

# The National Sunday Law - Revisited

**Author:** Larry W. Wilson

## The Origin of Sunday Blue Laws in the United States

Revelation 13:8 contains a profound prediction: A day is coming when **"All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast – all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world."** Two important features stand out in this verse. First, the phrase "all inhabitants of the earth" is inclusive. Every wicked person living on Earth at that time will worship the beast! Second, this text indicates every nation will be divided into two groups. One group will worship the beast and the other will not! When will this division occur? What will cause it? Why will 194 nations (as of date of publication) enact laws demanding that everyone worship the beast? Who is this beast that the wicked will obey? God has answered these questions in His Word if we are willing to let the Bible speak for itself. Surprisingly, the answer may be quite different than what you anticipate! So, please take a few minutes to consider this profound topic because this prophecy will be fulfilled very soon.

The story begins about A.D. 1532 in England. King Henry VIII wanted Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragon so that he could marry Anne Boleyn. When Pope Clement refused, King Henry retaliated by declaring himself the Supreme Head of the Church of England. Using his authority as King of England and Supreme Head of the Church of England, the king "persuaded" church leaders in England that it was in their best interests to annul his marriage to Catherine so he could marry Anne.

Anne Boleyn became pregnant and Princess Elizabeth was born in December 1532. A month later, Anne married King Henry even though his divorce from Catherine was not "declared" until May 23, 1533. Anne was the second of Henry's six wives. King Henry accused her of adultery and had her beheaded on May 19, 1536, although many historians agree that the king's interest in Jane Seymour (who became his third wife) was the primary cause for Anne's death.

Later on, Pope Paul III excommunicated King Henry for his rebellious and adulterous ways, but the king was not concerned. He remained a devout Catholic and during his reign, the Church of England mirrored the theology and practices of the Roman Catholic Church – the most notable difference was that the Supreme Head of the Church lived in England instead of Rome.

When King Henry died, his son, Edward VI, came to power. To win the approval of Protestants, King Edward permitted some reforms to take place within the Church of England. A new book of Common Prayer was created in 1552. The Protestants were delighted because it appeared that the Church of England was finally separating itself from Catholic heresy and tradition, but their joy was short lived because King Edward soon died. Since he died without an heir, his half-sister, Queen Mary I (also known as Bloody Mary), ascended to the throne. She was a devout Catholic and she used her authority as the Supreme Head of the Church of England to cancel the reforms that King Edward had permitted. She abruptly returned the Church of England to

pure Catholicism. Many people were burned at the stake during her reign because they would not embrace Catholicism and renounce the reformed faith.

Queen Mary also died without an heir and her half-sister, Queen Elizabeth I, came to the throne. Queen Elizabeth I is credited with establishing the Church of England (1558) as we know it today. She negotiated many thorny issues that existed between Protestants and Catholics. Theologically speaking, the Church of England ended up about 80% Catholic and 20% Protestant. During her reign, a grass-roots movement formed within the church. These conservative radicals called for (a) complete separation from the Church in Rome, (b) the abandonment of Catholic rituals, and (c) complete devotion to perfection and piety. For the most part, the people calling for these reforms were considered rabble (uneducated) and they were given the derogatory name, "puritans." To ordinary laymen, the Puritan Movement appeared to be obsessed with anti-Catholic sentiment and a relentless quest for purity and perfection.

King James I succeeded Queen Elizabeth in 1603. He favored some of the theology of the Protestant Reformation, but he did not like the Puritans. To his credit, King James believed that common people should be able to read the Bible in English and as the Supreme Head of the Church of England, he permitted the Bible to be translated into English. The first edition of the King James Version of the Bible was produced in 1611. After King James died, his son, Charles I, came to the throne. King Charles openly detested the Puritans because he wanted the Church of England to return to its Catholic roots and rituals. When King Charles married a zealous Catholic woman, the Puritans became outraged. Tensions escalated and the Puritans repudiated the doctrine of The Divine Right of Kings (a political/religious doctrine of absolutism), and King Charles responded by condemning the Puritans as heretics. Deadly persecution followed and thousands of Puritans fled England to escape death.

Jean Bodin (1530-1596) initiated a concept called "The Divine Right of Kings" based on a doctrine of sovereignty. Bodin was a devout Catholic, a French jurist, and a member of France's House of Parliament. Bodin was appalled at the abuses of the Catholic Church in general, and the pope in particular. His investigation into the question of human authority led to the conclusion that kings were not subservient to the Church. Of course, the Catholic Church condemned his conclusion. The doctrine of The Divine Right of Kings teaches that monarchs are not subject to anyone but God because they are appointed by God and they serve at God's pleasure. (See Romans 13.) Therefore, a monarch rules over church and state. Since a monarch rules according to divine authority, no one can question a monarch's decisions or judgment without blaspheming God. As you can see, the doctrine of The Divine Right of Kings opposes the doctrine of Petrine Succession. Petrine Succession exalts the authority of the head of the Church over heads of state. Catholics believe the doctrine of Petrine Succession is based on Matthew 16:19 where Jesus gave Peter the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Catholics believe this action by Jesus (who is King of kings) places the pope's authority above any earthly king. At that time, the Catholic Church held anyone rejecting the doctrine of Petrine Succession was a heretic and subject to excommunication, and where possible, death. Conflict over this doctrine explains why Pope Paul III excommunicated King Henry VIII.

Hopefully, this brief history on the formation of the Church of England helps you understand who the Puritans were and why they left England. Even though their exodus to the colonies of

New England began during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Puritans fled England in large numbers when King Charles began to vigorously pursue and kill them. One could say that the Puritans lost their homeland when they concluded the king of England and the Church of England would no longer tolerate their beliefs. So, the Puritans arrived on the shores of North America having a strong resentment against Catholics and a rigid devotion to purity and perfection, and an eagerness for freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience.

Life in colonial America for the Puritans was harsh. Illness was rampant, food supplies were inadequate, and the Indians were often hostile. These challenges forced the Puritans into a stark way of thinking and living. The Puritans viewed life in terms of black and white, and the laws by which they lived were simple: Right was right and wrong was wrong. They regarded themselves as "godly" and everyone else, especially Catholics, as "ungodly." The Puritans did not associate with the ungodly for fear they would contaminate their quest for purity.

The Puritans established Sunday laws in their colonies because they wanted to protect the holiness of Sunday from worldly compromise. To them, anything less than perfect obedience to God's law was sin. Their Sunday laws varied somewhat from colony to colony, but the result was the same. The Puritans obligated themselves to honor and respect the holiness of "the Lord's Day" through *mandatory* church attendance. Puritans could not work in the fields, make a bed, cook, sew, or even kiss their own child on Sunday. All business activities (for example, discussing business, buying, or selling) and various forms of casual pleasure were outlawed. Consider the severity of the Sunday law that Lord De La Warr, the first governor of Virginia, enacted in 1610: "Every man and woman shall repair in the morning to the divine service and sermons preached upon the Sabbath day, and in the afternoon to the divine service, and catechizing, upon pain for the first fault to lose their provision and the allowance for the whole week following; for the second, to lose the said allowance and also be whipped; and for the third to suffer death." (C. Gary Hullquist, *Sabbath Diagnosis*, Brushton, NY, Teach Services, 2004, p. 379.) Ironically, the Puritans came to North America searching for religious freedom, yet they were the first to enact and enforce laws limiting that freedom.

