**There is Heresy within Seventh Day Adventism (SDA)**

**What Happened on October 22, 1844?**

Many things happened in 1844. Mormon founder Joseph Smith, Jr. was killed, a man called the Bab went to Mecca and claimed he was the forerunner to what would become the Baha’i’s, Morse code was first sent by telegraph, communist founders Engels and Marx met, the YMCA was started, Goodyear patented Vulcanized rubber, and James Polk defeated Henry Clay to become President of the United States. But despite all of this, nothing important happened on October 22nd. Paradoxically, that date is only important for what did not happen.

Starting in 1833 William Miller and the Millerites predicted the return of Christ on October 22, 1844. Nothing happened, except a “Great Disappointment” and that the Millerite Movement petered out; many became disillusioned and thought Jesus would never return. But the Millerite Movement spawned new groups . Some said the date was wrong and predicted other dates later. These people coalesced into the Russellite movement, which became the Jehovah’s Witnesses (about 8 million members and 19 million attendance today), and Christadelphians (about 70 thousand today). Another group believed Hyram Edson and Ellen G. White.

Hyram said he received a vision showing that the date was correct, but it was a different event: not the return of Jesus to earth, but the start of Christ’s “Investigative Judgment” in the second chamber in the heavenly sanctuary. These became Seventh-Day Adventists, of which there are about 16.6 million, as of 2008.

While evangelical Christians can quickly see that Mormonism and the Jehovah’s Witnesses are false, heretical groups, they differ on the SDA. Complicating the facts are that all SDA don’t believe the same things. In the 1970’s there was a split of Seventh Day Adventists. A “conservative” wing continues stick to Ellen G. White’s strange teachings as equal authority to scripture. A “liberal” wing says the Bible is our authority, downplaying Ellen G. White and the Investigative Judgment. It is fairly close to evangelical Christianity. Excluding from their faith those who do not worship only on the Sabbath is a divisive schism, not a heresy. However, the issue of the Sabbath is like a smoke screen for more serious problems. So I won’t say that SDA is a cult or heresy, or that no one within the SDA is saved. But I will say that there is heresy within the SDA movement, and the bad within it has been in opposition to the true gospel.

**Heretical Teaching within the SDA**

**Christ’s Investigative Judgment** is their view that Christ will only complete atoning for our sins in the at the judgment after October 1844 A.D..

Many hold the words of their **prophetess, Ellen G. White,** to be on par with the Bible. But her words should not be trusted because they contradict Jesus and the apostles, and she has been charged with plagiarism; though SDA defenders merely it “borrowing”.

**Cling to the Law:** They don’t understand the New Testament teaching on grace. Ellen White in *Amazing Grace* p.136 says, “**Under the new covenant, the conditions by which eternal life may be gained are the same as under the old.**”

**Satan bears our sins** as a scapegoat, not Christ.

Some SDA have denied the **Trinity.** But today the official SDA statement of faith affirms it.

**SDA has been Schismatic**

Even a group without soul-perishing heresy can be schismatic (divisive) if they say that other Christians outside of their organization are of Satan or the Beast and won’t go to Heaven.

**“When you obey the decree that commands you to cease from labor on Sunday and worship God…*.*** you consent to receive the mark of the beast.” Review and Herald, July 13, 1897. But by 1909 Ellen G. White said it was all right at least to not work on Sundays.

Worshipping on any day is OK, and thinking you have to worship on the Seventh-day is wrong, but that is not heretically wrong. Seventh-Day Baptists also think that, and they are neither heretical nor schismatic. However, Many SDA claim Sunday worship is the mark of the beast, and those who commit the “sin” of Sunday worship are damned according to some SDA.

**Other Serious SDA Errors**

**The Mosaic Law** is still to be followed, except for things such as animal sacrifices and new moons.

**Can’t eat unclean foods** in the Old Testament.

**Soul-sleep:** People who die are not conscious again until the final Judgment

**No Hell, but annihilation:** All of the times Jesus spoke on Hell they believe people misunderstood.

**The Little Horn is Jesus**, not the Antichrist in Daniel 8

**Water baptism** is essential to salvation.

**Jesus is Michael the archangel,** but they say an archangel is not an angel.

**Easter** and **Christmas** are considered bad.

**Racism** in the teachings of Ellen G. White.

**Good Things in SDA**

SDA teach no abortion except to save the life of the mother or a serious moral dilemma. They are not to drink alcohol or smoke tobacco.

