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The 2520

The Original Position and the Repeated Objections

A documented comparison of the Millerite teaching, the objections raised before 1844, the later arguments of Uriah Smith, and the inspired testimony concerning the three angels' messages

“Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.”

Revelation 14:7 KJV

Prepared for careful Bible study and historical examination

Bible truth for everyday life.

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Purpose and Scope

This study sets the historical record in order. It presents the 2520 as William Miller and leading Millerite writers presented it; places beside that position the objections raised against it before 1844; shows where the same objections reappeared after 1844 in the published argument of Uriah Smith; documents the Millerite sources for the date 677 B.C.; and then sets the record beside Ellen G. White's statements concerning the prophetic reckoning, definite time, the testimony of those who passed through the messages, and the fixed order of the three angels' messages.

The purpose is not to replace the Bible with human authority. The Bible remains the final test of every doctrine. The historical question, however, must be answered honestly: What did the Millerites actually teach, what objections did they answer while the First Angel's Message was being proclaimed, and how closely did later objections repeat those earlier attacks?

This document preserves the force of the historical and inspired testimony. It also makes one necessary source distinction: Ellen G. White does not name the 2520 in the statements quoted here. Her words explicitly address the prophetic periods, the 1843 and 1844 proclamation, the three angels' messages, and the authority of the experience through which God led the Advent people. The application of those statements to the 2520 is therefore a historical and theological inference drawn by comparing her testimony with the documented content of the Millerite proclamation. That distinction does not erase the evidence; it states exactly what the evidence is.

The Record in Brief

1840 John Dowling publicly attacked Miller's reading of Leviticus 26 and argued that four appearances of "seven times" would require more than ten thousand years.

1843 Apollos Hale identified the 2520 as the first of the prophetic periods regarded as main pillars in Miller's calculations and formally listed three objections already urged against it.

1844 Millerite writers continued to defend 677 B.C. and corrected the termination from the apparent year 1843 to the Jewish year ending in 1844.

1850 The Advent Review special republished the original reckoning and stated that 677 B.C. was the only starting date the movement had used for this period.

After 1844 An unsigned Review article in 1864 denied that Leviticus 26 contains a prophetic period. Uriah Smith later published the same principal objections under his own name in Daniel and the Revelation.



1 The Original Millerite Position

The original position was definite. The “seven times” of Leviticus 26 were understood as one prophetic period. A prophetic “time” was reckoned as 360 days; seven times equaled 2520 days; under the day-for-a-year principle those days represented 2520 years. The period began with the captivity of Manasseh and the breaking of Judah’s independent national power in 677 B.C., and it reached to the closing year of the Millerite time proclamation.

Apollos Hale Identified the 2520 as a Main Pillar

“The first of the prophetic periods, which are considered as main pillars in the calculations of Mr. Miller, is found in Leviticus xxvi. 18-28.”

Apollos Hale, *The Second Advent Manual* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1843), p. 33.

“God has explained a ‘time’ to be a period of 360 days, (Rev. xii. 6, 14.) In seven of those periods there are 2520 days, which, understood as years,—for they cannot be understood literally,—and commencing B. C. 677, end A. D. 1843.”

Hale, *The Second Advent Manual*, p. 42.

The date “1843” in Millerite usage referred to the Jewish year expected to close in the spring of 1844. During 1844 the movement explained that full-year reckoning required the period to extend into 1844. This was presented as the correction of an overlooked fraction of a year, not as the abandonment of the period or its starting date.

William Miller’s Own Account

“From a farther study of the Scriptures, I concluded that the seven times of Gentile supremacy must commence when the Jews ceased to be an independent nation at the captivity of Manasseh, which the best chronologers assigned to B. C. 677.”

William Miller, *William Miller’s Apology and Defence* (Boston: Joshua V. Himes, 1845), p. 11.

Miller’s statement identifies both the prophetic event and the chronological basis he used. He did not describe 677 B.C. as a date created merely by subtracting 2520 from 1843. He said the event was Manasseh’s captivity and that the chronologers he consulted assigned that event to 677 B.C.

The 1844 Correction to the Ending Year

“The seven times of Moses, in Leviticus 26, amount to 2520 full years. They began with the breaking of the power of Judah, at the captivity of Manassah, B. C. 677. This is the time that has always been given as the date of their commencement.”

Advent Herald and Signs of the Times Reporter, April 3, 1844, p. 69.