## Blue Laws

Sunday laws are sometimes called "blue laws." One story about their origination is that Reverend Samuel Peters claimed in 1781 the Puritans wrote the laws on blue paper or they were bound in books with blue covers. (Peters, Samuel, *General History of Connecticut*, 1781) No evidence has been found to support this claim, but history suggests there may be a simple explanation behind the phrase "blue laws." The color blue is often associated with coldness and rigidity. For example, when a person dies, the body loses oxygen, cools, and then turns blue. When a person enters cold water, his limbs and lips will turn blue. Blue was often used in a number of early American colloquial expressions to indicate coldness, such as "bluenoses" which refers to people who live in the north or in cold climates, or "I'm feeling blue" which can mean one feels depressed or feels cold, or "a blue norther is coming" which means a bitter cold weather front is coming. The Puritans may have been delighted with their stringent regard for the holiness of Sunday, but their rigid ways and legalistic regard for Sunday observance left observers cold. Thus, the expression "blue laws" became

associated with the Puritans' laws regarding Sunday observance.

After the Civil War (1861-1865), several southern states (in the "Bible belt") enacted Sunday laws. Legislators claimed that a day of rest would be beneficial for the well being of society. Keep in mind that even though the war was over, attitudes towards slaves and slavery remained largely unchanged in the South. Many former slaves were forced to work seven days a week to survive. Lawmakers argued that Sunday laws were good for everyone because every human being should enjoy the benefits of a common day of rest. Most Protestant pastors agreed. They argued that since Sunday was the "Lord's Day," the Sabbath should be observed by attending church and resting from work. Church leaders also favored Sunday laws because business interests would not compete with attendance at worship services; therefore, most religious and non-religious people alike considered the "blue laws" a win-win situation.

There seems to be a truism that says, "Every time a new law is created, unintended consequences occur." History affirms that blue laws have caused unintended consequences. During the late eighteenth century, non-religious people were arrested for playing games on Sunday, working in their own fields, or for doing menial work around the farm, such as repairing a wagon. During the nineteenth century, blue laws changed focus by becoming more business oriented. This transition was necessary because personal freedom and civil rights became increasingly important in the United States. Currently, some cities still enforce blue laws. They allow grocery stores and drug stores to remain open on Sunday, but only certain items can be sold. (Only items defined as necessities can be purchased on Sunday. Nonessential items cannot.) Liquor stores are permitted to open on Sunday in some states, but only during certain hours. The state of Texas permits a car dealer to open his business on Sunday, but only if it is closed on Saturday. So, while blue laws may seem harmless to most Christians today, Jews, Seventh Day Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, Muslims and other religious groups that do not worship on Sunday often face the unintended consequences of Sunday blue laws. For example, a Seventh-day Adventist may close his businesses on Saturday due to religious principles. Because blue laws also restrict business opportunities on Sunday, his businesses is limited to operating five days per week instead of the six that Sunday observers would typically enjoy.

With today's understanding of the "wall of separation between church and state," it seems amazing that in 1961, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that Maryland's blue laws did not violate the First Amendment or the free exercise of religion. The court approved the state's restriction of commercial activities on Sunday because the judges determined that Sunday blue laws were designed "to provide a uniform day of rest for all citizens on a secular basis and to promote the secular values of health, safety, recreation, and general well-being through *a common day of rest*. That this day coincides with the Christian Sabbath is not a bar to the state's secular goals; it neither reduces its effectiveness for secular purposes nor prevents adherents of other religions from observing their own holy days." (McGowan v. Maryland, 366 U.S. 420 (1961), italics mine.)

Even though the Supreme Court does not acknowledge the sacredness of Sunday, it justifies Sunday blue laws for the same reason that legislators justified Sunday blue laws in the South after the Civil War. The justification was that everyone benefits from a common day of rest. I have wondered if the Supreme Court would have reached the same conclusion if the state of

Maryland had selected Tuesday as a common day of rest.

## **Why Seventh-day Adventists Anticipate a National Sunday Law**

For the past 145 years, Seventh-day Adventists (SDAs) in the United States have anticipated the enactment of a national Sunday law, and to a great extent, they believe this event will initiate a worldwide "time of trouble." They also believe "the time of trouble" will end with the outpouring of the seven last plagues and the appearing of Jesus. To understand the origin of this anticipation and their keen interest in a national Sunday law, a short review on the prophetic beliefs of SDAs is necessary.

Many of the pioneers who would later form the SDA Church grew up within the Puritan influence that permeated New England Protestantism during the early nineteenth century. Most Protestants living in the United States were gratified by news that the pope had been imprisoned and no longer had papal authority over Europe (1798). In 1831, William Miller, a licensed Baptist evangelist from New York, concluded that the Lord would return "around 1843." (Later, he corrected the date to 1844.) Based on his preaching, a movement (largely centered in New England) attracted between 50,000 and 100,000 of his followers. After the bitter failure of the Millerite Movement in 1844, prophetic interest within Protestantism generally waned. However, a tenacious group of Millerites went back to the Bible to see why Jesus had not appeared in 1844. After twenty years of regional conferences and various campmeetings to determine Bible truth, a group of people organized a new church body in Michigan and named it the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The year was 1863 and war between the states was raging.

SDAs believe they are the heirs of the Protestant Reformation that began centuries earlier in Europe. Like the Puritans before them, they believe it is their divinely appointed duty to point out the heresies that originated within Catholicism by teaching Bible truth. To this end, SDAs believe that a time is coming when everyone in the United States (and ultimately the whole world) will be forced to recognize Sunday as a holy day. Once a national Sunday law is enacted in the United States, SDAs believe that all who obey the fourth commandment will be persecuted for refusing to recognize the sacredness of the first day of the week. In some cases, they believe there will be torture and even death. (White, Ellen G., The Great Controversy, Mountain View: Pacific Press, 1911, pp. 591-92)

SDAs arrive at this conclusion in four steps:

### **Step 1 - The Catholic Church Is the Beast in Revelation 13:1**

SDAs believe the Roman Catholic Church is the first beast mentioned in Revelation 13. (White, p. 439) Since the Bible states this beast will make war on God's saints and impose false worship on the world (Revelation 13:5-8), SDAs conclude the Roman Catholic Church (the beast) will someday wage war against those who observe God's seventh day Sabbath. (White, p. 579)