There are two especially commendable things in SDA. First, Seventh-Day Adventists take scripture authoritatively. When you show them where they are unscriptural, regardless of whether they agree or disagree, at least they should take it seriously. This is in contrast to some other groups, that where you show them where they are unbiblical, they don’t care if they are scriptural or not.

While there is sometimes so-called Christian teaching, labeled easy-believism, that says that once you say you accept Christ it is not matter what you do anymore, Seventh-Day Adventism has always been consistently against that. They take obedience seriously. This is also good.

However, these commendable things were also true of the Pharisees in the time of Jesus. The two root causes of their problems are Ellen G. White, and that they pick and choose scripture to ignore.

**Taking Scripture Selectively**

Picking and choosing scripture just to support their doctrines can lead for bad consequences. For example, when the SDA teach their “Investigative Judgment” doctrine, they ignore the many verses that show that we are already saved in 2 Timothy 1:9. We are justified in Christ in Romans 3:27-28. We are sanctified (past and present tense.) in Acts 20:32; 26:18; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; Hebrews 10:10,14; Jude 1. We are no longer under law, but under grace according to Romans 6:14; 4:5-8; 3:27-28;7:4; 9:30-32; 10:4; Galatians 2:19-21; 3:10-13; 17-19; 23-25; 4:8-10. We are saved by grace, not works in Ephesians 2:8-9;15.

When the SDA teach that we are still under the Mosaic Law, they ignore Matthew 15:11; Luke 16:16; Acts 10:13; Romans 3:19-21; 27-28; 10:9

Seventh-Day Adventism ignores the fact that the Old Covenant is obsolete (Hebrews 7:18; 8:15). I have not yet even heard a decent attempt at an answer for how that verse can be true in their eyes. On the other hand, they can accuse us of taking scripture selectively, because we no longer obey many of the Old Testament commands.

Our answer to that has two parts. First they have to agree that they don’t either, for neither we nor they do animal sacrifices. Second, when God declares in scripture something in the Old Testament is superseded, we believe God; they don’t. Because of that they have to selectively ignore parts of the New Testament.

**The SDA Heresy of Christ’s Investigative Judgment**

Seventh-Day Adventists have consistently taught that Christ died on the cross for our sins, that there will be a final Great White Throne Judgment with Christ as the Judge. That is good, - so far. However, they teach that Christ did not finish the atonement at the cross; Christ will only finish atoning at the “Investigative Judgment”.

<http://searchingthescriptures.net/main_pages/answering_cults/seventh_day_adventism/sda_a_cult.htm> contains the following:

The investigative judgment doctrine of the SDA’s teaches that in fulfillment of Old Testament sanctuary typology, Christ entered into the second apartment of the sanctuary in heaven in 1844 to begin a work of “investigative judgment” to see who was worthy of eternal life, both of those still living and those dead.

Ellen G. White, who was heavily influenced by William Miller, an early Adventist, agreed with his date of October, 1844 as the date for the “visible” second coming of Christ. Christ obviously did not return on that date, so in order to “save face” over a false prophecy, White’s doctrine of “investigative judgment” was born. Rather than say1844 was the date when the second coming of Christ was to occur, it soon became the date when the work of FINAL ATONEMENT, which would blot out a believer’s sin, would BEGIN.

This teaching is the opposite of the full atonement taught by in the New Testament Scriptures, and also mocks the words of our Savior from the Cross, “It is finished.” (John 19:30) Hebrews 10:12 also states “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, FOREVER, sat down on the right hand of God.” Christ paid fully for our sins, atoning for them fully. No Scripture teaches otherwise.

In 1877, Uriah Smith, an early Adventist, declared, “Christ did not make the atonement when he shed his blood upon the cross. Let this fact be fixed forever in the mind.” (*The Sanctuary and the Twenty-Three Hundred Days of Daniel VIII*, 14, p. 276, quoted in *Are the Gospel and the 1844 Theology Compatible?* by Robert D. Brinsmead, p.17).

Ellen White herself declared in *The Great Controversy* that “before Christ’s work for the redemption of men is completed, there is a work of atonement for the removal of sin from the sanctuary. This is the service which BEGAN when the 2300 days ended.” (October, 1844)  So, Ellen White places the time of Christ’s atonement AFTER 1844.

