

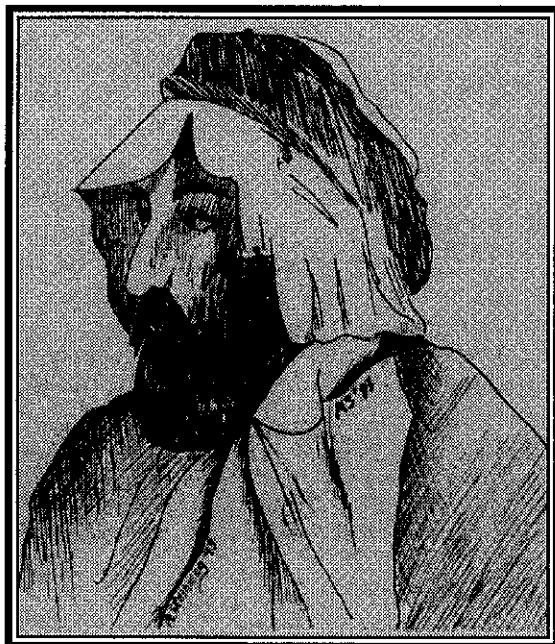
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Lest We Forget

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history." LS 196

MOHAMMED, 560-632 A.D.



A Remarkable PROPHECY

comments by Ellen G. White

In the year 1840 another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of Revelation 9, predicting the fall of the Ottoman Empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown "in A.D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;" and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: "Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before

**Josiah Litch
predicts the
Fall of the
Ottoman
Empire.**

Diaconozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case."—Josiah Litch, in *Signs of the Times, and Expositor of Prophecy*, Aug. 1, 1840.

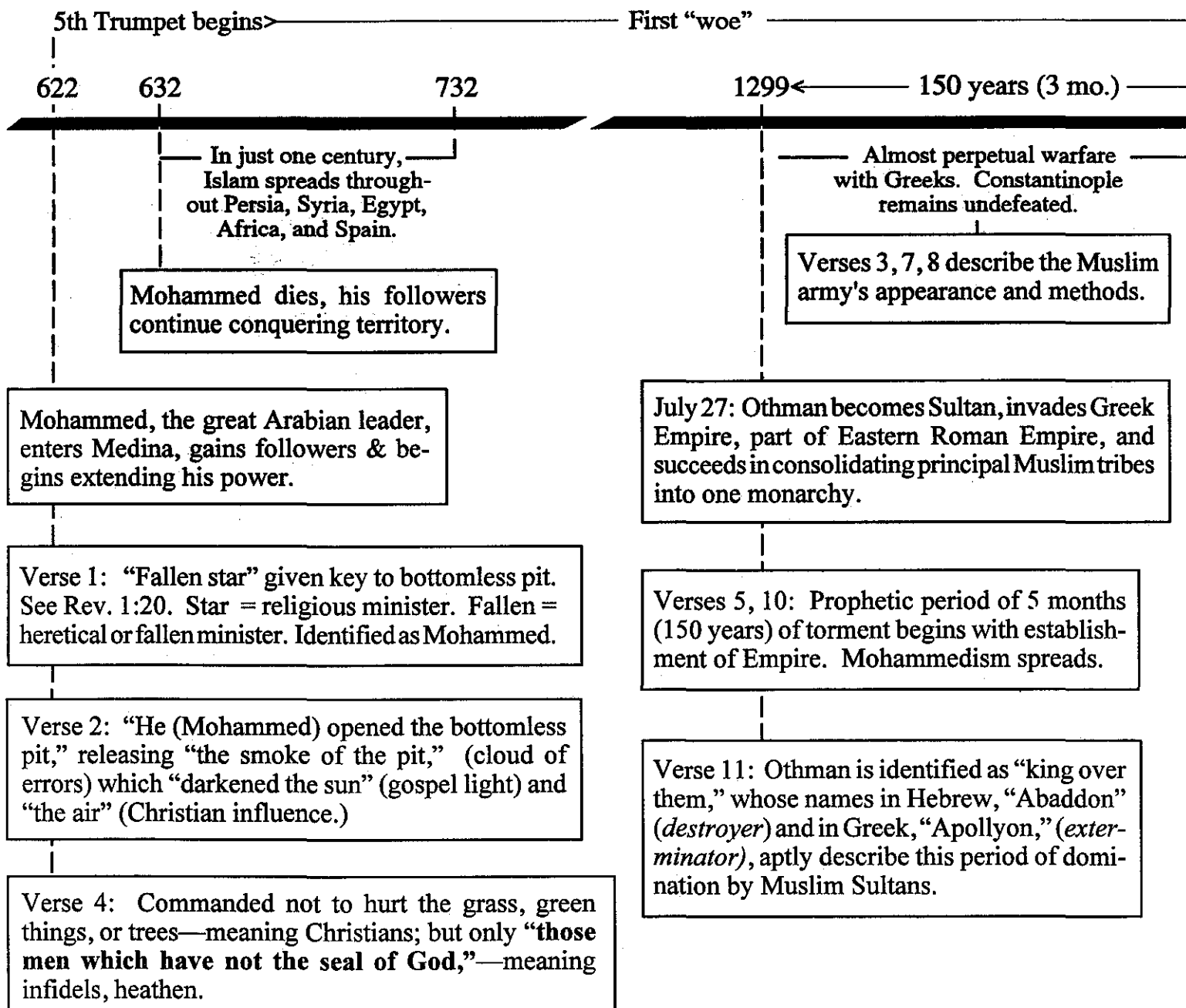
At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction When it became known, multitudes were convinced of the correctness of the principles of prophetic interpretation adopted by Miller and his associates, and a wonderful impetus was given to the advent movement. Men of learning and position united with Miller, both in preaching and in publishing his views, and from 1840 to 1844 the work rapidly extended. •