### **Step 2 - The Mark of the Beast Is Sunday Observance**

SDAs teach that the Roman Catholic Church altered the Ten Commandments by eliminating the second commandment. Moreover, the Catholic Church has tried to change the holiness of God's seventh day Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. (White, pp. 446-447. Compare Exodus 20:3-17 with any Catechism published by the Catholic Church) SDAs interpret these actions as blasphemy and this blasphemy is regarded as the mark (as in a trademark) of the Catholic Church's presumed authority. (White, pp. 447-448) Therefore, SDAs conclude that the mark of the beast is Sunday observance and this mark of papal authority will be imposed on everyone when a national Sunday law is enacted. This anticipated law, they teach, will require everyone to respect Sunday as a holy day. (White, pp. 604-605)

### **Step 3 - The Second Beast in Revelation 13 Is the United States**

SDAs teach that the second beast in Revelation 13 is the United States. (White, pp. 439-441) They believe the Roman Catholic Church and the United States government will "join hands" in the future to enact a national Sunday law. (White, p. 578 and White, Ellen G., Testimonies to the Church, vol. 5, Mountain View:Pacific Press, 1948, 712) United, these two superpowers will impose a *universal* Sunday law on every nation. The church's prophet, Ellen White (1827-1915), wrote: "As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the [Catholic Church's] false Sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." (White, Testimonies to the Church, vol. 6, p. 18 [insertion mine]) She also wrote: "The decree enforcing the worship of this day [Sunday] is to go forth to *all the world*. . . . Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to fourth commandment, refuse to worship this false Sabbath." (6 White, Ellen G., Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, vol. 7, Washington D.C.:Review and Herald, 1970, 976 [Italics mine])

### **Step 4 - A National Sunday Law in the United States Signals the End of the World**

SDAs teach that the enactment of a national Sunday law in the United States will usher in a worldwide "time of trouble." (White, Ellen G., The Great Controversy, p. 615) They believe that God will test the world through persecution to see who will honor Rome's false Sabbath and receive the mark of the beast. They believe God's saints must resist a Sunday law by standing firm in their faith and obeying the fourth commandment which declares the seventh day of the week holy. (White, Ellen G., The Great Controversy, p. 625)

### **What Will Trigger a National Sunday Law?**

Here is a mystery. What will cause the United States Congress to enact a national Sunday law? What will cause Protestants and Catholics to "join hands" and eliminate religious freedom in the United States? Will the 1961 Supreme Court decision favoring Maryland's blue laws provide a loophole around the First Amendment that eliminates religious freedom? Will the United States and the Catholic Church someday impose a *universal* Sunday law on all 194 nations of the world containing seven billion people?

The recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq prove that the outcome of war is hard to predict. The United States has sacrificed thousands of lives in Iraq. It has spent trillions of dollars and

invested six long years setting up a fledgling democracy in a tiny country of only twenty-five million people. (For comparison, the state of California has a population of thirty-six million.) If establishing freedom (a democracy) in tiny Iraq has been this deadly, expensive, and lengthy, how will the United States and the Catholic Church impose the holiness of Sunday on billions of devout Moslems, Hindus, Jews, Pagans, and Communists? This is a valid question and it deserves a biblically reasoned answer. Many SDAs are also asking this question because today, [93% of SDA Church members live outside the United States](#).

## What Is the Next Prophetic Event?

Revelation 13:1-8 clearly indicates that worship will someday become a hotly debated topic all over the world, but what will trigger this conflict? *What event should Christians anticipate?* What will cause the United States to negate the First Amendment and enact a national Sunday law? What will trigger the enactment of a national Sunday law in communist countries like China, North Korea, and Russia? What will cancel Sharia Law and trigger the enactment of Sunday laws in large Islamic populations found in Indonesia, Egypt, Iran, and Saudia Arabia? What will trigger a national Sunday law in the Jewish state of Israel where conservatives insist on observing the seventh day of the week? What will cause seven hundred million Hindus in India to worship the God of the Christians on Sunday? Today, the total of all the Christian religions of the world is a mere 25% of the world's seven billion people. So, how is a universal Sunday law possible?

Ironically, SDAs claim to have a prophetic end time message for the whole world, but they have little or nothing to say to the world about coming events because (a) their eschatology is essentially limited to events occurring within the United States, and (b) they insist that most of Revelation has already been fulfilled. Fortunately, they believe that Revelation 13:8 is future, "**All inhabitants of the Earth will worship the beast**," but they have no idea how this will happen? What will cause the entire world to worship the beast?

According to the book of Revelation, a national Sunday law in the United States **is not** the next prophetic event, and a national Sunday law in the United States **is not** the signal event that marks the commencement of the Great Tribulation for the whole world! SDAs are watching and waiting for a national Sunday law to usher in the final days of Earth's history, and unfortunately, they are sitting at the wrong bus stop. Like the rest of the world (and the ten virgins), the SDA Church will be caught by surprise. It is time to wake up and become serious students of God's Word.

### A Horrible Mistake!

SDAs have ruined the intended meaning of Revelation's story by forcing the seven trumpets into the past. By using the correct timing for the seven trumpets, a Bible student can understand how, when, and why false worship becomes an issue that engulfs the whole world. This is crucial to understanding Revelation's story because the seven trumpets will change life as we know it and trigger a worldwide controversy over worship!

SDAs and other evangelical groups both embrace a prophetic schematic that denies the

importance of the seven trumpets. The SDA Church teaches the seven trumpets happened centuries ago, whereas other evangelical groups teach the seven trumpets will occur *after* a pre-tribulation rapture. Tragically, the end result in both cases is the same: Both groups conclude the seven trumpets of Revelation are personally insignificant. This is a horrible mistake. Let me say it again, "This is a horrible mistake!" The first four trumpets are about to sound and almost everyone is asleep to their importance. The rejection of Messiah at the first Advent and the bitter Millerite disappointment of 1844 prove that a failed prophetic schematic can be spiritually fatal. Several hundred million Christians are about to wake up and discover they have been misled by church leaders, and the irony is, there is no need for this.

## **The SDA Position on the Seven Trumpets**

Before we investigate what the Bible has to say about the seven trumpets, please consider the historical interpretation which SDAs hold and vigorously defend:

There are some variations on the timing of the seven trumpets among SDA scholars. The positions stated here are taken from *Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation*, 1944 Edition, pages 476-490, 512-517, 542, Uriah Smith. See also *God Cares*, Volume II, 1985 Edition, pages 238-265, C. Mervyn Maxwell.

