

## Seventh-Day Adventists

### A Changing society

The end of the Revolutionary war (1775-1783) brought not just the prize of independence from England, but also freedom of religion in the sense that churches now were free from the control and subsidies of \_\_\_\_\_ support and began “relying wholly on their own resources and on God” (Lyman Beecher [Presbyterian minister] – 1775-1863)

The French Revolution (1789-1799) was characterized by a rejection of the Monarchy and the persecution of state-run churches and clergy during the Reign of Terror while the “\_\_\_\_\_” was running rampant.

Enlightenment and rationalism had new-found freedom to speak as they wished endeavoring to undermine Biblical revelation and conquer “an \_\_\_\_\_ of superstition.”

Immigration was flooding the growing nation with cults, sects and \_\_\_\_\_ from all religions and nations.

The “benevolent \_\_\_\_\_” was the churches response to the void created from the lack of a state-run church where there was no referee to arbitrate between the traditional scriptural debates and homegrown theologies.

Voluntarism – ministry actions unaided by the state and undirected by any supreme ecclesiastical authority, described the spiritual fervor after the Revolutionary \_\_\_\_\_.

Denominational universities sprung up \_\_\_\_\_ from government control.

Bible & Tract Societies – \_\_\_\_\_ themselves as a “united evangelical front” among differing denominations and sectarian jealousies.”

Sunday Schools became the first educational \_\_\_\_\_ to the many new immigrants and the population explosion westward.

The Second Great Awakening primarily promoted by Charles Grandison Finney (1792-1875) brought revivals, camp meetings and a renewed evangelistic fervor towards \_\_\_\_\_ (not just denominations)

Schisms developed even within \_\_\_\_\_ denominations to where churches were a mixture of differences and doctrines – the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Methodist Episcopal, etc.

William Miller (1782-1849), a farmer turned lay-preacher, broke from the Baptist church and promoted “Adventism” proclaiming the Lord would return March 21, 1843 based upon his rendering of Daniel 8:14. (Mt. 24:36, 42, 44; 25:13; Mk. 13:35; Acts 1:7)

A second date, October 22, 1844, passed without event becoming known through news \_\_\_\_\_ in society as “the Great Disappointment of 1844.”

Ellen Gould Harmon, \_\_\_\_\_ years old at the time of the Great Disappointment and a disciple of Miller, claimed to have received her first vision of “of a large number of Adventists following Christ into heaven.”

Ellen (married at 18 to James White) was accepted as a prophetess (though she never claimed to be on – just a messenger) and her teachings were accepted as authoritative since like followers believed in active spiritual gifts through which \_\_\_\_\_ was still being given to the church.

The official founding of the Seventh Day Adventist Church was in \_\_\_\_\_.

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) according to the church is the \_\_\_\_\_ translated American non-fiction author of either gender having written 24 published books, 5000 articles, and more than 200 informational leaflets.

Seventh Day Adventists number more than 22 million in over 235 countries with published materials in over \_\_\_\_\_ languages.

They have over 2 million in their educational programs and over 21 million outpatient visits in their healthcare ministries worldwide.

#### Where we Agree with the Seventh Day Adventists

Of the \_\_\_\_\_ Doctrinal Beliefs which are publicly published by the Adventists – we agree on the majority. “...Suffice it to say that the Adventists do have a clean bill of health where the major doctrines of Christian theology are involved.” (Martin, Kingdom of the Cults, pg. 608).

However, SDA stipulates that “Revision of these statements may be expected at a General Conference Session when the church is led by the Holy Spirit to a \_\_\_\_\_ understanding of Bible truth or finds better language in which to express the teachings of God’s Holy Word. (<https://www.adventist.org/beliefs/>)

#### Where we Disagree

##### The Sabbath

Seventh Day Adventists believe that the Sabbath was instituted (“blessed and sanctified”) in Genesis 2:1-3, affirmed before the law in Exodus 16:22-29, and enshrined in the law as the \_\_\_\_\_ commandment in Exodus 20:8-11, “for mankind for all eternity.”

Seventh Day Adventists believe that this change from the Sabbath (Saturday) to the First day of the week (Sunday) was a fulfillment of Daniel 7: \_\_\_\_\_ and that it will be restored prior to the Second Coming according to Revelation 14:9-12.