The Great Controversy, pp. 334, 335.

**IN THIS ISSUE: JOSIAH LITCH, his place in the Millerite Movement
and his interpretation of the prophecies of Revelation 9.**

THE RISE & FALL of

AS INTERPRETED



*Litch, J., "The Three Wo Trumpets, Fall of the Ottoman Empire, or Ottoman Supremacy departed, August 11, 1840," *The Midnight Cry*, January 6, 1843, pp.7-10; and "The Rise and Progress of Adventism," *The Advent Shield*, May, 1844, pp. 46-93.

Moon, J., *Josiah Litch: Herald of "The Advent Near,"* Andrews University S.D.A. Theological Seminary, May, 1973, 53 pages.

TRIUMVIRATE LEADERSHIP

When William Miller started preaching that Christ would come in 1843, he fully believed the churches would receive the message with joy and proclaim it everywhere. Seven years later, in early 1838, Miller was tired, ill, and discouraged. It was evident the message was unpopular. Miller didn't know that God was already leading in the lives of two men who would soon become his co-workers forming a triumvirate leadership for the great advent movement that was destined to rock the forties.

Miller's lectures had been published in 1836,¹ but all the ministers who believed the view previous to 1838, relapsed and abandoned preaching it, except for a certain Elder Fuller of whom little is known. "The current of public opinion was too strong for them. . . ."²

At this precise moment, God enlisted in the cause a powerful preacher and student of Bible Prophecy, Elder Josiah Litch. He had read Miller's lectures and was impressed in a dream to preach the message. When he decided to do this, he wrote ". . . [I was] alone, as an advocate of the doctrine, [but not discouraged]. . . by the report that Mr. Fitch had given it up."³ Josiah Litch is therefore considered by most historians to be the "first well-known minister to adopt Miller's views, and the first to join him as a full-time ministerial associate."⁴ This talented

preacher was later to be referred to as the Uriah Smith of the Millerite movement.

Between November and December of 1839, Joshua V. Himes also joined Miller [See *LWF* Volume 2:4.], and with Litch became united in an informal leadership of the movement. Miller continued as the central figure with the key prophetic message; Himes—as the dynamic publisher and public relations manager; and Litch—as the great

promoter and defender of the Second Advent Movement. One example of their wise leadership is the list of nine specific suggestions to believers regarding how to accomplish the solemn task of witnessing about the nearness of the Lord's coming. These nine suggestions formed part of an address drafted at the second Advent Conference, June 15, 1841, and were, in effect, a strategy for non-sectarian evangelism. [See center box.]

One evidence of Litch's leadership, daring, and faith was the decision to rent the great Chinese Museum Auditorium in Philadelphia which seated six thousand. William Miller lectured twice a day, for nearly two weeks in the over-crowded building. Litch reported that this campaign rocked Philadelphia from center to circumference.

