was the archheresy, turned into orthodoxy by the Antichrist in the early centuries. Miller became convinced of premillennialism and when he calculated the terminus date of the 2300 “years” in Daniel 8, he believed it pointed to the premillennial return of Christ in his lifetime. Since the Second Coming was imminent, it obviously became the most important theological truth to share with others that they might prepare for the event. After the theological turmoil that followed the prediction’s failure, some Adventists reinterpreted it as the commencement of the Judgment in heaven. White’s touch was to construct it into a theodicy, which entailed following Seventh-day Adventist doctrines such as keeping the seventh-day Sabbath.

It is worthy of mention to point out that it is too simple to say that the authors read this doctrinal innovation into Daniel 8. They all believed Scripture constituted one whole and therefore read texts in the light of each other, or interactively. This means that not only did they read Daniel 8 in the light of these doctrinal innovations, they probably also derived them in part from the text. This does not mean that their new ideas are necessarily embedded in

Daniel 8. But it does mean that Daniel 8 was not passive in the formation of their beliefs while other texts alone actively shaped their ideas. There are motifs in Daniel 8 that resonate with many dimensions in the authors's innovations: The last horn fights against heavenly powers and the saints, but in a deceptive way (assuring Luther that the Antichrist must be an "insider" in the Church and not an outside threat); the prominent salvific figure of many descriptions in Daniel, including the prince of the host in Daniel 8, is not obviously an eternal deity, despite Christian traditional reading of Daniel as messianic prophecies (strengthening Newton's suspicion that something went wrong in Christian interpretation early on); Daniel 8 and other chapters portray the victory of God and his people over earthly powers (leading Miller to believe the prophetic ciphers pointed to the ultimate victory when Jesus would return and the Kingdom of God would commence); conflict between God and his people against earthly powers is prominent in the imagery of Daniel 8 and other chapters (making it easy for White to think of the cosmic conflict while reading Daniel 8). Modern scholars as well as conservative readers (i.e. believers in prophetic interpretation) of other traditions may deem the authors's readings as unfounded (and indeed they are to a certain point contradictory and even mutually exclusive), but it can be said that Daniel 8 did indeed play a role in the way the authors read the chapter, and that, in some regards at least, they entered into the spirit of the text.

The power of doctrine in reading prophecy can further be seen from the fact that it sometimes ruled out alternative (and textually equally convincing) readings of the chapter. There was nothing in the typical reading of Daniel 8 that ruled between the timing or the proposed identities of the Antichrist. But once Luther became convinced of what constituted orthodoxy and apostasy, this conviction eliminated options. A future Antichrist became redundant in the face of the reigning apostasy. "Mohammad," i.e. Islam as the antichristian power, was also seen as less of a threat, since it was external and an obvious heresy. The same can be said about Newton's understanding of the Antichrist. While his harmonizing Daniel 8 with the other visions ensured that the Antichrist rose in Roman times, the text did not explain in clear terms what precisely constituted his apostasy. But once Newton was convinced that Trinitarianism was heretical, Luther's version of the papal Antichrist was too superficial and had to be improved upon. When Miller had become convinced of clear Scripture, premillennialism, and supersessionism, these convictions ruled out options. Prophecy could not be deemed obscure (and thus not interpreted) since Scripture was clear; the last horn of Daniel 8 could not be Antiochus (preterism) because this went against the harmonizing of the visions in Daniel; the cleansing of the sanctuary could not point to the Return of the Jews because they had been superseded by Christians, nor could it point to an earthly millennium, because that went against classical premillennialism (in which the Second Coming is not followed by the Last Judgment and eternity). When White decided to cast her lot in with the validity of the Millerite prediction and the religious experience that had attended it, she could rule out options. Admitting failure or a margin of error in the calculation was to give away the

validity of the entire enterprise and denying one's own experience; accepting a preterist reading of Daniel 8 was to join the critics and opponents of the Millerites, who had been "proven" true and had revealed themselves as "enemies" of the truth; and to insist that Christ did indeed return to earth on the predicted date resorted to spiritualizing, whereas Millerism treated the last events as literal, tangible events.

The same power of doctrine in reading prophecy is also reflected in the praxis which the authors believed the chapter called for. To Luther Daniel 8 remonstrated against using physical weapons against the Church. To Newton it was unclear what action the chapter called for, but if there was one, it was to share the antitrinitarian truth of Christianity with others. Miller believed he must share his Daniel 8 calculations with others since they pointed out the year in which Christ would return (premillennialism). To White, the chapter announced the Judgment was now in session (since 1844) and all must be made aware that they might prepare themselves for the end of the world. How directly related to praxis and how weighty to that praxis the text was differed between the authors. To Luther, Daniel 8 was a fundamental text to the doctrine of the Antichrist, but he cited it seldomly compared to his references to other antichrist texts such as 2 Thessalonians 2. Newton was eventually unsure what praxis a better understanding of the Godhead should lead to besides the accurate referent of worship. To Miller, this text was the clearest proof of the timing of the Second Coming and thus central to his system and appeal. To White, the text was the clearest text about Christ's final intercession phase and thus directly related to the praxis it involved. But when it came to the great controversy, the teaching which she derived from the new understanding of Daniel 8, and the praxis it involved, there were many other texts which she used much more frequently, such as texts about the Sabbath, etc.

The authors were all aware that their reading of Daniel 8 went against the grain of orthodoxy during their time. They accepted that their views would not gain significant ground and remain a minority view. But how could that be the case with truth, and truth that was newly discovered, important, and urgent? Here a third dynamic influenced the authors's reading. They all adhered to remnantism (in part based on Daniel 8, or read into it)—the belief that true believers, through history, and especially in the end times, would be in the minority, over against an apostate majority. This solved the problem of how their new reading of Daniel 8 (and other aspects of their theology) could be true, and yet accepted by but few of their fellow Christians. Remnantism in combination with revivalism meant that the authors felt impelled to share their prophetic views with others, while they resigned to the prospect of gaining but few over to the same views. Three of the four authors in fact turned out to be pioneers of their own new Christian movement or tradition: Luther became one of the fathers of the Protestant Reformation, and of Lutheranism in particular; Miller launched the Millerite Movement and the Adventist tradition; and White was one of the three founders of Seventh-day Adventism. Furthermore, remnantism clothed their views with the aura of being scriptural—there are remnantist passages in Scripture (e.g. Mt 24:12; Lk 18:8)—and

buttressed them against criticism, since criticism was to be expected from an unconvinced, apostate majority (“none of the wicked will understand,” Dn 12:10, NIV). Here Newton is different. It is often unfairly emphasized that he regarded himself as special or among the few true Christians. It is more accurate to say that Newton believed few Christians were aware of some vital truths, and yet he was ambivalent whether that divided believers into apostates and true remaining believers or into the fully orthodox and those who were still orthodox on many other or most points.

A fourth theological dynamic in the authors’s reading of Daniel 8 is narrating redemption history. In traditional and conservative Christianity, one strand of redemption history is prophecy, and by pulling on or changing that strand the whole tapestry may change. Reversely, changes in theology can result in changes in redemption history and interpretation of prophecy. Thus theology in general, interpretation of prophecy, and narrating redemption history all interact. This is because prophecy is the vehicle through which the history of dogma is explained. This is clearly demonstrated in the reading of the four authors. Luther read redemption history as the conflict between papal legalism and Gospel freedom. To him the papal Antichrist and the Reformation were but the latest phase in that story. Newton believed that over the course of history, there had been major apostasies into idolatrous polytheism with only a remnant holding fast to true monotheism. The Trinitarian apostasy in the early medieval period (and the faithful few who knew better) was but the last chapter in that story. To Miller, the pilgrimage of God’s people and their oppression had been outlined in prophetic periods, starting with uncontested examples like Israel’s four hundred years in the wilderness and the seventy years’s Captivity in Babylon. The 2300 years extending to the final redemption were but the longest of such time prophecies. To White, history was the controversy between Satan and Christ over God’s law of love. The split in Christianity over whether to keep the biblical Sabbath or venerate the papal Sunday was but the latest chapter in that story. There are differences here also. Luther, Newton, and White drastically re-read history in the light of a new theological understanding. Miller did not depart from traditional historiography of his time and was mostly interested in showing the chronological outlines of redemption history.

The fifth dynamic is historical research, and is closely related to doctrinal innovation and narrating redemption history. New doctrinal conviction did not occur in a historical vacuum. As the authors’s theological convictions changed, this occurred in tandem with historical research, and not only reflection on their present situation. It was not only Luther’s growing controversy with the reigning orthodoxy and church administration that led to his new views on the Antichrist—historical research led in part to these views. Studying papal decrees and canon law, and reading Valla and Hus, changed Luther’s perspective on the past, and hence on redemption history. Luther’s conviction that the Pope was the Antichrist was not based narrowly on his present controversy, but on his understanding of papal history as a whole. Newton’s antitrinitarianism may very well have had some roots in the theology of the times—

perhaps he disliked contemporary explanations of the Trinity, for instance—but his belief seems to have grown in tandem with his research into early church history, which he studied thoroughly. Miller also, in earth's few remaining years, spent time in studying the annals of secular and ecclesial history. This was necessary to match prophetic calculations with historical dates and periods, such as ascertaining the year of Artaxerxes's decree which he believed was the starting point of the 2300 years. These studies confirmed to him the correctness of his calculations and the veracity of prophecy. While White accepted mortalism as a child and without research into the history of this doctrine, historical research already became more prominent with the seventh-day Sabbath. If this doctrine and other Sabbatarian Adventist distinctives were indeed biblically sound, it should be possible to demonstrate this also from history (how these truths vanished supposedly from Christianity during the apostasy). While it is of a summary nature, church history constitutes about half of her redemption history as found in the *Great Controversy*, which include the Adventist historiography on how Sabbath-keeping changed from Saturday to Sunday. The historical research is important to point out, because, like history of redemption, it shows that the authors were not interested in prophecy only because of what it said about their present and the imminent future, but about history as a whole. That said, they also believed Daniel 8 said something about their present, even though its present message was grounded in the overall history of redemption.

The sixth dynamic was belief in the significant importance of the present, which was accompanied with a sense of urgency and imminence. (Many scholars would point to this element as one of the most salient features of apocalypticism. The limited helpfulness of that term has already been addressed in the introduction.) Luther believed that since the Antichrist had been exposed by his pointing out his identity as the Pope, Daniel 8 was close to its final fulfilment (the downfall of the Antichrist, which implied the Second Coming). The concept of unmasking the Antichrist is not found in Daniel 8; for this Luther relied on other texts, such as 2 Thes 2. But since the Antichrist had now been exposed, Luther believed he could hardly reign much longer. He therefore believed that the Reformation was a turning point in history, the beginning of the end. Miller believed he had deciphered nothing less than the date of the Second Coming, making his present the final few decades of history. His energetic ministry until his health broke down a few years before his death shows the genuineness of his belief. White believed that the Judgment had commenced in heaven, and that the final showdown between the forces of evil—led by the Papacy and soon-to-be transformed United States—and the remnant was imminent. This meant that her present was nothing less than the threshold of the final conflict in earth's history. Newton is here a significant exception. His historical focus was on the centuries of the first ecumenical Councils; all his calculations of time prophecies placed their terminus several centuries in the future from his day. This may be why Newton never went public with his views on prophecy and theology: Perhaps he believed that the time for these truths had not come, and that “the Dark Ages,” religiously speaking, were still

ongoing, with the true Reformation yet in the distant future. What is important to notice about the significance the three authors read into their times is that it was not only or even primarily caused by some generally shared sense that their contemporaries held of their own time. This significance was just as much, if not more, theologically derived. Luther was an active force in shaping the history of his time. Miller derived his sense of urgency nearly solely from prophetic arithmetic. White, apart from reshaping the same arithmetic to other purposes, also derived a sense of urgency and importance from new doctrines such as the Sabbath. While blue laws did exist in her lifetime, and there have always been dissenters against any state, Adventist ideas about the future role of America and the end of the world were to a large extent derived from the tremendous significance Adventists imbued the Sabbath with.

5.1.4 Conclusions

The study validates the usage of the threefold analytical approach to a theological thinker's beliefs about prophecy and eschatology. In the four authors's reading of Daniel 8, the three dimensions of dynamics—the historical, textual, and theological dynamics—all played a vital causative role in bringing about the historicizing of the chapter. No one category on its own can bear the weight of causative explanation. The dynamics were also all not only passive but also active in the formation of the reading. The authors's theology or textual methods cannot be seen as mere natural consequence of their contemporaneous *Zeitgeist*—they in fact also influenced the views of their times and demonstrated theological innovation. Neither can their prophetic interpretation be seen as an obvious or inexorable reaction to their historical context. There was deep dissatisfaction with the Church in Luther's time, but that dissatisfaction was expressed in many ways. It is the historical context of Luther's interpreting the Antichrist of Daniel 8 to be the Pope, but this reading would not have occurred had it not been for Luther's theological innovation and the permissible interpretation to see the Antichrist in the chapter and apply prophecy to history. The same can be said about the other three authors. In other words, their prophetic interpretation was a system which they received from past generations and in turn developed further. Any system has its own rules, purposes, and methodology. How one uses a system is influenced by one's own personal state and historical context, but neither one of these means that one can do anything with the system. There are limitations on in which directions one can develop or use a system. Conversely, a system does not exist in a historical vacuum. Had Luther's personal religious experience not led him into new theological paths, there would have been no reason for him to think that the Antichrist already reigned in the Church. Again, the same applies to the three other authors.

The study also offers some insight into the historicist school of prophetic interpretation from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. First, each of the four authors built on a previous reading of Daniel 8 and historicized it further. This shows that historicism is a system and also that it is a dynamic system.

