

The Pluto Effect

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Introduction

When it comes to the prophet Daniel's timeline prophecies, there are different views of interpretation. Depending upon which view you subscribe to (preterist, futurist, or historicist), Daniel's timeline prophecies have either been fulfilled, partially fulfilled or are yet to be fulfilled during a seven-year period of time just prior to Jesus second coming.

William Miller, who started and led the Millerite (Adventist) movement in the early to mid-1800's, believed that Jesus would return at the end of Daniel's 2300-day (year) prophecy. In 1822, Miller had this to say: "I believe that the second coming of Jesus

Christ is near, even at the door, even within twenty-one years, – on or before 1843.”¹

This end-date was later extended to the time period of the Jewish Calendar (March 21, 1843 to March 21, 1844). As for Daniel’s 1260, 1290, and 1335-day (year) prophecies, Miller further concluded that they must also have their fulfillment on or before Jesus’ blessed return—on or before March 21, 1844.

Seventh-day Adventists continue to hold onto William Miller’s views as far as the start and end dates for the 1260, 1290, and 1335-day timelines. Yet when it comes to the end of Daniel’s 1335-day prophecy, Miller’s predicted year of 1843 (Gregorian calendar) and the extended time period of March 1843 to March 1844 (Jewish calendar) for

1. Bliss, Sylvester (1853). *Memoirs of William Miller*. Boston: Joshua V. Himes, p. 79

Jesus anticipated coming not only marked the Millerite's first disappointment (March 21, 1844), but fails to show any blessed (happy) event in history as predicted by the prophet Daniel, "Blessed is the one who waits for and reaches the end of the 1,335 days." (Daniel 12:12, NIV).

The Pluto Effect

Growing up, I was always taught that our solar system consisted of nine planets, Pluto being the most distant planet from the sun.

The discovery of the planet Pluto came about in 1930 when astronomer Clyde Tombaugh, using a blink comparator and photographic plates, was able over time to uncover the hidden planet. It was classified a planet based on the traditionally held definition that planets are any geologically active bodies in space.

Fast forward to 2006, when the International Astronomical Union (IAU) made the determination that Pluto is not a plan-

et. According to the IAU definition of a planet, Pluto must be spherical, orbit the sun and not share an orbit with other objects. Long story short, Pluto has since been found to share its orbit with other objects called “plutinos.” Therefore, according to the IAU, Pluto is truly not a planet like the other eight planets in our solar system.

So why am I bringing this up?

Well, there are still people who firmly believe in the traditional view of Pluto being a planet, even in the face of astronomical evidence that clearly shows that unlike the other eight planets, Pluto holds the same orbit with other objects—plutinos. If Pluto is indeed a planet, then one must admit to there being many more “dwarf-like” planets in our solar system. Philip Metzger, a planetary physicist and proponent of Pluto being a planet, had this to say: “We think there’s probably over 150 planets in our solar system.”

Unfortunately, like so many other beliefs, it is human nature to hold on to our ingrained and oftentimes biased beliefs, even in the face of facts, evidence or scientific discoveries that would suggest otherwise.

Why is that?

Truth be told, we don't like change, especially change that requires us to shift our traditional viewpoint or to admit that perhaps we got it wrong!

Case in point, the Millerite (Adventist) belief that AD 1798 historically marks not only the papacy's deadly wound (Rev. 13:3), but the end of the papacy's dominion and rule as expressed in Daniel's 1260-day (year) timeline prophecy. William Miller, the founder of the Millerite movement, came to this conclusion on the premise that all of Daniel's timeline prophecies (1260, 1290, 1335) must come to fulfillment prior

to Jesus' anticipated return—on or before March 21, 1844.

We know that Jesus didn't return during the predicted time period of March 1843-44; therefore, it warrants the question, **Does AD 1798 mark both the papacy's deadly wound and the end of its of dominion as Miller predicted?**

As for the papacy's deadly head wound, history supports AD 1798 as being the correct date. Yet when it comes to the end of the papacy's dominion and rule, history clearly points us to another year—AD 1870 to be exact. After the papacy's deadly head wound in 1798, the pope's successor (Pius VII) regained temporal control over the city of Rome from Napoleon in 1800, and in 1815, under the Treaty of Vienna, further regained control over some of the original papal states in central Italy. It wasn't until October of 1870 that the last remaining papal state (the city of Rome) was relinquished

to the king of Italy, thus ending the papacy's long dominion and rule as predicted by Bible prophecy.

Why do Seventh-day Adventists ignore the papacy's historic fall in AD 1870?

First and foremost, most Seventh-day Adventists have little to no knowledge of the papacy's history beyond what is commonly taught within the church or by the various SDA ministries such as Amazing Facts, It Is Written, or The Voice of Prophecy.

Second, Adventists see the end of Daniel's 1260-year prophecy occurring when the pope was taken captive in AD 1798, while the beginning of this period is marked by Justinian's decree which in AD 538 made the Roman pontiff the head of all the churches (AD 538 + 1260 years = AD 1798). The unresolved issue and dilemma with this line of reasoning and justification for 1798 is that it completely ignores the fact

that the succeeding pope (Pius VII) not only regained papal dominion in 1800 but further expanded the papacy's dominion again in 1815.

History which affirms prophecy, speaks of two pivotal events that further shaped the Roman Church in the years AD 607 and AD 610, thus setting the stage for the abomination of desolation to be set up in the papal city of Rome. To learn more about these events and how they fit within Daniel's 1260-year prophecy, read Gregory John's book *Revelation's Dark Morning Star Rising*.

Third, but certainly not least, is Ellen White's book *The Great Controversy*, which reiterates William Miller's 1260-day (year) timeline for the papacy's dominion and rule from 538 to 1798. Her writings may be rightly seen as an authoritative source, even though she is known to have quoted or borrowed ideas from others, as in the case

of William Miller's views on the prophet Daniel's timeline prophecies.

In regard to the use of Ellen White's writings as an authoritative source on history, W.C. White had this to say: "Regarding Mother's writings and their use as authority on points of history and chronology, Mother has never wished our brethren to treat them as authority regarding the details of history or historical dates" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 446).

Whether it's the debunked belief that the world is flat, that the sun revolves around the earth, or that Pluto is just one of 150 planets within our solar system, our inherent biases can become a real stumbling block to our understanding of what is truth. Furthermore, when it comes to the timeline prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, let us not be of the Laodicean mindset that we have no more to learn, nor think that we are

any less capable of believing or holding on to inherently biased errors.

The truth is, we still have lessons to learn and even more to unlearn as God's remnant people. Therefore, may we humbly come before the Lord, and pray with a sincere heart, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path" (Psalm 27:11). In doing so, God's truth shall surely follow!

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