

THE SOUTHERN WATCHMAN

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“...for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

A FALLING AWAY FIRST

“In the days of the apostle Paul, the Thessalonian brethren were laboring under the erroneous impression that the Lord would return in their day, and Paul wrote to correct this false impression, stating what events must transpire before the advent could take place. He declared: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” The man of sin was to arise, and do his work of exaltation and blasphemy, before the brethren could look for the coming of Christ. That great event was to be preceded by a falling away. There would be revealed a form of Antichrist, and the leaven of apostasy was to work with increasing power to the end of time. We are not to be surprised beyond measure to see the widespread declension of faith and piety. I have been bearing my testimony for the last forty years, that there would be those who would fall away from the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in. God has been sending warnings, reproofs, and encouragements to his people. He has warned them that some would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits. From the beginning, it has been the special doctrine of the adversary of God and man, that the law of God was faulty and objectionable. He has ever represented the royal law of liberty, as oppressive and unendurable. He has denoted it “a yoke of bondage.” He has declared that it was impossible for man to keep the precepts of Jehovah. This has been, and still is, the work of Satan. This is the seductive doctrine that devils are seeking to spread throughout the world. “No law” is the cry of the enemy of God. Shall we go over to the side of the great rebel? If we do, it will be our ruin. Shall we make void the law of God, because Satan tells us that we should be more free, and happier, if we would do so? Were Adam and Eve happier, and did they walk in more liberty, when they received and acted upon these suggestions of the evil one?” Shall we say we have been deceived in regard to the doctrine of Christ’s near coming? Shall we declare that all our talking of his appearing has been in vain? Shall we say that all our work to make ready a people, prepared for his coming, has been for nought?-Never. We are not to become impatient and fretful, because time still lingers. We are to wait patiently for the work of God to be accomplished.

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A FALLING AWAY FIRST:

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another to provoke”—unto doubts and unbelief, and apostasy?—No, but “unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” We must have a knowledge of the Scriptures, that we may trace down the lines of prophecy, and understand the specifications given by the prophets, and by Christ and the apostles; that we may not be ignorant; but be able to see that the day is approaching, so that with increased zeal and effort, we may exhort one another to faithfulness, piety, and holiness. “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” Here is a most solemn statement, and one which should often be presented to souls, to show them the danger of entering into sin after they have received a knowledge of the truth of God. We would warn men and women off this ground. All would do well to remember, when tempted to leave the straight path of right, that those who, having received a knowledge of the truth, apostatize, “sin willfully,” transgress the law of God (“for sin is the transgression of the law”),—for such there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin. “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.”” – {RH July 31, 1888 Par. 3-6}

Contributors

Darlington Chitura

Desire A Mukatyei

Chris S Chidzomba

Marshall X Nkomo

Rawlings P Masoka

Ngqabutho R Ndlovu

Tendai Matsatsa

Russell Katiyo

Tapiwa L Kwenda

Editor

Nqobani Blessing Nyoni

Associate Editor

Thabo Mtetwa

Judas and the Glorious Land — National Apostasy in the Closing Scenes

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:” (Galatians 3:13)

Introduction

“It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross.” – {DA 83.4}

Inspiration enjoins the study of the life of Jesus Christ, especially the closing scenes of His ministry on the earth. A contemplation of this line of prophetic history is calculated to quicken faith in the student of prophecy which works by love and purifies the soul. It is a distinguished means of communicating the Spirit of God in latter rain power to the human suppliant, that the miracle of the incarnation (Christ in His people) may be completed in him. Judas—a professed disciple—played a crucial role in those concluding moments of the Savior’s earthly life; and his role is worth taking note of. The work of Judas typifies the end of the world (1 Cor 10:11). This false disciple undoubtedly prefigures the false disciples of 9/11 who fall away from the truth in the time of Adventism’s visitation (9/11 to the Sunday Law). But God’s prophetic word is also revealing truths in connection with the history of Judas which correspond to the role and fate of Protestant America. And this application is consistent with the tenth of the fourteen rules of William Miller which reads as follows:

RULE X

Figures sometimes have two or more different significations, as day is used in a figurative sense to represent three different periods of time...If you put on the right construction it will harmonize with the Bible and make good sense, otherwise it will not.

The symbols (figures) of Bible prophecy may at times possess “two or more significations.” The “right construction” of the symbols is to be determined by the context of the passage of study. Based on this principle, Judas can also be seen to be a symbol of the United States of America (the Glorious Land) in this final generation. And this understanding is unearthing precious gems of truth whose luster is clarifying the sequence and nature of the events which will lead to the enforcement of the Sunday Law in the United States.

This article presents an illustration (in the life of Judas Iscariot) of the national apostasy which will bring Protestant America to its ruin, as well as the implications of this line of truth for God's people living in the closing scenes of this earth's history.