While plagiarizing various writers of her time (or as the Adventists like to call it, “literary BORROWING”) she also copied statements teaching that redemption was finished at the cross, and some SDA’s like to quote only these references.  But in all honesty, they must admit the SDA view was and is a denial of the atoning work of Christ at Calvary. There is even found in “The Great Controversy” this denial of Him as our absolute mediator. “Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil.” Later in the same book this statement is made, “In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor.”

Heading 23, … entitled, “Christ’s Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary”, says, “He (Christ) was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement.”

But 1 John 2:1 says, “...And if anyone sins, we have [present tense] an Advocate [intercessor] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” NKJV

**Ellen G. White is a False Prophetess of the SDA**

Those loyal to Ellen White published statements such as those contained in the *Ministry* magazine of October, 1981. Ron Graybill, who was the assistant secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate at that time, made this statement on page 8, “We believe the revelation and inspiration of both the Bible and Ellen White’s writings to be of equal quality.  The superintendence of the Holy Spirit was just as careful and thorough in one case as in the other.” Graybill, however, went on to state that... “we dare not use Ellen White as the final arbiter in matters of doctrine.” In later years, he resigned his position. This is from

http://searchingthescriptures.net/main\_pages/answering\_cults/seventh\_day\_adventism/sda\_a\_cult.htm

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Point eight has the convert confessing, “that the gift of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church.”

Point thirteen identifies the Seventh-Day Adventist Church as the “remnant church of Bible Prophecy.”

Of course, these doctrines are all the teachings of Ellen G. White.

As the convert examines their baptismal booklet under the heading “Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-Day Adventists,” the beliefs that cause others to conclude the SDA church is a cult become apparent.

·  Under heading 17, “The Gift of Prophecy,” we find this statement “This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church, comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction.”

**Examples of Plagiarism**

The examples below are pulled from [a chart of examples of Ellen’s plagiarisms](http://www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/health2.htm) based on the content of *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* by Dr. Ronald Numbers. There are many more examples too.] These are from <http://isitso.org/guide/sdaplag.html>.

“It is as truly a sin against Heaven, to violate a law of life, as to break one of the ten commandments” (Larkin B. Coles, *Philosophy of Health* (1853), p. 215).

“It is as truly a sin to violate the laws of our being as it is to break the ten commandments. To do either is to break God’s laws.” (EGW, *Christian Temperance* (1890), p. 53.)

[Larkin B. Coles, who died 1856, was a Millerite.]

“The sympathy existing between the mind and the body is so great, that when one is affected, both are affected” (Larkin B. Coles, *Philosophy of Health* (1853), p. 127).

“The sympathy which exists between the mind and the body is very great. When one is affected, the other responds.” (EGW, *Testimonies*, vol.4, p. 60 (1876).)

“Flesh eating is certainly not necessary to health or strength. . . .If it be used, it must be a matter of fancy. . . .When we increase the proportion of our animal nature, we suppress the intellectual. . . .The use of flesh tends to create a grossness of body and spirit” (Larkin B. Coles: Philosophy of Health, (1853), p. 64-67)

“. . .flesh meat is not necessary for health or strength. If used it is because a depraved appetite craves it.  When the animal propensities are increased, the intellectual and moral powers are decreased. The use of the flesh of animals tends to cause a grossness of body and benumbs the fine sensibilities of the mind.” (EGW, Testimonies, vol.2, p. 63 (1868).)

The rest of this is from <http://isitso.org/guide/sdaplag.html>.

One of “these books” that EGW was referring to was her major volume titled *The Great Controversy*. About this book, she wrote:

   “While writing the **manuscript of *The Great Controversy****,* I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. A**nd many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night**, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.” (Letter 56, 1911; Colporteur Ministry, p. 128. Emphasis supplied.)

Was this so? Did she really receive the substance and details of the scenes she described in the book from “visions of the night”? SDA members have believed this for over 100 years. But evidence which has come to light in the past thirty years has made it abundantly clear that most of the book was pieced together directly from the writings of earlier authors.

Says Kaspersen:

   We are now being able to draw the following conclusions about the book ***The Great Controversy***by Ellen G. White,

   1. The book contains the heart of the SDA faith system.

   2. Very little of the material in the book is original with Ellen White. Investigation has been showing that the book is made up by material from at least 88 different authors.

   3. The book was published in three editions: 1884, 1888, 1911. The 1884-edition (*The Spirit of Prophecy,* Vol. 4), was simply doctored, new editions of James White’s [Ellen’s husband] book***Life Incidents and Sketches of William Miller***. James White in turn had been borrowing the material for his books from books by J.N. Andrews, Sylvester Bliss, and others.

