

# What's this “1335-thing” all about?

**Many Seventh-day Adventists have never heard of the phenomenon called, “the 1335 days” that is described in the book of Daniel.** Although it isn’t an official ‘doctrine’, the church maintains a *Traditional Understanding* of the subject. It is well documented and unwaveringly defended by the Biblical Research Institute (BRI). It shows in some academic curricula and is unconvincingly glossed over by a few Conference evangelists, but Daniel 12 is rarely mentioned from the pulpit. Nonetheless it forms a very important link in the chain that has anchored Adventist prophetic identity. Despite assigning the subject a very low public profile the church has a heavy historical investment in it.

<sup>1</sup> **William Miller** (1782–1849) first predicted Christ’s return to Earth to be in 1843. It was later adjusted to October 22, 1844 to account for the transition from BC to AD. When Jesus did not appear, the Millerites faced the Great Disappointment, a key event leading to the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

<sup>2</sup> The **1843 prophetic chart** was prepared in 1842 by Charles Fitch (a Congregationalist minister) with Apollos Hale (a Methodist preacher) and presented at a Millerite General Conference in Boston in May that year. Although produced in 1842, it was called the ‘1843 chart’ because its prophetic calculations identified that year as the time Jesus would come back to Earth to “cleanse the sanctuary”.

<sup>3</sup> The “**1260 days**” was accounted for as the 1260 years between the rise of the persecuting medieval Roman church in 538 AD to its overthrow in 1798 AD.

<sup>4</sup> When the Millerites later realised the date 1843 hadn’t allowed for the null year between BC and AD and should have been 1844, all their numbers for the 1335 component of their chart were thrown out of whack. A **revised chart**, dropping all reference to the now-problematic 1335 days, was published in 1850.

<sup>5</sup> **Historicism** understands biblical prophecy as unfolding through real historical events from the prophet’s time to the end of the world, rather than being confined to the distant past or future. Prophetic “days” are interpreted as literal Jewish years, forming the basis for all Adventist time-prophecy interpretations.

There are three distinct time periods in Daniel chapter 12—1260 (3½ “years”), 1290 and 1335 “days”. The present-day Adventist understanding of these timelines is based on a chart developed in early 1842 by two Millerites,<sup>1</sup> Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale.<sup>2</sup> Followers of William Miller believed the year 1843 would be the literal end of the world. They understood the 2300-days prophecy of Daniel 8:14 terminated at that date. Therefore all other time prophecies must end no later than 1843.

No clear start date for the 1335 days was apparent, so they chose to terminate the 1290 and 1335 days<sup>3</sup> at the same time as the much longer 2300 days and then work backward to find a starting date. They subtracted 1335 from 1843 and simple arithmetic produced the number 508. They were then faced with the problem of finding something significant enough to justify that date (post hoc logic). Scouring their history books they discovered Clovis the First, king of the post-Roman Franks, converted from paganism to Nicean Christianity on the 25th of December 496 AD. That 12-year gap obviously didn’t work for them. So they associated the year 508 with Clovis’s consolidation of his Nicene Christian kingdom and treated this as symbolically marking the decline of pagan political power. With no more-convincing evidence available, they committed to that date on their chart. The year 1798 was identified as the *beginning* of “the Time of the End” by the early Adventists and widely taught as non-negotiable (and still is today). So the pioneer Adventists chose the expedient of simply ignoring the resultant arithmetical problems brought about by the new date of 1844 in order to preserve the critically important 1798 date.<sup>4</sup>

They also believed the ‘days’ in all these time prophecies were symbols representing years. This system of interpreting time-based prophecies became known as the ‘year-for-a-day principle’ (YFD) which has been fundamental to Adventist Historicism<sup>5</sup> ever since.

[AdventAI.app](https://adventai.app) is a contemporary voice for all things Seventh-day Adventist. Citing acknowledged authorities in its support, and speaking in a morally-authoritative tone, it articulates the church’s Traditional Understanding this way:

*“Any theory suggesting that the 1290 and 1335 days are still future contradicts the foundational pillars of the Advent faith, implying that the book of Daniel remains sealed and that the historical movement of 1843/1844 was based on falsehood. **We rest assured in the certainty that these periods have been fulfilled**, confirming the unfolding of God’s plans in human history.”*

Career pastors today simply don’t have the time (or inclination usually) to carefully analyse such things. And church administrators instinctively steer away from anything that might disturb the status quo. Uncritically reciting the Traditional Understanding seems to satisfy most pew-dwellers

who may happen to stumble upon it, despite the existence of its evident anomalies. Few people have had the disposition or seen the need to investigate it for themselves. So the Traditional Understanding continues to be accepted with a shrug of the prophetic shoulders.

When you closely examine it however, it is truly surprising just how indefensible the Tradition is. But where it moves from merely *surprising* to deeply *disturbing*, is the dawning of the realisation that the real-life ramifications of the Traditional Understanding are, in fact, literally devastating.

How so?

Jesus answered His troubled disciples' question, specifically about "the end of the world", with His Olivet Discourse found in Matthew 24 (also Mark 13 and Luke 21). And right there He pointed explicitly to Daniel chapter 12 as being of life-and-death importance and essential to "understand" (Matthew 24:15). The "wise" who, in 70 AD, "took heed" and recognised the sign, acting in faith on Jesus' words, were saved from the hideous fate suffered by the dismissive "foolish".

