

Seeing that it is a specific period, can we not also recognize that God “determined” this period of time for His people? The word also means “cut off,” as we have just seen, but why not recognize all facets of the meaning of the word in our interpretation? By so doing we gain rather than lose.

#### 5. The Significance of the Fact That Daniel Did Not Understand the Fourth Scene in the Vision [mareh] (Daniel 8:26,27)

The fact that the vision of Daniel 8 closes without explanation of the fourth symbol-that of the 2300 evenings and mornings-indicates that it was God’s purpose to reveal this matter to His servant Daniel. Because there are points that tie this ninth chapter with the eighth chapter, it seems reasonable to conclude that when Gabriel came to Daniel he took up the thread of the prophecy from Daniel 8. Gabriel then told Daniel he was come to give him skill and understanding, and that now he was to understand the matter and consider the vision [mareh].

#### 6. The Significance of the Fact That Many Bible Expositors Have Recognized This Tie

For more complete data the reader is referred to *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, by L. E. Froom. We will give but one relevant quotation:

This chronological prophecy [Daniel 9] was evidently designed to explain the foregoing [chapter 8] vision, especially in its chronological part of the 2300 days. William Hales in *A New Analysis of Chronology*, 1833, Volume II, p. 517.

The following excerpts from the Ellen G. White writings should also be carefully noted:

Earnestly he [Daniel] sought for the meaning of the vision. He could not understand the relation sustained by the seventy years’ captivity, as foretold through Jeremiah, to the twenty-three hundred years that in vision he heard the heavenly visitant declare should elapse before the cleansing of God’s sanctuary. The angel Gabriel gave him a partial interpretation; yet when the prophet heard the words, “The vision ... shall be for many days,” he fainted away. “I Daniel fainted,” he records of his experience, “and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king’s business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it.” - *Prophets and Kings*, p. 554.

Yet God had bidden His messenger, “Make this man to understand the vision.” That commission must be fulfilled. In obedience to it, the angel, some time afterward, returned to Daniel, saying, “I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding;” “therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision!” There was one important point in the vision of chapter eight which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time,-the period of the 2300 days; therefore the angel, in resuming his explanation, dwells chiefly upon the subject of time. . . .

The angel had been sent to Daniel for the express purpose of explaining to him the point which he had failed to understand in the vision of the eighth chapter, the statement relative to time, - “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” - *The Great Controversy*, pp. 325, 326.

We believe these considerations give us fair, logical, and sound reasons for our belief, not only on the pre-Advent aspect of the judgment but also as to the time when that phase of the judgment began its work; namely, in 1844, at the close of the 2300 year-day prophecy.

For historic data on the accuracy of the beginning date of the 2300 days, that is 457 BC, see *The Chronology of Ezra 7*, by Siegfried Horn and L. H. Wood.

## **5. The Sabbath and the Lord's Day**

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IN HIS BOOK *The Truth About Seventh-day Adventism* Walter R. Martin attempts to show that the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church concerning the binding obligation upon Christians to observe the seventh-day Sabbath are without Biblical foundation. It is our purpose here to examine the arguments that he puts forth in chapter six. For easy comparison we will use the same headings that are found in his book.

## Apocalyptic Illusions

Walter Martin begins his argument by asserting that “Adventists base their interpretations largely upon purely apocalyptic and prophetic passages in the books of Daniel and Revelation- (page 142), and that we interpret these passages in a faulty manner. He does not show wherein these interpretations are faulty, but says concerning these Biblical passages, they are “symbols whose meaning the Holy Spirit has not been pleased to reveal,” and “in my opinion, it cannot be denied that the chief source of these apocalyptic speculations is a failure to consider the fact that God has deliberately hidden some things from human understanding- (page 143).