The second characteristic of the historicizing of Daniel 8 is that historicism transcended (to some extent) denominational lines. Luther was the founder of the Lutheran Church, Newton was Anglican with some Puritan sentiments, Miller was a Baptist (though he was eventually disfellowshipped for his views, he never ceased to view himself as a Baptist), and White was a co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Historicism began in the Catholic Church (Luther did not originate it), and for several centuries it was a pan-Protestant endeavor. This shows that historicism is not a passive reading dictated by theology alone and that the textual dimension or rules by which it exists are a substantial and independent part of the system.

The third characteristic is that the historicizing of Daniel 8 was increasingly, or perhaps persistently, traditional or conservative in its overall Christian views. After the early Reformation, many theological and historical changes occurred that gave rise to the conservative-liberal spectrum in Protestantism. Biblical criticism and liberal Christianity had strongest roots in the Continent, and then moved later overseas to the United States. Conversely, the bulwark of conservative Protestantism moved from the Continent to the British Isles and thence to the United States. The historicizing of Daniel 8 continued within conservative Protestantism, moving west from Luther in Germany before the spectrum arose, to Newton in England, and then to Miller and White in the United States. This shows that historicism, as part of eventually conservative Protestantism, was only viable in traditional or conservative Christianity, and to continue in the face of biblical criticism and liberal theology, it was persistently conservative, and eventually counter-cultural in the liberal West.

The fourth characteristic is that the four readings were increasingly marginal. Luther's reading was so radical that it was denounced by the (Catholic) Church and so was not marginal but forbidden. Within the new community, however, Luther's reading became the Protestant norm for centuries (though budding biblical criticism moved away from it). Newton's secret reading was a Protestant anathema during its time but later on was generally accepted by historicists, though divested of its theological implications. Miller was highly controversial and unwittingly founded a marginal Protestant tradition. White founded one of its branches, and though Seventh-day Adventism has an admirable global reach, it remains one of the small and marginal branches of Protestantism. This characteristic may be explained, in part, with the previous characteristic of persistent conservatism, and yet that it is an insufficient explanation, since the historicizing of Daniel 8 also became marginal within conservative Protestantism.

The fifth characteristic is that the historicizing of Daniel 8 was used in several radical theological endeavors: The birth of Protestantism and its departure from Roman-Catholicism, the antitrinitarianism of the dawning of the Enlightenment, the most (in)famous dating of the Second Coming probably in Christian history, and the birth of one of the new religious movements of the nineteenth century and its creative theodicy. Thus the authors read the text in the light of new theology and/or were led by the text into new theological terrain (regardless of whether that was the right reading of the text or not). This may be seen as proof

that prophetic interpretation is radical. The picture is, however, more complex. Radicality is defined by context. When a theologian sets forth new theology that causes them to depart from their community, this is a radical step. Their followers, however, especially later generations, now live in a new community and a new norm, and that is hardly a radical stance. To be a Lutheran in the late sixteenth century or the seventeenth century and to adhere to its prophetic interpretation of Daniel 8 was hardly a radical move by then. The same can be said about an orthodox Seventh-day Adventist in the late nineteenth century and onwards. Nor can it safely be derived from this point that any and every change in prophetic interpretation is equally radical. This characteristic probably helps to explain the increasing marginality of historicism. Radicality is used for something that goes against the mainstream, and unless radicality outgrows its predecessor in popularity (by establishing a new community with new norms), it is bound to become marginal. While Luther and the other early Reformers successfully established a large new community or Protestantism, it nevertheless was and remains the minority compared to Roman-Catholicism, which to this day, in terms of numbers, outshines all other traditions. Subsequent radical endeavors were therefore most likely bound to lead to ever smaller communities. The school of prophetic interpretation which in the late nineteenth century overtook historicism as the norm in conservative Christianity is futurism.

The sixth characteristic of the historicized reading of Daniel 8 is that it served as the apparently final dividing step between the historicist and critical readings of Daniel. While early Christians had already historicised chapters 2, 7, and 9, they maintained a reading of Daniel 8 which, according to biblical criticism, was original: Apart from their typical eschatological reading of the chapter's final enemy, they believed Daniel 8 was about Antiochus IV Epiphanes. When Daniel 8 had been fully historicized, however, this overlap with biblical criticism was gone. And that is a remarkable turn in the history of prophetic interpretation and indeed biblical interpretation in general. From this perspective, futurism (which still holds to some typical readings of Daniel and other prophecies) has more in common with biblical criticism than historicism in its present form does.

The development of the historicist reading of Daniel 8 in the thought of the four authors is a highly interesting chapter in Christian theology and in the history of prophetic interpretation. It is the red thread of historicism, from being the school of interpreting prophecy that was the common norm in Christendom, to its cataclysmic change in the Reformation, its further systematization through the subsequent centuries, peaking in popularity in the nineteenth century, and to its change of status into a minority view which has retreated from most of Christianity to pockets like Seventh-day Adventism. In summary, the historicizing of Daniel 8 traces the contours of historicism, and at the same time one ray of the significant influence of the Book of Daniel in theology and history.

5.2 Ramifications of the Study for Scholarship on Prophetic Interpretation

As was discussed in the Introduction, scholarship on prophetic interpretation and overlapping fields (such as apocalypticism and millennialism), could be improved by integrating insights from conservative scholarship on prophetic interpretation. The present study showed the validity of exploring prophetic interpretation as a category, and of analyzing it equally from three perspectives. This section will show how those conclusions can be applied in general scholarship to strengthen its analysis of prophetic interpretation.

5.2.1 Addressing Characteristics in the Scholarship

First, the study shows that, while not dismissing any modern conceptual categories (such as apocalypticism and millennialism), the believer's category of 'prophetic interpretation' is helpful to understand what a given author is doing theologically and not using it may cause analysis to overlook what and why and how an author does theology. Using the category in scholarship and the threefold analysis would strengthen scholarship in general for it would be analyzing the conceptual framework of the authors themselves as an actual system with its own consequences. Using the category would also counterbalance or make more precise the common ideas about prophetic beliefs being fringe (and hence exotic), passive to external factors, dangerous or violent, and limited to eschatology.¹ The present study is hopefully a helpful example of this corrective. That historical or external causes are not the main or only explanation for prophetic interpretation was already discussed in the previous section. The following paragraphs delineate how the study addresses the other ideas.

The study did portray the dwindling popularity of historicism, as was discussed in section 5.1.4. Yet it does not portray prophetic interpretation as marginal. Historicism was a norm in Christianity from early Christianity until the Reformation and through several centuries of Protestantism. Then, in the nineteenth century, most Protestants eventually became preterists, critical/liberal, or futurists. This development, however, does not portray prophetic interpretation in general as marginal in Christianity. While prophetic interpretation died out in liberal Protestantism and faded to some degree in Catholicism, it did not go extinct in Christianity in general. Rather, it moved from one school to another: Most conservative Christians from the nineteenth century to the present have been futurists rather than historicists. Due to the number of conservative believers in Christianity considered as a whole globally, this means that prophetic interpretation is still a vibrant tradition. While prophetic interpretation is not common in European Protestantism, it seems too Eurocentric to speak of prophetic interpretation as a minority belief without some geographic and denominational qualifications.

The study did not evince a link between prophetic interpretation and dangerous or violent behavior. It rather showed the opposite. Luther interpreted Daniel 8 as a call to personal piety and as forbidding insurrection against authorities, regardless of whether they were deemed

¹ Cf. section 0.5.

wicked or not. Newton also underscored the importance of charity and toleration of others, even despite what he saw as their apostate views. Miller, while implying the downfall of all governments with his reading of Daniel 8 as a prediction of the establishment of the Kingdom of God, exhorted his listeners to personal piety and had not a word to say about violence or insurrection. White read Daniel 8, in the context of the great controversy motif, as a call for personal piety necessary in the times of democratic backsliding of the United States, but the only civil disobedience she promoted was theoretical and non-violent—when the national blue laws would be enforced and seventh-day Sabbath-keeping forbidden, Sabbath-keepers should still keep the Sabbath. The study does not support the idea that the relationship between religion and violence should be construed in terms of prophetic beliefs in general.

The study was a good illustration of how prophetic interpretation entails more than eschatology. Scholars often marvel at the intransigent perseverance of prophetic expositors. Prophetic interpretation is portrayed as the incorrigible tendency to see the end as imminent, no matter how often such predictions fail and the end eludes believers. When prophetic interpretation is seen as a system with a history, however, the perspective changes. If the entire project was concentrated on future prediction alone, it would probably be a greater marvel that such predictions continue. But future predictions are but a part of the discipline. Luther's interpretation of the Antichrist entailed much of past history, though "the detection" of his papal identity also had eschatological implementations for Luther. Newton's interest in prophecy was mostly limited to the past. For Miller, it was the opposite: His main interest was the Second Coming. And yet his system comprised much more than only the eschaton. The same can be said about White: The eschaton was prominent in her prophetic interpretation, and yet nowhere near its only component. Her prophetic interpretation comprised all history, in particular the history of the church. Seeing prophetic interpretation as interwoven with the entirety of post-biblical history, and with redemption history from the commencement of time, should explain why apparent failures or delays of fulfillment did not undo the entire project. It can also be pointed out that historicists (and prophetic interpreters in general) believed that the knowledge of prophecy unfolded through time as more and more of prophecy was fulfilled. Interpreting prophecy was thus an ongoing project and, while divinely guided, prone to human error because of short-sightedness, mistaken hermeneutics, and so forth. In this context, mistaken future predictions are acceptable and to be expected: Failed predictions did not halt the system from advancing. When this broader view of prophetic interpretation is taken, while the system may not seem more convincing, it will seem less incorrigible as it would be did it consist in eschatological prediction alone.

5.2.2 Combination with Scholarship on Apocalypticism and Millennialism

Second, the study's methodology could be combined with present academic concepts. While this was not done in the main study, the study of prophetic interpretation could be combined with the analysis of apocalypticism and/or millennialism. This section will show a brief

overview of how such combination could look like. Since apocalypticism and millennialism have many characteristics, the overview will be limited to only few of them: The idea of the apocalypse, imminence, the millennium, and transformation of the world to a perfect/golden age or state. (Note that in evaluating millennialism, the terms “hot” and “cool” are used to convey how strong or weak the sense of imminence is;² and this term could just as well be applied to apocalypticism too.)

Luther was in a certain sense both an apocalypticist and millennialist. Luther’s apocalypse was in a sense the traditional eschatology of the Antichrist deceiving the Church, only to be exposed, and then destroyed at the Second Coming. The identity of the Antichrist, the saints, and the deceived by the Antichrist, had of course changed, and the timeline had shifted: The Antichrist had already ruled the Church for centuries. Since he was an eschatological figure, and his deception had now been exposed, the next fulfillment of prophecy would be the Second Coming and the Judgment. Luther believed in the evils of the last days (already present) and the signs of the times, though his description of the last time disasters was not very detailed. Luther’s apocalyptic imminence was constant once he started to believe that the Pope was the Antichrist. It was not connected to a date or to a penultimate prophecy before the Second Coming. I.e. the imminence was neither tied to a time prophecy nor an unfulfilled prophecy and therefore had a more general textual basis in the exposure of the Antichrist and the subsequent expectation of the Second Coming. (It cannot be overlooked, however, that Luther’s interpretation of the last verses in Daniel 11 contains penultimate prophecies and a soft date for the Second Coming.) This meant that there was room for the imminence to vary greatly depending on other factors, such as Luther’s psychology—his outlook on how well or poorly the Reformation was doing, and his expectations on how it would develop in the future. While his sense of imminence never left him, it varied from few months (while translating Daniel) to “only” (!) three centuries. In the strict sense of millennialism, Luther was a semi-amillennialist: He believed the millennium occurred during the church age. He did, however, apparently not equate it with church history in general, but dated it to literal one thousand years in the past (cf. *Supputatio annorum mundi*). In the broader sense of millennialism, Luther did believe in a future transformation of the world to a perfect state. Here Luther was again not very descriptive and stayed within traditional understanding of heaven after the Judgment as spiritual and yet also physical in some sense (the Resurrection of the flesh, etc.). Here scholars of millennialism may disagree, but would then have to clarify the borders of millennialism in terms of afterlife opinions. Thus, Luther was a hot apocalypticist and his millennialism consisted of traditional understanding of heaven.

Newton was also both an apocalypticist and millennialist: He believed that God would eventually conquer evil, that there would be some eschatological upheavals such as the Second Coming, the Resurrection, the Judgment, and the purification of the earth, and a literal

² Wessinger, “Millennial Glossary,” 719, 720.

millennium. Yet he had little to say about the apocalypse and though he believed in the traditional eschatological doctrines of the Creed such as the Second Coming, the Judgment, and the great beyond, he dwelt little on eschatology. In what little he had to say about eschatology, Newton had little to say about the evils of the last days or signs of the times, though he may have believed that both would occur. Apart from the Judgment, Resurrections (Newton believed there would be two), and the final victory over the Antichrist and his followers, Newton did not take some disastrous traditional ideas literally. E.g. he read scriptures about the fiery cleansing locally and even symbolically and not as a global conflagration. Newton's apocalypse was therefore not as drastic as often depicted in traditional and conservative Christianity. Newton did not believe the end was near or that he lived in the last days. All his calculations of the prophecies pointed to an eschaton yet several centuries in the future. It is interesting here to compare him with Luther. Even when Luther felt the end could be "only" three hundred years away, to him it was still imminent, whereas when Newton's calculations pointed to an end several centuries in the future, his non-urgent tone and lack of emphasis on the eschaton shows he felt this was in the "distant future." This is even more interesting seeing Newton's interpretation, in one sense, actually offered more textual basis for imminence than Luther's; Newton laid out what prophecies would have to occur before the Second Coming, and came close to dating the Second Coming. In the strict sense, Newton was a premillennialist. In the broader sense, interestingly enough, Newton was not a strong millennialist: The millennium, while in some aspects supernatural, would also be natural still: Those resurrected would be mortal, and the earth would continue apparently in the same state. As to what would occur after the millennium, it seems that Newton believed the natural world would still continue. Thus, Newton was a cool apocalypticist who believed in a minimized apocalypse and a cool premillennialist.