Seventh Day Adventists do not rely upon their Sabbath keeping as a means of salvation or of winning merit before God. "We are saved by grace alone. Hence our Sabbath observance, as also our loyalty to every other command of God, is an expression of our \_\_\_\_\_ for our Creator and Redeemer." (Questions on Doctrine, pg. 153)

We believe that services on Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ His resurrection on the first day of the week – Mt. 28:1; Lu. 24:1; John 20:1

We believe that services on Sunday were the \_\_\_\_\_ of the early church – Acts 20:7; 1Co. 16:1; Rev. 1:10

We believe that services on Sunday do \_\_\_\_\_ violate the commandment to honor a day of rest – Mt. 12:1-12; Mk. 2:23-28; Jn. 5:10-18; 7:22-23; 9:14-16; Col. 2:16

The doctrine of conditional immortality – “ \_\_\_\_\_ ”

The Adventists “believe that, in general, the Scriptures teach that the soul of man represents the whole man, and not a particular part independent of the other component parts of man's nature; and further, that the soul cannot exist apart from the body, for man is a \_\_\_\_\_.” *Questions on Doctrine, pg. 515*

We, as Adventists, have reached the definite conclusion that man \_\_\_\_\_ in the tomb until the resurrection morning. Then, at the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4, 5), the resurrection of the just (Acts 24:15), the righteous come forth immortalized, at the call of Christ the Life-giver. And they then enter into life everlasting, in their eternal home in the kingdom of glory. Such is our understanding. *Questions on Doctrine, pg. 520*

We believe that “life everlasting” is a \_\_\_\_\_ possession of the born-again believer, not something that is achieved AFTER the resurrection – 1Jn. 5:11-13.

We believe that once departing the body, the soul is present with the \_\_\_\_\_ – Phil. 1:21-24; 2Co. 5:6-8.

We believe that the saints who preceded us in death will return \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord in the Rapture, hence, no soul-sleep with the body in an unconscious state – 1Thes 4:13-18.

### Annihilationism

The Adventists believe that And when the lost die the second death, they will be destroyed, like no more, like ash on the ground. They are destroyed forever, not forever burning. The fire is an all-consuming fire. And when all wickedness has been destroyed, the fire will go \_\_\_\_\_.

“Behold, they are like stubble; the fire consumes them; they cannot deliver themselves from the power of the flame. No coal for warming oneself is this, no \_\_\_\_\_ to sit before!” (Isaiah 47:14, ESV).

Though the Adventists recognize in Matthew 25:46 that “eternal” (aionios) is the same word describing both punishment and life, they give \_\_\_\_\_ meanings to the word “eternal.”

They say, “Let us repeat: In the expression "eternal punishment," just as in "eternal redemption" and "eternal judgment," the Bible is referring to all eternity—not as of process, but as of result. It is not an endless process of punishment, but an effectual punishment, which will be \_\_\_\_\_ and forever (aionios).” (Questions on Doctrine, pg. 540)

We believe that “destroy” does not mean annihilation since Christ used “hell” (gr. Gehenna) as His illustration, where the Valley of Hinnom, a garbage dump outside Jerusalem, burned with perpetual \_\_\_\_\_ – Mt. 5:22; 10:28.

We believe additionally that “destruction” has the Greek meaning of “ruination” or “everlasting ruin” – to take that destruction means annihilation does injustice to the New Testament Greek \_\_\_\_\_ – 2Thes. 1:8-9.

We believe that the Lake of \_\_\_\_\_, the final location for the unjust, has “torment” as its intent to “denote great conscious pain and misery, never annihilation or cessation of consciousness” (Martin, Kingdom of the Cults, pg. 647) – Rev. 20:10-15; 14:10-11.

## The Spirit of Prophecy

The Seventh Day Adventists believe that though the Canon of Scripture is closed (nothing new being added to the 66 books), heaven’s communication with man continues with the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit.

James White, thrice General Conference president, speaking of the work of Ellen G. White, expressly declares that Adventists believe that God \_\_\_\_\_ her "to do a special work at this time, among this people.” *The Review and Herald, June 13, 1871, p. 205.* (Questions on Doctrine, pg. 97)

Though Ellen G. White claimed to be “a messenger” with the gift of prophecy, and that the gifts are still \_\_\_\_\_ today – within the denomination the Adventists “are of necessity committed to her visions and counsel because they believe that the Spirit of prophecy rested upon her and upon no other person of their group.” (So, why does just Ellen White have the gift of prophecy?)

Walter Martin, states that, “Although I believe that the influence of White’s counsel on the Adventist denomination parallels the influence of J. N. Darby of the Plymouth Brethren and A.B. Simpson of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the claim that she possessed a “gift of prophecy” akin to that described in 1 Corinthians 14, as believed by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, I \_\_\_\_\_ accept.” (*Martin, Kingdom of the Cults, pg. 633*).

We believe the gift of prophecy was given in earlier times to foretell truth from God, the Apostle Paul has redefined it to mean the “forth-telling” of the \_\_\_\_\_ of God – 1Co. 14:1-3.