It is evident that Mr. Martin is attempting to brush aside significant scriptural teaching and evidence on the important question of the Sabbath day merely with a sweeping assertion that the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation cannot be understood. We ask, Why did God send His Holy Spirit to indite these messages through the prophets? And why did God see fit to place these prophetic materials in the Bible if it were not that they are for our admonition and guidance? When the apostle Paul commended the Ephesian brethren “to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32), he did not exclude the prophetic writings of Daniel or of John. Undoubtedly, Mr. Martin would agree that the books of Daniel and Revelation belong to the Biblical canon. Yet in reality one’s canon of scripture consists only in that which one is willing to use for doctrine and as a guide for one’s life.

It is further asserted: “There is no grammatical or contextual foundation in the Word of God for teaching that (a) the Papacy is the power spoken of in Daniel 7:2Y’ (page 143). This judgment is surprising, inasmuch as our whole argument concerning Daniel 7:25 is based on the context. We are very careful to trace in this outline prophecy the development of great powers on the earth, beginning with Medo-Persia, followed by Greece, Rome, and then the great political and spiritual power that arose out of the Roman Empire, the little horn. This certainly is using the context. Furthermore, we do not know what Mr. Martin could possibly have had in mind when he says that there is no grammatical foundation for our teaching on this prophecy. He does not show where we violate the grammar of Daniel 7:25. What purpose does language serve except to convey meaning? Our interpretation is based on a searching examination of the meaning of the phrases in the twenty-fifth verse. We do no violence to the grammar of this passage at all.

Next, it is asserted that we hold to our interpretation of Daniel 7:25 because it has been “confirmed” in the writings of Ellen G. White. We have never based our interpretation of this passage on the statements of Ellen G. White, nor do we now. We go directly to the Bible and to its clear delineations of the little-horn power through the entire context of the seventh chapter of Daniel. Concerning the book of Daniel our Savior said, “Who so reads, let him understand” (Matthew 24:15). Jesus endorsed the book of Daniel and commended it for our study. We wonder, therefore, why Mr. Martin attempts to nullify the effect of a great prophecy merely by saying that it cannot be understood. We are amazed that he insists our interpretations are wrong without even attempting to show wherein they are in error, or what the scripture does mean. We would hardly want to think that our friend merely tries to dismiss an important portion of God’s Word by mere denials and airy, lofty generalizations. Obviously, we will not change our views on Daniel 7:25 on the basis of such arguments.

## Ellen G. White on the Fourth Commandment

Mr. Martin next quotes a statement of Ellen G. White from *The Great Controversy*, pages 452, 453, to the effect that the fourth commandment is the seal of the law of God. The seal consists in these two things—that the fourth commandment alone contains the name of God together with His title, the latter showing God’s authority as the Creator for giving the law. Mr. Martin attempts to show that the statement of Mrs. White is not supported in the Bible. He comments that her error is due to her unfamiliarity with the Hebrew, and asserts that the name and title of God occur elsewhere in the Ten Commandments. He fails in this attempt, for in no place else in the Ten Commandments, except in the fourth, is the title of God as the Creator, the one who made heaven and earth, mentioned. No matter how well one might know Hebrew, he could not find substantiation for Mr. Martin’s claim. Mr. Martin attempts to build his case on the fact that the name of God, Elohim, does appear elsewhere in the Ten Commandments, and that this name, he says, carries with it the connotation of Creator because it is used in Genesis 1:1, where we are told that God created the earth. This certainly is forced reasoning, and really consists of a form of hedging. Mrs. White