Miller believed in the apocalypse in full literal colors. He believed in the evils of the last (present) days and the signs of the times, which he listed for his audiences. The battle of Armageddon would soon be fought, the saints persecuted, (when neither happened, however, it did not bother Miller, showing these were not important ingredients for him) and then the Second Coming would occur and the whole natural order would be engulfed in purifying fire. Miller's imminence seems to have been mostly based on his calculation of the prophetic periods and the date of the Second Coming. Even when the prediction failed, Miller's sense of imminence did not abate, because Miller held to its textual belief: Some unknown error had crept into the calculation, but when the margin of error would pass, Christ would indeed return. In terms of strict millennialism, Miller was a premillennialist. In a broader sense, Miller was a millennialist indeed: The millennium would take place in a world glorified and in a sinless and immortal state; it would, in fact, be the first thousand years of eternity, separated from it only by the second Resurrection and the final phase of the Judgment. Thus, the earthly aspect of the afterlife was strongly present. Thus, Miller was a hot date-setting apocalypticist premillennialist.

White also believed in the apocalypse to the full extent of tradition and beyond that, according to Seventh-day Adventist innovation. White believed both in the evils of the last days and the signs of the times and had a clear outline of these fulfilling/unfulfilled aspects of the apocalypse. These included the completion of the apostasy of Christendom when, starting with America, all nations on earth would forbid the keeping of God's law (blue and anti-seventh-day Sabbath laws), natural disasters, wars, and the seven last plagues. White also had a detailed account of the Second Coming and the Judgment, and thus, like Miller, could extend apocalypticism more fully into these doctrines, which often remained undetailed in traditional Christianity. Here White described the post-apocalyptic state of the earth after the fiery return of Christ during the millennium, as well as the fiery re-creation of the globe after the millennium. White kept her sense of imminence through her early days as a Millerite, and then through the rest of her life as a Sabbatarian and then later Seventh-day Adventist. To White, the imminence of the end was clearly not rooted in time prophecies. Nevertheless, it had a textual basis in many ongoing developments: Developments in the United States, Spiritualism, the Papacy, the Judgment already begun in heaven, but mostly importantly, in the development of Seventh-day Adventism. It can therefore be said that for White, imminence had a strong theological basis: Seventh-day Adventists were going to fulfill their role in proclaiming the Gospel to all the world before the Second Coming, and they had a say in this development (by accepting or delaying it). In strict terms, White was a pre-millennialist, but not in the conventional understanding of the term, since White did not believe the saints would rule with Christ over an earthly Paradise, but rather that they would participate with Christ in determining the sentence of the wicked. In the broader sense, however, White was a millennialist like Miller, believing that after the millennium, Christ would purify the earth by fire and restore it to its edenic state. Thus White was a hot apocalypticist and premillennialist.

Combining this analysis of the various components or features of apocalypticism and millennialism with the dynamics of prophetic interpretation provides a richer and more accurate picture of the theology of the authors than conservative or general scholarship often does, by integrating their insights. To say that someone was a historicist is rather broad seeing how long and rich the history of that school of interpretation is. To say that someone is an apocalypticist or a millennialist is even broader, seeing these categories are not limited to Christianity. But to say that someone is a hot apocalypticist and a historicist, or a cool millennialist and a futurist, with a description of to what extent the rubrics of prophetic interpretation and the two eschatologies manifest themselves in that thinker's theology—this gives a more comprehensive and nuanced evaluation of that author's theology.

Such a combined approach requires that the scholar become familiar with the imagery of Daniel and Revelation and some other texts and the main outlines of prophetic interpretation, as well as the main contributions of general scholarship on apocalypticism and millennialism. While becoming familiar with the strange pictures of the apocalyptic texts in Scripture may

seem bewildering at first, these books are relatively short and their symbols eventually become easy to remember precisely because of their striking character. Once the symbols and the main schools of prophetic interpretation have become familiar, this knowledge opens endless doors of insight into the history of Christianity. Where before there was perhaps unfamiliarity and even confusion, now there can be detected strings of dynamic patterns within evolving systems. And since prophetic interpretation has played a role in Christianity from its New Testament dawn, and, for better and worse, continues to do so in large swaths of global Christianity, insight into that tradition or discipline will prove to be invaluable to theologians, church historians, scholars of religion, and (to a more limited extent) to Old and New Testament scholars.

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Summary of Daniel and Revelation

Since the visions of Daniel and, to a lesser extent, Revelation, are frequently cited in the present work and not at every reader's memory-fingertips, a summary of them is presented here. The summary is based on the authors's interpretative construction of each vision.

- Dn 2 King Nebuchadnezzar sees a giant idol in a dream. It has a gold head, silver arms and chest, brass thighs and belly, iron legs, and feet of iron and clay. A stone, cut out of a mountain, then strikes the feet and pulverizes the entire statue, and grows into a mountain that covers the earth.
- Dn 7 Daniel sees a vision of four beasts coming out of the sea: (1) a lion, (2) a bear, (3) a leopard, (4) a beast with ten horns. Three of the ten horns are rooted up. An eleventh sprouts up, with eyes and a mouth. It persecutes the saints for "time, times, and half a time." Then follow scenes of Judgment and the Son of Man receiving an eternal kingdom.
- Dn 8 Daniel sees a vision: A goat attacks a ram and tramples it down. The goat's one horn breaks off and four new horns grow to the four winds of the heavens. A fifth and last horn grows out of one of them and reaches the stars. Angelic figures discuss how long this will continue and the answer is given that it will be for 2300 evening-mornings and then the sanctuary will be cleansed.
- Dn 9 Gabriel tells Daniel that seventy weeks are determined for his people. From the decree to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah are 7 + 62 weeks.¹ During the last week, the Messiah makes a covenant with many, is cut off, and in the middle of the week an end is put to sacrifices.
- Dn 11–12 Gabriel gives Daniel a detailed account of the future. It concerns mostly kings who are fighting each other until the Resurrection. Historicists have applied the description to the history of the four kingdoms of chs. 2 and 7. In the end angelic figures discuss several time periods: 1260 days, 1290 days, and 1335 days.
- Rv 1–3 The visions of the book begin. Jesus dictates seven epistles to John to be sent to the seven churches. Their situation is described, and they are praised, critiqued, and exhorted.
- Rv 4–5 John sees a door open in heaven and entering it he sees God enthroned and his retinue of 24 elders and four living creatures. The creatures have six wings and are covered in eyes. God holds a scroll sealed with seven seals. The Lamb, the only one able to unseal it, arrives and is given the scroll.
- Rv 6 The lamb begins to open the seals, with the following effects: (1–4) horsemen ride out on a white, red, black, and a pale horse, (5) martyred souls under the altar are

¹ Many modern translations divide the sentences differently so that the 7 and 62 weeks do not go together.

- given the comfort that persecution is almost over, (6) the stars fall, the heavens are rent asunder, and the wicked cry out in terror because the day of wrath has come.
- Rv 7 John sees four angels standing on the corners of the earth holding back the four winds while 144 000 saints are sealed, of equal proportion, from the twelve tribes. John then sees a great multitude dressed in white with palm branches celebrating that their tribulation is over.
- Rv 8 When the seventh seal is opened, there is silence in heaven. Then angels blow the seven trumpets, with catastrophic effect on earth: (1) hail and fire falls on the earth, (2) a mountain falls into the sea, (3) the star Wormwood falls on the rivers, (4) sun, moon, and stars are stricken and lose some of their light,
- Rv 9 (5) a star falls from heaven and opens the bottomless pit, releasing locusts that torture mankind for five months, (6) the four angels at the Euphrates are released and an army of horsemen goes forth to kill mankind for “an hour, a day, a month, and a year.”²
- Rv 10 An angel standing on the sea and the earth, having a little scroll, declares that time³ shall be no longer. John is told to ask for the scroll and to eat it. It is sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach. He is told he must prophesy again.
- Rv 11 John is given a measuring rod and measures the Temple but not the court which is given over to the Gentiles for 42 months. The two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth for 1260 days. A beast ascends from the abyss and kills them. They lie dead 3,5 days but then ascend to heaven. A great earthquake makes one tenth of the city fall. The seventh trumpet blasts and the kingdoms are declared to belong to Christ and the Temple in heaven opens.
- Rv 12 John sees a pregnant woman and a red dragon who sweeps down a third of the stars from heaven. Before he can devour her child, it ascends to heaven to rule all nations. The woman receives wings to fly into the wilderness for “times, time, and half a time” or 1260 days. The dragon spews water after her, but unable to harm her, he goes to wage war with the remnant of her offspring.
- Rv 13 John sees two beasts. The first ascends from the sea and is a composite of the beasts from Dn 7. It has seven heads and ten horns. It rules for 42 months. It receives a deadly wound but is healed and the whole world follows it. The second beast arises from the earth, with lamblike horns, but speaking like the dragon. It performs miracles, leads people to make an image of the former beast, and marks those who worship it (and without the mark nobody can buy or sell). The number of the beast is 666.
- Rv 14 John sees the 144 000 redeemed on Mount Sion with the lamb. He then sees three angels flying with a message: (1) worship God for the hour of his judgment is

² Modern translations render this as a point in time rather than a period of time.

³ Modern translations render this as ‘delay.’

come, (2) Babylon is fallen, (3) do not worship the beast or its image or receive its mark. Then the Son of Man appears on a cloud with a sickle. Two angels with sickles reap the harvest of the earth. The latter throws his harvest into the winepress of wrath.

Rv 15 John sees those who conquered the beast, its image, and mark, standing on a sea of glass. Seven angels exit the temple in heaven, which fills with smoke, and they receive vials with plagues which they pour out on the earth with the following effects:

Rv 16 (1) the wicked receive painful sores, (2) the sea turns to blood, (3) the rivers turn to blood, (4) the sun scorches people, (5) the kingdom of the beast is engulfed by darkness, (6) the Euphrates dries up and demonic spirits gather the kings of earth to Armageddon for battle, (7) the cities of the earth crumble in an earthquake, islands and mountains disappear, great hail falls down.

Rv 17 One of these seven angels shows John Babylon, who is to be judged. He sees a prostitute sitting on a scarlet beast with seven heads and ten horns. The angel explains the imagery to John.

Rv 18 John sees a glorious angel declaring that Babylon is fallen. He then hears a voice telling God's people to leave Babylon so they will not meet her plagues. Babylon's supporters grieve her fall.

Rv 19 John hears celestial celebrations. He then sees a rider on a white horse and the heavenly armies descend to wage battle against the wicked. The beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire.

Rv 20 An angel binds Satan in the abyss for 1000 years. The saints reign with Christ during that time. At the end of the millennium, Satan gathers the wicked against the saints. The Judgment takes place and the wicked are cast into the lake of fire.

Rv 21–22 John sees New Jerusalem.

6.2.1 Translations of Daniel 8 Pertinent to the Study

Luther's 1520 Translation of Dn 8:23–25 in the *Responsio* Compared with the Vulgata

| Vulgata Clementine ed. 1592 | Luther <i>Responsio</i> , 1520 (WA 7:722) |
|---|--|
| 23 Et post regnum eorum, cum creverint iniquitates, consurget rex impudens facie, et intelligens propositiones; | 23 Et post regnum illorum, obscurantibus eos praevaricationibus, stabit rex potens faciebus et intelligens propositionum. |
| 24 et roborabitur fortitudo eius, sed non in viribus suis: et supra quam credi potest, universa vastabit, et prosperabitur, et faciet. Et interficiet robustos, et populum sanctorum | 24 Et roborabitur efficacia sua et non in efficacia sua, et mirabilia corrumpet et prosperabitur et faciet, et corrupted robusta et populum sanctorum, |
| 25 secundum voluntatem suam, et dirigetur dolus in manu eius: et cor suum magnificabit, et in copia rerum omnium occident plurimos: et contra principem principum consurget, et sine manu conteretur. | 25 et ad sensum suum erit. Et prosperabitur dolus in manu eius. Et in corde suo magnificabitur et in successu corrumpet multos. Et adversus principem principum stabit, et sine manu conteretur. |

6.2.2 Translations of Daniel 8 Pertinent to the Study

Hebrew, Latin, Luther's Translation, and the King James Version

Notes: Luther, Newton, and the Millerite leaders who knew Hebrew, of course consulted other editions of the Hebrew and Latin, which were, however, not substantially different from those presented here. The last edition of Luther's Bible is presented here. Throughout his Bible translation career, Luther revised his translation. These revisions include minor details in Daniel 8, which are not presented here. They can be found in *WA DB 11*¹¹ and Volz, *Vom Spätmittelhochdeutschen*, 34–36.