   4. The 1888-edition was augmented with quite a number of pages, consisting of historical material, and from Uriah Smith - who in turn had been drawing from various sources. There were no references, and no credit had been given to the respective authors.

   5. Entire chapters in the book are from other authors.

   6. Historical errors these authors had been doing, were copied straight into ***The Great Controversy.*** This should refute the claim some are making, that “God showed Ellen White what to copy, and what to leave out”.

   7. The theology in the book, and accordingly the central doctrines of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, like the 2300 years, 1844, the sanctuary, the Investigative Judgment, USA in the prophecies, the mark of the Beast etc., had in fact been derived from Adventist pioneers as J.N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, Owen R.L. Crosier etc.

SDA historian Donald Adams was forced to admit after reviewing the evidence:

   “What we find when we examine the historical portions of the Great Controversy (those events from the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. through the French Revolution) is that entire chapters at a time **are simply selective abridgments of protestant historians.** . . . In the samples I have examined there is not one historical fact in her text that is not in their text.” (Donald McAdams, *Ellen G. White and the Protestant Historians.* Unpublished Manuscript, p. 16-17.)

   “The hand-written manuscript on John Huss follows the historian so closely that it does not even seem to have gone through an intermediary stage, but rather from the historian’s printed page to Mrs. White’s manuscript, including historical errors and moral exhortations.”(Donald McAdams, “Shifting View of Inspiration.” *Spectrum*, vol. 10, No. 4, March. 1980. Quoted in Rea, p. 164. Emphasis supplied.)

[Documented examples from Walter Rea’s book *The White Lie*](http://www.ellenwhiteexposed.com/rea/rea9.htm) regarding the sources of material in *The Great Controversy* give absolutely no room for any question that White plagiarized earlier writers word for word over and over, claiming divine inspiration for what was ungodly deception.

**The SDA Heresy that We are Still Under the Old Covenant**

<http://searchingthescriptures.net/main_pages/answering_cults/seventh_day_adventism/sda_a_cult.htm> says the following:

Point six reads, “I accept the Ten Commandments as still binding upon Christians, and it is my purpose by the power of the indwelling Christ, to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord.”

 Point ten requires the convert to commit themselves to “abstaining from all unclean foods.” (Contrary to what Paul said about foods: 1 Timothy 4:1-5)

Point thirteen identifies the Seventh-Day Adventist Church as the “remnant church of Bible Prophecy.”

Of course, these doctrines are all the teachings of Ellen G. White.

When God commanded Peter to “kill and eat” unclean animals in Acts 10:13 should Peter have obeyed God, or told God he was going to follow the law, regardless of what God now commanded? Peter did the second, and God rebuked Peter in Acts 10:15. If God told you that something changed in His law, and you had to choose between what God said and what the law said before, would you choose obeying God or the law? If you would say the second, or that there never is a difference, then go do your animal sacrifices, and remember all of your new moon feasts.

“but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. Why? Because *they did* not *seek it* by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumbling stone.” Romans 9:30-32

Hebrews 8:15 says that the first covenant is “obsolete”, and the former commandment was annulled in Hebrews 7:18. We do not need to observe either sabbaths or new moons according to

Colossians 2:16-17

Sometimes people can look over the plain meaning of scripture to put in their own limitations. For example, when God’s word says “don’t steal”, that means of course don’t steal from women. So then is it OK to steal from men? Of course not! God’s word meant don’t steal from anyone, and God did not say it was limited to women or men. In Colossians 2:16-17, which new moons was God referring to: January through March, or April through June? Of course it is all new moons. In Colossians 2:16-17, which Sabbaths is God referring to? Just sabbaths of years, just special sabbaths, or just regular sabbaths? The word “Sabbaths” means all sabbaths, which is how the early Christians understood it. This kind be hard for Seventh-Day Adventists to swallow. If a Seventh-Day Adventist says the old Covenant is not obsolete, then show them Heb 7:18, 8:15; and Colossians 2:16-17. If they still say they are not obsolete, then don’t waste time talking with them anymore, because they don’t want to listen to God.

Anyway, back to Romans 14:5-6, which says, “One person esteems *one* day above another; another esteems every day *alike*. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes *it* to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.”