did not say that the name of God occurs only in the fourth commandment, but that God's name coupled with His designation as Creator of the heavens and the earth occurs there alone. Mr. Martin's assertion that because he has shown how the name of God occurs in Exodus 20:1, 2, 5, 7, he "disposes" of Mrs. White's claim, is really ludicrous. Yet after mentioning the fact that the name of God occurs elsewhere in the Ten Commandments, and that wherever it occurs we should understand that it means "Creator", Mr. Martin says this is "an unanswerable linguistic argument." We fail to see that this is even a linguistic argument, let alone that it is unanswerable. The fact that in Genesis 1: 1 God is described as the Creator does not mean that wherever the name "God" is used we are immediately to supply the words Creator of the heavens and the earth. The Hebrew word Elohim used alone carries absolutely no connotation of "Creator." We are astounded even more when Mr. Martin says that if the entire fourth commandment were removed, the title of Creator would remain in the other commandments simply because the name of God appears there. Is it not Martin who is straining and stretching the scripture, and not Ellen G. White, despite the fact that several times in this passage he asserts that her interpretation is "neither grammatically, nor contextually tenable" and that it is "seriously deficient in the all important areas of language and syntactical usage"? Not once did Mr. Martin show that Mrs. White's use of the Bible is contrary to grammatical or contextual or syntactical usage. In fact, his extreme position that the mere mention of the name of God must be understood to include His title as Creator shows that it is Mr. Martin who is not observing the laws of grammar and linguistics. Mrs. White's statement is in harmony with the language and syntactical usage of Exodus 20, while Mr. Martin's statement is not. Moreover, he attempts to becloud the issue by stating that although God hallowed the Sabbath day, scholars from the Church Fathers on down have debated the meaning of the word hallowed. The Hebrew makes perfectly clear that God hallowed the Sabbath by resting on it and by setting it apart for His own use. Because we might not know all the connotations of the word hallow is no excuse whatsoever for men not to rest and worship on the Sabbath as God commanded them.

Mr. Martin next quotes a statement of Ellen G. White in which she stated that the Papacy brought about the change of worship from the seventh day to the first day of the week. He attempts to dispose of this claim by asking to which pope she referred. He says we agree that there was no such office as the Papacy until the elevation of Gregory the Great in AD 590, and since we admit that a great body of Christians were keeping Sunday before that time, we contradict ourselves. In the first place, we do not admit that there was no such institution as the Papacy before Gregory. This matter rests entirely on the definition given of the word papacy, and in a case like this the only fair procedure is to ascertain what the word meant to Ellen G. White at the end of the nineteenth century, and not what it means to Mr. Martin today.

We do agree that the primacy of the Bishop of Rome over the Christian church came about through an evolutionary process. After the destruction of the Temple in AD 70 and of Jerusalem in AD 132, the church in Rome rapidly came to the forefront of Christendom. Although there were other great churches that were founded by the apostles, yet the fact that both Peter and Paul met their death in Rome, and the fact that Rome was the capital of the empire, caused the early Christians to regard highly the opinions of the leaders of the Christian community in Rome. As the decades passed, this eminence was steadily augmented. Irenaeus of Lyons (France) represented the general feeling of the churches of his time (about AD 185) when he drew attention to the fact that the Roman Church was founded by Peter and Paul, and declared, "For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its pre-eminent authority."-Heresies 3:3. Further evidence of this primacy of the Roman Church and the Roman Bishop is seen about AD 198, when the problem of the date of Easter became so acute that a number of synods were convened in Rome, Palestine, Alexandria, and other places. These synods all decided in favor of the Roman practice of holding Easter on a Sunday instead of on the evening of the fourteenth of Nisan.

BY AD 200 Rome was the eminent and influential center of Christianity, and the Roman bishops were not slow to make the most of this eminence. As time passed, the influence of the Bishop of Rome was greatly extended, so that he was almost always selected as president and moderator of ecumenical assemblies, and there existed a general feeling that no decisions of a general nature could be made without his consent. In the Synod of Sardica in AD 343 we observe that the longstanding authority of the Roman Bishop was formulated ' and he was given appellate powers to settle disputes involving other bishops. A careful study of the experiences of the church of those times reveals that the bishops of Rome exercised their power in widespread church affairs, and often at the request of bishops and princes. Damasus, another strong pope elected in AD 366, obtained from Emperor Gratian the right to try other bishops.