- Trumpet 1: A.D. 395 – Alaric leads the Goths against Rome
- Trumpet 2: A.D. 428-465 – Genseric leads the Vandals against Rome
- Trumpet 3: A.D. 460 – Attila leads the Huns against Rome
- Trumpet 4: A.D. 476 – Odoacer forces the collapse of Rome
- Trumpet 5: A.D. 1299 – Ottoman Empire founded by Othman
- Trumpet 6: August 11, 1840 – Ottoman Empire falls
- Trumpet 7: 1844 until the close of salvation

## **What Does the Bible Actually Say about the Seven Trumpets?**

- Trumpet 1: Burning hail falls. A third of the trees and all of the green grass burned up (Revelation 8:7)
- Trumpet 2: Something like a huge mountain, all ablaze, impacts an ocean – water turns to blood, kills sea creatures, sinks ships (Revelation 8:8,9)
- Trumpet 3: A blazing star impacts a continent – rivers and springs contaminated, people drink poisoned water and die (Revelation 8:10,11)
- Trumpet 4: Darkness – the light from the Sun, Moon, and stars is obscured (Revelation 8:12)
- Trumpet 5: An angel king and his demons are released from the Abyss – the wicked are tormented for five months (Revelation 9:1-11)
- Trumpet 6: A great war starts and Lucifer takes control of Earth – one third of mankind killed. (Revelation 9:13-21)
- Trumpet 7: Close of Salvation – Ark of the Covenant shown from Heaven (Revelation 11:15-19)

Why do SDAs apply the first four trumpets to the fall of pagan Rome? The answer is clear when one studies the early history of the church. The Millerites put the seven seals, seven trumpets, Two Witnesses and even the seven last plagues into past centuries for a simple reason. (Froom, LeRoy Edwin, Prophetic Faith of our Fathers, vol. IV, Washington D.C.:Review and Herald, 1946-54, p. 724) The Millerites believed the world would end in 1844; therefore, they reasoned, everything in Bible prophecy must be fulfilled prior to 1844. To make the book of Revelation meet their prophetic needs, they researched history and invented "historical fulfillments." Think about this. The Millerites were forced by their end-of-the-world conclusion to put the bulk of Revelation's story in the past.

During the period between 1844 and 1863, members of what would become the SDA Church reexamined Miller's views and they made a few prophetic changes. Perhaps the most notable change, in terms of timing, concerned the worship of the beast in Revelation 13:8 and the seven last plagues. Since nothing occurred in 1844, these events were moved into the future.

## The First Four Trumpets Are Literal Events

Contrary to what most SDA scholars say, the first four trumpets are not symbolic. The first four trumpets are four literal, physical judgments that will soon befall Earth. The first four trumpets are expressions of God's wrath. The first four trumpets will awaken the whole world to the reality and holiness of Almighty God, and man's accountability to Him. The first four trumpets must be treated as literal descriptions of literal events for three reasons:

1. If the first four trumpets were symbolic, *God would have clearly defined the symbols with relevant texts.* (Notice the clarity of symbols defined with relevant texts. See Daniel 2:38; 4:20-22; 7:17; Revelation 1:20; 17:15,18.) Consider this: The Bible says that people will die from drinking poisoned waters from rivers and springs during the third trumpet. Now, let us ask a few clarifying questions. What are people if they are not literal people? What are rivers and springs if not literal rivers and springs? What is poisoned water if not poisoned water? If the language of the third trumpet is symbolic as SDAs claim, where is the relevant text that defines these symbols? What about the fourth trumpet? If the Sun, Moon, and stars are not literal, what else could they be? What else could turn dark so that a third of the day and night is without light? *There is no better way to destroy the intended meaning of "the more sure word" of Bible prophecy than to declare prophetic elements symbolic which God has not made symbolic.*
2. The first four trumpets describe literal events because the outcome in each case is consistent with the laws of physics. For example, fiery hail (a meteoric firestorm) will fall from the sky during the first trumpet and the result will be wildfires all over the world! The Bible says a third of the trees and all of the green grass will be burned up! This "cause and effect" is fully consistent with the laws of physics. Remember, God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with a fiery hailstorm (Genesis 19:24) because ". . . **the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.**" (Genesis 13:13) Consider this: During the second trumpet, the Bible says something like a great mountain – all ablaze – will impact an ocean and the sea will turn to blood. Science affirms this result is physically consistent with an asteroid impact. A white-hot asteroid impact would boil available oxygen out of the sea. Red tide algae (which is very toxic)

quickly blooms and thrives in an oxygen-deficient environment. The phenomenon of red tide is found around the world. In fact, red tide has covered areas up to 10,000 square miles! During July 2009, red tide caused a near-complete closure of shellfish harvesting in the state of Maine. Red tide killed more than 23 million dollars worth of shellfish during 2005 in Maine and Massachusetts alone! The Bible says that sea creatures will die from the asteroid impact (due to superheated water and the growth of red tide algae) and a third of the ships will sink (as a result of the tidal wave that follows)! What is this great mountain – all ablaze, the sea creatures, and the ships if not a burning asteroid, sea creatures, and ships? No one can declare a prophecy symbolic and then make up a meaning for the symbol. The Bible must be permitted to speak for itself. *If God does not define an item to be a symbol with a relevant text, then the item cannot be symbolic.*

3. Finally, we must treat the first four trumpets as literal events because they are expressions of God's wrath. The first four trumpets are deliberately designed to harm Earth! (This is why the quantity of one-third is mentioned twelve times in the seven trumpets. God generously spares two-thirds!) We know from Revelation 7:1 that four angels have been stationed at the four corners of Earth. These four angels are holding back the four winds of destruction. They have been given power *to harm the earth, sea, and trees*. They have been told to wait until God has selected and empowered 144,000 servants. Once the 144,000 are selected and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the earth, sea, and trees will be harmed. The harm inflicted on the earth, sea, and trees is described in the first three trumpets! That's right! The first three angels in Revelation 7 will harm the trees, sea, and the earth. (Revelation 7:1-3; 8:2, 7-11)

God has carefully designed the first four trumpets to tear down and rip up this world. His patience with man's degenerate behavior is limited. God destroyed the whole world in Noah's day. God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah in Abraham's day and God twice destroyed Jerusalem. The first four trumpets will demolish all of man's precious infrastructures. God intends to get the full and undivided attention of Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Hindus, atheists, Muslims, and Pagans by releasing His wrath – although mixed with mercy.

The seven trumpets are the seven "first" plagues and the seven bowls are the seven "last" plagues. Half of the world's population will perish during the seven trumpets (adding Revelation 6:8 with Revelation 9:15) and it is during this overwhelming despair and drama that mankind will come together in humility to appease God. God will soon confront the false religious systems of the world with His truth. He will ensure that everyone hears and intelligently considers His everlasting gospel. God's servants, the 144,000, empowered by the Holy Spirit, will proclaim four distinct messages: (a) worship Jesus the Creator on His holy day, (b) Babylon's attempt to appease God is blasphemous, (c) do not worship Lucifer (masquerading among men as Almighty God) or receive his mark, and (d) separate yourself from false religion or you will receive the seven last plagues.