The article then explained that if the period began after the opening of 677 B.C., the corresponding portion of A.D. 1844 had to be included. This is the contemporary Millerite explanation for the movement from the apparent termination in 1843 to the completed reckoning in 1844.

2 Objections Raised Before 1844

The objections now used against the 2520 did not all originate after the Disappointment. The pre-1844 record shows that the central attacks were already in print while Miller and his associates were proclaiming and defending the First Angel's Message.

The Three Objections Hale Recorded in 1843

"The objections urged against this are, 1. That it should not be considered a prophetic period at all. 2. If it be so considered,—as the seven times occur four times in the text,—it should be understood as a period of four times seven times. 3. Admitting it to express only one period of seven times, which, understood prophetically, would be 2520 years, why should the period begin B. C. 677?"

Hale, *The Second Advent Manual*, p. 33.

Hale's list establishes the historical comparison. Before 1844 opponents were already arguing that Leviticus 26 contained no prophetic period, that four occurrences would demand four periods, and that 677 B.C. lacked a valid starting-point.

Objection One There Is No Prophetic Period

Hale stated the objection without softening it: "It should not be considered a prophetic period at all." He answered that biblical usage of "times," the prophetic setting, and the historical character of the threatened judgments warranted a chronological reading. The denial of any prophetic period was therefore already an objection to the Millerite position in 1843.

Objection Two Four Occurrences Require Four Periods

John Dowling had printed this argument in 1840:

"Before he has read the verses, he has doubtless discovered what I charitably hope escaped the notice of Mr. M. ... namely, that this 'seven times' is to be repeated four times over, (see verses 18, 21, 24, 28); so that if 'seven times' means, according to Mr. M. 2520 years, then the whole period must be over ten thousand years."

John Dowling, *An Exposition of the Prophecies, Supposed by William Miller to Predict the Second Coming of Christ*, in 1843 (Providence: Geo. P. Daniels, 1840), p. 106.



Hale answered that the four statements were repetitions of the same period. He compared them with repeated biblical declarations of a single period, including Pharaoh's doubled dream, repeated announcements of the seventy years, and the several expressions of the forty-two months or 1260 days.

"The mystery of the seven times is, therefore, explained by the very natural and scriptural supposition of 'a repetition of the same period.'"

Hale, *The Second Advent Manual*, p. 36.

Objection Three Why Begin in 677 B.C.

Hale devoted pages 37 through 42 to this question. He connected "I will break the pride of your power" with the loss of national independence when Manasseh, king of the remaining division, was carried captive. He cited the charges against Manasseh in Kings and Chronicles, the continuing subjection described in Nehemiah 9:32, Isaiah's sixty-five years in Isaiah 7:8, and the chronological works of Prideaux and Ussher.

"Why commence the seven times at the captivity of Manasseh, B. C. 677? 1. The prediction itself points to that event."

Hale, *The Second Advent Manual*, p. 37.

The Severity Argument

The later Hebrew argument—that "seven" in Leviticus 26 expresses degree or severity rather than duration—was stated more fully after 1844. Its conclusion, however, falls under Hale's first recorded objection: Leviticus 26 contains no prophetic period. The document therefore distinguishes between an old conclusion and a later, more developed grammatical argument.

3 The Historical Sources for 677 B.C.

The purpose of this section is historical: to show why Millerite writers used 677 B.C. and what sources they named. It does not claim that every modern chronology assigns Manasseh's captivity to that year. It documents the chronological foundation actually presented by the movement.

The Biblical Markers Used by Hale

Hale's reasoning began with 2 Chronicles 33:11, which records that the captains of the king of Assyria took Manasseh, bound him, and carried him to Babylon. He linked that captivity with the breaking of the "pride" of national power in Leviticus 26:19. He also joined Hosea 5:5 with Isaiah 7:8 and used the marginal date 742 B.C. for Isaiah's sixty-five-year declaration:

"From 742 deduct 65 leaves B. C. 677,—the only date ever given, I believe, for the captivity of Manasseh."

Hale, *The Second Advent Manual*, p. 39.



Prideaux and Ussher as Quoted by Hale

Hale then reproduced a historical account from Humphrey Prideaux. In that chronology, Esarhaddon's western campaign and the captivity of Manasseh were placed in the twenty-second year of Manasseh, 677 B.C. Hale next quoted Ussher's Annals:

"Year of the world 3327. Julian period 4037. Before Christ 677."

James Ussher, Annals of the World, as quoted in Hale, The Second Advent Manual, p. 41.