There were people back then who may have held a day special, and Paul does not tell us whether it was Saturday, Sunday, or some other day. He also said some Christians did not hold any day special. Paul did not say “you are not worshipping on my special day”, or kick out Christians who hold a different day special, or kick out Christians who hold no day special. Paul accepted all of them, and we should follow the example of the apostle.

**So do we have no law, and can we do anything we want?**

“God forbid!” as Paul says in Romans 6:1-2. The old law is gone, but we have a new law, written on our hearts (Hebrews 10:16) and taught to us in the New Testament. In some ways, such as divorce, the New Covenant law is stricter. In other ways, such as men not cutting the hair around their temples, is less strict. So what part of the Old Testament law should we still obey? Clearly we no longer need to follow the laws that God said we not longer should follow. And we must still obey everything God reiterated in the New Testament. It might take some wisdom to determine the things the New Testament is silent about, but that is not relevant to this discussion, because the Sabbath is in the first category, of things we are explicitly told we do not have to follow.

So, for example, the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament said don’t worship other gods, don’t steal, don’t murder, don’t covet, etc., and the New Testament says the same. While the Old Testament commanded the Israelites to keep the Sabbath, the New Testament specifically says this is no longer binding, in Colossians 2:16-17 and Romans 14:5-6. Just like we don’t have to do animal sacrifices anymore, we do not have to keep the Saturday Sabbath anymore.

**The SDA Heresy that Satan Bears our Sins**

Christ bore our sins on His body in 1 Peter 2:24, and He became sin for us in 2 Corinthians 5:21. The SDA would agree, but Ellen G. White in *The Great Controversy* adds that Christ then laid our sins on Satan. She bases this on misinterpreting the type of the scapegoat in Leviticus 16.

**Racism – Separate but Equal - in SDA Teachings**

“Every species of animal which God had created were preserved in the ark. The confused species which God did not create, which were the result of [amalgamation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bestiality), were destroyed by the flood. Since the flood there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men.” Ellen G. White (1860).Spiritual Gifts, Volume 4. The Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association. So what are these “certain races” that were amalgamations of man and beast?

“Let the colored people work chiefly for those of their own race. ...The best thing will be to provide the colored people who accept the truth, with places of worship of their own, in which they can carry on their services by themselves... Schools and sanitariums for colored people should be established.” Testimonies, vol. 9, p.206, 207

“Let white and colored people be labored for in separate, distinct lines.” Testimonies, v.9, p.210

However, Ellen G. White did not advocate being mean or exploiting them, and the SDA sided with the north in the Civil War.

**The Trinity: Many seem OK on That Now**

Many early SDA viewed Jesus as less than the Father; and some today still deny the Trinity. However, in their statement of faith today, Fundamental belief no.2 is belief in the Trinity. “There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three co-eternal Persons. God is immortal, all-powerful, all-knowing, above all, and ever present.”

Their belief statement declares [[68]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criticism_of_Ellen_G._White#cite_note-68) Ellen White clearly stated that Jesus was divine in her book *The Desire of Ages*

By His humanity, Christ touched humanity; by His divinity, He lays hold upon the throne of God. As the Son of man, He gave us an example of obedience; as the Son of God, He gives us power to obey. It was Christ who from the bush on Mount Horeb spoke to Moses saying, “I AM THAT I AM.... Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” Exodus 3:14. This was the pledge of Israel’s deliverance. So when He came “in the likeness of men,” He declared Himself the I AM. The Child of Bethlehem, the meek and lowly Saviour, is God “manifest in the flesh.” 1 Timothy 3:16.

— The Desire Of Ages, p. 24

Ellen White also correctly stated that the Holy Spirit was divine and part of the Godhead. “The Holy Spirit has a personality, else He could not bear witness to our spirits and with our spirits that we are the children of God. He must also be a divine person, else He could not search out the secrets which lie hidden in the mind of God. “For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” (1 Corinthians 2:11) The prince of the power of evil can only be held in check by the power of God in the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit.”

— Evangelism, p. 617

**Stop Doubting God, Who Says We are Not Longer to Keep the Law**

Some failed to understand that we are no longer to keep the law (Gal 2:16; 3:2,10-12). Paul means the Old Testament Law, which the New Testament calls obsolete. But we but we instead have a new law, written on our hearts, the law of Christ, that the New Testament teaches us.

God could not bear the new moons and feast of evil people. (Isaiah 1:13-15). God has made Zion forget her feasts and Sabbaths (Lamentations 2:11).

by Steven M. Morrison, PhD.