## **Two Reasons for Keeping the Seven Trumpets in the Past**

SDAs vigorously defend their belief that the seven trumpets are in the past. They do so for several reasons, but these appear to be the most important two:

1. Ellen G. White, the church's prophet, endorsed a historical setting for the seven trumpets in her book, *The Great Controversy*. This means that SDAs cannot change their position on the seven trumpets without contradicting their prophet. (To date, the church has not taken a formal position on any topic that is in open conflict with her statements.)
2. The fifth trumpet has a time period of five months embedded in it. SDAs believe that a day *always* equals a year in Bible prophecy and this rule of interpretation forces the five months in Revelation 9:5,10 to equal 150 years ( $5 \times 30 = 150$ ). Adventists reason that a future fulfillment of the fifth trumpet would put the Second Coming more than 150 years away and this, they say, is not possible!

Because the world did not end in 1844, we have the advantage of reviewing the Millerite movement to see what went wrong. Miller's conclusion about 1844 created a fatal problem which no one could foresee. The Millerites ended up reasoning backwards. They let their prophetic conclusion obscure prophetic details. The Millerites (unwittingly) abused the Bible by forcing it to say things it did not say. It is very important that we observe this flaw because it is a perpetual problem for everyone who studies the Bible. The Millerite movement was built on a false assumption and the movement eventually imploded because they forced the Bible to defend their conclusions rather than allowing the Bible to speak for itself. *At maximum volume, the Bible speaks so softly that one must really strain to hear what it has to say. God's Word is easily drowned out by personal bias, tradition, heritage, and external authority.*

In 1838, Dr. Josiah Litch, a scholarly Methodist minister from Massachusetts, published a forty-eight page booklet supporting Miller's prophetic position. Litch had been studying the prophecies for some time when he became aware of the Millerite movement. Litch became involved in the movement and he produced a discovery that brought thousands into the Millerite movement in 1840. Looking back through the corridor of history for a fulfillment for each of the seven trumpets, Litch came up with an explanation for the fifth and sixth trumpets that was better and more concise than anything heard previously. Litch's exposition on Revelation 9 fit within the paradigm of 1844 like a hand fits within a glove. Basically, Dr. Litch discovered a time capsule. He translated the five months in Revelation 9:5 to mean 150 years (using a day for a year) and the time period called *an hour, day, month and year* in Revelation 9:15 he translated as 391 years and 15 days. In other words, Dr. Litch calculated that the fifth and sixth trumpets spanned a total of 541 years and 15 days.

Dr. Litch concluded that the fifth trumpet marked the rise of Othman, a Moslem commander who founded the Ottoman Empire. Litch also concluded that the five months mentioned in Revelation 9:5 began on July 27, 1299 when Othman began to assault (torment) the Greeks, and the 150 years (using a day for a year) of torment ended when Constantine was crowned at Sparta in 1449. (This Constantine is not to be confused with the Constantine who ruled over Rome during the fourth century A.D.) Shortly after Constantine was crowned, Constantinople fell to the Moslems and according to Litch, the Ottoman Empire ruled over the Greeks for 391 years and 15 days. Litch concluded in 1838 that the Ottoman Empire would fall two years later, specifically on August 11, 1840. Litch's prophetic position was hot news! It was widely published throughout New England and everyone waited anxiously to see what would happen.

"At the very time specified," Ellen White would later write, "Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations." (White, The Great Controversy, pp. 334-335, [underlining mine]) The Millerites were overjoyed. Their prophetic interpretation was on track. The Ottoman Empire had fallen and their joy overflowed as hundreds of new converts swelled the Millerite movement. Seeing was believing. The end of the world was less than four years away!

Ellen G. Harmon-White came from a family of Millerites. (In fact, the Harmon family was removed from the Methodist Church in 1843 because they embraced the date-setting heresies of William Miller.) Throughout her life, Ellen White believed the seven trumpets were historical in nature, and today, many church leaders consider any deviation from the prophet's "pen of inspiration" an abomination. In other words, SDAs generally believe that God spoke through Ellen White and her words have as much weight and authority as Scripture. Moreover, SDAs are committed to a historical position on prophecy because they believe the historical approach uniquely identifies the true Antichrist (which they believe is the pope), and the mark of the beast is Sunday observance.

Even though some SDA scholars have recognized that Litch's August 11, 1840 date is meaningless (for example, C. Mervyn Maxwell suggests the sixth trumpet could have ended in 1844), SDAs are limited to a historical position on the sixth trumpet because (a) no one within the church can openly promote the idea that Ellen White is factually wrong without offending the leaders of the church and (b) the SDA Church believes that a futurist approach to prophecy undermines its understanding of the identity of the Antichrist and the mark of the beast (Sunday observance).

Over the years, I have asked SDA pastors about the church's view on the seven trumpets. Usually, they diminish the importance of the seven trumpets with one of two arguments. First, some say the trumpets are in the past and they are not essential to our salvation, and that is the end of the discussion. The second argument is a bit more involved. Some leading SDA pastors and members believe that a dual fulfillment of the seven trumpets is possible. Dual fulfillment means that a historical fulfillment and a future fulfillment are both possible. To prove their point, advocates of this view will usually offer this statement written by Ellen White in 1890 saying: "Solemn events before us are yet to transpire. Trumpet after trumpet is to be sounded; vial after vial poured out one after another upon the inhabitants of the earth." (Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, Volume III, p. 426)

## **Dual Fulfillments of Prophecy Is a Disastrous Concept**

Using Ellen White's writings to support dual fulfillment is baffling because it creates more problems than it solves. Actually, the dual fulfillment argument is an apologetic device. It allows staunch church members to hold on to the traditional views of Ellen White while permitting "progressive members" to embrace a totally different view of prophecy endorsed by Ellen White. The end result is that Ellen White is not put in an errant position. Ironically, the Catholic Church did the same thing at the turn of the sixteenth century by offering both the preterist and futurist views of prophecy – simultaneously! But, the dual fulfillment argument is a disaster in the making.

Dual fulfillment really means two different interpretations for a given prophecy. In other words, the third trumpet can be one thing at one time in Earth's history and something else at another time in Earth's history! This nonsense reduces the "more sure word of prophecy" to a nose of wax which expositors can distort to suit their needs. God's Word is true and there is one truth. The intended meaning of Bible prophecy does not change with time and a fulfillment only occurs when the specifications are full-filled. Taking the dual fulfillment device to its logical conclusion, we have to ask, "Will the 1,260 years of the Dark Ages be repeated a second time? If not, how would you prove it? Will the seventh trumpet (the close of salvation) occur a second time? If not, how would you prove it? Will the mark of the beast occur a second time? Will the seven last plagues happen twice? If not, how do you prove it? What mechanism determines which prophecies in Daniel and Revelation occur twice and which ones do not?"