Judas Iscariot — A Representative of Satan

Inspiration defines Judas as having been a representative of Satan:

*“Instead of walking in the light, Judas chose to retain his defects. Evil desires, revengeful passions, dark and sullen thoughts, were cherished, until Satan had full control of the man. **Judas became a representative of the enemy of Christ.**”* — {DA 295.3}

*“Among the chosen disciples of Christ **there was a representative of Satan.** At heart Judas was not a disciple.”* — {RH May 12, 1903 Par. 12}

This description provides a key for unlocking the door of Scriptural understanding in order to identify Judas as a symbol of the United States of America. The prophetic pencil vividly portrays the work of the USA; that of restoring the lost ascendancy of the man of sin (the Papacy) at the end of the world (ST June 12, 1893 Par. 12). But this line of prophecy is typified in the history of the Pagan Roman Empire. During that period of history, the scepter of Imperial Rome was transferred into the hands of the

Bishop of Rome. And this shift of power is represented in the book of Revelation in the following words:

*“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: **and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.**”* (Revelation 13:1, 2)

The “beast” “like unto a leopard” is a symbol of the Papacy (GC439.1), and the “dragon” which gave its kingdom over to the Papacy is Pagan Rome (GC54.2). Protestant America will do in these last days what Pagan Rome did in the early years of Christianity. The prophetic word marks it as the nation that will give its kingdom over to the haughty See of Rome:

*“**What is it that gives its kingdom to this [papal] power? Protestantism, a power which, while professing to have the temper and spirit of a lamb and to be allied to Heaven, speaks with the voice of a dragon. It is moved by a power from beneath.**”* — {7BC 983.5}

Thus the prophetic role of Pagan Rome fitly typifies the prophetic role of the United States at the end of the world. This understanding brings to

view another line of prophecy which also illustrates the work performed by the foregoing kingdoms of Bible prophecy. This line of prophetic history is to be found in the life of Judas Iscariot. Such an application is made apparent upon considering the relation of Pagan Rome to Satan:

*“**But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian Era was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.**”* — {GC 438.2}

The Roman Empire was the prime representative of Satan during the early centuries of the Christian dispensation. Its role was similar to that of Judas—the betrayer of Christ—who also served in the capacity of an ambassador of the enemy. The animosity manifested towards the principles of the Christian religion by Pagan Rome was similar to the antagonism of Judas to the life and mission of Christ.

“Thus the prophetic role of Pagan Rome fitly typifies the prophetic role of the United States at the end of the world.”

Rome's enmity towards the precepts of God's holy law met its climax in the elevation of the Papal church to civil and religious supremacy in the sixth century. This move resulted in a crucifixion of the law of God as verily as the treachery of Judas led to the crucifixion of the Savior some centuries before. The apostle Paul elaborates on the corridor of power which was provided by Pagan Rome to usher the Catholic Church into the realm of universal dominion:

*“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come **a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed**, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? **And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time**. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: **only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way**. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:”* (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8)

The “man of sin” is the Papacy (GC356.1); and he who prevented (letteth) her rise to power was the Pagan Roman Empire. In order for the Papacy to usurp the throne of the earth, there had to be “a falling away first,” and Pagan Rome had to be “taken out of the way.” This was accomplished in the early centuries of the Christian Era. And this pattern is to be followed by the USA in delivering its kingdom into the hands of the Papal church at the end of the world. The same pattern is also illustrated in the experience of Judas who fell away in advance of the revelation of another representative of Satan.

Judas and Barabbas — Revealing the Man of Sin

Judas' perfidy brokered the capture of Christ and satisfied the malicious designs of the Jewish Sanhedrin. His act of infidelity contributed to the Savior's subsequent condemnation and the release of Barabbas in His stead. But prior to the emancipation of the wicked Barabbas, the stroke of divine justice fell upon the betrayer of Christ. Thus Judas was “taken out of the way,” for Barabbas—another representative of Satan—to be revealed:

*“The people of Israel had made their choice. Pointing to Jesus they had said, “Not this man, but Barabbas.” **Barabbas, the robber and murderer, was the representative of Satan.**”* – {DA 738.5}

Barabbas was a “robber and murderer,” and the meaning of his name sheds light on the prophetic personage he symbolizes:

bar-ab-bas'

*Of Chaldee origin ([H1347] and G5 (Greek)); **son of Abba**; Bar-abbas, an Israelite: - Barabbas.*

ab-bah'

*Of Chaldee origin [H2]; **father** (as a vocative): - Abba.*

The name of this notable prisoner of the Scriptures means “son of the father.” And he symbolizes a prophetic kingdom that would palm itself off as the earthly representative of Jesus Christ (who is the true Son of the Father). But in reality this counterfeit Christian kingdom would accomplish the will of its founder father, the Devil (GC50.1). The Papacy is the kingdom here represented; and like Barabbas, it is denounced by inspiration as a representative of the arch-apostate:

“By consenting to break one precept, men are brought under Satan’s power. By substituting human law for God’s law, Satan will seek to control the world. This work is foretold in prophecy. Of the great apostate power which is the representative of Satan, it is declared, “He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand.” Daniel 7:25.” – {DA 763.1}

“To secure worldly gains and honors, the church was led to seek the favor and support of the great men of earth; and having thus rejected Christ, she was induced to yield allegiance to the representative of Satan—the bishop of Rome.” – {GC 50.2}

The character of Barabbas as a robber and murderer perfectly illustrates the character of the Papal kingdom; for the prophetic word brands the Papacy as the robbers of God’s people (Dan 11:14). Therefore, the prophetic shift from Judas to Barabbas is an illustration of the transfer of power from Pagan to Papal Rome. And consequently, these two lines of prophetic history typify the United States’ conveyance of modern Papal Rome from political oblivion to global domination at the end of the world.

