

Ellen White. Visionary for Kids

First Quarter 2011

Seventh-day Adventists:

Where Did We Come From?

In this issue:

An End-time Mystery

**Does It Matter What
Church I Attend?**

Create a Time Line

. . . and more



H.M.S. Richards, Sr.

Mrs. William Miller

Charles Bradford

Alma McKibbin

me

you

Pull out and save

A “Little Flock” No More

The small Advent movement blossomed
into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



The disappointed believers continued to study their Bibles.

Do you have someone in your extended family who tells great stories about “the old days?” Maybe your grandpa tells you what it was like to immigrate to another country when he was young, or your favorite aunt tells you stories about when your dad was a kid. If you have someone in your life who can tell you about your great-grandparents or your great-great-grandparents, you are very fortunate! History can be intensely interesting—especially when those historical stories are about people you know and love.

Have you ever wondered where the Seventh-day Adventist church came from? Maybe you attend a Seventh-day Adventist church or school. Who started this church, anyway, and why?

You might say that Adventists are “descendants” of the Millerite movement, named after William Miller. Miller believed and preached that Jesus would return in the 1840s. He based this idea on Daniel 8:14: “For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed” (NKJV).* William Miller believed that the sanctuary was the earth and that it would be “cleansed” by the fires of the judgment at Jesus’ second coming. Ultimately, the Millerites determined that the 2300-day/year prophecy ended on October 22, 1844.

When Jesus did not return to earth on that day, the faithful Millerite Adventists who remained in the movement continued to study their Bibles. They prayed that God would help them understand what they had misunderstood about the prophecy of Daniel 8:14. They had experienced such a sweet unity as they waited for Jesus to return! Individually and as a group, they had accepted Jesus as their Savior, had confessed their sins, and were so eager to meet Jesus. They felt certain that the Holy Spirit had blessed their study and fellowship and that somehow He would lead them to the true meaning of Daniel’s prophecy.

In time God’s Spirit helped them see that their careful study of the prophecy had led them to the correct date but the wrong event. On October 22, 1844, Jesus did do something important. In ancient Israel, on the yearly Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place in the earthly sanctuary. Similarly, in 1844 Jesus entered the Most Holy Place in the *heavenly* sanctuary

The first Seventh-day Adventist church

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to begin what is sometimes called the pre-Advent, or investigative judgment. He will continue this judgment process until He returns the second time.

One of the most important ways that the early Adventists came to agree on what they believed about the Bible (their doctrines) was to hold weekend Bible conferences. Representatives of Adventist groups, especially those living in New England, would attend these conferences. Many ideas would be studied, and together the group would come



to agreement. Sometimes Ellen White had visions that helped those attending understand that they were on the right track, though these visions were never intended to take the place of serious Bible study and prayer.

So it was not surprising that the Adventist leaders decided to hold a conference in Battle Creek, Michigan, to study whether they should have a name for their group!

Many early Adventists had been asked to leave their churches prior to 1844. Now they belonged to a group they sometimes referred to as “the scattered flock.” Because some of them felt that organized religion was “Babylon”

(confusion) and from the devil, they opposed naming their group or organizing it into a church. But others felt it was really important to organize and become a recognized denomination.

Adventists came to that special Michigan meeting from as far away as New York, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Ohio. At the beginning of the conference, many were still opposed to organizing into a church. But James White argued that the “orphan” needed a name! Up to this time the churches and publishing house were the property of whoever owned the land that the buildings were on. “What if the owner of the land decides not to be part of our group anymore. What then?” James White asked. Also, who would decide who could be a minister and

“I propose we take the name of Seventh-day Adventists!” David Hewitt declared.

who could baptize members? Gradually the attendees recognized that since there is order in heaven, there should be order on earth.

Finally, a dedicated Adventist named David Hewitt stood up. "I propose we take the name of Seventh-day Adventists!" he declared. Someone else stood and commented, "That name does contain our two distinct doctrines—the Sabbath and the Second Coming." After discussion, the chairperson of the meeting, Joseph Bates, called for a vote. Only one man stood up against the motion. So, on October 1, 1860, the "scattered flock" finally had a real name.

Three years later, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was organized. At that time, there were about 3,500 members. Today, there are about 16 million! The Seventh-day Adventist Church owns and operates hospitals, publishing houses, and schools around the world.