Because Ellen White's endorsement on the sixth trumpet is problematic, please consider these four statements:

1. If Ellen White believed the seven trumpets were in the future, why didn't she correct her errant position which was published in the 1907 and 1911 editions of *The Great Controversy*? *The Great Controversy* was first published in 1888. Later, it was expanded and revised in 1907 and again in 1911. Ellen White died in 1915. If Ellen White believed the seven trumpets of Revelation were future events in 1890 when she wrote the statement in *Selected Messages Volume III*, she had twenty-five years and two published editions to correct her mistake.
2. If Ellen White believed the seven trumpets were future in 1890, why didn't she say something specifically about them and their horrific consequences? For someone who wrote more than 250,000 handwritten pages during her lifetime, there is total silence in her writings on the seven trumpets as future events. On the other hand, when she did address the seven trumpets, she placed them in the past. An impartial jury would have to look at this evidence and conclude that her silence on the seven trumpets as future events indicates that she did not believe they were future events.
3. A computer search of her writings indicates that Ellen White mentioned the word "trumpets" at least ninety-four times in her writings. In each case, she either associated the word with the seven trumpets or she used the word to identify a warning instrument, such as: **"Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand."** (Joel 2:1) In other words, Ellen White did not write one word about the seven trumpets being future. One would hope that academic honesty would cause SDAs to keep her 1890 *Selected Messages* quote within the context of her historical understanding, but this has not been the case. Many people continue to take her 1890 statement out of its context to make it appear that she endorsed a future sounding of Revelation's seven trumpets. This is inexcusable.
4. Finally, some SDAs say that her statement on the sixth trumpet in *The Great Controversy* should not be treated as though she is presenting her thoughts, but instead she is presenting Dr. Litch's view on the sixth trumpet. This argument is a smokescreen to protect her infallibility. If Ellen White knew that Litch was in error, she would have said so. Litch's error occurred in 1840 and he recanted his error shortly after 1844.

Josiah Litch published a book in 1873 titled [A Complete Harmony of Daniel and the Apocalypse](#) (Philidelphia: Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, 1873) in which he stated the first four trumpets will be literal events that will occur in the future! Dr. Litch believed the first three trumpets will come as judgments from God and they will consist of fiery meteors and two asteroid impacts! (Pages 152-160)

Ellen White lived seventy-five years after 1840 and she did not say one word about Litch's 1840 error in all of her writings. If, after the passage of sixty years, she still presented Litch's position in *The Great Controversy*, why would she leave the reader with the idea that Litch's position was perfectly valid if she knew it was false? After hearing these four arguments repeatedly, I conclude that many SDAs are simply uninformed or unwilling to admit that their prophet has made a serious error.

## **The SDA Position on the Seven Trumpets is Invalid**

There are several reasons why the historical position on the seven trumpets that the SDA Church defends is not valid or defensible. The following facts are simple. These remarks may be frustrating to SDAs, but please prayerfully consider them. Ellen White wrote: "In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. . . . At the very time specified [in Revelation 9:15], Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction." ( White, [The Great Controversy](#), pp. 334-335, underlining mine)

### **1. The Ottoman Empire Did Not Fall in 1840**

The war waged against the Sultan of Turkey in 1840 actually ended in 1841 without significant changes in territory. From 1783 to 1914, the boundaries of the Ottoman Empire were increasingly reduced through a series of defeats. In fact, during World War I, Turkey allied with Germany and lost even more territory. Today, historians widely agree that the Ottoman Empire ended during World War I. In 1923, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey proclaimed Turkey to be a republic and Turkey remains a sovereign nation to this day. History does not validate that the Ottoman Empire fell on August 11, 1840 and it is no surprise that history does not give August 11, 1840 any significance in Turkish history.

### **2. Faulty Understanding of the Greek Language**

Dr. Litch identified the August 11, 1840 date for the fall of the Ottoman Empire through a faulty translation of Scripture. The KJV says: "**And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.**" (Revelation 9:15) Dr. Litch applied the day/year principle to this verse and derived 391 years and 15 days out of the hour, day, month, and year mentioned. However, the translation should actually read: "And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind." Greek scholars around the world (who have no prophetic position to defend) widely agree that the syntax of Revelation 9:15

points to a specific point in time. The phrase should not be regarded as the *sum* of chronological units of time. (See the NIV, NEB, NEV, RSV, and ASV.) In other words, the sixth trumpet says nothing about a span of time lasting 391 years and 15 days.

### **3. August 11, 1840 Is a Totally Meaningless Date!**

The insurmountable problem with the date, August 11, 1840, is that Dr. Litch failed to adjust his 391 year, 15 day prophecy to reflect a change in the calendar which occurred in October 1582. Pope Gregory XIII removed ten days from the Julian Calendar that year to reset it with respect to the Sun. Therefore, Dr. Litch's August 11, 1840 date should have been adjusted to August 21, 1840 and again, nothing of historical consequence occurred on that date.

Once the 1844 paradigm of the Millerite movement is understood and once the facts are put on the table, it is clear that the historical position on the seven trumpets advocated by Miller, Litch, and Ellen White is factually wrong. Of course, some well meaning SDA pastors may promote the illusion of dual fulfillment, but multiple interpretations only harm and obscure the truth. Why not let the Bible speak for itself? I have no doubts that Miller, Litch, and Ellen White did their best to understand God's Word, and to his credit, Dr. Litch discovered and publicly corrected his mistake. I believe that William Miller and Ellen White would do the same if they were alive today. Previous generations could not know all that we know today because man's understanding of God's truth is progressive. To reach the intended meaning of apocalyptic prophecy, we must use valid rules of interpretation. If the bitter failure of the Millerite movement teaches us anything, it proves that we have to let the Bible speak for itself!

### **The Second Reason SDAs Keep the Seven Trumpets in the Past**

With one glaring exception, SDAs believe that *all* prophetic time periods in Daniel and Revelation must be translated according to their "day for a year" rule. However, it remains a mystery why most SDA scholars do not translate the 1,000 years of Revelation 20 into 365,000 years – which their day/year rule requires. Nevertheless, because the fifth trumpet has five months embedded in it, SDAs have been unwilling to put the fifth trumpet in the future. Consistency in interpretation is very important, but it is more important to use valid rules of interpretation. Flawed rules always yield flawed result.

Note: There is a Bible process that determines whether prophetic time is translated as a day for a year or whether it should be considered literal time. If you would like to examine this process, you can [read the following article for free](#) and read the Addendum at the end of the article or you can [purchase a book](#) that includes this article.

The rule that SDAs use, "In Bible prophecy, time is *a/ways* translated as a day for a year," is invalid. The process mentioned in the note above demonstrates that God translates some prophetic time periods using a day for a year and others, He does not. To illustrate the difference, we will examine the forty-two months mentioned in Revelation 13:5 and hopefully, you will see that the day/year rule does not always apply.