In light of this, Judas can be seen to be a symbol of the USA which shall betray “the principles of Protestantism” and espouse the cause of the Papacy:

*“When the land which the Lord provided as an asylum for his people, that they might worship him according to the dictates of their own consciences, the land over which for long years the shield of Omnipotence has been spread, the land which God has favored by making it the depository of the pure religion of Christ,—when that land shall, through its legislators, **abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to Romish apostasy in tampering with God’s law,—it is then that the final work of the man of sin will be revealed. Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by a national act enforcing***

the false Sabbath, they will give life and vigor to the corrupt faith of Rome, reviving her tyranny and oppression of conscience. Then it will be time for God to work in mighty power for the vindication of his truth.” – {ST June 12, 1893 Par. 12}

Prophetic arguments apart from those already mentioned to substantiate this claim can be drawn from the history of Judas’ life leading up to the betrayal and eventual crucifixion of Christ. And these shed clearer light on the work of the United States in the last days.

Lamb-like Profession and the Dragon’s Voice

Judas’ experience with Christ is summarized in the following passage of inspiration:

*“But Judas had opened the door of his heart, the chambers of his mind, to the temptations of Satan. And the enemy sowed in his heart and mind the seed which he communicated to his brethren. The questioning doubts which were passed on to the minds of his brethren. This one man, **professing to be a follower of Christ**, while not bearing the precious fruit revealed in the life of Christ, would be a channel of darkness to the other disciples in the time of test and trial that was soon to come, and that was even then upon them. **He presented so much accusation of his brethren that he was counterworking the lessons of Christ. This is why Jesus called Judas a devil.**” – {RH November 16, 1897 Par. 13}*

This false disciple claimed to be a “follower of Christ.” Christ had come to the earth to be the Lamb of God (Joh 1:29), and give His life as ransom for the life of the world. Hence Judas professed to be a disciple of the Lamb. But his Lamb-like profession could not conceal the dragon spirit that actuated him and manifested itself in his speech. His dichotomous legacy was to be inherited by the United States in the last days. The prophetic word describes this nation as possessing a lamb-like appearance, but eventually speaking “with the voice of a dragon”:

*“The “two horns like a lamb” well represent the character of the United States Government, as expressed in its two fundamental principles, Republicanism and Protestantism. These principles are the secret of our power and prosperity as a nation. Those who first found an asylum on the shores of America rejoiced that they had reached a country free from the arrogant claims of popery and the tyranny of kingly rule. They determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty. **But the stern tracing of the prophetic pencil reveals a change in this peaceful scene.** The beast with lamblike horns speaks with the voice of a dragon, and “exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him.” Prophecy declares that he will say to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast, and that “he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” **Thus Protestantism follows in the steps of the Papacy.**” – {ST November 1, 1899 Par. 4, 5}*

The speaking of a nation is the act of its legislative and judicial authorities (GC442.1).

Accordingly, the accusations presented by Judas against his

brethren would illustrate the nature of the laws that will be passed into effect by Protestant America to oppress the faithful people of God. The accusations brought upon “those whose obedience to God’s commands is a perpetual reproof to transgressors” will be the basis for enforcing the religious enactments that will destroy liberty of conscience:

*“The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven **will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God’s commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors.** It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities **which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced;** and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity.” – {GC 590.1}*

Thus shall “Sunday observance” be “strictly enforced” by the haven of religious liberty. But the premier motivation for this movement for Sunday Legislation will be America’s desire to return to “temporal prosperity.” This line of truth is also exemplified in the history of Judas.

Christ’s Kingdom vs. Worldly Kingdom

Inspiration specifically teaches that the turning point in Judas life was Christ’s sermon in the synagogue of Capernaum:

*“Christ’s discourse in the synagogue concerning the bread of life **was the turning point in the history of Judas.**” – {DA 719.1}*

The turning point of Judas’ life prefigured 9/11 which was a turning point in the history of the United States and the Seventh-day Adventist Church at which the light for this time was given (BEcho August 26, 1895 Par. 11). Therefore, the story of Judas is especially present truth at this time. The Inspired record shows that in the history leading up to the sermon on the Bread of Heaven, Judas desired to “take Christ by force and make Him king.” He [Judas] thus hoped to unite Christ’s spiritual kingdom with the temporal kingdom of this world:

*“Judas was first to take advantage of the enthusiasm excited by the miracle of the loaves. It was he who set on foot the project **to take Christ by force and make Him king.** His hopes were high. His disappointment was bitter.” – {DA 718.2}*

In like manner, Protestantism was prepared to forge a union of church and state at the time of

the 9/11 crisis; a move which would culminate in the enforcement of the Sunday Law. But as Christ intercepted the plans and shattered the hopes of the covetous and ambitious Judas, so also did He interpose to defer the Sunday Law crisis by turning the attention of the USA from establishing a Christian state to tackling the protracted problems posed by radical Islam (20MR216.6; EW38.1, 2). The Spirit of prophecy teaches that the principles of Christ's kingdom were unwelcome in the heart of Judas; and that "the love of money" and the desire for a "temporal kingdom" led Him to betray his Master:

"The love of money had perverted the nobler nature of Judas, making him a fit agent for Satan to use in the betrayal of Christ." – {3SP125.2}

So also does the Spirit of prophecy highlight the fact that the principles of true Protestantism find no place in the seat of modern America's government. Consequently, the love of money will drive this country to fully abandon the law of God and officially adopt the corrupt faith of the Roman Church:

"The unrivaled mercies and blessings of God have been showered upon our nation, it has been a land of liberty, and the glory of the whole earth. But instead of returning gratitude to God, instead of honoring God and his law, the professed Christians of America have become leavened with pride, covetousness, and self-sufficiency. The love of money, which is the root of all evil, has had a large place in their hearts." – {RH May 2, 1893 Par. 10}

Bible prophecy predicts a crisis that will rapidly lead the United States into economic oblivion. And in a supposed attempt to regain financial stability, the leading churches of the United States will clasp hands with the secular government to advocate the observance of Sunday by a national act. This is represented in God's word as the forming of the image of the beast (GC443.2). And the point in history when this union will take place is noted in the story of Judas:

"In surprise and confusion at the exposure of his purpose, Judas rose hastily to leave the room. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.... He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night." Night it was to the traitor as he turned away from Christ into the outer darkness." – {DA 654.3}

The night that Judas completed the transaction to sell Christ into the hands of His enemies symbolizes the way-mark of the Midnight Cry at the end of the world. Inspiration teaches that the way-mark of the Midnight Cry was located in the history of Millerite Adventism (EW238.1, 2); and that it is also to find its place at the end of the world (RH February 11, 1896 Par. 6). And consistent with the pattern set forth by Millerite history, the Midnight Cry is to precede the way-mark of the closed door (the enforcement of the Sunday Law). Judas' traitorous act brought together the religious and civil authorities who were bent on annihilating Christ, and silencing this Voice of reproof forever. Similarly, the United States' plea for restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity in the crisis of the Midnight Cry will bring church and state together in order to rid the earth of the faithful company who choose to conscientiously keep the law of Jehovah:

"It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." – {GC 590.1}

A complementary truth which adds clarity to the nature of this work is also demonstrated in the line of Judas. Scripture reveals that Judas was charged to perform his work quickly (Joh 13:30). And this point is of great prophetic significance in the final generation. No sooner will the crisis have hit the United States than the civil and religious leaders unite to plead in favor of Sunday

observance by law. This is corroborated by the words of inspiration concerning the rapidity of last day events (9T11.2). Therefore, God's people can be assured that the movement for Sunday Legislation will perform a quick work, and the Sunday Law that fulfills Bible prophecy will be passed into effect in unprecedented haste. When this takes place, Protestant America will have come to its end; and it will manifest that it has bowed down in complete submission to the authority of the Church of Rome (Dan 11:41). This prophetic truth is also illustrated in the account outlining the dreadful end of Judas Iscariot.

Judas' Prophetic Woe — Identifying the End of Protestant America

The inspired record states that Judas' death was predicted by Christ beforehand:

“A year before, Jesus had told the disciples that he had chosen twelve, but that one was a devil; and now his words to Judas on the occasion of the passover, showing that this treachery was fully known to his Master, would strengthen the faith of his true followers during his humiliation. And when Judas should have come to his dreadful end, they would remember the woe which Jesus had pronounced upon the betrayer.” – {3SP 87.2}

His demise was predicted as a “woe”; and this prophecy was designed to strengthen the faith of Christ's faithful disciples during the trial of the cross. This is a portrayal of the affliction that is to bring the nation of America to ruin at the Sunday Law. The woe that fell upon Judas signifies the role of the third woe of radical Islam in bringing divine judgments upon the United States. The manner of his suicidal death represents the self-inflicted curse that is to fall upon the United States at the Sunday Law; “for it is written, Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree.” (Gal 3:13).

Through the experiences in the line of Judas Iscariot, Bible prophecy foretells an escalated form of attacks by radical Islam against Protestant America which will result in a total withdrawal

from the principles of Protestantism on the part of America, and a permanent abolition of their national sovereignty. This will bring the former defender of religious freedom under the full control of the Papacy; the man of sin will then be revealed. And the fulfillment of this prophecy will strengthen the faith of the true followers of Christ, while it will simultaneously overthrow the faith of the false professors of Adventism.

In Closing

“The people of the United States have been a favored people; but when they restrict religious liberty, surrender Protestantism, and give countenance to popery, the measure of their guilt will be full, and “national apostasy” will be registered in the books of heaven. The result of this apostasy will be national ruin.” – {RH May 2, 1893 Par. 11}

The closing scenes of the life of Christ are shedding glorious light on end-time Bible prophecy. They are demonstrating both the internal and external influences that affect the church, and are leading both the church and the world to the long deferred Sunday Law crisis. These fresh revelations of present truth are God's appointed means to prepare His people to meet their crowning trial with success. May it be the prayer of those within the movement to keep up with this light, or else risk being final recipients of the Mark of the Beast when America's national apostasy results in national ruin.

