

# MILLERITES

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

Take a minute to pray for God to guide you as you study...

In our last lesson we learned that the Bible predicted a period of time where the truth about Jesus would be hidden from the world. Thankfully God wouldn't allow this time to go on forever! God would send a man to reawaken a sleeping world and direct them back to the Bible. This man's name is William Miller, the man who began what is now called the Millerite movement.

William Miller (1782-1849) was a skeptic who when converted began studying the Bible furiously as he found that it best described the world and its problems. As he began studying, he found Bible prophecy especially interesting and began to seek understanding on several key prophecies that concern the second coming and events that must take place before Jesus comes back.

Read **Matthew 24:1-31** to see what Jesus himself said would take place before His second coming. Write down the sequence of events that must take place.

It was in this passage that William Miller saw Jesus refer to the book of Daniel and even say, *"let the reader understand."* This lead Miller to the longest time prophecy in the Bible, which we will discover, points to a wonderful truth about God and His plan of redemption.

Read **Daniel 8** and write down the basics from this vision that Daniel is given.

In this vision Daniel sees a Ram and a Goat. Thankfully God sent Gabriel to tell Daniel the meaning of the vision! God wants us to know what He is up to! However, there was a portion of the vision that the angel Gabriel did not answer and it was about the 2300 days.

In Daniel 8:27, he says:

**Daniel 8:27:** "I, Daniel, was worn out. I lay exhausted for several days. Then I got up and went about the king's business. I was appalled by the vision; **it was beyond understanding.**"

Daniel wanted to know what the 2300 day prophecy meant! He knew the only way to have a chance at understanding it was to go to God in prayer and this is exactly what he did.

And here's what happened next...

**Daniel 9:20:** "While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord my God for his holy hill— while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight"

Gabriel came specifically to give Daniel understanding (Daniel 9:22-23) about the portion of the vision he was so confused about. Gabriel walks Daniel through a portion of the 2300 days telling him when the Messiah of Israel and the whole world would come to save. Read **Daniel 9:24-27**.

When William Miller was studying these prophecies, he could see the fulfillment using the biblical key for time prophecy: **1 day = 1 year** (Ezekiel 4:6 and Numbers 14:34). He then knew that 70 weeks meant 490 years and that 2300 days meant 2300 years. Daniel himself was even told *"The vision of the evenings and mornings which has been told is true.....For it pertains to many days in the future."* (Daniel 8:26 NASB).

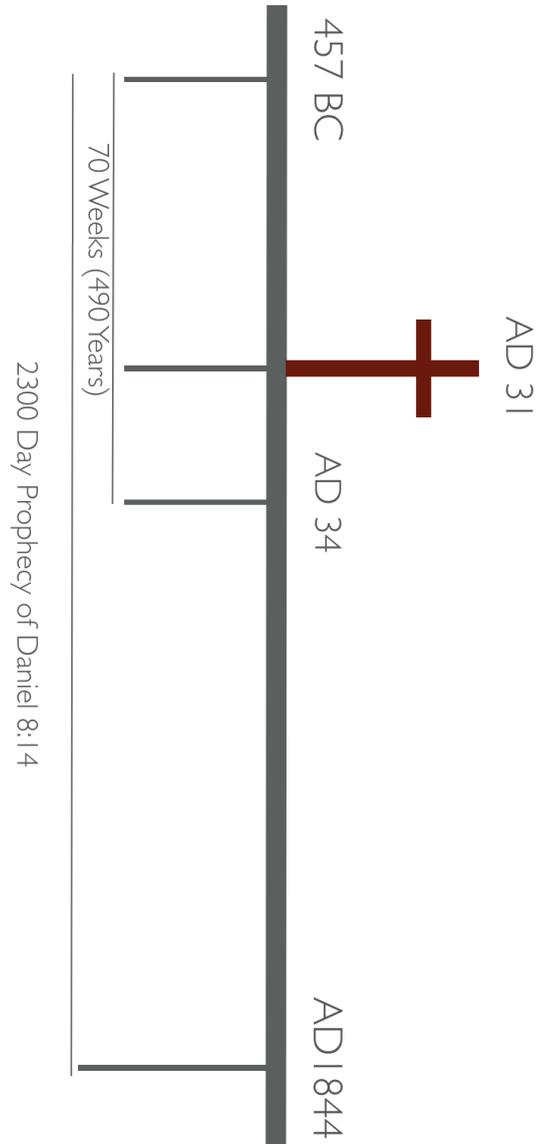
### BASIC POINT

God used William Miller to start an end-time movement that draw people to Him.

If it was a literal 2300 days, then the time prophecy would have only been forecasting 6 years and 3 months. However, as William Miller prayerfully studied this he began to understand that this time prophecy was pointing towards the end of time. He began to believe the sanctuary being cleansed at the end of 2300 years pointed to the second coming of Christ. If only he could find the starting point of this time prophecy!

Daniel was told that the 70 weeks would begin *"from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem"* (Daniel 9:25 NASB). Miller wondered if he could find when that decree happened. In studying the book of Ezra, he found that the decree was given during the reign of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. This became the starting point of this wonderful prophecy given to Daniel. Miller traced the events carefully. The Messiah coming and being anointed in AD 27, being crucified AD 31, and then the gospel being given to the gentiles after Stephen's execution. Miller found that everything happened exactly as the prophecy said!

Here's a visual chart to help you understand what Miller had discovered.



This gave him confidence that the end of the prophecy found in Daniel 8:14 would also happen! Thinking that this, pointing towards the second coming, William Miller began to preach a soon coming of Christ. As he gathered a following that began to be called the Millerites, men and women began to make preparations for Christ to come in 1844. People were so committed to this message that many didn't plant crops thinking there was no point since Jesus was to come. Unfortunately, we know from our place in history, that Jesus did not come in 1844. What could've gone wrong, how could the Millerites gotten this wrong? Many were so discouraged that they went back to their old churches, but some returned to the Bible. Wanting to know how they could've been so certain and yet so wrong they began to study these prophecies again. What they would find is that God knew and predicted their disappointment but would continue to lead them, just as He had with Daniel, and God had used William Miller to begin an end-time movement that would participate in the accomplishment of the last phase of God's redemptive plan. It is the end time movement that our next studies will consist of.

## FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

1. What is your opinion of William Miller?
2. Why do you think God allowed Miller to be wrong about the 2nd coming of Jesus?

### LESSON 4: MILLERITE MOVEMENT