### The Sanctuary, Investigative Judgement and the scapegoat

Daniel 8:14 notes that after the 2,300 “evenings and mornings” (which the Adventists take for years), “...the sanctuary will be properly restored.” Hebrews 8:1-3 mentions Christ as the high priest, of whom one of His responsibilities was to “cleanse” the Tabernacle on the Day of Atonement.

Seventh Day Adventists believe “that Christ was inaugurated as our High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844 AD, at the end of the 2300-day prophetic period, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgement, which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of atonement.”

“The investigative judgement reveals to heavenly intelligences ... who are deemed worthy to have a part in the first resurrection ... who among the living are abiding in Christ and ready for translation. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent”

At the Second Advent, following the pattern in Leviticus 16, sin will find its final disposition of sin upon the scapegoat (in no way bearing sin as a substitute, but as having the responsibility of sin charged to him – Satan). *Questions on Doctrine, pg. 400, 422-423, 444.*

Walter Martin states, “...the great error of the sanctuary and investigative judgement teachings is the premise that sins confessed by Christians are not fully dealt with until the conclusion of the investigative judgment, a position Scripture will not allow. Actually, most are agreed that they have created doctrines to compensate for errors in prophetic interpretation. But the very doctrines intended to solve their theological problems have in turn only increased their dilemma – a dilemma which they have yet to solve! Romans 8:1 declares, ‘There is therefore now no condemnation [i.e., judgment] to them which are in Christ Jesus.’” *Martin, Kingdom of the Cults, pg. 673.*

## The Second Coming of Christ and end times

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Savior's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die. The almost complete fulfillment of most lines of prophecy, together with the present condition of the world, indicates that Christ's coming is near. The time of that event has not been revealed, and we are therefore exhorted to be ready at all times. (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 5:1-6; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2:8; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7; 14:14-20; 19:11-21.)

<https://www.adventist.org/second-coming/>

The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close, Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever. (Rev. 20; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Jer. 4:23-26; Rev. 21:1-5; Mal. 4:1; Eze. 28:18, 19.)

<https://www.adventist.org/millennium-and-the-end-of-sin/>

In other words, Seventh Day Adventists believe that the church is \_\_\_\_\_ in the Seven-Year Tribulation, no pre-tribulation rapture of the church, no bema seat judgment rewards (for service), no millennial reign of Christ on earth, and no eternal hell fire for Satan and the unjust.

We believe we are in the church \_\_\_\_\_ (age of Grace) until the imminent return of Christ in the clouds for catching up the church (1Thes 4:13-18; 1Co. 15:51-54), keeping her from the time of wrath (1Thes. 1:10; 5:9-10; Rev. 3:10). The Judgment seat of Christ (2Co. 5:10) and the marriage of the Lamb to His bride, the Church (Rev. 19:7-9), will take place in heaven while the time of wrath (7-year Tribulation) is taking place on earth (Rev. 6:17; 16:1-19).

We believe the Second Coming of the Lord will culminate as He returns to the earth with His saints, splitting the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1-9), victorious at the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16), and ushering in His millennial reign on earth over those righteous who endured to the end in their \_\_\_\_\_ bodies (Mt. 24:13).

## Vegetarianism

Many Adventists stick to a vegetarian diet (modeled after Leviticus 11) and abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and narcotic drugs, believing that personal health can be a powerful expression of \_\_\_\_\_.

Though certain meats are allowed in Leviticus 11, there is a primary promotion of a plant & grain-based diet.

Standards of behavior and diet are strongly promoted and can differ church to church and country to country, but the Adventist General Conference \_\_\_\_\_ “recognize the autonomy of each individual and their God-given power of choice.”

<https://www.adventist.org/who-are-seventh-day-adventists/adventist-focus-on-lifestyle/>

A helpful acronym to their belief that optimum health is found by utilizing the simplest forms of nature, is NEWSTART.

N =

E =

W =

S =

T =

A =

R =

T =

## Cult or Sect?

Cult, which shares an origin with culture and cultivate, comes from the Latin cultus, a noun with meanings ranging from "tilling, cultivation" to "training or education" to "adoration." By the 19th century, the word came to be used of "a religion regarded as unorthodox or spurious" – meaning outwardly similar or corresponding to something \_\_\_\_\_ having its genuine qualities.

Sect, a dissenting or schismatic religious body especially one regarded as extreme or heretical, additionally is descriptive of a group adhering to a distinctive doctrine or to a leader.

\_\_\_\_\_ – a formal division in or separation from a church or a religious body. I would hold to Seventh Day Adventists being a schism from Protestant Christianity adhering to specific doctrines and a specific leader.

## Bibliography

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Martin, Walter. *The Kingdom of the Cults*. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2019, Bethany House Publishers