A Defense of the Sacred Reform Lines

Introduction

Those who proclaim the third angel's message are required to correctly employ the principles of prophetic interpretation given by the Highest Authority (see 1888 403.1; RH Nov 25, 1884 Par. 23). These principles are set forth in William Miller's fourteen rules of interpretation. The fifth of the 14 rules reads as follows:

RULE V

Scripture must be—its own expositor; since it is a rule of itself. If I depend on a teacher to expound it to me and he should, guess at its meaning, or desire to have it so on account of his sectarian creed or to be thought wise, then his guessing, desire, creed or wisdom is my rule, not the Bible.

The scriptures themselves are the key that unlocks the Bible to the understanding of the students of prophecy. The words of ministers and theologians—finite men—are not the rule in establishing the meaning of any portion of God's Word. Isaiah clarifies this point:

“Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:” (Isaiah 28:9, 10)

This passage refers not only to Miller's rules but to the approach of laying prophetic line upon prophetic line in order to understand end-time Bible prophecy. By identifying the lines of prophecy—the patterns of events in different Bible histories—God's people are thus enabled to understand the sequence and nature of events at the end of the world and how to prepare for them. But in recent times the centrality of this approach has been called into question within the present truth movement. This article is a defense of the

prophetic lines as an approach to understanding Bible prophecy. It is also a warning against rejecting this approach as it, and the patterns it establishes, are not the work of man but of God Himself.

The Measuring Line — A Symbol of the Gospel Pattern

“For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:” (Isaiah 28:10)

Isa 28:9-13 is the primary reference in Scripture for how God's people are to understand the truth for this time. The meaning of the word translated as “line” in “line upon line” reads as follows:

qav qâv

kav, kawv

*From H6960 (compare H6961); a cord (as connecting), **especially for measuring**; figuratively a rule; also a rim, a musical string or accord: - **line**.*

This word can be understood to mean an instrument of measurement—a measuring line. Zec 1:12, 16 connects this measuring line to the work of constructing God's temple:

*“Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years? ... Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, **and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.**” (Zechariah 1:12, 16)*

"So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: My house shall be built in it, . . . and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem." Zechariah 1:12-16.

*... **God had commanded that Jerusalem be rebuilt**; the vision of the measuring of the city was an assurance that He would give comfort and strength to His afflicted ones, and fulfill to them the promises of His everlasting covenant. His protecting care, He declared, would be like "a wall of fire round about;" and through them His glory would be revealed to all the sons of men. That which He was accomplishing for His people was to be known in all the earth. "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." Isaiah 12:6." – {PK 580-581.3}*

The actual fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy was seen in the three decrees issued by Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes:

"And the elders of the Jews builded, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." (Ezra 6:14)

These decrees are types of the three angels' messages which arrived in the history of the Millerites. As the literal temple was built through three decrees, these three messages began building the spiritual temple of Adventism following the scattering of God's people through the Dark Ages. The three angels' messages are prophetic tests that are identified as the "everlasting gospel" to be given to the world in the last days (5T 455, Ev 613.1). The first gospel promise is Genesis 3:15. This verse communicates the truth that the gospel is calculated to produce two classes of worshippers based upon how God's people respond to them (2SM 106.2). Therefore Zechariah's measuring line (and that of Isa 28) can be understood to represent the three step testing process of the everlasting gospel which builds a spiritual temple of faithful believers in God's Word. These way-marks constitute a pattern that is repeated in every reformatory movement. And in this final generation Christ requires His people to understand it by considering the lines of past histories (Ecc 3:15; Isa 46:9, 10).

Inspiration ties the three angels' messages to prophetic lines:

*"God has given the messages of Revelation 14 their place **in the line of prophecy**, and their work is not to cease till the close of this earth's history." – {1888 804.3}*

Isaiah 28:16-17 supports the foregoing truths. God elaborates on the gospel's work of constructing His spiritual temple as follows:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." (Isaiah 28:16, 17)

He uses a "line" and a "plummet" in connection with the laying of the Sure Foundation. A plummet is

weight suspended from a line and it is used to determine the verticality of a structure. Both the line and plummet are tools used in the work of building. God lays righteousness and judgement upon these measuring lines. This is in agreement with the three-fold work of the Holy Spirit outlined in the book of John:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” (John 16:7, 8)

In Isaiah 28 the two classes that remain at the end of this three step testing process are the believers in the Sure Foundation—those who receive the which is communicated “prophetic line upon prophetic line”; and the rejecters of this truth who are described as trusting in lies and falsehood. Isaiah goes on to say that the lies and falsehoods under which the latter class have hidden themselves will be swept away by the “hail” and “waters” which are the Sunday law (Dan 11:40-41).

Thus it can clearly be seen that Isaiah’s line represents the gospel pattern that is the three angels messages at the end of the world.