The doctrinal controversies of the fourth century greatly enhanced the power of the Bishop of

Rome. Innocent I (AD 404) laid claim to the supreme right of adjudication in all the more grave and momentous cases of church disputes, and also claimed the right to issue obligatory regulations for the several districts of the Church. Leo I (AD 440-461) emphasized the primacy of Peter, and claimed that the bishops of Rome were Peter's successors. He so effectively made his claims that he was able to exercise authority in Gaul, Spain, and North Africa. In AD 445 he obtained an edict from Emperor Valentinian III, who ordered all Christians to obey the Roman Bishop as having "the primacy of St. Peter." Leo effectively exerted his control of the Church by interfering in this or that important concern of the whole Christian church.

As far back as the third century we find Irenaeus of Lyons listing the popes of Rome. He claimed that Peter was the first pope, and he listed twelve popes who had ruled in succession from his day. Regardless of what we think of this list, it is evident that great sections of the Christian church in the third and fourth centuries AD looked to the Roman bishop as the foremost "father" of Christendom. That is the meaning of the word, and it was in this sense that Mrs. White—as well as practically all writers of her time—used the word, referring to the institutions of the Papacy, the continuing line of spiritual leaders of the Church, and not to any one single Bishop of Rome.

Certainly the institution of the Papacy existed before the time of Gregory I, and numerous statements from early church historians show that these popes were active in using their influence in downgrading the seventh-day Sabbath and in encouraging the Church to keep Sunday instead. In some cases this took the form of proclaiming Saturday as a fast day, which fast was not to be broken until the beginning of the first day of the week. Another instance, occurring much earlier, is the indefatigable efforts put forth by the bishops of Rome to establish throughout Christendom the practice of observing the anniversary of Christ's resurrection on Sunday, instead of on different days of the week year by year. The Jewish Passover season, during which Christ was crucified and resurrected, was determined according to the rising of the full moon in the Jewish month Nisan. Accordingly, the Passover and the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread wandered among the various days of the week. When the early Christians very early began to honor the yearly anniversary of Christ's resurrection, they used the Jewish reckoning, and honored it, one year on Tuesday, another on Wednesday, et cetera. This method of fixing the anniversary of Christ's resurrection was used throughout the Christian church at one time, and especially so in Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor.

When the Jewish people fell into great disfavor in the early Christian centuries, the leaders of the church in the West (Italy, Gaul, etcetera) felt irked at having to use Jewish reckoning to set the date of a church celebration. They began agitation to tie the anniversary of His resurrection to a fixed day of the week, namely, Sunday, inasmuch as when Christ was resurrected, that feast day had fallen on Sunday. This helped strengthen their contention that Christians should also observe the first day of the week in honor of Christ's resurrection, rather than observe the seventh-day Sabbath as the Bible commands. Thus they used the fledgling Easter celebration as a means of establishing the observance of Sunday.

Victor, the bishop of Rome from approximately AD 189 to 200, tried to force this practice upon the church in Asia Minor. When the leaders of the church in the East protested, he attempted to excommunicate them all. The controversy raged during the third and fourth centuries, until eventually the bishops of Rome were able to enforce their will upon the entire Christian church. As the anniversary of the Lord's resurrection gradually became tied to Sunday, the esteem of the people for that day increased, and little by little they became willing to accept it as the weekly day of worship in place of the seventh day Sabbath. Certainly the bishops of Rome played a leading part in changing the practice of the Christian world from the observance of Sabbath to Sunday.

The leaders of the Church of Rome used their influence upon Emperor Constantine to bring about his Edict Of AD 321, in which people living in cities were forbidden to labor on Sunday. In the Council of Laodicea, held between AD 343 and 381, the church leaders made the following law: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day; but the Lord's day they shall especially honor, and, as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ." - Canon 29, Hefele's Councils, Volume 2, bk. 6, sec. 93.

That the bishops of Rome, the "fathers," i.e. popes, of the most influential part of Christendom, surely were primary agents in creating the observance of Sunday, just as Ellen G. White wrote, is clearly evident.