| | <i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</i> 1977 | Vulgata, Clementine ed. 1592 | Luther 1545 | King James Version 1611 |
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| 1 | בְּשָׁנָה שְׁלוֹשׁ לְמַלְכוּת בִּלְאִשְׁצָר הַמֶּלֶךְ חָזוֹן נִרְאָה אֵלַי דְּגִלְאֵל אַחֲרֵי הַנִּרְאָה אֵלַי בַּתְּחִלָּה: | Anno tertio regni Baltassar regis, visio apparuit mihi. Ego Daniel, post id quod videram in principio, | Am dritten jar des Königreichs des königes Belsazer, erschein mir Daniel ein Gesicht, nach dem so mir am ersten erschienen war. | In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, even unto me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first. |
| 2 | וְאַרְאֶה בְּחִזּוֹן וַיְהִי בִּרְאִי וְאָנֹכִי בְּשׁוֹשַׁן הַבֵּיטָה אֲשֶׁר בְּעֵילָם הַמְּדִינָה וְאַרְאֶה בְּחִזּוֹן וְאָנֹכִי הָיִיתִי עַל-אוּבַל אוּלַי: | vidi in visione mea, cum essem in Susis castro, quod est in Ælam regione: vidi autem in visione esse me super portam Ulai. | Ich war aber, da ich solch Gesicht sahe, zu schlos Susan im lande Elam, am wasser Ulai. | And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I was at Shushan in the palace, which is in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai. |
| 3 | וְאַשָּׂא עֵינַי וְאַרְאֶה וְהִנֵּה אֵיל אֶחָד עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי הָאֵבֶל וְלֹו קַרְנָיִם וְהַקַּרְנִים גְּבוּהוֹת וְהָאֶחָת גְּבוּהָ מִן- הַשְּׁנִיט וְהַגְּבוּהָ עָלָה בְּאַחֲרֹנָה: | Et levavi oculus meos, et vidi: et ecce aries unus stabat ante paludem, habens cornua excelsa, et unum excelsius altero atque succrescens. Postea | Und ich hub meine Augen auff, und sahe, und sihe, ein Widder stund fur dem wasser, der hatte zwey hohe Hörner, doch eins höher denn das ander, und das höhest wuchs am letzten. | Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had two horns: and the two horns were high; but one was higher than the other, and the higher came up last. |
| 4 | רָאִיתִי אֶת-הָאֵיל מִנֶּגַח יָמָה וְצָפוֹנָה וְנִגְבָּה וְכָל-חַיּוֹת לֹא-יַעֲמֶדּוּ לִפְנָיו וְאֵין מַצִּיל מִיָּדוֹ וְעַשָּׂה כְּרָצוֹ וְהִגְדִּיל: | vidi arietem cornibus ventilantem contra occidentem, et contra aquilonem, et contra meridiem, et omnes bestiae non poterant resistere ei, neque liberari de manu eius: fecitque secundum voluntatem suam, et magnificatus est. | Ich sahe, Das der Widder mit den Hörnern sties gegen Abend, gegen Mitternacht, und gegen Mittag, Und kein Thier kund fur im bestehen, noch von seiner Hand errettet werden, Sondern er thet was er wolt, und ward gros. | I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither was there any that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great. |

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| 5 | <p>וּבֹאֵי הַיָּמִי מִבֵּין וְהִנֵּה צִפְרִי-הָעֵינַיִם בָּא מִן-הַמַּעַרְבַּל עַל-פָּנָי כָּל-הָאָרֶץ וְאֵין נוֹגֵעַ בָּאָרֶץ וְהַצֶּלֶר קָרַן חֲזוֹת בֵּין עֵינָיו:</p> | <p>Et ego intelligebam: ecce autem hircus caprarum veniebat ab occidente super faciem totius terræ, et non tangebatur terram: porro hircus habebat cornu insigne inter oculos suos.</p> | <p>Und in dem ich drauff merckt, Sihe, so kompt ein Zigenbock vom Abend her, uber die gantze Erden, das er die erde nicht rürete, Und der Bock hatte ein ansehlich Horn zwisschen seinen augen.</p> | <p>And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.</p> |
| 6 | <p>וַיָּבֹא עַד-הָאֵילִל בְּעַל הַקֶּרְנִים אֲשֶׁר רָאִיתִי עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי הָאֵבֶל וַיִּרְץ אֵלָיו בְּחֶמֶת כָּחוֹ:</p> | <p>Et venit usque ad arietem illum cornutum, quem videram stantem ante portam, et cucurrit ad eum in impetu fortitudinis suæ.</p> | <p>Und er kam bis zu dem Wider der zwey Hörner hatte, den ich stehen sahe fur dem wasser, und er liess in seinem zorn gewaltiglich zu jm zu.</p> | <p>And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.</p> |
| 7 | <p>וַרְאִיתִיו מֵגִיעַ אֶצֶל הָאֵיל וַיִּתְמַרְמֶר אֵלָיו וַיִּךְ אֶת-הָאֵיל וַיִּשְׁבֹּר אֶת-שִׁטֵּי קֶרְנוֹ וְלֹא-הָיָה כֹחַ בְּאֵיל לַעֲמֹד לִפְנָיו וַיִּשְׁלִיכֵהוּ אֶרְצָה וַיִּרְמָסֵהוּ וְלֹא-הָיָה מַצִּיל לָאֵיל מִיָּדוֹ:</p> | <p>Cumque appropinquasset prope arietem, efferatus est in eum, et percussit arietem: et comminuit duo cornua eius, et non poterat aries resistere ei: cumque eum misisset in terram, conculcavit, et nemo quibat liberare arietem de manu eius.</p> | <p>Und ich sahe jm zu, das er hart an den Widder kam, und ergrimmet uber jn, und sties den Widder, und zubrach jm seine zwey Hörner. Und der Widder hatte keine Krafft, das er fur jm hette mügen bestehen, Sondern er warff jn zu boden, und zutrat jn, und niemand kund den Widder von seiner hand erretten.</p> | <p>And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.</p> |
| 8 | <p>וּצִפְרִי הָעֵינַיִם הִגְדִּיל עַד-מְאֹד וַיִּכְעַצְמוּ נִשְׁבָּרָה הַקֶּרֶן הַגְּדוֹלָה וַתַּעֲלֶנָּה חֲזוֹת אַרְבַּע תַּחְתִּיָּה לְאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם:</p> | <p>Hircus autem caprarum magnus factus est nimis: cumque crevisset, fractum est cornu magnum, et orta sunt quatuor cornua subter illud per quatuor ventos cæli.</p> | <p>Und der Zigenbock ward seer gros, Und da er auff's sterckest worden war, zubrach das grosse Horn, und wuchsen an des stat ansehliche viere, gegen die vier winde des Himels.</p> | <p>Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.</p> |
| 9 | <p>וּמִן-הָאֶתֶת מִהֶם יָצָא קֶרֶן-אֶתֶת מִצְעִירָה וַתִּגְדַּל-יִתֵּר אֶל-הַגִּבּוֹר וְאֶל- הַמְּזֻרָח וְאֶל-הַצָּבִי:</p> | <p>De uno autem ex eis egressum est cornu unum modicum: et factum est grande contra meridiem, et contra orientem, et contra fortitudinem.</p> | <p>Und aus der selbigen einem, wuchs ein klein Horn, das ward seer gros gegen Mittage, gegen Morgen, und gegen das Werdeland.</p> | <p>And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land.</p> |
| 10 | <p>וַתִּגְדַּל עַד-צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם וַתִּפֹּל אֶרְצָה מִן-הַצָּבָא וּמִן-הַכּוֹכָבִים וַתִּרְמָסֵם:</p> | <p>Et magnificatum est usque ad fortitudinem cæli: et deiecit de fortitudine, et de stellis, et conculcavit eas.</p> | <p>Und es wuchs bis an des Himelsheer, und warff etliche davon, und von den Sternen zur Erden, und zutrat sie.</p> | <p>And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.</p> |

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| 11 | וְעַד שָׂר־הַצָּבָא הִגְדִּיל וּמָלְנוּ הָרִים הַתְּמִיד וְהַשְׁלֹךְ מָכוֹן מִקִּדְשׁוֹ: | Et usque ad principem fortitudinis magnificatum est: et ab eo tulit iuge sacrificium, et deiecit locum sanctificationis eius. | Ja es wuchs, und verwüstet die Wohnung seines Heiligthums. | Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down. |
| 12 | וְצָבָא תִּנָּתַן עַל־הַתְּמִיד בְּפֶשַׁע וְתִשְׁלַךְ אִמַּת אֶרְצָה וְעִשְׂתָּהּ וְהִצְלִיחָהּ: | Robur autem datum est ei contra iuge sacrificium propter peccata: et prosternetur veritas in terra, et faciet, et prosperabitur. | Es ward jm aber solche macht gegeben, wider das teglich Opfer, umb der Sünde willen, Das er die warheit zu bodem schlüge, und was er thet, jm gelingen muste. | And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered. |
| 13 | וְאִשְׁמַעְיָה אֶחָד־קְדוֹשׁ מִדְּבָר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶחָד קְדוֹשׁ לְפִלְמוֹנִי הַמְּדַבֵּר עַד־מָתִי הַחֲזוֹן הַתְּמִיד וְהַפֶּשַׁע שְׁמָם תֵּת וְקִדֵּשׁ וְצָבָא מִרְמָס: | Et audiui unum de sanctis loquentem: et dixit unus sanctus alteri nescio cui loquenti: Usquequo visio, et iuge sacrificium, et peccatum desolationis quæ facta est: et sanctuarium, et fortitudo conculcabitur? | Ich höret aber einen Heiligen reden, und der selbige Heilige sprach zu einem der da redet, Wie lange sol doch weren solch Gesicht vom teglichen Opfer, und von der Sünden, umb welcher willen die Verwüstung geschicht, das beide, das Heiligthum und das Heer zutretten werden? | Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? |
| 14 | וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי עַד עָרֵב בֹּקֶר אֶלְפִּים וּשְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת וְנִצְדָק קִדְשׁ: | Et dixit ei: Usque ad vesperam et mane, dies duo millia trecenti: et mundabitur sanctuarium. | Und er antwortet mir, Es sind zwey tausent, und drey hundert tage, von abend gegen morgen zu rechnen, So wird das Heiligthum wider geweiht werden. | And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. |
| 15 | וַיְהִי בִּרְאֵתִי אֲנִי דָנִיֵּאל אֶת־הַחֲזוֹן וְאִבְקֵשָׁה בִּינָה וְהִנֵּה עֹמֵד לְנִגְדִי כְּמִרְאָה־גִּבּוֹר: | Factum est autem cum viderem ego Daniel visionem, et quærerem intelligentiam: ecce stetit in conspectu meo quasi species viri. | Und da ich Daniel solch Gesicht sahe, und hette es gerne verstanden, Sihe, da stunds fur mir, wie ein Man. | And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man. |
| 16 | וַאֲשַׁמַּע קוֹל־אָדָם בֵּין אוּלַי וַיִּקְרָא וַיֹּאמֶר גְּבִרְיֵאל הִבֵּן לְהִלָּז אֶת־ הַמִּרְאָה: | Et audiui vocem viri inter Ulai: et clamavit, et ait: Gabriel, fac intelligere istam visionem. | Und ich höret zwisschen Ulaj eines Menschenstim, der rieß, und sprach, Gabriel, Lege diesem das Gesicht aus, das ers verstehe. | And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision. |
| 17 | וַיָּבֹא אֶצְל עֹמְדִי וַיִּבְבְּאוּ נִבְעֹתַי וַאֲפָלָה עַל־פָּנַי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי הִבֵּן בּוֹר־ אָדָם כִּי לַעֲתִיקָז הַחֲזוֹן: | Et venit, et stetit iuxta ubi ego stabam: cumque venisset, pavens corruí in faciem meam: et ait ad me: Intellige, fili hominis, quoniam in tempore finis complebitur visio. | Und er kam hart bey mich, Ich erschrack aber da er kam, und fiel auff mein angesicht. Er aber sprach zu mir, Merck auff du Menschenkind, denn dis Gesicht gehört in die zeit des endes. | So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end shall be the vision. |

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| 18 | וּבְדַבְּרוֹ עִמִּי נִרְדַּמְתִּי עַל־פְּנֵי אֲרָצָה וַיִּגַע־בִּי וַיַּעֲמִידֵנִי עַל־עַמְּדִי: | Cumque loqueretur ad me, collapsus sum pronus in terram: et tetigit me, et statuit me in gradu meo, | Und da er mit mir redet, sanck ich in eine Ammacht zur erden auff mein angesicht. Er aber rüret mich an, und richtet mich auff, das ich stund. | Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright. |
| 19 | וַיֹּאמֶר הַנְּנִי מוֹדִיעֶךָ אֵת אֲשֶׁר־יְהִיָּה בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּעַם כִּי לְמוֹעֵד קָץ: | dixitque mihi: Ego ostendam tibi quæ futura sunt in novissimo maledictionis: quoniam habet tempus finem suum. | Und er sprach, Sihe, ich wil dir zeigen, wie es gehen wird, zur zeit des letzten zorns, Denn das ende hat seine bestimpte zeit. | And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end shall be. |
| 20 | הָאֵיל אֲשֶׁר־רָאִיתָ בְּעַל הַקָּרְנִים מֶלֶכִּי מִדֵּי וּפָרָס: | Aries, quem vidisti habere cornua, rex Medorum est atque Persarum. | Der Widder mit den zweien Hörnern, den du gesehen hast, sind die Könige in Media und Persia. | The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. |
| 21 | וְהַצִּפִּיר הַשָּׁעִיר מֶלֶךְ נֶגֶו וְהַקָּרוֹן הַגָּדוֹלָה אֲשֶׁר בֵּין־עֵינָיו הוּא הַמֶּלֶךְ הָרִאשׁוֹן: | Porro hircus caprarum, rex Græcorum est; et cornu grande, quod erat inter oculos eius, ipse est rex primus. | Der Ziegenbock aber ist der König in Griechenland. Das grosse Horn zweisschen seinen Augen, ist der erste König. | And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. |
| 22 | וְהַנְּשִׁפָּרֶת וְתַעֲמֻדָּה אַרְבַּע תַּחְתֶּיהָ אַרְבַּע מַלְכוּתוֹת מִזֵּי יַעֲמֻדָּה וְלֹא בְכַחֲו: | Quod autem fracto illo surrexerunt quatuor pro eo: quatuor reges de gente eius consurgent, sed non in fortitudine eius. | Das aber Vier an seiner stat stunden, da es zubrochen war, bedeut, Das vier Königreiche aus dem Volck entstehen werden, Aber nicht so mechtig, als er war. | Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. |
| 23 | וּבְאַחֲרֵית מַלְכוּתָם כָּהֵתָם הַפְּשָׁעִים יַעֲמִד מֶלֶךְ עֲז־פָנִים וַיַּכִּין חֵידוֹת: | Et post regnum eorum, cum creverint iniquitates, consurget rex impudens facie, et intelligens propositiones; | Nach diesen Königreichen, wenn die Übertretter uber hand nemen, wird auffkomen ein frecher und tückischer König. | And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. |
| 24 | וְעֶזְרָם כָּחוֹ וְלֹא בְכַחוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹת יִשְׁחִית וְהַצְלִיחַ וְעָשָׂה וְהִשְׁתִּית עֲצוּמִים וְעַם־קֹדָשִׁים: | et roborabitur fortitudo eius, sed non in viribus suis: et supra quam credi potest, universa vastabit, et prosperabitur, et faciet. Et interficiet robustos, et populum sanctorum | Der wird mechtig sein, doch nicht durch seine Krafft, Er wirds wunderlich verwüsten, Und wird jm gelingen, das ers ausrichte. Er wird die Starcken, sampt dem heiligen Volck, verstören, | And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. |
| 25 | וְעַל־שִׁכְלוֹ וְהַצְלִיחַ מְרֻמָּה בְּיָדוֹ וּבִלְבָבוֹ יַגְדִּיל וּבִשְׁלֹנָה יִשְׁחִית רַבִּים וְעַל־שִׁרְשָׁרִים יַעֲמִד וּבְאַפָּס יָד | secundum voluntatem suam, et dirigetur dolus in manu ejus: et cor suum magnificabit, et in copia rerum omnium occidet plurimos: et contra principem | und durch seine klugheit wird jm der betrug geraten, Und wird sich in seinem hertzen erheben, und durch wolfart wird er viel verderben, Und wird sich | And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall |

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| | יִשָּׁבֵר: | principum consurget, et sine manu conteretur. | aufflehen, wider den Fürsten aller Fürsten, Aber er wird on hand zubrochen werden. | also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. |
| 26 | וּמִרְאָה הָעֶרֶב וְהַבֹּקֶר אֲשֶׁר נֶאֱמַר אֱמֶת הִיא וְאַתָּה סֵתֵם הַחַזוֹן כִּי לִיָּמִים רַבִּים: | Et visio vespere et mane, quæ dicta est, vera est: tu ergo visionem signa, quia post multos dies erit. | Die Gesicht vom abend und morgen, das dir gesagt ist, das ist war, Aber du solt das Gesicht heimlich halten, denn es ist noch eine lange zeit dahin. | And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told is true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it shall be for many days. |
| 27 | וְאֲנִי דָנִיֵּאל נִהְיִיתִי וְנַחֲלִיתִי יָמִים וְאֶלְוִים וְאַעֲשֶׂה אֶת־מְלָאכַת הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאִשְׁתּוּמָם עַל־הַמֶּרְאָה וְאִין מִכִּין: פ | Et ego Daniel languui, et ægrotavi per dies: cumque surrexissem, faciebam opera regis, et stupebam ad visionem, et non erat qui interpretaretur. | Und ich Daniel ward schwach, und lag etliche tage kranck. Darnach stund ich auff, und richtet aus des Königs geschefft, und verwunderte mich des Gesichts, und niemand ward der michs berichtet. | And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it. |

6.3 The Original Creed according to Newton, the Apostolic Creed, and the Nicene Creed

Note: The translation of the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds is from the *Book of Common Prayer* (1662).¹

| Newton's "Original Creed" | | The Apostolic Creed | | The Nicene Creed |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------|--|---|
| §1 | I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, | §1 | I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: | I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible. |
| §2 | and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, | §2 | And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord; | And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made: |
| | who was born of the virgin Mary, | §3 | Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, | Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, |
| | suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, | §4 | Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried; | And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate: He suffered and was buried, |
| | the third day he rose again from the dead, | §5 | He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, | And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, |
| | and ascended into heaven, | §6 | He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; | And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: |
| | from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. | §7 | From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. | And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end. |
| §3 | And I believe in the Holy Ghost. | §8 | I believe in the Holy Ghost; | And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the prophets. |
| | | §9 | The holy Catholick Church; the Communion of Saints; | And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. |
| | | §10 | The Forgiveness of sins; | I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. |
| | | §11 | The Resurrection of the body; | And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, |
| | | §12 | And the Life everlasting. Amen. | And the Life of the world to come. Amen. |

¹ *The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Church of England: Together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, Pointed as They Are to Be Sung in Churches* (Cambridge: John Baskerville, 1762), (whole book is unpaginated).

6.4 Isaac Newton's Religious Mss. and Their Datability

This information is taken from the manuscripts' catalogue entries at The Newton Project. The dating factors are italicized and are the following:

- *Hand*: Ms. contains text written by another hand than Newton's
- *History*: Historical context
- *Letter*: Ms. contains draft letter which serves as the oldest possible date of the Ms.
- *Mint*: Ms. contains work-related texts from Newton's year at the Royal Mint
- *Principia*: Ms. contains drafts or portions of the book and can hence be dated to the time when Newton worked on that work (at least the Ms. is not older)
- *Royal Society*: Ms. contains text related to the Royal Society
- *Source*: Newton used a source in the Ms. that helps with dating
- *Watermark*: The paper of the Ms. has a watermark that a scholar has claimed to be able to date

| Manuscript | Ff. | Date |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| fN563Z | | <i>Source</i> : Cudworth. <i>The True Intellectual System of the Universe</i> . 1678 |
| Keynes Ms. 1 | | |
| Keynes Ms. 2 | pt. 1, cover | <i>History</i> : "Fr Massam at Oats Highlaver Parish near Harlow" in Newton's hand. In 1689–1690 "Newton Newton frequently attended the house of Sir Francis Masham at Oates (where he often met and discussed theological issues with Locke), but it is not necessarily contemporaneous with the rest of the document." |
| | pt. 1, Flyleaf ^v | <i>Source</i> : <i>Epistola consularis</i> , 1683 |
| | pt. 2, f. Br | <i>Source</i> : Rosenroth. <i>Kabbala denudata</i> , 1684 |
| | pt. 2, f. 64r | <i>Hand</i> : Humphrey Newton's hand. He stayed with Newton from 1683 or 1684 to 1688 |
| | pt. 2, f. 10r | <i>Letter</i> : "The repeated heading 'De Antichristo' is deleted and replaced by 'On 1 Iohn 5.7, 8'; this was used as the basis of the start of the first letter to Locke of November 1690." |
| Keynes Ms. 3 | | |
| Keynes Ms. 4 | | |
| Keynes Ms. 5 | ff. I–VI | <i>Watermark</i> : "Early pages (ff. I–VI) have the same watermark (horn + HG/LL) as a manuscript page from the <i>Opticks</i> of the late 1680s or very early 1690s, and pp. 1–6 share a watermark with a manuscript portion of the <i>Principia</i> of 1687." |
| Keynes Ms. 6 | f. 1r | <i>Mint</i> : "A draft of Statement Five occurs in the Mint Papers: Mint catalogue MINT00570 (V.33) on the reverse of a draft document of 1715, though it is not clear which side was written first" |
| Keynes Ms. 7 | | |
| Keynes Ms. 8 | | |
| Keynes Ms. 9 | f. 3v | <i>Principia</i> : Contains "Latin notes on tides, and a list of editorial instructions in Latin, these last two relating to emendations to the first edition of the <i>Principia</i> ." They must have been written before 1713, when the 2 nd edition was published |
| Keynes Ms. 10 | ff. 1–26 | <i>Watermark</i> : "fleur de lys/CSH", "identical to those occurring on a letter to Locke of 3 May 1692, and also on some revisions to the <i>Principia</i> of the early 1690s and drafts of 'De quadratura curvarum' dating from autumn-winter 1691–2" |
| | ff. 27–32 | <i>Watermark</i> : "lys/HD", "appears on papers dated between June 1691 and July 1695" |
| Keynes Ms. 11 | | |
| Keynes Ms. 146 | | |
| M132/2/10, Stanford | | <i>Watermark</i> : 1700–1. See Shapiro, "Dating Game," 197 |
| Ms. 361(1) | f. 7r | <i>Letter</i> : "'The Introduction' (2 pp.), on the backs of a draft letter to the Treasury about copper coinage technique (cf. Mint |

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| | | catalogue MINT00633 (II.356) [May 1717]) and a sheet of algebraic calculations and notes on the generation of organic bodies from water and on magnetic attraction” |
| Ms. 361(3) | f. 34r | <i>Draft letter</i> : “Many of the sheets had previously been used for notes on other subjects, including (f. 34 ^r) an undated draft letter [2 May 1693? to Fatio de Duillier?] (<i>NC</i> , 7: 367) and a list of alchemical titles (f. 105 ^r)” |
| Ms. 361(4) | ff. 2–41 | <i>Letter</i> : “Copy of two letters of 14 November 1690” to John Locke |
| Ms. 434, Babson | | |
| Ms. 435, Babson | f. 1v | <i>Letter</i> : “On reverse of a one-page letter from John Blow dated 4 March 1709 (i.e. 1710)” |
| Ms. 436, Babson | | |
| Ms. 437, Babson | | |
| Ms. 438, Babson | f. 1v | <i>Letter</i> : “Written on the back of and around a letter to Newton from George Watson, dated 4 March (no year), asking him to take over a £500 mortgage on which Catherine Barton had defaulted.” Hanna Barton, Newton’s sister, became a widow in 1693 |
| Ms. 704, Babson | | |
| Ms. 1029, Babson | | |
| Ms. 130, Harry | | |
| Ms. 132, Harry | | |
| MS. Add. 3988 | | <i>History</i> : Newton received the French critique of his short <i>Chronology</i> on November 11, 1725, and started these drafts on his <i>Chronology</i> after that |
| Ms. Add. 3989 | | |
| Ms. Add. 4003 | | |
| MS Add. 4005 | ff. 39–42 | <i>Principia</i> : Arguments derived from the <i>Principia</i> , which was first published in 1687 |
| Ms. N47 | | |
| MSS.Temp3.Miss, PA | f. 23 | <i>Source</i> : Tavernier, Jean Baptiste. <i>Six Voyages</i> . Translated from French. 1684 |
| N563M3 P222 | | |
| R.16.38.436A | all | <i>Source</i> : Notes “from Ralph Cudworth's <i>True Intellectual System of the Universe</i> (1678), pp. 287 and 290” |
| R.16.38.438A | | |
| SL232 | | |
| SL255 | f. 4r | <i>Source</i> : “A marginal reference on f. 4r to an edition of Athanasius’s works published (according to Newton) at Paris in 1699 gives a <i>terminus a quo</i> for the date of this section. However, the edition Newton had in mind is surely the works of Athanasius, edited by Bernard de Montfaucon, published at Paris in 1698” |
| Yahuda Ms. 1 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 2 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 3 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 4 | | <i>Letter</i> : “Newton’s covering letter for the copy of this manuscript that he sent to Mill, dated 29 January 1693/4, is printed in <i>NC</i> , 3: 303–4: he observes that he is sending ‘not only my old collations so far as they vary from yours, but also some new ones of Dr Covils |

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| | | two MSS” |
| Yahuda Ms. 5 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 6 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 7 | pt. 3p | <i>Letters</i> : “Includes re-used letters to or draft letters from Newton bearing the dates 26 April 1709, 26 Oct. 1709, 2 Aug. 1714, 1719, 27 Jan. 1721, 1 Feb. 1725/6” |
| Yahuda Ms. 8 | pt. 1, ff. 3r–v | <i>Source</i> : reference “to a book on coinage history published in 1689 (there is another copy of the passage in the Mint Papers, MINT00345 (III.446))” |
| | pt. 2, f. 2 | <i>History</i> : “Mint-related material (expenses incurred by the Warden's clerk in pursuing counterfeiters in 1711)” |
| | pt. 3 | <i>Source</i> : “Dr. Tillotson, late Archbishop of Canterbury,” “so after Nov. 1694” when he passed away |
| | pt. 4 | <i>Hands</i> : “Two clerical hands” |
| Yahuda Ms. 9 | all | <i>Hand</i> : “Approximately dateable since a substantial part of the manuscript is in Humphrey Newton’s hand (up to Ms. 9.2 f. 45 the hand alternates between Isaac and Humphrey Newton’s; from that point on the main text is entirely in Humphrey’s hand but with occasional interpolations, corrections and additions by Isaac)” |
| Yahuda Ms. 10 | ff. 1r–2v | <i>Source</i> : Garret, Walter. <i>A Discourse concerning Antichrist</i> , 1680 |
| Yahuda Ms. 11 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 12 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 13 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 14 | ff. 42r–43v | <i>Letter</i> : “written around a draft letter [to Henry Oldenburg, Jan. 1674/5] accepting the offer to waive Newton's fees as Fellow of the Royal Society” |
| Yahuda Ms. 15 | ff. 124r, etc. | <i>Mint, Royal Society</i> : “A number of sheets had previously been used for material concerning Newton's activities at the Mint and in the Royal Society. The text on f. 124r is written around some jottings about payments (probably Mint-related) made in 1708-9. ff. 132r-133r have a draft letter of c. 1710 relating to the renewal of Queen Anne's contract with Cornish tin producers (cf. the section ‘Tin Trade’ in the Mint catalogue). f. 165r has a draft letter of c. 2 Feb. 1711 concerning Robert Ball's tender to handle the Queen’s tin (cf. Mint Catalogue MINT00714 (III.556)), f. 181v has a list of Fellows of the Royal Society, and f. 182 has the draft of a formula for calculating coinage duty (cf. Mint Catalogue MINT00291 (III.444))” |
| Yahuda Ms. 16 | pt. 2 | <i>Hand</i> : “written largely in Humphrey Newton’s hand (the rectos of ff. 1–18, 28-43, 50–58 are all in his hand, amended by Newton and with additions by Newton on some of the versos)” |
| | pt. 2, f. 20v | <i>Mint</i> : “Mint material relating to the silver issue of mid-1711” |
| Yahuda Ms. 17 | pt. 1, f. 5v | <i>Source</i> : Ioannis Antiocheni Cognomenti Malala, 1691 |
| | pt. 2, f. 24 | <i>Source</i> : Humphrey Prideaux's <i>Marmora Oxoniensa</i> , 1676 |
| Yahuda Ms. 18 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 19 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 20 | | <i>Hand</i> : “Hopton Haynes, Newton’s protégé at the Mint” |
| Yahuda Ms. 21 | | <i>Watermark</i> : “Same watermark as letters to Oldenburg of 18 August, 26 August and 24 October 1676” |
| Yahuda Ms. 22 | | <i>Hand</i> : Humphrey Newton |
| Yahuda Ms. 24 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 25 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 26 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 27 | f. 15r | <i>Hand</i> : another hand in French <i>History</i> : Newton received the French critique of his short <i>Chronology</i> on November 11, 1725, and started these drafts on his <i>Chronology</i> after that |
| Yahuda Ms. 28 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 29 | | |
| Yahuda Ms. 31 | ff. 1r–v | <i>Letter</i> : “an undated draft letter in Latin about calculating the surface |

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| Yahuda Ms. 33 | <p>area of mountainous regions, addressed to ‘Mr. Jo. Lacy, one of her Majesty’s surveyors’”</p> <p><i>Letter:</i> “Written under a fragment of a draft letter, reading only ‘Sr., please return my hearty thanks to the R. Society for their kind accepting of the copy &’”</p> |
| Yahuda Ms. 39 | |
| Yahuda Ms. 41 | <p><i>Watermark:</i> “similar to those on <i>prisca sapientia</i> material from 1691–2”</p> |

6.5 Marginalia and Markings in Newton's Personal Bible

Newton's personal Bible is kept in Wren Library, Cambridge University. The author of this dissertation copied the marginalia and markings which Newton wrote in that Bible. They are published, as far as the author knows, here for the first time (though some of them have been cited before). Since they have not been published before, they are provided here in full.