Seventh-day Adventists still have the same mission that they had on their "birth date" in 1860. That mission is to take the messages of the three angels of Revelation 14 to all the world, preparing men and women, boys and girls for Jesus' soon coming.

James and Ellen White, along with Joseph Bates, are said to be the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But as you will read in our Bible study in this issue of *Visionary*, Jesus is the real founder of this special movement with an end-time mission.



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James and Ellen White



**You can share the main message of
Seventh-day Adventism.**

Give a Bible Study: An End-time Mystery

It's fun to browse through your school yearbook or study a class photo. These pictures provide memories of special people—your classmates.

Did you know that there's a “picture” of another group of people, Seventh-day Adventists, along with their special mission, in a very important chapter of the Bible? Take a look!

1. Revelation 10:1. A mighty Angel (who matches the descriptions of Jesus in Ezekiel 1:26-28 and Revelation 1:15) came down from heaven to earth.

2. Revelation 10:2. The angel had a little book, or scroll, open in his hand. The only book in the Bible that was ever said to be closed is Daniel (Daniel 12:4). The book would be open to humans' understanding at “the time of the end.”

3. Revelation 10:2, 3. The angel who held the now-open book had one foot on the sea and the other on the land, signifying that the message he was about to give would be a global message meant for everyone on our planet.



4. Revelation 10:4. The seven thunders sounded a message that John was not to write, because the time for understanding the prophecies of Daniel was not in John's time, but at the time of the end.

5. Revelation 10:5, 6. The angel took a solemn oath by the Creator of heaven and earth that there would be "time no longer" (KJV). Many scholars believe that "time" refers to the longest prophetic time period of the Bible, found in Daniel 8:14, and that when this time period ended on October 22, 1844, there would never again be a time or date set for any prophetic event. This means, among other things, that no one but God knows the day or year of Jesus' return to earth.

6. Revelation 10:7. When the seventh angel begins to blow his trumpet, God's "mystery" will be finished. This great mystery is redeeming you and me! (See Ephesians 1:9-19, Ephesians 6:19, and Colossians 4:3.) God is nearly finished taking out from among the nations the people who are ready for Jesus' return. When God finishes this work, He will come back!

7. Revelation 10:8. A voice told John to take the open book (scroll) from the hand of the angel who was standing on the seas and on the land.

8. Revelation 10:9. When John came to get the book, the angel said, "Take it, and eat it. It will turn your stomach sour, but in your mouth it will be as sweet as honey."

9. Revelation 10:10. John took the book and ate it. In other words, he thought about it and "digested" the information (see Jeremiah 15:16). It was sweet in his mouth and bitter in his stomach. Seventh-day Adventists believe this verse describes the terrible disappointment when Jesus did not return on October 22, 1844, as the Millerites and early Adventists believed that He would. At first the news of Jesus' soon coming was such sweet news, but when He didn't return, the sad disappointment was bitter.

8. Revelation 10:11. John, who represents God's people, was told to prophesy again to many peoples and nations. That means we, as God's end-time church, have a prophetic message to share! The message God calls us to give to all the world is found in Revelation 14:6-12—the three angels' messages. These messages call everyone to worship God, reject false religion, and recognize that judgment is taking place.

This great work still remains to be done. Let's get up, get out, and get active sharing the good news!

This Bible study was made especially for young people. You can find more Bible studies for young people at www.AdventSource.com, including the *41 Bible Studies* set by Cindy Tutsch.

You've Got Issues

Why should I be interested in the stories of Adventist pioneers?

The early Adventists answered the call to share Jesus in their homes, their communities, and wherever else God called them to witness. They gave their talents, their time, their energy, and their money to help others understand what the Bible says about the nearness of Jesus' return and how to be prepared for that great event. Their stories of adventure, commitment, and sacrifice can encourage us to stand tall for Jesus.

In 1 Corinthians 10:11 the apostle Paul says that the stories written in the Bible are meant to encourage those of us who await Jesus' return. In the same way, the stories of God's intervention and miracles on behalf of the Adventist pioneers can help us understand how God led in the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Some of those Adventist pioneers were as young as you are when they began to do missionary work. Mary Andrews, daughter of the first official Adventist overseas missionary, John Nevins Andrews, sailed for Switzerland from the United States when she was just 13. By studying French, within a short time Mary was serving as copy editor for the French publication *Signs of the Times*. Her mom had passed away, and her dad was too busy to pay much attention to the family's needs. But even in those difficult circumstances, Mary chose to do her best for Jesus.