So here's the thing.

Those same words of Jesus have a specific application to the end of time, as His unfolding explanation to the disciples makes evident. And because we are living at the predicted time in history, the words, "spoken by Daniel the prophet", have direct and urgent application to us. That enigmatic expression, "The Abomination of Desolation", Jesus declared, is something we need to understand—because its significance to us is as *existential* as it was to those living in 70 AD. And that is the cue for Cognitive Dissonance<sup>1</sup>, Nonchalance and simple Naïveté to enter, singing and dancing hand-in-hand, stage left: "How can it be that our whole understanding of the matter, taught as the church's settled position from the very beginning, could possibly be in error?" The implications seem so unsettling that almost everyone walks (or runs) away to avoid any real discussion of the matter.

***The Traditional Understanding is adamant that all the time prophecies of Daniel 12 have already been fulfilled, starting as far back as 508 AD. So, by the immutable laws of logic, there can be nothing now in Daniel 12 of which to "take heed".***

But Jesus makes it very clear there are events yet to happen that constitute mortal peril for those who build their expectations on what turns out to be, on close inspection, the sandy-ground assumptions of the Millerite-now-Adventist Tradition.

After all the debris and dust of the 1843/4 Great Disappointment had settled, in 1883 and again in 1903, Ellen White pointed unequivocally to the same thing Jesus did that evening in His garden retreat on the Mount of Olives:

"In the Scriptures are presented truths that relate especially to our own time. To the period just prior to the appearing of the Son of man, the prophecies of the scripture point, and here their **warnings** and **threatenings** pre-eminently apply. The prophetic periods of Daniel, extending to the very eve of the consummation, throw a flood of light upon events then to transpire" (Review & Herald, September 25, 1883).

"Let us read and study the twelfth chapter of Daniel. It is a **warning** that we shall all need to understand before the time of the end" (LT 161, July 30, 1903, Ellen White to church leaders A G Daniells and W W Prescott).

***This is not a doctrinal dispute. Nor is it a challenge to Historicism. It is a structural issue with profoundly practical consequences: the only sign Jesus gave for His people to recognise is emphatically disallowed by the Traditional Understanding.***



<sup>1</sup> Attention diverted by preoccupation with the stuff of life and lulled by a Laodicean overconfidence in a dubious, man-made tradition rather than the rock-solid words of Jesus.



It is common to hear preachers assert that Jesus gave only one sign of the end—"This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world... and then shall the end come". But this claim is unsustainable on several grounds. Not least of which is, that while Jesus' statement is certainly true, it does not constitute a 'sign' in the sense demanded by the disciples' urgent, end-of-the-world question. It is neither immediate nor universally observable, and therefore lacks the essential characteristics of a warning signal. The true sign, explicitly identified by Jesus, is found in Daniel 12:11. And although Jesus' sign is not 'flashing lights and sirens' to those who are distracted<sup>1</sup>, to those who are "taking heed" with trimmed lamps and plenty of oil—it is exactly that.

The book, '1335 Days', is a wake up call. It carefully reveals the Traditional Understanding's flawed structural issues and finds a welcome resolution that confirms Historicism, the Spirit of Prophecy and the uncompromised fundamentals of Seventh-day Adventism—and brings Jesus' urgent warning into the 'Heads-Up Displays' of "the wise"—sharply focussed.

Jesus was intentionally urgent about His warning signal for good reason. But still, to many, "the 1335-thing" just seems kind of irrelevant right now—like some odd curiosity from the distant past.

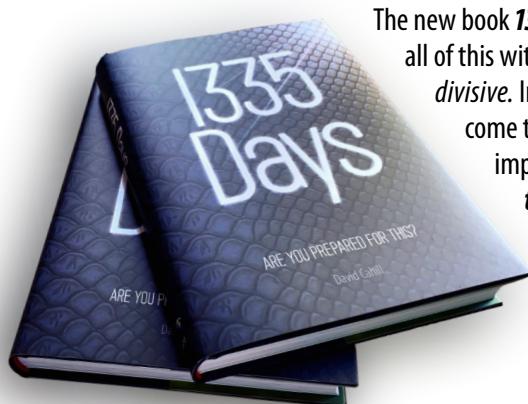
*"Doesn't the church still teach Jesus' warning in Matthew 24 anyway?" So it's really "business as usual" for all practical purposes: 'Plan as though Jesus will not come for a hundred years and [pretend to] live as though He is coming tomorrow.'*

*"Just preach the wonderful, reassuring truth of Jesus' grace, mercy and forgiveness. There's no crippling fear in the true Gospel—'My grace is sufficient for you'!"*

► Can we decide something Jesus declared to be hyper-critical is not important?

If it contains **warnings** and **threatenings** especially for us, are we "wise" to bury them under 1500 years of history in order to preserve an insubstantial tradition? Can we safely "...rest assured in the certainty that these periods have been fulfilled..." when Jesus (and Inspiration) places them in *our immediate future*?

Knowing **what** to look for and **when** to expect it would be rather important don't you think?



The new book **1335 Days** examines what is really at stake in all of this with thoroughly informed and fresh eyes. *It isn't divisive*. In fact it provides the most excellent reason to come together as never before. And of vital importance, the book **accurately identifies the start** of the 1335 days and reveals the significance of the other, related periods.

The time is imminent.

[www.finalwarning.world](http://www.finalwarning.world)