### **Embarrassingly Simple Logic**

To begin, almost everyone would agree that a wound has to be inflicted before a wound can be healed. This is embarrassingly simple logic, but it is a point which SDAs distort in Revelation 13. SDAs believe the papacy received a deadly wound in 1798 and they also accurately believe the deadly wound is healed after 1798. The problem that SDAs cannot resolve is that the beast in Revelation 13 is empowered for forty-two months *after* the deadly wound is healed! Study the following passage from Scripture and observe the chronological order of events. This passage of Scripture begins in 1798. After 1,260 years of trying to destroy the woman in the wilderness (538-1798), the devil was forced to admit failure.

**"Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest [the remnant] of her offspring – those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea [impatiently waiting for the time when God would permit him to make war on the remnant of the woman]. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads . . . .The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority. One of the heads [actually, the sixth head] of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed [when the beast came up out of the sea]. The whole world was astonished [at the appearing of this beast] and [they voluntarily] followed the beast. . . . The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months. He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling place and those who live in heaven."** (Revelation 12:17-13:6. I have added insertions within [ ] for clarity.)

Seven chronological steps stand out very clearly:

1. After failing to destroy the woman in the wilderness (538-1798), the dragon is furious and he prepares to make war on the remnant of the woman.
2. The dragon waits for his final opportunity to make war on the remnant of the woman.
3. A beast with seven heads and ten horns rises from the sea.
4. One of the heads seems to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound *had been healed*.
5. The whole world is astonished and follows after the beast.
6. The beast is given power for forty-two months.
7. The beast blasphemes God.

Look again at item #4: One of the heads seems to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound *had been healed*. This specification forces this beast to rise from the sea after 1798. Remember, simple logic says a wound must be inflicted before a wound can be healed. In other words, this beast has to rise from the sea *after* 1798 because the deadly wound is healed when the beast rises from the sea and the *whole world* follows this beast for forty-two months as it blasphemes (insults) God.

SDA evangelists vigorously argue that the forty-two months in Revelation 13:5 took place during the Dark Ages (538-1798). This is not a reasonable argument because (a) this beast has no power other than the forty-two months granted to it, and (b) this beast rises from the sea after 1798 because the deadly wound is healed when the beast appears! Contrary to what Adventists

say, this beast is not the papacy. This beast is not to be confused with the fourth beast in Daniel 7 that was empowered for 1,260 years. The fourth beast in Daniel 7 is Rome and the little horn in Daniel 7 is the papacy. The little horn persecuted the saints for 1,260 years during the Dark Ages.

The first beast in Revelation 13 represents Babylon and the papacy is only one seventh of Babylon. Remember, this beast has seven heads, and one of the seven heads – the head that was wounded – is the papacy. The fourth beast in Daniel 7 and the first beast in Revelation 13 are completely different beasts. They live at different times and are empowered at different times! The forty-two months of power granted to the first beast in Revelation 13 occurs *after* the deadly wound is inflicted on the papacy because the deadly wound *is healed* when Babylon rises out of the sea!

Consider the following two verses and especially notice verse 8: "**He** [the leopard-like beast] **was given power to make war against the saints and to *conquer them*. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation** [including China, Russia, India, and the United States]. ***All inhabitants of the earth will worship* [obey] **the beast – all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.**" (Revelation 13:7,8, italics and insertions mine)**

SDAs correctly believe that the devil is preparing to make war on the remnant of God's people, but they do not properly understand Revelation 13:1-8. The devil is preparing to wage war on the remnant of the woman in Revelation 12:17, and verse 7 says the devil will *conquer* the saints. When this war ends, "**All** [of the wicked] **inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast.**" Will this war last forty-two literal months or another 1,260 years (calculated using the SDA rule, that is, a day always represents a year)?

This war will last forty-two literal months because there is a mechanism that tells us when God translates a day for a year and when He does not. SDAs do not understand this mechanism and their conclusions on Revelation 13 are prophetically confusing and harmful. The devil is preparing to wage war against God's saints, and although the SDA Church anticipates religious persecution, they are sitting at the wrong bus stop, prophetically speaking, waiting for the arrival of a national Sunday law. Why is the church sitting at the wrong bus stop? They have put the seven trumpets in the wrong place!

## End Time Scenario

Because space is limited, I would like to close with an end time scenario for your consideration. The biblical basis for this story is supported in my book, *A Study on the Seven Trumpets, Two Witnesses and Four Beasts*, so I will not defend the details here. Just read over the story, consider its ramifications and pray about it. If you want to further examine "the rest of the story," you can [download the book for free](#) or you can purchase a printed copy.

The overall purpose of the seven trumpets is to awaken the whole world to the authority and reality of the returning of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ. God's wrath against degenerate and decadent behavior is about to be released. During the seven trumpets, Jesus will send

destructive judgments that will cause devastation and death on a scale not seen since the flood in Noah's day. The scope and severity of this destruction will awaken everyone to the reality that corporate mercy has ended. The 144,000 will put this world on notice that Jesus is in charge of Heaven and Earth, and that He is about to return to Earth to conclude the sin problem. Even in His wrath, His generous offer of salvation is extended. For 1,260 days, the 144,000 will faithfully proclaim the eternal gospel throughout the world! (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6,7) Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Catholics, Protestants, Atheists, and Pagans will humbly listen to a gospel that is unlike anything they have ever heard. Millions of honest-hearted people will embrace Jesus Christ as their Creator and worship Him on His holy Sabbath as He decrees.

The first four trumpets will occur over a period of about sixty-four days and the results will be overwhelming and catastrophic for the whole world. The first trumpet-judgment will be a meteoric shower of burning hail that burns up a third of Earth! (Revelation 8:7) Notoriously wicked places all over the world will be burned up just like Sodom and Gomorrah were. The second trumpet-judgment will be an asteroid impact on an ocean. Ships will sink and sea creatures will die. But worse, the impact of a huge asteroid will create a tsunami that rises several hundred feet high. Of course, a wall of water several hundred feet high moving at a high rate of speed will quickly destroy thousands of coastal cities within a few hours. The ocean will roil with great turbulence for months. (Luke 21:25) (Do you remember the December 26, 2004 tsunami that destroyed 230,000 people in southeastern Asia? That event stands as a prophetic warning and is just a sample of the huge tsunami that will soon destroy thousands of coastal cities.)