With the blessing of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit, this triumvirate leadership worked an astounding increase and spread of the message just as Himes predicted in his famous words, ". . . doors shall be opened in every city in the Union; and the warning shall go to the ends of the earth."⁵

—MS • (1)(2) Litch, J., "Rise and Progress of Adventism," *The Advent Shield*, May, 1844, p. 80, 81. (3) *Ibid.*, p. 56.

(4) Moon, J., *Josiah Litch: Herald of "The Advent Near,"* Andrews University Thesis, May, 1973, p. 6.

(5) Nichols, F.D., *The Midnight Cry*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., 1944, p. 72.

STRATEGY FOR EVANGELISM*

By J. V. Himes & J. Litch

1. Maintain personal consecration, watchfulness and prayer.
2. Conduct one-on-one conversation about the second coming of Christ.
3. Form Bible study classes.
4. Schedule social meetings for prayer and preaching.
5. Question ministers as to the meaning of certain key texts.
6. Circulate the Advent books, but in this to neglect neither a preparation for the second coming, nor one's earthly business.
7. Remain in the churches and seek to bring about a more positive attitude regarding the second coming.
8. Endure persecution, opposition, and scorn with patience.
9. Establish Second Advent Libraries in all towns and villages.

Source: Nichols, F.D., *The Midnight Cry*, Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C., 1944, p. 86, 87.

*Paraphrased.

THE RISE & FALL of JOSIAH LITCH

by Marlene Steinweg

What a dream! Josiah trembled as he remembered its forceful message. Why did he have this dream? What did it mean? How would it effect his future?

Early Glimpses

Josiah Litch was born in Higham, Massachusetts, in 1809. We know little about his early life and training except that he was converted at age 17, that at one time he studied to be a physician, and that he became an itinerant minister for the Methodist Episcopal Church when he was 24 years old. Through his prolific writings it is evident his formal education was more than adequate. He became a man of conviction who had the "courage to advocate what he believed to be truth."¹

In early 1838, as he skeptically read *Miller's Lectures*, he was convicted of its truth. The arguments were so clear, simple, and scriptural that his own great arguments against the coming of the Lord vanished and he was delighted with the idea of the glorious reign of Christ on a renewed earth.² He then reasoned with himself, "If this doctrine is true, shouldn't I try to understand and proclaim it!"³ He resisted this conviction, however, fearing that, if Jesus did not come as predicted, his having preached the doctrine would hurt his reputation.

Then he had his spectacular dream through which the Lord humbled him and made him willing to bear reproach for Christ.⁴ He had been "called to this cause by such forceful evidence [that] . . . to resist would be tantamount to turning from the Lord. . . ."⁵ Without hesitation, he resolved to preach the truth on the subject of the Second Coming of Christ. Twenty-nine years old at the time, Litch had been an itinerant minister for five years.⁶ He immediately began writing about and preaching the doctrine wherever he went.

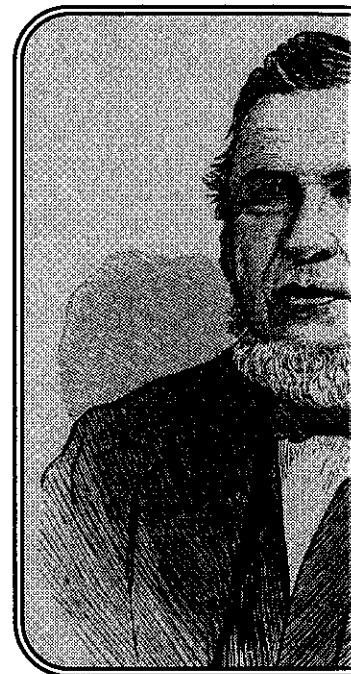
Litch Attains Prominence

Litch published an article in June of 1838, entitled "*The Probability of the Second Coming*

of Christ About A.D. 1843," in which he predicted the fall of the Ottoman Empire in August of 1840, as a direct fulfillment of the prophecies of Revelation, chapter nine. This awakened a great deal of interest throughout the northeast and, as the time approached, many opponents declared that the event would not occur, and that "then the spell would be broken, and Adventism would die."⁷ Infidels were ready to jest; while believers trembled for fear that it should not come to pass as anticipated. More importantly, if this prophecy were fulfilled as predicted, many thought it would corroborate Miller's use of the year-day principle in interpreting the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14.