Providing them in full also gives comparative context to what Newton wrote on the pages of Daniel and Revelation. The verses in the right column are those of the modern KJV, without the in-text apparatus of the version Newton used. When Newton added text to a verse, the verse is given in full.

| Reference | Marginalia | In-Text Markings |
|----------------|---|---|
| Gn 2:9 | + Amos 1.5. | And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in ⁺ Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. |
| Gn 2:11 | ? 24.25. Gen 25.18 1 Sam 15.7. | |
| Gn 2:14 | [D]an. [10].4. | |
| Gn 22:22 | | And <u>Chesed</u> , and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel. |
| Gn 24 | | Dot at the start of v. 45, with a diagonal line down left to v. 27 in the other column A wide "checkmark" around the verse number in v. 48 The lines are clear and definite, so they could be accidental markings |
| Dt 22:16 | Deut. 16.18. | |
| 1 Sm 15:18–19 | | A wobbly line through these two verses, perhaps unintentional marking |
| 1 Sm 26:2 | | A little line going through the initial "And" in the verse, perhaps unintentional marking |
| 1 Kgs 12:28–32 | Hos 4.15 & 8.6 & 13.2. Amos 5.4,5,6. 1 Kin 14.9. & 16.31[.] 2 King. 3.2 & 10.29. & 13.4,6,11,14 & 17.16,22,25,27,26,29,33,34,41. & 23.15,19,20. Jud. 18.30. Ezra 4.2. | |
| 2 Kgs 25:27 | Jer 52.31 | |
| 1 Chr 6:50 | ch. 6.4. | |
| 1 Chr 6:54 | Josh. 21.10,11,12 &c. | |
| Ez 7:1 | 1 Chrō 6.14. | |
| Ez 8:33 | | Now on the fourth day was the silver and the gold and the vessels weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Uriah the priest; and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinehas; and with them was <u>Jozabad the son of Jeshua, and Noadiah the son of Binnui, Levites;</u> And all Israel in the <u>days of Zerubbabel</u> , and in the <u>days of Nehemiah</u> , gave the portions of the singers and the porters, every day his portion: and they sanctified holy things unto the Levites; and the Levites sanctified <i>them</i> unto the children of Aaron. |
| Neh 12:47 | | |
| Sg 1:7 | S [then scribbled over] | |
| Sg 1:8 | S | |
| Sg 1:12 | A | |

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| Sg 1:15 | S | |
| Sg 2:1 | A | |
| Sg 2:2 | S | |
| Sg 2:3 | A | |
| Sg 4:1 | S | |
| Sg 4:16 | A | |
| Sg 5:1 | S | |
| Sg 5:2 | A | |
| Sg 5:9 | D | |
| Sg 5:10 | A | |
| Sg 6:1 | D | |
| Sg 6:2 | A | |
| Sg 6:4 | S | |
| Sg 7:10 | A | |
| Sg 8:5 | Chorus. | Placement: Over the verse |
| Is 66:14 | ὡς βοτάνη ἀνατελεῖ. Isa 25.8 | And when ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall <u>flourish</u> like an herb: and the hand of the Lord shall be known toward his servants, and his indignation toward his enemies. |
| Is 66:17 | Isa. 65:3. | They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the <u>gardens</u> behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD. |
| Jer 22:6 | NB ch. 33.16 | In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE <u>LORD</u> OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. |
| Jer 31:31 | John 17.25. | |
| Ez 3:12 | 1 King. 18.12. 2 King 2.16. | |
| Ez 5:2 | Zech. 13.8. | |
| Ez 5:12 | Zech 13.8. | |
| Ez 5:13 | Zech. | |
| Ez 16:46 | | And thine elder sister is Samaria, she and her daughters that dwell at thy left hand: and thy younger sister, that dwelleth at thy right hand, is <u>Sodom</u> and her daughters. |
| Ez 37:1 | Isa 25.8 & 66.14. & 26.19 & 24.23 | |
| Dn 7:8 | x A seer & fals prophet. 1 Sam. 9.9. | I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the <u>eyes</u> of man, and a <u>mouth</u> speaking great things. |
| Dn 7:12 | + long before | As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion + <u>taken away</u> : yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. |
| Dn 8:25 | Names y ^c name of Antichrist. | And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up <u>against the prince</u> of princes; but he shall be broken without hand. |
| Dn 9:25 | + Mica. 7.11. Amos. 9.11,14: Ezek 36.33, 35, 38. Isa 61.4. & 58 | Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to <u>*build</u> Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. |
| Dn 9:27 | Hos 3.4 Jer. 49.22 | And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the <u>overspreading</u> of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. |
| Dn 11:31 | Hos. 3.4 | |

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| Dn 11:36 | Isa 54.8 Isa. 26.20 Isa. 10.23,25 Dan. 8.19, 9.27 Isa 26.20.2? Jer [illegible]4.3.20 Jer. 30.24 Jer 32.37 Zech. 1.12. Ezek. 22[.]31. & 24.13 & 36.18 & 5.12[.]13. Mica .7.9,18. [illegible] 16.42 | And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the <u>indignation</u> be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. |
| Dn 11:37 | desire. Ezek. 24.16 | Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the <u>desire</u> of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. |
| Hos 4:15 | Ezek. 5.2 & 12 16 Amos 8.14. Zeph 1.5. | |
| Am 5:22 | Hos. 8.13. Amos 4.5. Jer. 7.2 &[?] 9,10,18,21,30 | |
| Zec 1:10 | ch. 6.5. ch. 4.10 Tob. 12.15 | |
| Zec 1:19 | Dan. 7. | |
| Zec 13:8 | Ezek 5.2[.] 12 | |
| Mt 1:19 | a merciful. Knatschbull. | Then Joseph her husband, being a ^a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. |
| Mt 2:16 | a of one year old & under. Kn. | Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, ^a from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. |
| Mt 3:4 | b tops of plants & wild hony. Kn. | And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was ^b locusts and wild honey. |
| Mt 4:5 | c on the top of y ^c temple. Kn. | Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him ^c on a pinnacle of the temple, |
| Mt 4:7 | d again, It is written, Thou &c Kn | Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. |
| Mt 5:16 | a. Even so let your light shine. Kn. | ^a Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. |
| Mt 5:19 | b the least of these – Kn. | Whosoever therefore shall break ^b one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. |
| Mt 5:42 | c turn him not away that would borrow of thee. Kn. | Give to him that asketh thee, and ^c from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. |
| Mt 6:5 | a they hinder their reward. Kn. | And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, ^a They have their reward. |
| Mt 9:5 | a Arise & walk, but that ye may know the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins? 6 Then saith he &c. Kn. | For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, ^a Arise, and walk? |
| Mt 9:18 | b is at y ^c point of death. Kn. | While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter ^b is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. |
| Mt 11:19 | a And this wisdom – Kn. | The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. ^a But wisdom is justified of her children. |
| Mt 12:18 | b shall preach judgment unto y ^c Gentiles, (He shall not strive, quench.) till he bring forth his judgment in victory. Kn. | Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he ^b shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. |

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| Mt 12:20 | c. and a dying lamp shall he not quench. Kn. | A bruised reed shall he not break, ^c and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. |
| Mt 12:43 | a desert places. Kn. | When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through ^a dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. |
| Mt 13:44 | a he concealeth. Kn. | Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, ^a he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. |
| Mt 17:11 | a finish all things. Kn. | And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and ^a restore all things. |
| Mt 19:28 | a in the resurrection when. Kn. | And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, ^a in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. |
| Mt 24:14 | Rev. 14.6. | |
| Mt 24:15, marg. ref. | & 8.13. & 12.11. & 11.31 | When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) [Marginal reference: * Dan. 9.27.] |
| Mt 24:16 | | Then let them which be in Judaea flee into <u>the mountains</u> : |
| Mt 24:17 | Luke 17.31 | |
| Mt 24:21 | Jer 30.7. Isa 66.7 Dan. 12.1 Rev. 14.12. & 7.14 | |
| Mt 24:40, marg. ref. | 4,35,36. | Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. [Marginal reference: * Luke 17.3] |
| Mk 3:21 | a to stay if him, for they said, [illegible]. Kn. a And some hearing of it, went out from him to stay it; for they said, it was mad. Kn. | ^a And when his friends heard of it, they went out to ^a lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself. |
| Mk 7:9 | a Do ye well to . . . Kn. | And he said unto them, ^a Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. |
| Mk 9:23 | a If thou canst? Do thou believe. All things – Kn. | Jesus said unto him, ^a If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. |
| Mk 11:13 | a for where he was, was the time of figs. Grot. Kn. | And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; ^a for the time of figs was not yet. |
| Mk 14:3 | a having a cruise of oyntment of spikenard very precious, & she shook the box ^{cruise} together & poured it on his head. Kn. | And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman ^a having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. |
| Lk 1:55 | a (as he spake to o[ur] fathers) to Abraham – Kn. | ^a As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. |
| Lk 2:35 | a And even thy sword shall pierce their soul, that the thoughts – Kn. | ^a (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. |
| Lk 3:23 | a And Jesus was about 30 years of age, beginning [the following genealogy,] being (as was supposed)– Kn. | ^a And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, |
| Lk 6:35 | a lend causing no man to despair & your reward & - Kn. | But love ye your enemies, and do good, and ^a lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. |
| Lk 7:30 | a the will of God towards themselves. Kn. | But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected ^a the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him. |
| Lk 11:41 | a are within , | But rather give alms of such things as ^a ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you. |
| Lk 12:49 | a what should I? O that it were already kindled! Kn | I am come to send fire on the earth; and ^a what will I, if it be already kindled? |

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| Lk 22:20 | a This cup w ^{ch} is poured out for you is the new Testament in my blood. Kn. | Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, ^a This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. |
| Lk 22:32 | b and do thou strengthen thy brethren when thou hast converted them. Kn. | But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: ^b and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. |
| Jn 1:1 | 1 John 1.1. Heb 4.12 | |
| Jn 1:4 | chap 3.19. & 8.12 | |
| Jn 1:16 | I.16 Irrepsit ἀντι χάριτος en margine | And of his fulness have all we received, and grace <u>for grace</u> . |
| Jn 5:26 | Colos. 1.19 | |
| Jn 7:21 | a & y ^c all wonder because of it. Moses gave you – Kn. | Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, ^a and ye all marvel. |
| Jn 11:10 | a no light in it. Kn. | But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is ^a no light in him. |
| Jn 11:33 | b it troubled him. Kn. | When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and ^b was troubled. |
| Jn 15:20 | a watched my sayings, they will watch yours also. Kn. | Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have ^a kept my saying, they will keep yours also. |
| Jn 16:26 | a & not (I say unto you) because I will pray the Father for you, for the father himself loveth you. | At that day ye shall ask in my name: ^a and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: |
| Acts 1:6 | 2 Tim. 4.1 Rev 20.4 | |
| Acts 5:4 | 1 John 5.9 | |
| Acts 7:19 | a by causing their children to be cast forth Kn | The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, ^a so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live. |
| Acts 13:20 | a .XIII.20. And about 450 years after that he gave them judges untill Samuel the Prophet. Kn. | ^a And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. |
| Acts 13:48 | a .XIII.48. met together, believed in eternal life. Kn. | And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ^a ordained to eternal life believed. |
| Acts 14:23 | b appointed them Elders. Kn. | And when they had ^b ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. |
| Acts 15:10 | a XV.10 by putting a yoke. Kn. | Now therefore why tempt ye God, ^a to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? |
| Acts 15:14 | b XV.14 by taking out. Kn | Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, ^b to take out of them a people for his name. |
| Acts 15:19 | ch. 16.3 & 18.18,21. & 20.16,22. & 21.4,12 13,21,24 25. & 22. 12. & 24 11, 18. & 25.8. & 28.17. & 14.14 | Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the <u>Gentiles</u> are turned to God: |
| Acts 15:23 | Rom. 2[.]25 & 3.1,2 & 7.6,7,12. 1 Cor. 7.18 & 9.20.21. 2 Cor. 3.11,13,14. Phil. 3.6. | And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the <u>Gentiles</u> in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia. |
| Acts 15:29 | 1 Tim. 1.8 Galat Hebr. | |
| Acts 16:13 | – a XVI.13 where a house of prayer was by the law appointed to be. | And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, ^a where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. |
| Acts 16:16 | – | |

