

**A Review of Jeff Pippenger's teachings**  
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Jeff Pippenger is a Seventh-day Adventist layman and Bible teacher from Bonnerville, Arkansas. He is known among certain circles within Adventism for his teachings on Bible prophecy. He takes special interest in the Millerite movement and the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. While upholding in many ways the traditional historicist principles of prophetic interpretation, he has developed some new ideas which are very unconventional. The purpose of this short article is an attempt to analyze some of Mr. Pippenger's teachings in light of the principles of historicism.

**The Triple application of Bible prophecy**

Mr. Pippenger teaches that the Bible follows the rule of the triple application. What he means by this can be found in the following illustration. In the Bible, there are three Elijahs: Elijah, John the Baptist, and God's last day people who give the last-day Elijah message. Because the third Elijah (God's last day people) have characteristics of the first and second Elijahs (Elijah and John the Baptist) respectively, then this proves that when there are a series of threes, the third must necessarily be a combination of the characteristics of the first and the second. As an example, Elijah was translated, John the Baptist was martyred, and some in the third Elijah will be translated as the 144,000 while others will be martyrs for the faith.

Mr. Pippenger then applies the triple application of Bible prophecy in the following way to the three woes of Revelation. He correctly points out that the first and second woes of Revelation 9 are the Ottoman Turks taking down the Eastern Roman Empire. He then shows how the Islamic Ottomans used guns and gunpowder and struck "quickly, unexpectedly, with explosives" (which is a phrase I have heard him use repeatedly) to take down Eastern Rome. He then makes the application that the third woe must necessarily have the characteristics of Islam striking modern day Rome "quickly, unexpectedly, and with explosives." He believes that the United States of America is modern day Rome (which A.T. Jones also taught), and thus the third woe "began in history on September 11, 2001."

There are some seriously problematic aspects with that approach to the three woes. First, both the first and second woes are associated with specific time prophecies. The first with the five months (or 150 days) which equals 150 prophetic years from July 27, 1299 to 1449. The second woe is the famous prophecy of one hour, one day, one month, and one year which prophetically is 391 years and 15 days. Revelation 9:12 uses the word "hereafter" in the KJV to denote a direct continuation from the first to the second woe. Thus, continuing on another 391 years and 15 days, takes us to August 11, 1840, which is the date that the Ottomans surrendered their powers to Western Europe. Ellen White affirms this teaching as upholding the principles of historicism in GC 334. The obvious question that must be asked then (according to the triple application of Bible prophecy) is

why does the third woe not contain these time prophecies within them? According to Mr. Pippenger, the third woe is a combination of the characteristics of the first and second woes. He only includes the characteristics of Islam “striking Rome quickly, unexpectedly, and with explosives”. He leaves out the time prophecies. Of course, to include the time prophecies would be to go against the understanding of the Bible and SOP that there is no more time prophecy after 1844. How do we know which characteristics apply and which we can leave out?

The other issue that Mr. Pippenger ignores is the timing and Biblical description of the third woe. In Revelation 11:14 the Bible says “the second woe is past; and behold, the third woe cometh quickly.” The second woe ended on August 11, 1840. Uriah Smith, in Daniel and Revelation, original edition, p. 538 says, “The second woe ended with the sixth trumpet, Aug. 11, 1840; and the third woe occurs under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which commenced in 1844. Then where are we? “Behold!” that is to say, mark it well, “the third woe cometh quickly.” The fearful scenes of the second woe are past, and we are now under the sounding of the trumpet that brings the third and last woe.”

A brief overview of the 7 trumpets and the three woes is probably useful at this juncture. The first four trumpets are the judgment of God on Western Rome ending in 476 A.D. The fifth and sixth trumpets (first and second woes respectively) are the judgments of God on Eastern Rome, and the seventh trumpet (during which the third woe occurs) includes the judgment on papal Rome. The seventh trumpet also includes the beginning of the judgment in 1844 as seen in Revelation 11:19. The Biblical description of the seventh trumpet and third woe is seen in Revelation 11:14-19. In verse 19, we see after the opening into the Most Holy Place in heaven, the phrase “there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.” This is very similar to the language used in Revelation 16:18-21 to describe the outpouring of the seventh of the seven last plagues. The key point here is that James White and J.N. Andrews taught that the third woe is the judgment of God on papal Rome by the outpouring of the seven last plagues as the culmination of the seventh trumpet. The connections in Revelation are clear and unmistakable.

However, Mr. Pippenger does not teach about the plain Biblical description of the seventh trumpet and the third woe, (which is not described in the Bible as being with explosives and gunpowder, but with the judgment of God and the seven last plagues), and instead he sensationalizes 9/11 and tries to make 9/11 into something prophetically that it is not. Was 9/11 significant? Yes, it was! Is it the beginning of the third woe in prophecy? Not according to the plain reading of Scripture. One final point to be made about the triple application of Bible prophecy is with respect to the three angels’ messages. The third angel’s message is most powerful when preached in combination with the first and the second angels’ message and yet has very distinct components separate from the first two. It cannot be accurately said that the third angel’s message necessarily must be a combination of the first two. It makes much more sense to read what the third angel’s message actually is than to try to make some illogical application that has no basis.