When the Ottoman Empire effectively lost its independence on the precise day predicted by Litch, at least one thousand infidels accepted the Bible "as God's revelation to man,"⁸ and the year-day principle received incontrovertible support. [See "*The Rise and Fall of the Ottoman Empire*," pp. 2, 7, & Insert A.] Some modern Bible scholars disagree with Litch's interpretation and application. Nevertheless, this fulfillment impressed Bible scholars and many infidels at that time in history.

Early in 1841, Litch was impressed to discontinue his itinerant ministry with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but it was hard for him to do so. He didn't want to sever the strong ties he had with that church, and he was also concerned about "The feelings and welfare of [his] beloved family . . ."⁹ These two concerns formed an apparently insurmountable barrier against devoting himself



JOSIAH LITCH

exclusively to the work of proclaiming the Lord's coming. This conflict was resolved at an annual Methodist Episcopal ministerial conference held that summer. On June 9, at Providence, Rhode Island, he appeared before the examination committee to answer for the doctrine he was teaching. The committee decided that Litch "held nothing contrary to Methodism, although he went in some points beyond it."¹⁰ After this, he was left at liberty to devote his time to preaching the soon second coming.¹¹

Litch attended three other Methodist Episcopal conferences that summer, where he was able to preach the Advent for his fellow ministers and distribute about forty dollars worth of literature. He reported that the publications were eagerly seized upon by those "ambassadors of Christ" and long-cherished prejudices began giving way.¹²

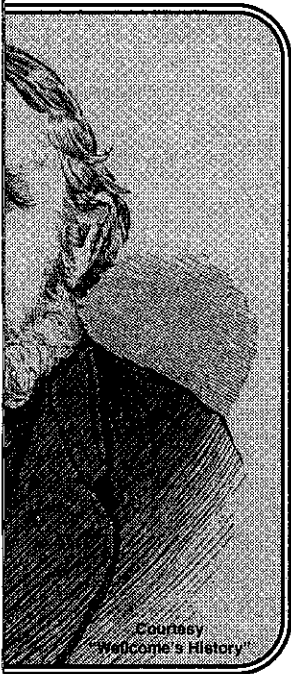
During the time interlude between the summer of 1841 and the Disappointment, Litch never once turned aside from the inspiration of his dream. He worked full-time as a general agent, and also on the editorial staff of *The Signs of the Times*. He wrote prolifically and preached eloquently, often holding the unwearied interest of thousands for an hour and a half as he spoke on the imminent return of Christ.

Disappointment and Decline

When S. S. Snow's seventh-month movement caught on in the mid-summer of 1844 [See *LWF* 3:2.], Litch was very cautious and only accepted the new date eleven days before the fact. He declared, "I cannot praise God sufficiently that He has [permitted]. . . me to behold this great light. I feel myself humbled. . . and now lift up my head in joyful expectation of seeing the King of kings within ten days."¹³

Interestingly enough, Litch once said regarding the event to occur on October 22, 1844, "It yet remains to be shown that our calculations of time are not correct, and are only in error relative to the event which marked its close. This is the most likely."¹⁴ This indicated he was so sure of the time that he thought it more probable to err in the prophetic interpretation regarding the event. However, when Christ failed to come on October 22, he began to readjust his thinking.

