

THREE INELUCTABLE* FACTS OF HISTORY

* **ineluctable** | ɪnɪˈlʌktəbl |
adjective – unable to be resisted or avoided; inescapable: ‘the ineluctable facts of history’.

¹ *Tiberius Julius Alexander’s lived-understanding of Jewish culture made him invaluable to the Romans. We are warned there will be traitors in the impending crisis who will, with the benefit of their ‘insider knowledge’, abandon their fellows and become the most effective agents against them (GC 608.2).*

1. In AD 70 Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. Under Titus, his most senior commander was Tiberius Julius Alexander, a Jewish-born¹ Roman general and nephew of Philo of Alexandria, appointed by Emperor Titus Flavius Vespasianus’ authority. As a highly experienced officer who had previously governed Judea and Egypt, Alexander exercised significant influence during the campaign and very likely shaped strategic decisions made by the younger and less experienced Titus. This holocaust is one of history’s most horrific events and is the stark fulfilment of Jesus’ warning (Matthew 24). The destruction of Jerusalem demonstrates that divine warnings are “ineluctable” events—they are not mere abstract possibilities, nor do they wait for generations to act. Misapplying them brings devastating consequences.

2. Jesus forewarned His disciples. With solemn emphasis He said, “Take heed that no one deceives you” (Matthew 24:4). Roughly forty years passed between that warning and the complete destruction of what was the national, religious and political nucleus of the Jews. His alert was unheeded by “the foolish” who, reflexively defaulting to their familiar tradition, slumbered on. A small, “wise” minority recognised the sign and fled for their very lives to the little fortified hill town of Pella.

3½ years (1260 days) elapsed between the arrival and retreat of the Roman armies under Cestius Gallus in autumn 66 CE and the siege by Titus beginning in spring 70 CE.

² *Forty years was regarded as a generation, so explaining Jesus’ statement, “This generation shall not pass until. . .” (Matthew 24:34).*



3. Jesus has forewarned us. Spoken on the Mount of Olives, Jesus’ words applied first to the generation of those present with Him in the garden². But it was also specifically intended for those who would live in the literal time of the end, as Jesus’ expanding discourse makes clear.

³ *The 1290/1335 days of Daniel 12 are chronologically anchored in the “Time of the End”. They are not “tear-off” intervals that can be freely repositioned or posited in a distant past without destroying the intent of the prophecy.*

His warning’s AD-70-fulfilment is a preview of what is now imminent on a global scale. When Jesus pointed us to Daniel 12’s message (“. . . spoken of by Daniel the prophet. . .”) it becomes immediately urgent—it cannot be interpreted away (as the veiled Millerite Preterism of the Traditional Understanding does) without incurring the consequences.³

⁴ *Tradition flattered the Jews they were still God’s Chosen People destined to rule the nations, even though they had crucified their Messiah and declared eternal subjection to Caesar: “His blood be upon us and our children. . .” (John 19:15; Matthew 27:25).*

The 1290 and 1335 days are not, ‘now-irrelevant’ markers, applying to distant centuries. They are *living deadlines*, and the divine oath attached to them is unbreakable. Disregarding them now—by trusting to long-accepted tradition, as most did in AD 70⁴—carries, catastrophic consequences that are simply inescapable.

These undeniable facts of history are clear evidence that the Author of the universe exercises rightful authority over His everlasting kingdom. And in the words of the prophet Daniel to King Nebuchadnezzar, “The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure”.

But there’s more.

¹ The common claim 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”—is incorrect on several grounds. Not least of which is, that while that statement is 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 character of a warning signal. The true sign, explicitly identified by Jesus, is found in Daniel 12:11. And while Jesus’ sign is not ‘flashing lights and sirens’ to those who have been sleeping, to those who have stayed alert with trimmed lamps and plenty of oil, taking earnest heed—it is just that.

² Jesus knew Matthew, Mark and Luke would faithfully record His words for the benefit of the generation living when the events would take place.

Official wardens of biblical ‘truth’ for the Seventh-day Adventist church, the Biblical Research Institute (BRI), continues to uphold a long-standing tradition on Daniel 12 that is in accord with the disproven Millerite chart produced by Charles Fitch and Apollos Hale in April 1842. It anticipated the events Jesus described in Matthew 24 to occur by 1843. They didn’t. The [chart](#) was retro-modified and lithographed by Otis Nichols and first offered for sale in [1850](#)

³ Daniel 9:27 (70 AD)
Daniel 11:31 (538-1798 AD)
Daniel 12:11 (beyond 1798)
(See History in Advance by Allen Sonter).

His disciples had asked Jesus, “When will these things happen; and what will be *the sign*¹ to look for that *signals the end of the world?*”

Their question was very specific. They were concerned.

To them their Master was the long-anticipated Messiah who was to establish His kingdom over the entire world. They had no doubt about it. It was something they were taught in Sabbath School from their earliest childhood. They’d ‘shut-up-shop’ and followed Him because they believed it.

They had recently been arguing among themselves over who of them would hold the most prestigious positions in the new global empire. So when Jesus spoke about the huge stones of the temple being thrown down in climactic destruction, to them it could mean only one thing: *the end of the world*. It couldn’t be anything else, because here was the Messiah in the very throes of *establishing* His kingdom. That was a settled question in their thinking. And that’s why they came up to Jesus privately in the garden overlooking the brightly-lit temple and asked confidentially when the final cataclysm He had been speaking to the Pharisees about would take place and what would *the sign* be for them to recognise? The logic was straightforward. And they wanted Jesus to supply the missing piece in their puzzle: when would ***the end of the world*** take place and how would they be able to recognise its approach?

Jesus’ reply was not what they were expecting—like something from left field: “Take heed [stay alert] so no one deceives you!”

Deception was uppermost in Jesus’ mind. He knew the expectations of their religious traditions made His followers particularly susceptible to being misled. And as His elaboration on their question developed into reflections beyond 70 AD to our time, He said, “the final deception will be so convincing it will be, even to genuine Christians, indistinguishable from the real thing” (Matthew 24:24-25). Satan has in readiness, as you are reading these words, such a senses-overwhelming display of glory and power, so far beyond human imagination, that *every human being’s* capacity for rational thought will be completely knocked out and their normal processes of perception utterly bogged.

Then Jesus handed them their missing piece:

“So, ***when*** you see the “**abomination of desolation**” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, (whoever reads the words I have just spoken must be sure to understand them for themselves—don’t just accept the traditional understanding of the pharisees²), ***then*** . . . flee. Meanwhile, *be ready!*” (Matthew 24:15-16).

The phrase “abomination of desolation” appears three times in the Bible³. But only in Daniel 12 is it explicitly tied to *the end of the world*. In the emergency of Matthew 24, Jesus pointed to that very chapter as the locus of final, time-critical events whose warning was meant to guide those who would actually *live in* the events—and obviously that cannot be Clovis the First in 508 AD—or anyone living prior to 1844 (as the Millerites learned to their great disappointment).

Now:

If Seventh-day Adventists, who are living in the second quarter of the twenty-first century (~6,000 years since Creation), truly are the appointed custodians of the flame lit by the Protestant reformers—and have been tasked with giving the messages of the Three and Fourth Angels to “every kindred, nation, tongue and people”—thoughtfully consider this:

Would it be unreasonable to think the Master of Deception might choose their most insubstantial ‘tradition’ to distract Adventists away from paying attention to the object of Jesus’ sharply-focussed warning to them?

Take (*very careful*) heed, (and examine Revelation 3:13-22 as you do so).



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