The third trumpet-judgment will be another asteroid impact, only this impact will hit a wicked continent. Seismic havoc will cause rivers and underground aquifers to become contaminated with buried sewage and toxic waste. Millions of people will die from drinking poisoned water. The fourth trumpet describes a judgment that will affect the Sun, Moon, and stars. Even though the Bible does not explicitly say what causes the darkness, there is a simple ecological answer. Hundreds of volcanos will erupt simultaneously. The ash and ejecta, carried by the jet stream, will darken the middle third of planet Earth for months. Crops will perish and famine will overtake the world. *God's coming wrath is beyond calculation, but so is His great offer of salvation!*

The first four trumpets will achieve two impressive goals. First, religious and political leaders will see God's wrath with their own eyes, and the smoldering ruins will force all mankind to realize that there is one living God and He is not happy with this planet. Every nation on Earth will reel from God's judgments. All 194 nations will be afflicted and as a result, citizens of the world will conclude that they must unite as one family to beg Almighty God for forgiveness so that His wrath will cease. Out of anguish and fear, the nations of the world will repeat the words of ancient Israel, *Whatever you want oh God, we will do!* (Exodus 19:8)

Second, the world's religious and political leaders will meet to discuss ways to appease God. During this meeting, world leaders will create a new religious government that will have authority over all of the nations of Earth to lead the world in repentance. The book of Revelation calls this beast, "Babylon." *Babylon will be given authority over every nation without firing a single*

*bullet.* In fact, at first almost everyone will think that forming Babylon is a great idea! (Revelation 13:3)

Babylon and its global authority represent mankind's united response to God's wrath. Babylon's mission will be simple: Appease God so that His wrath will cease. The leaders of Babylon will have authority over all nations to determine what must be done within each nation to best appease God's wrath. Because no nation wants to further offend God and risk more destruction, secular legislators will dutifully carry out Babylon's religious demands, outlawing sinful behaviors of all kinds.

## **The Deadly Wound Healed**

Babylon will have seven heads. The seven heads represent the seven religious systems on Earth. The head that was wounded and healed is the Roman Catholic Church. Preeminent among equals, the pope will be selected as the leader of Babylon because the Catholic Church is the only church that already has diplomatic relations (and respect) with most of the world. Currently, the Roman Catholic Church has diplomatic relations with 177 nations. When the religious and political leaders of the world select the pope to lead Babylon, the deadly wound will be healed. Finally, the reigning pope will have authority over the nations as he did during the Dark Ages.

Keep in mind that the pope will not be put in a position to impose the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church on the nations of Earth. (Christians are a mere 25% of the world's population.) The world's religious systems view the will of God in different ways, but all seven will have one thing in common after they see and experience God's wrath! They will agree that mandatory worship and respect is necessary to appease God! This process explains the enactment of laws mandating worship.

The pope and his religiously diverse executives will approach each nation according to the prevailing religion within that nation. For example, the pope and his cabinet will direct lawmakers in the United States to establish a day for repentance and worship. This is how a national Sunday law will occur in the United States. Moslem nations will implement Friday laws (the Moslem day for worship), and the modern nation of Israel will honor Saturday as its holy day. In fact, every nation on Earth will enact laws mandating respect for God so that His judgments will cease. Each nation will also implement and enforce additional laws forbidding sinful behaviors such as homosexuality (including gay marriage or gay clergy), abortion, sexual immorality, gambling, cursing, and drinking. A long list of "sin-less" laws will constitute Babylon's desperate effort to appease God's wrath, and everyone, in every nation, will be obligated by severe penalties to obey these laws.

I know it seems outrageous to say that the world's political leaders will voluntarily submit to the leadership of the pope and Babylon's religious authority! In today's secular and diverse societies, submitting to a single religious authority is unthinkable and impossible, but the Bible predicts it will occur. Do you recall how Republicans and Democrats stood together for prayer on the steps of Capitol Hill after the World Trade Towers fell? Remember when representatives from many different religions later stood together on that same platform and prayed together?

When world leaders see and experience the magnitude and scope of God's wrath on thousands of notably wicked places and when they witness how God's wrath has killed almost two billion people, everyone will tremble at God's displeasure.

## Final Three Trumpets

A few words about the last three trumpets is necessary. The fifth trumpet will be the physical and glorious appearing of the devil – the Antichrist himself. The devil will physically masquerade around the world as Almighty God! He will deceive the world through his mighty miracles. One miracle will stand out above all others. He will convince the world that he truly is God by calling fire down out of heaven at will. (Revelation 13:13,14) Jesus will grant the devil, attended by 200 million angels (actually demons – Revelation 9:11,16), five months to convince the world that he is God. (See 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12) The sixth trumpet is even worse. At the end of the fifth trumpet, the devil will demand that a theocracy (the image to the beast) be established. He will kill a third of mankind (those who oppose him) and set himself up as King of kings and Lord of lords. Masquerading as God, the devil will declare, "There is no room for religious diversity!" Everyone willing to obey and worship the devil on his universal holy day will receive a tattoo (a mark) on his or her right hand. Evidence of this tattoo will be required each time a business transaction occurs. Finally, the seventh trumpet will sound in Heaven's court. This trumpet will mark the close of God's grace and mercy. Every choice will have been made, every decision is final. At this time, God will demonstrate a great display of His divine power. Everyone on Earth will look up and see the Ark of the Covenant, which contains the Ten Commandments. God will show the world that His Law is above all laws. The seven bowls will then be poured out on those having the tattoo that represents the mark of the beast.

## Summary

We have briefly examined the origin of Sunday blue laws. We have briefly examined the prophetic beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as they pertain to a national Sunday law in the United States. We have briefly considered the problem of imposing Sunday laws on 194 countries of the world. We have noticed that SDAs do not know what will trigger a national Sunday law. SDAs do not have an explanation for Revelation 13:8 because they do not properly understand the seven trumpets.

We have also briefly examined the first four trumpets because they will drastically change life on planet Earth as we know it. The first four trumpet events will be the catalyst that causes Revelation's end time story to begin. They reveal how, when, and why Revelation's story will unfold so that worship will become the matter of greatest concern for everyone on Earth. We have examined some of the obstacles that prevent SDAs from putting the seven trumpets in the future. We have also learned how the long held SDA position (promoted by Ellen White) on the sixth trumpet does not have historical support or significance. So, where does all of this information leave you? I hope it causes you to want to learn more about the book of Revelation!

This little brochure has been prepared and distributed in hopes that you might become motivated to restudy Revelation and reexamine your prophetic position. **This is not an attempt**

**to siphon members or money away from your church.** My concern is simple and straightforward. I believe the seven trumpets are about to sound. I believe that God's wrath will soon be directed at Earth and billions of people will soon perish as a result. I believe that God's Word has much to say about coming events – much more than Christians have been willing to embrace.

Because the Great Tribulation will be the worst time in Earth's history, we need to know and understand God's Word. His Word will be *a lamp unto our feet and a light on our path* as we proceed through 1,335 days of severe tribulation. At a minimum, please download the free material. No strings are attached. The information provided there is carefully documented. If you want to order a printed copy, please contact us. This brochure has not been sent to sell you something or to ask for money. Our joy is sowing the good seed, the Word of God. The Bible has never been more relevant than now. Bible truth is more complete and comprehensive than ever before. God's truth is marching on. We cannot afford to depend on church leaders or the final crisis to awaken us. **"The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can [study and] pray."** (1 Peter 4:7, insertion mine)