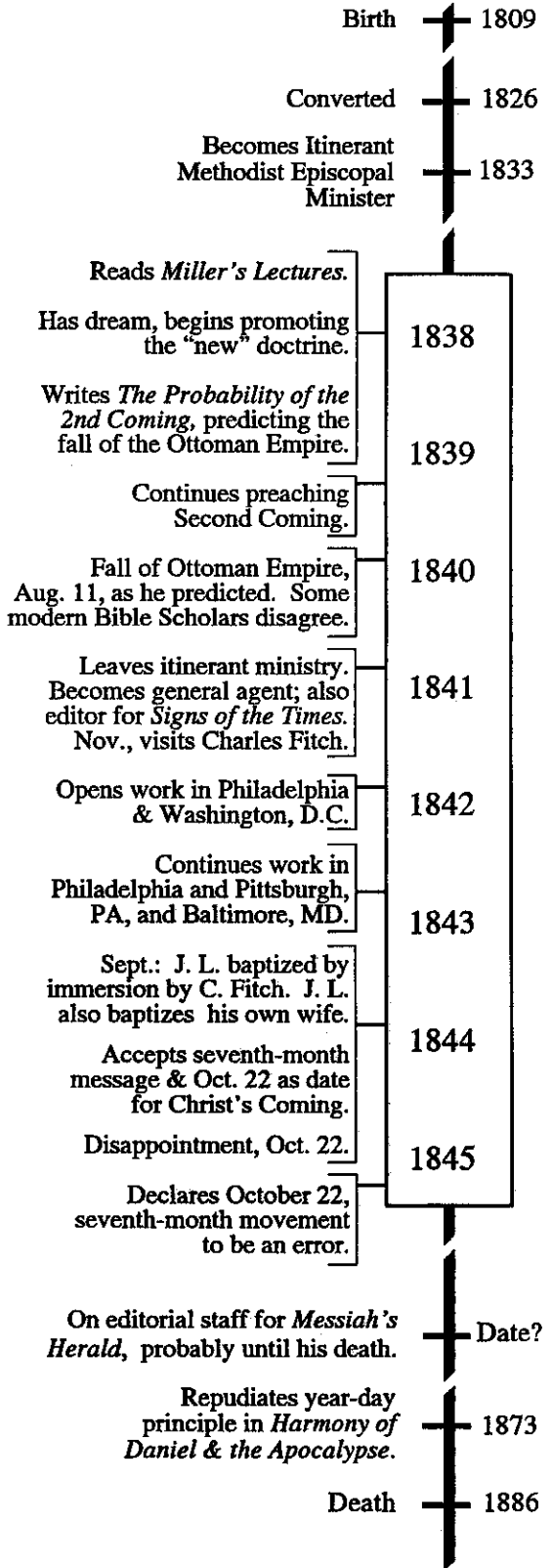
In May of 1845, he reversed his position regarding the seventh-month movement stating, "I believe we erred and ran off our track about one year ago."¹⁵ He continued for a time believing that Miller's first view was true and that the cry would continue till Jesus appeared in the air.¹⁶ At this time he joined the formal Adventists with Himes, Bliss, and Hale, who believed the error was the time and that the event was still future; that the "door" was still open and would be closed when Christ came. He opposed both the extremist branch with Turner and Snow, and the Sabbatarian branch with Bates, Edson and the Whites.¹⁷



Courtesy
"Welcome's History"

H 1809-1886

TIME LINE



continued on page six

THE GREAT SECOND P.R. MAN

Josiah Litch was a talented publishing and public relations man. He worked as a general agent, traveling widely in behalf of the Millerite publications. As he traveled, he preached and opened up the work in new places. He was well known for his many articles on a wide range of subjects—some refuting supposed doctrinal error—others supporting Miller's doctrine.

While editor of the *Signs of the Times* since July, 1841, his scholarly articles appeared in its columns as well as in many other advent newspapers often with nothing more than a simple "L." to identify the writer. In Philadelphia, he edited a powerful advent paper, the *Philadelphia Alarm*, which later became the *Trumpet of Alarm*. Some of his publications are listed below.

Publication	Date
<i>The Midnight Cry</i>	Early 1838
<i>Probability of the Second Coming of Jesus About A.D. 1843</i>	May/June, 1838
<i>Eight Fundamental Errors in Miller's Theory (Rebuttal.)</i>	Mar., 1840
<i>Address to the Clergy</i>	May, 1840
<i>Our Work</i>	June, 1841
<i>Address to Clergy (Enlarged.)</i>	July, 1841
<i>Prophetic expositions (Refuting Dowling's Reply to Miller's Judaism Overthrown.)</i>	Nov., 1842
<i>Anti-Annihilationist (Refutes Conditional Immortality.)</i>	Dec., 1842
<i>Rise & Progress of Adventism</i>	May, 1844
<i>Messiah's Throne & Traces of Millennial Glory</i>	1855
<i>Everlasting Punishment</i>	1859
<i>Prophetic Significance of Eastern & European Movements</i>	1867
<i>Complete Harmony of Daniel & the Apocalypse, (Repudiates year-day principle.)</i>	1873

THE RISE & FALL OF JOSIAH LITCH

continued from page five

He also joined with some leaders who sought to influence Miller against the light from heaven regarding the Third Angel's Message and the commandments of God. [See box below.] These men failed to recognize and accept the message which would have best explained the "disappointment and cast a light and glory on the past."¹⁸

Elder Litch progressively declined from his former position on prophetic interpretation, until he published in 1873, *A Complete Harmony of Daniel and the Apocalypse*,¹⁹ in which he repudiated almost every portion of Millerite prophetic interpretation including the year-day principle. His new interpretation placed all of Revelation from chapter 4 onward to be fulfilled in the future.²⁰

A Warning

"Elder Litch had that experience of genuine submission to the will of God, but he failed to maintain it. This failure led him to minimize the marked way the Lord had led in his own past experience and in the movement he had been called to be a part of. He was used by God as a mighty herald of 'the advent near,' but he eventually denied almost every dis-

tingitive point of the message he had helped to proclaim. His tragic experience is a warning for us all."²¹ •

(1) Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, *Commentary Reference Series*, Volume 10, Review & Herald Publishing, p.705.

