

# Our Origins

The disappointed believers continued to study their Bibles.



**William Miller**

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

Ultimately, the Millerites determined that the 2300-

day/year prophecy ended on October 22, 1844.

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

In time God’s Spirit helped them see that their careful study of the prophecy had led them to the correct date but the wrong event. On October 22, 1844, Jesus did do something important.

In ancient Israel, on the yearly Day of Atonement, the high priest entered the Most Holy Place in the earthly sanctuary. Similarly, in 1844 Jesus entered the Most Holy Place in the

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

When the Seventh-day Adventist Church was newly formed, it was teenagers and young adults who held many leadership positions and helped to transform the church into the organization it is today.

Ellen Harmon was just 17 years old when she received a vision from God. When she received the vision, she was afraid that no one would listen to her. She even prayed all day that God wouldn't make her tell others. But God didn't excuse her, and she related her vision at a prayer meeting where the message was gladly received. That was just the beginning of what God had in store for her. She was young, she was sick, and she was female, but God used her as His prophet.

John Loughborough was baptized as a first-day Adventist when he was 16 years old, then joined the Seventh-day Adventist movement three years later. When he turned 17 years old, he became an itinerant preacher. Of his own accord he gathered together tracts, walked many miles handing them out, and studied the Bible from house to house. That same year he began preaching, and before his eighteenth birthday he toured with an evangelist, helping to hold evangelistic seminars and winning many to Christ. John Nevins Andrews, or J. N. Andrews, was a major leader and evangelist in the Adventist church, and he worked closely with James and Ellen White. By the time Andrews was 26 years old, he discovered, as a theologian, that the two-horned beast of Revelation was the United States of America. He also helped Adventists to understand the Sabbath as reaching from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday. Andrews helped organize the Adventist church as a legal organization so the church could obtain legal possession of property. Between the ages of 31 and 35 Andrews chaired the committee that suggested a plan of organization for the church's publishing house in Battle Creek, Michigan, and lobbied during the Civil War for Adventist draftees to be able to receive noncombatant designation. Later in life he also became one of the church's first missionaries.



**John Nevins Andrews**

#### **Uriah Smith**



At the age of 23 Uriah Smith became editor of the *Review and Herald* (now the *Adventist Review*) magazine. He faced many financial problems when he started, but managed so well that in a short time the *Review and Herald* began to flourish and grow. In this job Smith was not only editor, but proofreader, business manager, and bookkeeper, as well. Smith was editor for almost 35 years (not continuously). At the

age of 31 he patented an artificial leg with fully flexible knee and ankle joints. He was considered a handsome and charming man.

Even though he at one point opposed the idea of righteousness by faith, he never left the church. He later admitted his wrong attitude, and Ellen White never thought of him as unfit for his office. In fact, Ellen White held him and his work in high esteem.

Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. Although Kellogg would later leave the Adventist church, James and Ellen White met him as a teenager, saw his potential, and encouraged him to go to medical school, even lending him \$1,000 for expenses. Kellogg was 23 years old when he graduated from medical school. Kellogg turned 23 one day after he graduated from medical school, and immediately began working at the Adventist health institute at Battle Creek, becoming medical superintendent in 1876. He held that position for 67 years. In later years he never took payment for his work at the sanitarium or for any of his surgeries. Kellogg coined the term *sanitarium*; advocated low-calorie diets; developed peanut butter, granola, and toasted flakes; warned that smoking caused lung cancer; and was an early advocate of exercise. And those were just a few of his accomplishments--all started as a teenager and young adult.

Despite the awesome faith and work of Adventist pioneers such as Ellen Harmon White, John Loughborough, J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, and John Harvey Kellogg, they are too often thought of as old and solemn instead of young and on fire for God, as they were. And if these individuals could be such incredible pioneers at such a young age, why do many think only older people can be workers in the church now? When young people want to help with responsibilities in the church, they should be trained and allowed to.



**James & Ellen White**

# Create an Adventist History Time Line

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

First organized Sabbath school

$$548 + 828 + 400 + 77$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

John Nevins Andrews is first official Adventist missionary to Europe

$$531 + 343 + 1000$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

The Great Disappointment

$$917 + 463 + 464$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

First General Conference session

$$800 + 250 + 800 + 13$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

William Miller starts preaching

$$812 + 654 + 365$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

Ellen White's first vision

$$789 + 155 + 900$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

Ellen White has vision about importance of Sabbath

$$748 + 99 + 1000$$

= \_\_\_\_\_