Bind and Collect Together — Line upon Line

The meaning of the root word for the Hebrew word translated as “line” sheds light on the foregoing points. Strong’s concordance gives its meaning as follows:

qâvâh

kaw-vaw'

A primitive root; **to bind together** (perhaps by twisting), that is, **collect**; (figuratively) to expect: - gather (together), look, patiently, tarry, wait (for, on, upon).

It means “to bind together” or to “collect” together. This definition corresponds with the fourth and sixth rules of Miller’s rules which state:

RULE IV

*To understand doctrine, **bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know, then let every word have its proper influence, and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in an error.***

RULE VI

*God has revealed things to come, by visions, in figures and parables, and in this way **the same things are often time revealed again and again,***

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“To understand doctrine, bring all the scriptures together on the subject you wish to know, then let every word have its proper influence, and if you can form your theory without a contradiction, you cannot be in an error.”

by different visions, or in different figures, and parables. If you wish to understand them, you must combine them all in one.

In order to understand doctrine all the Scriptures on a given subject must be brought together; and if no contradiction can be found in a proposed theory it stands as truth. In the sixth rule, the knowledge of future things is said to be revealed by different figures (symbols). To understand them, they must all be combined in one. These principles lie at the heart of the prophetic lines. The way-marks that form the patterns in the prophetic lines are figures (symbols). By laying prophetic line upon prophetic line, or combining them, symbolic representations of the history of the end of the world are formed. The Spirit of prophecy confirms this application:

*“We must have a knowledge of the Scriptures, that we may trace down **the lines of prophecy, and understand the specifications given by the prophets, and by Christ and the apostles; that we may not be ignorant; but be able to see that the day is approaching, so that with increased zeal and effort, we may exhort one another to faithfulness, piety, and holiness.**” – {RH July 31, 1888 Par. 6}*

Thus a perfect harmony can be seen between Isaiah 28:10, the

Spirit of prophecy, Miller’s rules and the prophetic lines. A point worth noticing is that the prophetic lines join the fourth and sixth rules of interpretation together. The joining of these two rules (“four” and “six”) gives the number 46 which is associated with the building of the temple (Exo 24:16-18, Joh 2:18-21). There are no coincidences in God’s Word. This corroborates the truth that the prophetic lines are God’s method of erecting His spiritual temple at the end of the world. But what is arguably the most solemn truth brought to view by the root word for “line” is the understanding obtained through its alternate meaning which is to “tarry.”

Line upon Line, Stammering Lips, the Tarrying Time and 9/11

The word “tarry” introduces an important dimension to the shaking within the present truth movement. It locates the shaking over the prophetic lines within the tarrying time at the end of the world. The tarrying time is a subject of Bible prophecy and it is marked in different prophetic histories in the Bible. But only those who accept Isaiah 28:10 as referring to the prophetic lines will be able to see that we are in the tarrying time and that this way-mark has specifications that God’s people need to understand in order to safely navigate through this time. And it is sobering to note that many

who are opposing the prophetic lines as a means of understanding present truth also oppose the understanding that we are currently in the tarrying time. This is Satan’s design to keep them (and those that follow them) blinded to the salvational implications of this way-mark until it is too late. In Millerite history, the tarrying time was inaugurated by the first disappointment of April 19, 1844. This time marked the arrival of the second angel’s message (1SG 153.1). It was also the time in which fanaticisms entered into the Advent movement:

*“It was not the proclamation of the second advent that caused fanaticism and division. **These appeared in the summer of 1844, when Adventists were in a state of doubt and perplexity concerning their real position.**” – {GC 398.2}*

Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary describes fanaticism as follows:

*FANATIC, FANATICAL, a. [L. fanaticus, phanaticus.] **Wild and extravagant in opinions, particularly in religious opinions; excessively enthusiastic; possessed by a kind of frenzy. Hence we say, fanatic zeal; fanatic notions or opinions.***

The various phases of fanaticism were the result of misapplying the Scriptures. That history is repeating to the very letter and the prophetic lines are

the principal way of demonstrating this truth. The current tarrying time began when the second angel's message was repeated as stated in Revelation 18:2, 3. This took place on 9/11 (LS 411.5). Therefore based upon the pattern seen in the line of Millerite history, it follows that fanaticism would enter the present truth movement after 9/11. This certainly has been the case as the post-9/11 time period has seen a range of "wild and extravagant" opinions promoted within the movement. An example is the idea that the day of the Lord began at 9/11. Inspiration places the day of the Lord at the Sunday law (close of probation) and the time of God's executive judgement (14MR 91, PK 389). Therefore to teach that the day of the Lord began at 9/11 is to teach that probation began to close at 9/11 which is both erroneous and fanatical. Another example is the false teaching that Miller's rules allow for the literal interpretation of prophetic symbols. Miller's rules teach that every event foretold in prophecy will be literally fulfilled. But the manner in which these events are communicated in the Bible is through "visions, figures and parables"—through symbols (rule six). And rule eight of the 14 rules clearly states that "figures **always** have a figurative meaning." Yet now in the tarrying time men are standing before God's people and contradicting this truth in order to uphold their wild and extravagant opinions about end-time Bible prophecy.

In Isa 28:13 the prophet goes on to explain the cause of the fanaticism. It is a disregard of the prophetic lines which would enable them to correctly locate way-marks such as the tarrying time in the line of end-time Bible prophecy.