"At which time also ... some of the chief commanders of the Assyrian army made an inroad into Judea, and then took Manasseh the king ... after binding him with chains of brass, carried him away to Babylon."

Ussher, Annals of the World, as quoted in Hale, The Second Advent Manual, pp. 41-42.

Miller's 1845 Retrospective Statement

Miller's Apology and Defence confirms that this chronological assignment belonged to his original method: he located the commencement at Manasseh's captivity and reported that the "best chronologers" assigned it to 677 B.C. His statement appears on page 11 of the 1845 tract.

The Millerite Press in 1844

"The date of this event therefore points to the year of the Julian period 4037. This is the only date which is ever named for this event by any writer of any note."

Signs of the Times and Expositor of Prophecy, January 10, 1844, p. 172.

That article then equated Julian Period 4037 with 677 B.C. and carried the 2520 years to the close of the Jewish year 1843, which ended in 1844.

The Advent Review Preserved the Same Date After the Disappointment

"We date the 'seven times' or 2520 years, from the captivity of Manasseh, which is, with great unanimity, placed by chronologers B. C. 677. This date is the only one we have ever reckoned from, for the commencement of this period."

The Advent Review, 48-page special, September 1850, "A Vindication," p. 2.

This post-Disappointment review is important to the historical record. It did not disown 677 B.C. It repeated the date and explained the full-year reckoning that carried the periods into 1844.

What the 677 Evidence Establishes

The record establishes that 677 B.C. was not an undocumented date silently inserted into the Millerite calculation. Miller named the event and the chronologists. Hale printed the biblical argument and quoted



Prideaux and Ussher. Millerite periodicals defended the Julian-period calculation. The Advent Review later stated that 677 B.C. was the only commencement the movement had used for this period.

4 The Same Objections After 1844

After 1844 the opposition appeared within later Adventist literature. The source trail must be stated precisely. The January 26, 1864 Review and Herald article is unsigned; this document therefore does not assign it to any individual. The named later objector is Uriah Smith, because his own book prints the argument under his authorship.

The Unsigned Review Article of 1864

“Is there any prophetic period brought to view at all in Lev. xxvi? We claim that there is not.”

“The Seven Times of Lev. xxvi,” Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, January 26, 1864, p. 68. The article is unsigned.

The article argued that the Hebrew wording in Leviticus 26 expresses degree rather than duration and contrasted it with the explicit time expression in Daniel. This returned to the first objection Hale had recorded in 1843: the denial that Leviticus 26 contains a prophetic period.

Uriah Smith’s Documented Objection

“All such speculators might as well spare their pains; for there is no such prophetic period in the Bible.”

Uriah Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 1909 ed., Appendix, p. 784.

“Now, if ‘seven times’ denotes a prophetic period (2520 years), then we would have four of them, amounting in all to 10,080 years.”

Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 1909 ed., p. 784.

“The expression ‘seven times’ does not denote a period of duration, but is simply an adverb expressing degree, and setting forth the severity of the judgments to be brought upon Israel.”

Smith, Daniel and the Revelation, 1909 ed., p. 785.

The Historical Comparison

OBJECTION BEFORE 1844	MILLERITE ANSWER	LATER OBJECTION
No prophetic period exists in Leviticus 26. Hale, 1843, p. 33.	The wording and prophetic-historical setting support a chronological reading. Hale, pp. 33-35.	The 1864 Review and Smith deny that the passage contains a prophetic period.
Four occurrences require four periods.	The four statements repeat one period,	Smith argues that four periods would total



OBJECTION BEFORE 1844	MILLERITE ANSWER	LATER OBJECTION
Dowling, 1840, p. 106; Hale, 1843, p. 33.	as Scripture repeats other single periods. Hale, pp. 35-37.	10,080 years. Daniel and the Revelation, p. 784.
Why should the period begin in 677 B.C.? Hale, 1843, p. 33.	Manasseh's captivity broke Judah's independent power; Isaiah 7:8 and named chronologies locate the event at 677 B.C. Hale, pp. 37-42.	Once the period itself is denied, the historical starting date is treated as irrelevant.
"Seven times" should not be read as duration. The denial is encompassed by Hale's first objection.	Hale read "times" chronologically and applied the day-year principle.	Smith argues that the Hebrew is an adverb expressing degree and severity. Daniel and the Revelation, p. 785.

The conclusion of the comparison is historical and direct: principal arguments later used by Uriah Smith against the 2520 were already being urged against Miller and answered in the Millerite movement before 1844. Smith's four-period argument closely repeats Dowling's 1840 objection. His denial of a prophetic period repeats the first objection listed by Hale. His grammatical explanation supplies a later rationale for that same denial.