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| Acts 18:5 | a XVIII.5 Paul was earnestly minded to testify to y ^e Jews. Kn. | And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, ^a Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. |
| Acts 19:9 | a XIX.9. of one of y ^e rulers of the city. Kn | But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school ^a of one Tyrannus. |
| Acts 19:21 | b XIX.21. Paul resolved in his mind. Kn | After these things were ended, ^b Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. |
| Acts 21:16 | a .XXI.16. who conducted us to one Mason a Cyprian | There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, ^a and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. |
| Acts 24:18 | a XXIII.18. The w ^{ch} whilst I was doing, certain Jews from Asia. Kn | ^a Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. |
| Rm title | Act. 20.2 | |
| Rm 1:17 | a. Rom. I.17. by faith revealed y ^t it may be believed. | For therein is the righteousness of God ^a revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. |
| Rm 3:5 | a III.5. But if of unrighteousness occasion [word struck out] y ^e righteousness of God. what shall we say? [sentence struck out] Is not God unjust for punishing [us] (I speak after y ^e manner of men; far be it. For then how shall God, judg y[^e] world? For if why am I yet judged as a sinner, & not (as we are slandered & as some report that we say) because we have done evil, y ^t good might follow? | ^a But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) |
| Rm 3:7 | | For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I yet also judged as a sinner? |
| Rm 4:13 | Heb 11.9,10 Act 3.25. & 7 [unclear] Luke [?] 1.72,73,74. Rom. 9.8 Gal. 3.16. Act. 26.6,7,8. | |
| Rm 5:12 | even | Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; <u>and</u> so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: |
| Rm 5:14 | man to come | Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of <u>him that was</u> to come. |
| Rm 6:4 | Father of glory | Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the <u>glory of the Father</u> , even so we also should walk in newness of life. |
| Rm 6:19 | in or by uncleanness & by iniquity by righteousness. See Philip. 2.3 & Heb. 3.10.13. | I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants <u>to</u> uncleanness and <u>to</u> iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants <u>to</u> righteousness unto holiness. |
| Rm 7:24, marg. ref.; 25 | or rather, the death of the body. I thank God [he will deliver me] through – Kn | O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the <u>body of this death</u> ? [Marginal reference: * Or, this body of death.] |
| Rm 8:3 | a. VIII.3. For in y ^t y ^e law was impotence of the law was weak because of the flesh, God sending – Kn. | |
| Rm 9:10 | a IX.10. but Rebecca also by | And not only this; ^a but when Rebecca also had conceived by |

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| | another [word of promis] was with child by o[ur] father Isaac. Kn. | one, even by our father Isaac; |
| Rm 9:20–22 | v: 20,21,22, see Kn. | Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? (Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour,) What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: |
| Rm 10:16 | a X.16. But none have obeyed y ^e gospel. Kn. | |
| Rm 11:21 | a XI.21. perhaps he will neither spare thee. Kn. | For if God spared not the natural branches, ^a take heed lest he also spare not thee. |
| Rm 11:23 | vers 15,23. Act 3.21 Luc 21.24 Act. 1.6. | |
| Rm 12:19 | b. XII.19. [God's] vengeance [by God's ministers.] Kn. | Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto ^b <u>wrath</u> ; for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. |
| Rm 14:1 | a judg of his inward thoughts. Kn | Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to ^a <u>doubtful disputations</u> . |
| Rm 16:25–27 | a XVI.25. Blot out ye three last verses here & insert them at y ^e end of ch. 14. | |
| 1 Cor title | Act. 19.22. | |
| 1 Cor postscript | Ephesus by Timotheus & Erastus ch. XVI,3,8,10,19. Act. XIX.1,21,22 2Tim. 4.20 | The first epistle to the Corinthians was written from Philippi by Stephanas, and Fortunatus, and Achaicus and Timotheus. |
| 2 Cor title | Act. 20.1 | |
| Eph postscript | 2 Tim. 4.12 | |
| Phil 2:8–10 | Rev. 3.21. & 2.27. Rev. 1.1 Heb. 1.9 & 2.9 & 1.6 & 5.9 & 12.2. Act. 2.36. Rev. 5.12 | |
| Phil 4:4, marg. ref. | & 13.8 | * Rev. 3.5 & 20.12. & 21.27. |
| Col 2:17–18 | + but y ^e body of Christ. Let no man beguile you of, being a voluntary in humility &c. | Which are a shadow of things to come; ⁺ <u>but the body is of Christ.</u> <u>Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility</u> and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, |
| 1 Thes title | Act. 17.15 | |
| 2 Thes title | Act. 17.1 | |
| 2 Thes 2:8, marg. ref. | | And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume* with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: *Is. 11.4. & 30.33. Hos 6.5. Rev. 2.16. |
| 2 Tm 3:1ff | Matt. 24.12. 2 Esdr. 5.1,2,9,10,11 & 8.50. & 12.24,25. | |
| Heb 1:9 | * Wherefore, O God, thy God hath annointed thee. Euseb: Demonstr. Evang. l. 4.§15 In Psal 45.7 &c. Eloim Eloach: | Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; * therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. |

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| Heb 4:10 | quod Aquila reddit ὁ θεὸς θεός. vers 4 Coloss. 2.16,17. Hosea 6.2 2 Pet. 3.8. Apoc. 20. | |
| Heb 4:12 | + Apoc. 19 | For the + word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. |
| Heb 4:14 | Apoc. 1 | Seeing then that we have a great + high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. |
| Heb 8:2 | Apoc 4. | |
| Heb 8:7 | Apoc. 8 | |
| Heb 12:8 | Act. 3.25. Rom. 4.15. Mat. 22.32. Heb 12.22 28 | |
| Heb 12:10 | Heb. 13.14. & 6.12,13,14,18. | |
| Heb 12:12 | Ezek. 16.60. Mica. 7.20 | |
| Heb 12:16 | Apoc. [illegible] | |
| Heb 12:22 | Apoc. 21 | |
| 2 Pet 3:7 | Mal. 4.1 Zeph. 1.18. & 3.8. Deut. 32.22. Isa. 34.4. Hosea 6.2 | |
| 1 Jn 2:18 | Heb. 9.26 | |
| Rv title | 1 King. 13.16,17. Matt 1.20 & 2.19. And 5.23. & 6.11,12,14,16,20. & 13.3,16,22. & 2.1 Act. 7.38. Gen 32.30 collated wth Hos. 12.4,5. Zech 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7.12.[illegible] | |
| Rv 1:1 | ch 19.10 & 1.13 Dan 10.5,6, 21. Dan 8 & 9 Luc. 1.19,26. 2 King. 1.3.15,17. Act. 8.26,29 ⁴ ,39 & 23.9 & 27.23 | The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his <u>angel</u> unto his servant John: |
| Rv 1:4 | Zech. 4.10. Tobit 12.15. Prov. 9.1. | John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the <u>seven spirits</u> which are before his throne; |
| Rv 1:10ff | ch. 1.1,4,13 & 2.7 & 3.1 & 4.2,5 & 5.3,6,13. & 8.2 & 10.1. & 15.7 & 17.3. & 18.1 & 19.10 & 21.9,10 & 22.6,8,16,17 | I was in the <u>Spirit</u> on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. |
| Rv 1:15 | Deut. 4.20. | |
| Rv 1:16 | Isa. 49.2. | |
| Rv 2:7 | ch. 19.10 | He that hath an ear, let him hear what the <u>Spirit</u> saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. |
| Rv 2:15 | + like[unclear] | So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, + which thing I hate. |
| Rv 2:17 | Isa 62.2 | |
| Rv 2:18 | + Apoc. 19 | And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his + eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; |

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| Rv 2:22 | II.22 Behold I will cast her & them that commit fornication with her on the bed, into great affliction. [Unclear word] | |
| Rv 3:7 | ch. 1.18 Psa. 45.1 | |
| Rv 3:13 | Isa 62.2 | |
| Rv 3:14 | Colos. 1.15. | |
| Rv 4:1 | | After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. |
| Rv 4:5 | Zech. 4.2,10. | And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven <u>lamps</u> of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. |
| Rv 5:1ff | Isa. 8.16. & 29.11,12,18 Dan 8.16 & 12.4,9 | |
| Rv 5:6 | + Zech. 3.9 & 4.2,10. & 1.10. Rev 4.5 & 2.1. Tob 12.15 | And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and + seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. |
| Rv 5:8 | ch. 14.2,3. ch. 8.3,4. | |
| Rv 5:12 | ch. 4.11. | Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to <u>receive</u> power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. |
| Rv 6:8 | Jer 27.6. & 28.14. Ezek. 5.17 | |
| Rv 6:12 | whi[te? unclear] Nahum 3.12 | And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the ^ moon became as blood; |
| Rv 6:13 | + Isa. 34.4 | And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a + fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. |
| Rv 7 | JS[?]. 2 | |
| Rv 7:2ff | 2 Cor. 1.22 2 Tim. 2.19 Eph. 1.13 John 6.27 2 Esdr. 2.38. & 6.5 | |
| Rv 7:9 | ch. 11.12. & 19.1 2 Esdras 2.42,45. Levit 23.40. Esdras [?]. 10.4. | |
| Rv 7:14 | Mat. 24.21. Dan 12.1. | And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great <u>tribulation</u> , and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. |
| Rv 7:16 | ch 15.8,9. | |
| Rv 8:3 | ch. 5.8 | |
| Rv 8:7 | & y ^e 3 ^d p ^t of y ^e earth was burnt up | The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: ^a and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. |
| Rv 8:8 | Jer 51.25 | |
| Rv 8:11 | Lam. 3.15 | |
| Rv 8:13 | eagle | And I beheld, and heard an <u>angel</u> flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound! |
| Rv 9:10 | | And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings & in their tails: and [unclear superscript] their power was to hurt men five months. |
| Rv 9:13 | Ezek. 39.17. | |
| Rv 10:1 | c. 1.15. | |
| Rv 10:7 | Ezek. 38.17. | |

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| Rv 10:9 | Ezek 2.[8] | |
| Rv 11:1 | Isa. 34.17. Isa. 18.2. 2 Sam. 8.2. Deut. 21.24 | |
| Rv 11:2 | Dan 12.7 Rom 11.25 | |
| Rv 11:3 | + 2 Chrō 24.19. | And I will give power unto my two ⁺ witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. |
| Rv 11:5 | ch. 12.14. & 1.20. 1 John. 2.20. Rom. 11.17,24. | |
| Rv 11:8 | ch 13.19 Ezek. 16. 1 John 2.18 | |
| Rv 11:11 | [unclear] | |
| Rv 11:13 | + Zech 14.16 | And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the ⁺ remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. |
| Rv 12:2 | Isa. 66.7 Jer 30.6 | |
| Rv 12:3 | | And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red <u>dragon</u> , having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. |
| Rv 12:4 | Dan. 8.10. ch. 1.20. & 12.1 | |
| Rv 12:14 | ch. 11.3,4. Exod. 19.4. Deut. 32.11 | |
| Rv 12:16 | Lam. 2.16. Ier. 51.34,44. | |
| Rv 13:8 | Dan. 12.1 | |
| Rv 13:14 | * 2 Thes 2.9. Deutron. 13.1. | And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth * by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. |
| Rv 14:1 | ch. 5.6, & 13[?].11 ch. 7.3,4. his name & | And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having [^] his Father's name written in their foreheads. |
| Rv 14:2 | ch. 10.3 | |
| Rv 14:3 | ch. 15.3. | |
| Rv 14:4 | ch. 17.2 | |
| Rv. 14:5 | | And in their mouth was found no guile ^{lye} : for they are without fault before the throne of God. |
| Rv 14:6 | Matt. 24.14 | |
| Rv 14:10 | Is 66:24 | |
| Rv 14:11 | Isa. 34.10 & 36.33 | |
| Rv 14:17 | Matth 13.39 | |
| Rv 14:19–20 | Is. 63.2,3 Mat. 21.33. ch 19.13,15. Jer 25.30 | |
| Rv 15:2 | | And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. |
| Rv 15:3 | † the nations. Lect. Grot. &c | And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of † <u>saints</u> . |
| Rv 15:7–8 | Ezra 10.7 Luc. 24.1 John 20.1 Apoc. 9.12. Gen[?] 1.5 | And <u>one</u> of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. |
| Rv 16:14 | Mat 24[.]24 | |
| Rv 16:17 | Ezek. 39.8. | |
| Rv 16:19 | Ezek. 5.11,12 | |
| Rv 17:1 | [margin torn, used to have some writing] | And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great <u>whore</u> that sitteth |

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| | | upon many <u>waters</u> : |
| Rv 17:3 | Isa. 14.1. | |
| Rv 17:4 | Isa. 14.4 Jer. 51.[illegible]7. | |
| Rv 17:5 | Jer. 50.38. Exod. 28.36. | |
| Rv 17:10 | Also they are | |
| Rv 17:14 | Dan. 8.25. | |
| Rv 17:17 | Dan. 8.23. | For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give <u>their</u> kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. |
| Rv 18:1ff | [torn]9. [torn]0.39. [torn].21. [torn].23.8,17 Ezek. 27. | |
| Rv 18:4, marg. ref. | , 45. | And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, * Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. *Jer. 51.6 |
| Rv 18:5 | Jer. 51.45. | |
| Rv 18:8 | Isa 34.1 | |
| Rv 18:12 | Ezek. 27. | |
| Rv 18:21 | Isa Jer 51.63 | |
| Rv 18:22 | Jer 25.10 | |
| Rv 18:23 | Isa. 47.9 | |
| Rv 19:7 | Isa 62.4 | |
| Rv 19:11 | ch. 3.1 | |
| Rv 19:15 | Isa. 11.4. Is. 63.27. Lam. 1.15. | |
| Rv. 19:17 | Ezek. 39.17,18,19,20. Isa. 25.6. | |
| Rv 19:19 | even | And I saw the beast, <u>and</u> the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. |
| Rv 19:20–21 | Mat 13.40. & 24.51. Isa. 27.1 & 66.16. | |
| Rv 20:5–6 | 1 Cor. 15.23,24,25. 1 Thes. 4.[unclear] 16. 2 Tim. 4.1. Heb. 11 | |
| Rv 20:11 | Heb 12.27. Isa. 51.6. | |
| Rv 20:13 | | And the sea gave up the dead <u>which were</u> in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. Line is perhaps accidental |
| Rv 21:4 | Isa 65.19 | |
| Rv 21:12 | Exod. 28.21 | |
| Rv 21:14 | Exod 28.21 | |
| Rv 21:18 | Isa 54.11,12 | |
| Rv 21:19 | Tob. 13.6. Exod 28.17,21. | |
| Rv 21:24 | Zech. 14.16. Isa 60.10,16 | |
| Rv 21:27 | Joel 3.17 Isa. 52.1 | |
| Rv 22:1 | Ezek. 47. Zech. 14.8. | |
| Rv 22:12 | * Isa. 62.11 | And, behold, I come quickly; * and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. |