To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear. But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken. (Isaiah 28:12-13)

The rejection of the prophetic lines is leading the advocates of error to make lies their refuge and to hide themselves under falsehoods (Isa 28:14-15). They will thus be left to "go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken" unless they repent. But while those advocating error continue to cause a shaking by resisting the truth an environment is being created that requires the wise to clarify and defend the truth as the end of the tarrying time approaches (TM 112). The stammering lips will now be ready to speak plainly (Isa 32:4):

"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people." (Isaiah 28:9-11)

The "stammering lips"—men possessing few external qualifications, and little influence in the movement are those whom the Lord is using to clarify the issues in this shaking. Few of the great men in the movement have landed on the right side of the issues and the Spirit of Prophecy gives the reason why:

"The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many. Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Those who have rendered supreme homage to "science falsely so called" will not be the leaders then. Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock. In the last solemn work few great men

will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view.” – {5T 80.1}

Many are becoming “self-sufficient, independent of God” by reason of “intellect, genius” and “talent.” As useful as these endowments can be, they become a curse when not on the side of truth. By not keeping “pace with the light” and diverting peoples’ attention to falsehoods many are now working against the advancing light. Notwithstanding this, “the Lord has faithful servants” who in this shaking time are being “disclosed to view.” They are the “stammering lips and another tongue” who have chosen to maintain a teachable spirit before the Lord. And the prophecy that highlights this aspect of the shaking is set forth in verses **9-11** of Isa 28; thus placing its fulfillment in the prophetic setting of the post 9/11 tarrying time.

The Unpardonable Sin — Rejecting the Prophetic Lines

The arguments drawn from the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy all attest to the divine origin of the prophetic lines. But Satan is seeking to lead the disciples of 9/11 to reject them and in this manner, commit the unpardonable sin. This sin is defined below:

“What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan.” – {CCh 81.1}

Men do “despite unto the Spirit of grace” (Heb 10:29) by rejecting the means through which the

Spirit works with man – the “refreshing” which is communicated line upon line (Isa 28:12; RH, July 20, 1897 par. 7). Some are performing this work even now. “Convincing evidence” has shown that the prophetic lines are “in harmony with the Scriptures.” They at one point acknowledged these truths to be the mighty power of the Holy Spirit but are now denouncing them (directly or by inference) as “the power of Satan.” The fearfulness of their course is not as readily discerned on account of the fact that they continue to teach some phases of present truth. But Inspiration is clear that those who will not accept all the light will after a time do the work of a false watchman.

A long-continued resistance of truth will harden the most impressionable heart. Those who reject the Spirit of truth place themselves under the control of a spirit that is opposed to the word and work of God. For a time they may continue to teach some phases of the truth, but their refusal to accept all the light God sends will after a time place them where they will do the work of a false watchman. {MR760 29.5}

Another line of truth that is located in the post 9/11 tarrying time is the history of Judas’ betrayal of Christ and his subsequent suicide.

Line upon Line — Judas’ Cord of Death

Inspiration teaches that the turning point in Judas life was Christ’s sermon at the synagogue in Capernaum.

Christ's discourse in the synagogue [in Capernaum] concerning the bread of life was the turning point in the history of Judas. He heard the words, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." John 6:53. He saw that Christ was offering spiritual rather than worldly good. He regarded himself as farsighted, and thought he could see that Jesus would have no honor, and that He could bestow no high position upon His followers. He determined not to unite himself so closely to Christ but that he could draw away. He would watch. And he did

watch. {DA 719.1}

This turning point is linked to 9/11 which was the turning point in the history of the world and the church at which the light for this time was given (RH, July 5, 1906 par. 14).

There are periods which are turning points in the history of nations and of the church. In the providence of God, when these different crises arrive, the light for that time is given. If it is received, there is spiritual progress; if it is rejected, spiritual declension and shipwreck follow. The Lord in His word has opened up the aggressive work of the gospel as it has been carried on in the past, and will be in the future, even to the closing conflict, when Satanic agencies will make their last wonderful movement. From that word we understand that the forces are now at work that will usher in the last great conflict between good and evil--between Satan, the prince of darkness, and Christ, the Prince of life. But the coming triumph for the men who love and fear God is as sure as that His throne is established in the heavens. {BEcho, August 26, 1895 par. 11}

Therefore the transactions in Judas' life are present truth now in the post 9/11 tarrying time. It is important to note that Judas' disaffection was brought on by the realization that Christ was offering a spiritual kingdom and not a "worldly" or literal one. This typifies the dynamics of the current shaking which is (amongst other things) a conflict between one class who insist on the literal application of prophetic symbols and another who teach that Miller's rules only allow for the spiritual application of such symbols. This turning point led Judas to betray the truth as represented by Christ and subsequently hang himself. The inspired record states that Judas hung himself with a cord:

*"Judas saw that his entreaties were in vain, and he rushed from the hall exclaiming, It is too late! It is too late! He felt that he could not live to see Jesus crucified, and in despair **went out and hanged himself**. Later that same day, on the road from Pilate's hall to Calvary, there came an interruption to the shouts and jeers of the wicked throng who were leading Jesus to the place of crucifixion. As they passed a retired spot, they saw at the foot of a lifeless tree, the body of Judas. It was a most revolting sight. His weight had broken **the cord by which he had hanged himself to the tree**. In falling, his body had been horribly mangled, and dogs were now devouring it. His remains were immediately buried out of sight; but there was less mockery among the throng, and many a pale face revealed the thoughts within. Retribution seemed already visiting those who were guilty of the blood of Jesus." – {DA 722.4, 5}*

The word translated as line in Isa 28 also means "a cord."

