

Sweet in the Mouth, in the Belly Bitter

1. The angel Gabriel declared to Daniel that when the little book is unsealed in the time of the end, knowledge shall be increased (**Dan 12:4**)
 - a. Not talking about scientific knowledge in general, but knowledge about the prophecies relating to the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary in the time of the end (**Dan 8:26; Dan 8:14**);
 - b. The eyes of men and women would run to and fro through the book of Daniel and the 2300-day prophecy would be unsealed to the understanding;
2. This takes us to the time right after the French revolution –right after the 1260 prophetic years were accomplished; thinking men and women from both sides of the Atlantic who saw the violence and the total overthrow of morality and other extremes that occurred during those times were led to seriously investigate the prophecies that related to the time of the end;
 - a. Bible societies were formed and Bibles printed and distributed by the thousands
 - b. The next 50 years would see a dramatic increase in the publication of books related to the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation
 - c. Men and women were truly running to and fro through the prophetic books that have now been unsealed

William Miller and Adventism

3. One of the students of prophecy of significance to Adventists was William Miller, a deist¹ who used to make fun of his grandfather who was a preacher during his drinking bouts with friends;
 - a. During the war with Britain in **1812**, Miller discovered (while witnessing the death of his comrades in the foxholes) that Deism did not have answers to the problem of suffering and death;
 - b. This drove him to the study the Bible from Genesis to Revelation beginning in **1816**, a transformed man,
 - c. He became part of the Second Great Awakening, a great spiritual revival during which an entire generation Europeans and Americans turned away from Deism toward Evangelical Christianity, in reaction to the excesses of the French revolution;
 - d. As Miller studied the prophecies, he discovered that the fulfillment of the 2300 years prophecy would take place sometime between 1843 and 1847
 - e. As Miller looked at Daniel 8:14, he was led to believe that the sanctuary to be cleansed was the earth in the 1840's and that fire would be the cleansing agent; in the light of 2 Pet 3:11-13, he concluded that this would happen when Jesus would come again
 - f. by **1818**, Miller was convinced that Jesus would come again in 25 years to cleanse the earth with fire; this discovery filled his heart with joy (sweet in the mouth)
 - g. But for many years, Miller refused to share his convictions for fear of being ridiculed; he lacked confidence in his ability to preach; he stifled the inner conviction

¹ **Deism**--a [philosophy of religion](#) that states that [reason](#) and observation of the [natural world](#), without the need for organized religion, can determine that a [supreme being](#) created the [universe](#). Further the term often implies that this supreme being does not intervene in human affairs or suspend the natural laws of the universe. [Deists](#) typically reject supernatural events such as [prophecy](#) and [miracles](#), tending to assert that God (or "[The Supreme Architect](#)") has a plan for the universe that is not to be altered by intervention in the affairs of human life. Deists believe in the existence of God without any reliance on revealed religion, religious authority or [holy books](#).

- h. in **1832**, Miller began preaching that Jesus would come again in 1843
- i. in **1841**, Miller understood that the Advent Movement to which he belonged, was the fulfillment of the prophecy dealing with the opening of the little book in Revelation 10;
- j. Miller also believed that the call to prepare for the coming judgment and cleansing of the sanctuary was a fulfillment of the first angel's message of Revelation 14;

The First Great Disappointment

- 4. Miller was smart enough not to assign a specific date to the second coming on account of **Matt 24:36**; so Miller would only say the lord was coming "about the year 1843"
- 5. but by December 1842, his fellow believers were asking if he could be more specific on the topic since, 1843 was just around the corner now; Miller believed that he could be more specific after considering the typological application of the Jewish calendar to Christian dispensation: he then concluded that Jesus would return between the Jewish Passover of 1843 and the Jewish Passover of 1844—or between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844.
- 6. But **March 21, 1844** arrived and the Millerites passed through their first great disappointment;

The Midnight Cry

- 7. then in the **summer of 1844**, a Methodist Millerite named Samuel Snow insisted that they shouldn't be looking for a Passover fulfillment of the ending of the 2300-year prophecy, but rather a Day of Atonement. Snow suggested that the spring feasts, including the Passover had their fulfillment in the first coming of Jesus, but the autumn feasts would find their fulfillment in the 2nd coming of Jesus; Snow concluded that the sanctuary would be cleansed on the 10th day of the Jewish seventh month and that day in 1844, would fall **on October 22**;
- 8. Miller was not excited about this new date; in fact he did not accept it until **October 6, 1844!**
 - a. Miller's comment on the October 22 date published in the **Midnight Cry** newsletter of the Millerites:

" I see glory in the seventh month which I did not see before. Although the Lord has shown me the typical bearing of the seventh month, one year and a half ago (May 17, 1843), yet I did not realize the force of the types. Now, blessed be the name of the Lord, I see a beauty, a harmony, and an agreement in the Scriptures, for which I have long prayed, but did not see until today.

"Thank the Lord, O my soul. Let Brother Snow, Brother Storrs and others, be blessed for their instrumentality in opening my eyes. I am almost home, glory, glory, glory!!! I see the time is correct. . . .