## **The “Daily”**

Mr. Pippenger teaches the pioneer view as “the daily” being paganism that was taken away. My concern with Pippenger’s teaching on this point is the importance that he places on the view. While it is good to have a correct understanding of the “daily”, Ellen White clearly states in 1 SM 164 that “As this is not a test question, I entreat of my brethren that they shall not allow the enemy to triumph by having it treated as such.” I have personally listened to Mr. Pippenger read from 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12. He shows that William Miller found 2 Thess. 2:7 which helped Miller understand that the “daily” is paganism and that the papacy would arise after paganism is taken out of the way.

However, I strongly object when he then proceeds to verses 11 and 12 which says “for this cause God will send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” I was shocked to hear him then say that if you don’t believe the daily is paganism, “you are lost” and believe a delusion. This goes clearly against Ellen White writing that this is not a testing point. If Mr. Pippenger wanted to teach his view point without making it a salvational issue, I would not have as much a problem with his teaching on this point, but he is in serious error to tell people they are lost if they do not agree with him on the “daily.”

## **The 2520 days**

Mr. Pippenger quotes from Early Writings 74 and 75 where Ellen White says that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord and that the figures should not be altered. He points out that the 2520 day prophecy is at the top of this chart.

Pippenger does a nice job of showing what the pioneers (William Miller and Hiram Edson) believed about this prophecy. William Miller first went to Leviticus 26 where the phrase “seven times” is used in which God says he will pass over and chastise the Israelites seven times for their sins if they do not obey Him. Miller believed this was a time prophecy of 2520 days (or prophetic years) that began in 677 B.C. when Manasseh king of Judah was taken captive. This is known as the beginning of the scattering of God’s people. 2520 years after 677 B.C. was calculated by Miller to be 1843 (although he made the same mistake with the 2300 years so it should be 1844). Hiram Edson disagreed with Miller and believed the 2520 years began with the captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel in 723 B.C. Edson correctly calculated that 2520 years after 723 B.C. takes us to 1798.

However, the 2520 years was rarely discussed, other than by Edson after 1844. It is not on the 1850 prophetic chart. It is interesting that the ending points are 1798 and 1844. However, a careful reading of Leviticus 26 does not convincingly suggest a time element associated with the “seven times”. Adventists, including Ellen White, dropped the discussion of the 2520 years. Jeff Pippenger synthesizes Miller and Edson’s views and believes that the 2520 years are an important element to understanding prophecy. He

believes that both Miller and Edson were correct. He then emphasizes repeatedly the EGW quote that the 1843 chart was directed by the hand of the Lord and should not be altered. Thus, if the 2520 was on the 1843 chart, it must be important for us in the last days. Pippenger seems to be elevating the importance of a time prophecy that was not elevated to prominence by our early pioneers after 1844. Even if the view proved to be true, it is very hard to prove. We have all the evidence we need for 1798 and 1844 from the repeated prophecies of the 1260 in Daniel and Revelation, the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, and the sounding of the seventh trumpet in Revelation 11.

### **Summary of Pippenger's principles and emphasis of prophetic interpretation.**

From the times I have gone to hear Mr. Pippenger, he usually emphasizes the third woe, the daily, and the 2520. While it can be interesting to hear his points on these topics, it must be noted that these issues are not the key testing truths for our time. We have seen how he wrongly interprets the third woe and wrongly elevates his view of the daily to a salvational issue.

When he was editor of *Our Firm Foundation*, he wrote a series of articles on the "Time of the End" and stated that we are living in another fulfillment of the time of the end because of his articles. He seems to think highly of the importance of his teachings and that they are salvational in nature. Any good Seventh-day Adventist who believes in the historicist principles of prophetic interpretation would agree that our understanding and application of the three angels' messages, including the mark of the beast, the seal of God, the United States in Bible prophecy, the papacy, and related prophetic teachings are crucial to our salvation.

However, when Mr. Pippenger begins to elevate his personal views of the daily to a salvational level, and teaches a private interpretation of the third woe, and places strong emphasis on an obscure, long-discarded teaching on the 2520, there is cause for concern that he is venturing onto troubled ground. The Bible teaches that by a man's fruits, ye shall know him. Mr. Pippenger has caused division and trouble in many of the churches he has attended in his home state of Arkansas. The issues usually center around the fact that some members of the church grow to appreciate his teachings while others see cause for concern in his teachings. The discussion over whether or not to let him share his views in that particular church have typically led to splits.

It is my personal belief, that Mr. Pippenger would do well to go back to the basic principles of our faith and elevate that which should be elevated and not place an emphasis on that which is not emphasized as strongly in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. He would make a much more effective worker for God if he spent more time on the personal application of the three angels' messages (such as righteousness by faith, victory over sin) instead of making issues such as the "daily" salvational.

I hope that this analysis will prove useful. It is by no means an exhaustive approach to all of Mr. Pippenger's teachings.