H6957

*From H6960 (compare H6961); **a cord** (as connecting), especially for measuring; figuratively a rule; also a rim, a musical string or accord: - line. Compare H6978.*

Thus typifying the self-inflicted spiritual death of those who reject the communications of the Spirit in the latter rain. They will be condemned by the very truths conveyed through the prophetic lines they have rejected. Like Judas, they may in the final crisis be brought to confess to having forsaken the truth of God. But this realization will not change their position then. As Judas fell from the tree and had his body eaten by dogs, this class that is falling away from the truth (2 Thess 2:3) will be devoured by the Sunday laws which shall be passed by the governments of the earth; they will receive the Mark of the Beast.

In Closing

“Great reproach has been cast upon the work of the Holy Spirit, by the errors of a class that, claiming its enlightenment, profess to have no further need of guidance from the Word of God. They are governed by impressions which they regard as the voice of God in the soul. But the spirit that controls them is not the Spirit of God. This following of impressions, to the neglect of the Scriptures, can lead only to confusion, to deception and ruin. It serves only to further the designs of the evil one. Since the ministry of the Holy Spirit is of vital importance to the church of Christ, it is one of the devices of Satan, through the errors of extremists and fanatics to cast contempt upon the work of the Spirit, and cause the people of God to neglect this source of strength which our Lord himself has provided.” – {GC88 v.2}

Great reproach has been cast upon the work of the Holy Spirit by the errors that deny the prophetic lines. The class that does this claims enlightenment, having tasted of the heavenly gift and of the powers of the world to come. But by rejecting these truths they are allowing themselves to be led by another spirit, even the spirit of devils. The prophetic histories of Isa 28 and of Judas are present truth now in the tarrying time and they have been recorded to warn God’s people and keep them from following paths that will lead them to receive strong delusion and the Mark of the Beast at the Sunday law.

CLOSING REMARKS

“Questioners, doubters, and apostates say to those who have been looking for the appearing of their Lord, “You are false prophets.” “You have been telling us for years that it was but a little time until the day of God would break; and it is evident that Christ will not come for many, many more years.” Are you not afraid to make such statements? Has not Christ described you in the person of the unfaithful servant who said, “My Lord delayeth his coming,” and who began to eat and to drink with the drunken, and to smite his fellow-servants? The inspired word declares, “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Christ spoke repeatedly of his second coming to the earth. At one time he said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the

resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” More than eighteen hundred years have passed since he, who spake as never man spake, uttered these words. He who could utter nothing but truth, made this assertion, which implied that the hour was at hand; but the dead are still in their graves. The Lifegiver’s voice has not yet called the sleeping saints from their gloomy prisons, but we have not lost faith, because the predicted hour has not yet arrived. We work on, trusting, and believing, and waiting, not taking one step backward; but obeying the orders of the Captain of our salvation, whose command to his people is, “Go forward.”

The hour will come; it is not far distant, and some of us who now believe will be alive upon the earth, and shall see the prediction verified, and hear the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God echo from mountain and plain and sea, to the uttermost parts of the earth. All creation will hear that voice, and those who have lived and died in Jesus, will respond to the call of the Prince of life.

It will be heard in the dungeons of men, in the caverns of the deep, in the rocks and caves of the earth, only to be obeyed. It is the same voice that said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,"—the same voice which said, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." All those who have obeyed that voice when it said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," will hear the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." To them, that voice will mean,—rest, peace, and everlasting life. They will recognize it as the voice of one who has been touched with the feeling of their infirmities.

Shall any one become weary now? Shall any one say, "The city is a great way off"? Shall we give up our faith, and draw back unto perdition, when we are nearing the eternal world?—No; no. God lives and reigns. "Call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions." Give up our faith? lose our confidence? become impatient?—No; no. We will not think of such a thing. "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which

drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God; but that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned."

The Christian is represented by the figure of the earth, which drinks in the rain that comes upon it, and brings forth fruit to the one who dresses and cares for it. The follower of Christ is to gather sap and nourishment from the living Vine. He is to produce fruit to the glory of God. The Lord requires that every plant in his garden should be thrifty, and bear fruit in abundance,—some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. We are not to be satisfied with momentary flashes of light; but we are constantly to seek for the illumination of the Spirit of God. It is our privilege to study the word of truth, and to obey it. We are not safe unless we are often found before God, offering up, in faith, fervent and effectual prayers. We must draw water from the wells of salvation. We may raise the soul from its common earthliness into a heavenly atmosphere which will purify, elevate, and refine it for the paradise of God. Those who keep the commandments of God, have a right to appropriate the rich promises that he has given."

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