"My soul is so full I cannot write. I call on you and all who love his appearing, to thank him for his glorious truth. My doubts, and fears, and darkness, are all gone. I see that we are yet right. God's word is true; and my soul is full of joy; my heart is full of gratitude to God. Oh, how I wish I could shout. But I will shout when the 'King of Kings comes.'

- 9. This re-invigorated movement is called the seventh-Month Movement believed that the midnight cry in the parable of the 10 virgins in Matt 25 now applied to their call to meet Jesus in October 22 1844.
- 10. This group applied the pronouncement of the second angel's message "Babylon is Fallen, Is Fallen" to the churches that rejected the call to prepare to the coming of Jesus in October 22, 1844.

The Second Great Disappointment

11. But **October 22** came and went and Jesus did not come to earth
12. On **October 24, 1844, Josiah Litch** (one of the foremost Millerite leaders), wrote to William Miler from Philadelphia, noting that

“it is a cloudy and dark day here---the sheep are scattered---and the Lord has not come yet”
13. **Hiram Edson** commented that “our fondest hopes and expectations were blasted, and such a spirit of weeping came over us as I never experienced before. It seemed that the loss of all earthly friends would have no comparison. We wept, and wept.
14. **James White** reported “that the disappointment at the passing of the time was a bitter one. True believers had given up all for Christ, and had shared his presence as never before. . . .The love of Jesus filled every soul and beamed from every face, and with inexpressible desires they prayed ‘Come Lord Jesus, and come quickly.’ But he did not come. . . I . . . wept like a child” –*James White, Life Incidents, p. 182.*

Lesson from Our Bitter Past

15. **The Millerites were destined to experience two great disappointments because their theology was riddled with errors;**
 - a. error in the understanding of the 2300- year prophetic timeline (March 21 1844 later changed to October 22, 1844 which led to 2 disappointments instead of just one;
 - b. error in their understanding of the location of the sanctuary in Dan 8:14 and the typological significance of the services
16. **Error in their understanding of the midnight cry**
 - a. The call go ye out to meet him (**Matt 25:6**) made during the summer of 1844 by the seventh-month movement led by Samuel Snow was erroneously applied to the coming of Jesus to earth, when in reality it was a call to go and meet Jesus in the Most Holy place of the heavenly sanctuary (EW 260)

Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second; neither were they benefited by the midnight cry, which was to prepare them to enter with Jesus by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. **EW 260.**

17. **God allowed these errors in understanding to test his professed people and reveal what is in their hearts.**

I saw the people of God joyful in expectation, looking for their Lord. But God designed to prove them. His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods. Those who were looking for their Lord did not discover this mistake, and the most learned men who opposed the time also failed to see it. God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment. The time passed, and those who had looked with joyful expectation for their Saviour were sad and disheartened, while those who had not loved the appearing of Jesus, but embraced the message through fear, were pleased that He did not come at the time of expectation. Their profession had not affected the heart and purified the life. The passing of the time was well calculated to reveal such hearts.

They were the first to turn and ridicule the sorrowful, disappointed ones who really loved the appearing of their Saviour. I saw the wisdom of God in proving His people and giving them a searching test to discover those who would shrink and turn back in the hour of trial. **EW 235-236**

18. Also note that even though the theology of the Millerites were not perfect, their hearts were right with God:

A spirit of solemn and earnest prayer was everywhere felt by the saints. A holy solemnity was resting upon them. Angels were watching with the deepest interest the effect of the message, and were elevating those who received it, and drawing them from earthly things to obtain large supplies from salvation's fountain. God's people were then accepted of Him. Jesus looked upon them with pleasure, for His image was reflected in them. They had made a full sacrifice, an entire consecration, and expected to be changed to immortality. But they were destined again to be sadly disappointed. The time to which they looked, expecting deliverance, passed; they were still upon the earth, and the effects of the curse never seemed more visible. They had placed their affections on heaven, and in sweet anticipation had tasted immortal deliverance; but their hopes were not realized. **EW 239.**

19. the question is, why did not God translate the faithful Adventists just then? Why let them go through great bitterness and disappointment when they were ready for Christ to come?

. . . Those who were obedient to the message stood out free and united. A holy light shone upon them. They renounced the world, sacrificed their earthly interests, gave up their earthly treasures, and directed their anxious gaze to heaven, expecting to see their loved Deliverer. A holy light beamed upon their countenances, telling of the peace and joy which reigned within. Jesus bade His angels go and strengthen them, for the hour of their trial drew on. I saw that these waiting ones were not yet tried as they must be. They were not free from errors. And I saw the mercy and goodness of God in sending a warning to the people of the earth, and repeated messages to lead them to a diligent searching of heart, and study of the Scriptures, that they might divest themselves of errors which have been handed down from the heathen and papists. Through these messages God has been bringing out His people where He can work for them in greater power, and where they can keep all His commandments. **EW 249.**

20. It could not be said of the Millerites that "here are they that keep the commandments of God;
21. Also, the three angels messages can only be proclaimed with loud voice by those who stand faultless before the throne and have no guile in their lips (**Rev 14:1-4**)

When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own. **COL 69**

22. Hence the call to prophesy again after the bitter disappointment (**Rev 10:10-11**)