(2) Litch, J., "Rise and Progress of Adventism," *The Advent Shield*, May, 1844, p.55.

(3)(4) *Ibid.*, p.55.

(5) Moon, J., *Josiah Litch: Herald of "The Advent Near,"* Andrews University Thesis, May, 1973, p.13.

(6) *The Advent Shield*, p.64.

(7) *Ibid.*, p.59.

(8) Loughborough, J. N., *The Great Second Advent Movement*, Review & Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D. C., 1909, p.132.

(9) *The Advent Shield*, p.62.

(10)(11)(12) *Ibid.*, p.64,65.

(13) Litch, J., "Letter," *The Midnight Cry*, October 12, 1844, p.125.

(14) *The Advent Shield*, p.81.

(15) Litch, J., "Letter," *The Advent Herald*, May 21, 1845.

(16) Froom, L. E., *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers*, Volume IV, Review & Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D. C., 1954, pp. 828-842.

(17)(18) White, Ellen G., *Early Writings*, Review & Herald Pub. Association, Washington, D.C., 1945 edition, p.257.

(19) Litch, J., *A Complete Harmony of Daniel and the Apocalypse*, Claxton, Remsen, & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia, 1873.

(20) Moon, p.51.

(21) *Ibid.*, p.48.

LEADERS INFLUENCE MILLER AGAINST TRUTH

"...Satan and his angels were busily engaged in laying snares to unsettle the faith of the body. He affected the minds of persons who had had an experience in the messages, and who had an appearance of humility. . . . Many who had led in the first and second messages now denied them, and there was division and confusion throughout the body.

"I saw leading men watching him [William Miller], fearing lest he should receive the third angel's message and the commandments of God. And as he would lean toward the light from heaven, these men would lay some plan to draw his mind away. A human influence was exerted to keep him in darkness and to retain his influence among those who opposed the truth.

"He leaned to human wisdom instead of divine, but being broken with arduous labor in his Master's cause and by age, he was not as accountable as those who kept him from the truth. They are responsible; the sin rests upon them." *Early Writings*, p. 257.

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

FROM REVELATION 9 & HISTORY BY JOSIAH LITCH*



THE OTTOMAN SULTAN MEHMED II, 1430-1481

HOLY PROFESSION

by Josiah Litch*

CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR,—You profess to have put on the Lord Jesus Christ: but remember, “If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.” Again “If any man says that he is Christ’s, he ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” And it is only while we exhibit Christ’s spirit that we either give to others or have ourselves a good evidence of being his.

What then was the spirit of Christ? It was a spirit of love toward the wretched and perishing. He left all his glory behind, to humble himself, suffer and die for sinners; that they might not perish but have everlasting life. And shall we call ourselves *Christians*, the disciples of this Jesus, while we in fact do not and are not willing to make any sacrifice for the salvation of those for whom the Redeemer died? Have you spoken to that friend or neighbor of yours, with whom you daily converse in the merest trifles, respecting the awful subjects of HEAVEN... JUDGMENT and ETERNITY? Have you prayed and wept over that unconverted *parent, brother, sister, child*, or it may be, *husband or wife*? Have you spoken to them of their danger?

This is an employment worthy of the holy profession you have made; and should constitute the great and all absorbing business of life... The judge is even now at the door, how contemptible should all worldly pleasure appear, and how vastly important everlasting things.

UNCONVERTED SINNER,—This is your working day... Your sins have separated between you and your God, and unless removed they must ruin you forever. Do you ask what you can do? I reply, cease to sin, repent and believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, *and you shall be saved*. Do not imagine you will ever be any better by any process you can pursue, until you believe in Christ as your Savior, and through his merits that God can be just and yet be your justifier. It is the only way to pardon and salvation... Why, then, if salvation is so important and the time so short in which you may secure it, can you find time to attend to every thing else rather than to this great work? “The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand; Repent ye and believe the gospel.”•—L.

*Signs of the Times, January 1, 1841, p. 1.

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