Who knows? Maybe someday someone will be encouraged by your story of faithfulness to Jesus!



Mary Andrews

Create an Adventist History Time Line

Add up the numbers to discover the years in which these important events happened. Then put the dates on your own Adventist history time line.

First organized Sabbath school

$$548 + 828 + 400 + 77$$

= _____

The Great Disappointment

$$917 + 463 + 464$$

= _____

William Miller starts preaching

$$812 + 654 + 365$$

= _____

Ellen White has vision about importance of Sabbath

$$748 + 99 + 1000$$

= _____

John Nevins Andrews is first official Adventist missionary to Europe

$$531 + 343 + 1000$$

= _____

First General Conference session

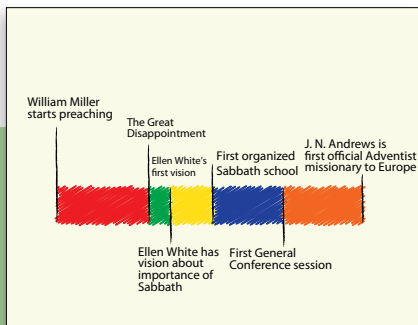
$$800 + 250 + 800 + 13$$

= _____

Ellen White's first vision

$$789 + 155 + 900$$

= _____



To create your time line you will need a ruler with a centimeter scale on it, a blank piece of paper, a pencil, and markers. Turn the paper on its side as shown.

Measure 4 cm from the left edge and draw a line. Put your first date there.

On the time line every $\frac{1}{2}$ cm (5 mm) will equal one year. For example, 11 years would be $5\frac{1}{2}$ cm. Use your creativity to decorate your time line: color it, draw pictures on it, etc. Have fun! Oh, send pictures of your time lines to visionary4kids@gmail.com and we'll post them on our blog!



Cindy

Does it matter what church you attend, as long as you love Jesus?

It's very important to love Jesus! How could we not love Him? He loved us first, after all, and not just a little bit. He let Himself be crucified on Calvary because He loved us with all His heart. Today He is in heaven preparing mansions for us to live in (John 14:1-3, KJV). What Jesus really wants more than anything is to come and rescue us from the sin and pain of Planet Earth and take us to heaven where we can be best friends with God forever.

So how can Jesus tell whether we love Him back? He actually gives us the answer to that question in John 14:15: "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (NKJV). * And in Matthew 12:49, 50 Jesus identifies His family as those who do the will of His Father in heaven.

Since our family in heaven will honor God's commandments and do His will, it's important that our church family on earth do the same. I personally am a Seventh-day Adventist because I love Jesus and want to follow what the Bible teaches. To show Jesus that I love Him, I choose through God's Spirit to obey His commandments, including the fourth one. I'm glad that Seventh-day Adventists care about the whole person—body, mind, and soul—as the Bible directs us to do (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 10:31). I also believe that God's true church family will care about those who have the least in society, and treat them as we would treat Jesus Himself (Matthew 25:31-46).

Jesus loves His children in every church and in every religion. But He wants to bring them out of churches that do not follow the Bible and into one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (Ephesians 4:4, 5; Revelation 18:1-4). He describes His last-day people in Revelation 12:17 as those who keep His commandments and have the testimony of Jesus (Revelation 19:10). That sounds a lot like sincere Seventh-day Adventists to me!

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What Do You Want to Know?

Ask youth minister Cindy Tutsch any question about Ellen White, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, or the Bible—especially questions on next quarter's *Visionary* topic: "What Happens When You Die?" Just send your e-mail to cindytutsch@hotmail.com. All of your questions will be answered—and we might even put some of them in a future issue of *Visionary*!





About Ellen White

Ellen White was born in 1827 near Portland, Maine, U.S.A. Seventh-day Adventists believe that God called her to be a prophet and gave her messages through dreams and visions, as foretold in Bible passages such as Joel 2:28, 29 and Ephesians 4:11-13.

Ellen White's writings bring messages of hope that express the love of Jesus for every person. She proclaimed that the Ten Commandments are based on God's great love and that God will help His children keep His commandments as a response to that love. Ellen White dedicated her entire life to serving others.

The editors of *Visionary* invite you to read Ellen White's writings for yourself to discover, enjoy, and build a stronger friendship with Jesus.

For more fun stories and puzzles, visit our online edition of *Visionary* at www.whiteestate.org/vez.

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