Mr. Martin asks why Seventh-day Adventists cite the testimony of Roman Catholic authorities to the effect that they changed the Sabbath to Sunday when he can find other Roman Catholic authorities that do not agree. Our answer to this is that when some authorities acknowledge the fact that it was the Roman

Catholic Church who brought about the change in practice of Christendom of worshiping on the first day of the week instead of the seventh, are agreeing with that which actually happened, and with the statements of the prophecy of Daniel 7:25 concerning what would take place under the influence of the little-horn power.

On page 148 of his book, Walter Martin quotes the excellent statement of Peter Geiermman, acknowledging that Saturday is the Sabbath day and that the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday. Mr. Martin quotes another statement of Mr. Geiermann which reiterates the same thing and emphasizes that 'I 'this change the church was authorized to make by the power conferred upon her by Jesus Christ' " (page 149). But he also mentions such texts as Revelation 1:10; Acts 20:7; and 1 Corinthians 16:2 as Biblical authority for the observance of the first day of the week. Not one of these texts state that Sunday is the Lord's day, nor do they cite a divine command that Christians should observe the first day of the week. We accept the second statement of Professor Geiermann too, for in it he also says that the Catholic Church had authority to decree that Christians should keep the first day of the week. We quoted him in the first instance because he so claimed. His assertion that this authority was theirs by virtue of the Scriptures, we reject, but doing so in no way weakens his testimony as to the part the Roman Catholic Church played in the attempt to change the Sabbath. We see nothing inconsistent in citing Geiermann as a witness.

### **Adventism Unmoved**

Mr. Martin attempts to make a strong argument out of the fact that Arthur E. Lickey, an Adventist writer, in showing the relationship between the Sabbath and the cross, put his argument in the form of a statement by God and ended it by saying, "What I have joined together, let no man put asunder." Mr. Lickey was showing how Calvary did not abrogate the Sabbath, but rather strengthened its claim to be the Christian day of rest because it is a sign of God's creative, redeeming power, as is Calvary. Mr. Martin says he is shocked to find that Mr. Lickey quotes Matthew 19:6, which is speaking of marriage, and applies it to the Sabbath and Calvary. He claims that this is an illustration of the way we use scriptures out of context.

Actually, anyone reading Mr. Lickey's statement will recognize that he is using the words of Matthew 19:6 as a literary borrowing. It is a very common thing among many Christian writers to borrow the phrasing of a certain Biblical passage and to use it in an entirely different setting because of the apt phraseology. It is apparent that Mr. Lickey is not trying to use these phrases as Biblical support for his argument, nor is he exegeting Matthew 19:6. It would not be difficult to find many instances of this literary borrowing of phrases in practically any Christian book. To magnify this literary borrowing the way Mr. Martin has is evidence only that there has been much searching to try to find a little weakness to pick on. In this connection, however, we should say that neither Mr. Lickey nor any Seventh-day Adventist would attempt to make the Sabbath of equal importance with the cross. The cross is the most important event in Christian history, and nothing can equal it. On the other hand, it is certain that nothing happened at Calvary to change the fact that God said it is His desire and will that His children observe the seventh-day Sabbath, which is a memorial of His creative power just as the cross is an even greater sign of God's creative-redeeming power. After the cross, the seventh-day Sabbath was still the will of God for His people. Calvary ratified the new covenant, and after a covenant or testament has been ratified no one can make any changes in it. The institution of Sunday, or the observing of the first day of the week, came too late to be included in God's new covenant for His people. Sunday keeping is merely man's unilateral covenant, and God has nothing to do with it. Sunday has no part in God's gracious covenant with mankind, and is therefore only a human institution.

## **6. The Sabbath or the Lord's Day?**

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THIS SECTION OF Mr. Martin's book begins as follows: "Seventh-day Adventists from the beginning have always attempted to equate the Sabbath with the Lord's Day. Their principal method for accomplishing this is arguments against their position, i.e., the Lord's Day as opposed to Sabbath observance." - Page 151. We do not comment on this, for we cannot understand the thought of the writer in