6.6 The Bodmer Manuscript and Its Description

The Bodmer manuscript has not been included to a great extent in recent Newtonian studies and, unlike most of his other manuscripts, is not available online. Most of the folios are not enumerated. There is no conventional or standard enumeration of the folios yet. The present work enumerated the content drafts with Roman numerals, unlike Ducheyne who enumerated the folios with Arabic numbers throughout. For these reasons, the readers of the present work may meet with difficulty in looking up its citations of the Bodmer manuscript. To make that easier, the contents of the Bodmer manuscript are presented below according to the present enumeration and with chapter titles as they appear in the manuscript. The strikethroughs are Newton's, as can be seen from the fact that the emendations (added after the strikethroughs) are in his hand. Bracketed text is descriptive and added by the present author.

| Folio no. | Titles by Newton. Further explanations or descriptions by the dissertation's author in brackets |
|-------------|--|
| ir–iiv | Of the Church. The Introduction |
| iiir–viiiiv | [Several drafts of Content] |
| 1r–21v | Chap. I. Of the Host of Heaven & the Prince of the Host. [Note: There is a small inserted loose paper between ff. 17 and 18.] |
| 22r | Chap IX. Of the Prince of the Host or Messiah y ^e Prince and of his Host composed of Jews & Gentiles united by charity. |
| 22v–25v | Chap. 1. Of the Host of Heaven and the Prince of the Host. |
| 26r | Chap. II. Of the holy covenant |
| 27r–52v | Chap II. Of the holy Covenant. |
| 53 | [Blank] |
| 54r | Of the Faith once delivered to the saints |
| 55r–78r | Chap Of the rending of the Church Catholick into parties faith once delivered to the saints. |
| 79 | [Blank] |
| 80r | N. ^o 36 / Chap. 4 Of the Theology of the Heathens Cabbalists and ancient Hereticks. |
| 80v–81v | Chap. XII Of those who do wickedly against the holy covenant in departing from the true faith & worship in the worship of God. |
| 82r–87v | Chap. 4. Of the Theology of the Heathens Cabbalists and ancient Hereticks. |
| 88r | This Chapter is all almost transcribed, some in y ^e 1 st some in ye 2 ^d , 3 ^d , 4 th . 5 th ., so that this seems to be y ^e first draught, & then enlarged & drawn out in those chapters, & that of y ^e Rise of the Catholic Church. |
| 89r–115v | Chap. Of the working of the mystery of iniquity. |
| 116r | N. ^o 35 – |
| 117r–123v | Chap. Of the breaking of the primitive Church into parties & the rise of Popery working of the mystery of iniquity This is all almost verbatim in Chap. of Theology of Heathens |
| 124–125 | [Blank] |
| 126r | Of the Working of the mystery of Iniquity Duplicates |
| 127r–140v | Chap. Of th ^e working of th ^e mystery of iniquity |

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| | All this transcribed out of the Theology of Heathen Cabbalists & Heretics. |
| 141r | [A chapter title stricken through and hard to read] |
| 141v | Of the working of the mystery of iniquity. 2 pieces |
| 142r | [Drafted chapter titles and explicatory notes] |
| 143r–156v | Chap. XIV. Of the Host of Heaven, and the corruptions which crept into it. |
| 157r | Compleat 88 pages |
| 158r | [Draft of Contents] |
| 159r–174v | [Untitled] |
| | [Note: There is a small loose leaf between ff. 174 and 175] |
| 175 | [Blank] |
| 176r | [Explicatory notes] |
| 177r–201v | Chap A further account of the host of heaven & th ^e corruptions which crept into it. |
| 202–203 | [Blank] |
| 204r | Ch. 4 |
| | Of the Host of heaven, and the Prince of the Host. [illegible] Religion & its Corruption in morals. |
| 205r–211v | Chap. Of the Christian Religion and its corruption in morals. |
| 212 | [Blank] |
| 213r–215v | Chap. Of the corruption of the Christian Religion in discipline & morality. |
| 216–217 | [Blank] |
| | [Note: There are two smaller loose papers between ff. 216 and 217] |
| 218r | [Draft of Contents] |
| 219r–238v | Chap. Of the corruption of the Church in [illegible] language & opinions. |
| 239r | This is all in the foregoing sheets |
| 240r–248v | Chap. Of the [additions, some illegible, some stricken through] revelation of the Man of Sin |
| 249r | [Drafted chapter titles] |
| 250r–264v | Chap. X. Of the sanctuary of strength, or Of the Temple & Synagogues of the Jews & Churches of the Christians. |
| 265 | [Blank] |
| 266r | [Text, does not continue from f. 264] |
| 267 | [Blank] |
| | [Note: There are two smaller loose leaves between ff. 267 and 268] |
| 268r | [Text] |
| 269 | [Explicatory notes on verso] |
| 270 | [Blank] |
| 271r–272v | Chap. VIII. The history Of the Roman Empire in relation to the Ecclesiastical dominion & the power of changing times & laws in matters of Religion. |
| 273r–295v | Chap. VIII. Of the Roman Empire in relation to its Ecclesiastical dominion & legislation in matters of Religion. |
| 296–297 | [Blank] |
| 298r | N. ^o 37. / Chap. XVI. |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| | A further account of the host of heaven & of the An account of the contest between the Host of heaven & the transgressors of the holy covenant |
| 299r–321v | Of the Rise of the Rom. Cath. Church Chap. Of the rise of the Roman catholick Church. |
| 322–323 | [Blank] |
| 324r | Of the Rise of the Rom. Cath. Church. |
| 325r–333v | Chap. Of the rise & dominion of the Roman catholick Church. |
| 334r–335v | Chap. VII. Of the rise of the Roman Catholick Church in Ecclesiastical Dominion. |
| 336r–360v | Chap. VII. Sect. Chap. 7. Chap. XII. Of the corruption of the Christian religion Of the Devil coming [s]oon amongst the inhabitants in superstition & idolatry of the earth & sea in respect of superstition Of the abomination of desolation. and idolatry [f. 353 is blank] |
| 361r | Of the Church of God & her Laws |
| 362r–367v | Chap. I. Of the Church of God and of her Laws Sanctuary Government |
| 368r | Of the Prince of the Host |
| 369r–371v | Chap Of the [illegible, stricken through] Apostasy & [stricken through] revelation of the man of sin. |
| 372r–373v | Chap. of the fundamental first principles of the Christian religion. |
| 374r | [Drafted Contents] |
| 374v– 377v | [Text. Part of f. 375 was torn away before Newton wrote on it.] |
| 378r–379v | Chap. I. Of the Ecclesiastical Polity, or The ancient form of Churgh Government. |
| 380r–381v | Chap. Of the rule of faith, and the schism by the Church of the converted Romans of the Christian Roman Empire. union of Christians in one body and the separation breach of that union |
| 382r | Of y ^e union of Christians for composing the mystical body of the Messiah Chap Of the union of Christians mystical body of Christ |
| 383 | [Blank] |
| 384r–390v | Chap. Of the Church or mystical body of Christ [addition stricken through] the Messiah |
| 391 | [Blank] |
| 392r–393v | The everlasting Gospel to be preached in all nations. |
| 394r–396v | Chap. 3. Of the rule of faith & schism of the Christian Roman Empire first principles of the Christian religion |

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| 397 | [Blank] |
| 398r–403v | [Untitled] |
| 404r | Of the Sanctuary Corruption in Discipline & morality |
| 405 | [Blank] |
| | [Note: There is an inserted smaller set of leaves between ff. 405 and 406] |
| 406r–411v | [Text] |
| | [Note: There is one smaller inserted leaf between ff. 406 and 407] |
| 412 | [Blank] |
| | [Note: There are two smaller leaves between ff. 412 and 413] |
| 413–415 | [Reigns of kings and geneologies] |
| | [Note: There is one folded paper between ff. 415 and 416] |
| 416 | [Text] |
| 417 | [Blank] |
| 418–423 | [Text] |
| 424 | [Blank] |

6.7 Adventist Groups, 1830–1863

Notes: Mainline Adventists organized and continued to branch into different groups, but that development is beyond the scope of the present work. The left arm of the chart may look complicated at first sight, but in short the radical Adventists divided on whether they believed the fulfillment which they thought took place in 1844 was literal or spiritual, and if literal, a finished event or an ongoing process. The group which believed it was a literal process outlived the others and became known as Sabbatarian Adventists. Sabbatarian Adventists had already decided on the name “Seventh-day Adventists” in 1860 but only organized officially as a church of that name in 1863.

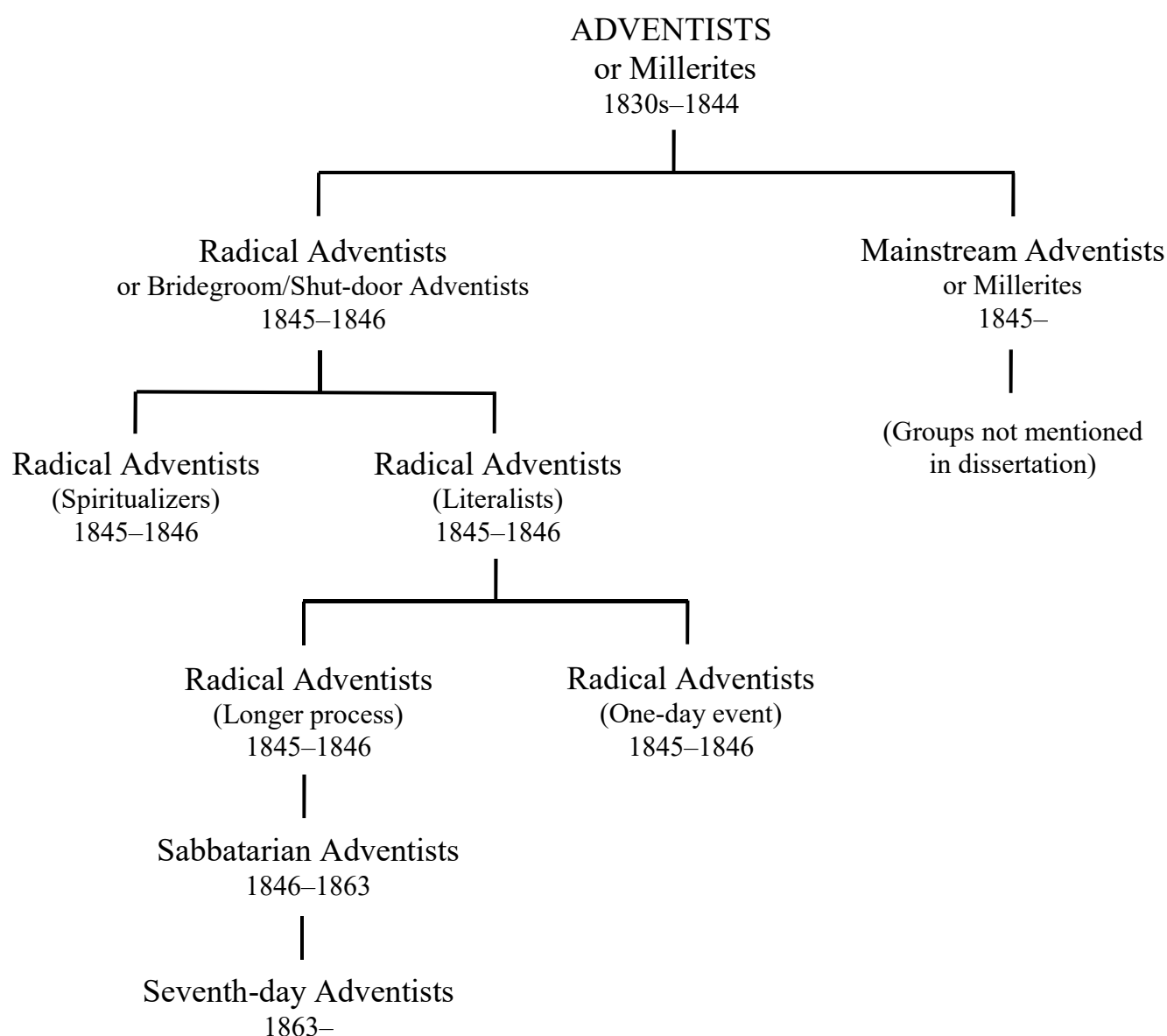


Figure 4. The denominational family tree of the Adventist tradition in Christianity. Only the groups that appear in the study are presented.

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- Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI, United States. A collection of old Millerite and Seventh-day Adventist literature.
- EGW Writings, Ellen G. White Estate. <https://egwwritings.org/>. Ellen G. White Estate. <http://ellenwhite.org/>. Ellen G. White Estate. <https://whiteestate.org/>. The three websites of the White Estate. They contain all of White's digitized corpus. Most of this literature is also available in the EGW Writings CD/software and app.
- Fondation Martin Bodmer. Newton's manuscript entitled "Of the Church," or the Bodmer Ms., is housed there.
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7.3.2 Luther

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7.3.6 Conclusion and Appendices

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