5 Inspired Testimony Concerning the Prophetic Reckoning

The following statements are quoted exactly and cited directly beneath each quotation. They must be read in their own context and then compared with the historical record already established.

Correct in the Reckoning of the Prophetic Periods

"I saw that they were correct in their reckoning of the prophetic periods; prophetic time closed in 1844, and Jesus entered the most holy place to cleanse the sanctuary at the ending of the days. Their mistake consisted in not understanding what the sanctuary was and the nature of its cleansing."

Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 243.2.

"I have been shown that our disappointment in 1844 was not because of failure in the reckoning of prophetic periods, but in the events to take place."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 4, 1883; Manuscript Releases, vol. 16, p. 177.3.

These statements explicitly affirm the reckoning of the prophetic periods and identify the mistaken event. They do not explicitly list the 2520 by name. The 2520 connection arises from the historical record showing that Miller and Hale included it among the periods used in the proclamation.



Definite Time Was Part of the Test

"I saw that God was in the proclamation of the time in 1843. It was His design to arouse the people and bring them to a testing point, where they should decide for or against the truth."

Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 232.2.

"The preaching of definite time called forth great opposition from all classes, from the minister in the pulpit down to the most reckless, heaven-daring sinner."

Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 233.2.

"Many shepherds of the flock, who professed to love Jesus, said that they had no opposition to the preaching of Christ's coming, but they objected to the definite time."

Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 233.2.

The testimony is explicit: definite time was not a disposable side issue in the historical First Angel's Message. God used the proclamation of time to arouse the people and bring them to a testing point, and opposition centered directly upon that definite time.

Receive the Testimony of Those Who Passed Through the Messages

"These men followed on step by step in the very fulfillment of prophecy, and those who have not had a personal experience in this work, are to take the Word of God and believe on 'their word' who have been led by the Lord in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 32, 1896; Selected Messages, book 2, p. 111.2.

The command is not to surrender personal Bible study to men. It is to take the Word of God seriously and not cast aside the testimony of those whom the Lord led step by step through the fulfillment of the messages.

Every Specification of Prophecy Was Fulfilled

"In the proclamation of the messages, every specification of prophecy has been fulfilled."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 28, 1890; Selected Messages, book 2, p. 387.3.

"We have seen and do testify that the power of the Holy Ghost has accompanied the presentation of the truth, warning with pen and voice, and giving the messages in their order."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 28, 1890; Selected Messages, book 2, p. 388.1.

These words place the proclamation and its prophetic order under the working of the Holy Ghost. They demand reverence toward the history God established; they do not give permission to invent claims that the text itself does not make.



6 The Fixed Order of the Three Angels' Messages

"The proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages has been located by the Word of Inspiration. Not a peg or pin is to be removed. No human authority has any more right to change the location of these messages than to substitute the New Testament for the Old."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 32, 1896; Manuscript Releases, vol. 1, p. 43.1; Counsels to Writers and Editors, pp. 26-27.

"The first and second messages were given in 1843 and 1844, and we are now under the proclamation of the third; but all three of the messages are still to be proclaimed."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 32, 1896; Manuscript Releases, vol. 1, p. 53.1.

"By pen and voice we are to sound the proclamation, showing their order, and the application of the prophecies that bring us to the third angel's message. There cannot be a third without the first and second."

Ellen G. White, Manuscript 32, 1896; Manuscript Releases, vol. 1, p. 53.1.

The 1843 and 1850 Charts in the Order of the Messages

"I have seen that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord, and that it should not be altered; that the figures were as He wanted them; that His hand was over and hid a mistake in some of the figures, so that none could see it, until His hand was removed."

Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 74.1.

"On our return to Brother Nichol's, the Lord gave me a vision and showed me that the truth must be made plain upon tables, and it would cause many to decide for the truth by the third angel's message with the two former being made plain upon tables."

Ellen G. White, Letter 28, 1850; Manuscript Releases, vol. 5, p. 203.1.

The first statement identifies the 1843 chart as directed by the hand of the Lord. The second was written while the new chart was being prepared in 1850 and states the purpose plainly: the third angel's message was to be presented with the two former messages made plain upon tables, and this presentation would cause many to decide for the truth.

No After Suppositions Contrary to Established Light

"When the power of God testifies as to what is truth, that truth is to stand forever as the truth. No after suppositions, contrary to the light God has given, are to be entertained."

Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, book 1, p. 161.1; Counsels to Writers and Editors, pp. 31-32.

New study must be tested by Scripture. Yet a claimed new interpretation is not safe merely because it is later or because it employs learned language. It must not contradict the light God established under the demonstration of His Spirit.



What Is Explicit and What Is Inferred

The source record permits a firm statement without an overstatement:

- **Explicit in the Millerite sources:** the 2520 was taught as a prophetic period, identified as a main pillar in Miller's calculations, dated from 677 B.C., and defended against stated objections before 1844.
- **Explicit in Uriah Smith:** he rejected the 2520, repeated the four-occurrences argument, and argued that the Hebrew expressed severity rather than duration.
- **Explicit in Ellen G. White:** God was in the 1843 proclamation; definite time was a test; the believers were correct in the reckoning of the prophetic periods; every specification of prophecy in the messages was fulfilled; the messages were divinely located and must be given in their order.
- **Not explicit in Ellen G. White:** none of the quotations in this study names "the 2520" or gives a direct sentence commanding belief in that period by name.
- **The historical inference:** because the 2520 was publicly included among the Millerite prophetic periods and defended during the First Angel's Message, Ellen White's broad affirmations must be weighed together with that documented fact rather than isolated from it.

7 The Warning of the First and Second Angels

The warning cannot be softened. Ellen White connected the churches' fall with their rejection of the First Angel's Message, and she described definite time as the point that called forth opposition and exposed the hearts of ministers and people.

"As the churches refused to receive the first angel's message, they rejected the light from heaven and fell from the favor of God. They trusted to their own strength, and by opposing the first message placed themselves where they could not see the light of the second angel's message."

Ellen G. White, Early Writings, p. 237.2.

"When the churches spurned the counsel of God by rejecting the advent message, the Lord rejected them. The first angel was followed by a second, proclaiming, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'"

Ellen G. White, The Story of Redemption, p. 364.4.

"This message was understood by Adventists to be an announcement of the moral fall of the churches in consequence of their rejection of the first message."

Ellen G. White, The Story of Redemption, p. 364.4; compare The Great Controversy, p. 389.2.

A Warning for the Present

The churches did not fall because they loved the appearing of Christ too earnestly. They fell because they refused light from heaven. They opposed the First Angel's Message and especially resisted the definite time that brought men to a testing point. Their rejection placed them where they could not see the light of the



Second Angel's Message, and their moral fall became the very condition announced by the cry, "Babylon is fallen."

This history is not safe to treat as a dead controversy. The same foundational objections raised against Miller's 2520 before 1844 were later repeated by Uriah Smith: no prophetic period, four occurrences producing four periods, and the denial of duration. When later Adventists use the old weapons of Miller's opponents against a calculation that was publicly included among the Millerite prophetic periods, they must face the inspired record concerning the proclamation in which those periods stood.

This does not rest upon a fabricated quotation claiming that Ellen White named the 2520. She did not do so in the statements cited here. It rests upon a documented comparison: the Millerite record identifies the 2520 as part of the prophetic framework; the objections were on record before 1844; the same objections reappeared afterward; and Ellen White declared that God was in the proclamation of the time, that definite time was a test, that the reckoning of the prophetic periods was correct, and that the messages must be proclaimed in their established order.

The warning is therefore solemn. Do not repeat the opposition of those who rejected the heaven-sent message while claiming to preserve the message itself. Do not remove the First Angel's historical foundation and then suppose the Second and Third Angels can stand untouched. "There cannot be a third without the first and second." Every claim must be tested by the Bible; every historical assertion must be proved by the record; and every soul must choose whether to receive the light God has given or to stand with those who opposed it.

Christ remains the center and object of the messages. The prophetic proclamation was given to awaken repentance, restore faith, prepare a people for the judgment, and make ready a people for the return of Jesus. The right response is not mere controversy. It is humble searching of the Word, repentance for rejected light, faith in Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, obedience to His commandments, and faithful proclamation of the everlasting gospel.

Sources

Primary and authoritative sources used for quotation verification are listed below. Page references in the study follow the printed pagination of the cited editions.

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17. White, Ellen G. The Story of Redemption. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, p. 364. Official text and PDF: egwwritings.org.

Source Notes

Quotations retain the wording and punctuation of the consulted editions, with ellipses used only where intervening words were omitted. Historical spellings such as "Manassah" are retained when quoted. The 1864 Review article is treated as unsigned. Uriah Smith is identified from Daniel and the Revelation, where the later objection is directly attributable to him.