

Questions About Whether Seventh-Day Adventist Are the Result of a Failed Prophecy

By Pastor Ed Anderson

Are the 7th Day Adventists the result of, or in some way connected to a failed prophecy that the Lord Jesus would return, and then He didn't return...then this 1844 Judgment explanation was given to account for the Lord not returning?

Answer:

Absolutely — and your heart to answer **lovingly** and **truthfully** is the right one. Here's a response that's both **honest** and **gracious**, while clearly addressing the historical and prophetic issues:

Response:

Thank you for your question. It's a fair one, and you're not the first to ask it. Many people have wondered about the origins of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its connection to the 1844 event. Let's walk through this together — with truth and love.

Yes, there was a great disappointment — but not a failed movement.

In the early 1800s, a group of sincere Bible students across many denominations — including Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and others — began studying the **prophecies of Daniel**, particularly the **2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8:14**.

They came to the conclusion that something significant would happen in **1844**. They believed (based on their understanding at the time) that this pointed to the **literal return of Christ**. When Jesus didn't return in 1844, it became known as **"The Great Disappointment."**

But here's the important part:
The **date** was right. The **event** was misunderstood.

So what actually happened in 1844?

After prayerful study — especially of the **sanctuary services in the Old Testament** and the **book of Hebrews** — a small group of believers realized the prophecy wasn't pointing to Christ's return to earth, but to a **new phase of His ministry in heaven**: the **beginning of the investigative judgment** in the **heavenly sanctuary** (Daniel 7:9–10, Revelation 14:6–7, Hebrews 8–9).

This was not an excuse for a failed prophecy — it was a **correction of their understanding**, just like the early disciples.

Even the disciples misunderstood prophecy.

Jesus' own followers **expected Him to establish an earthly kingdom**, not die on a cross. When Jesus was crucified, they were devastated. But later they understood the prophecy had been **fulfilled perfectly** — just not the way they expected (see Luke 24:25–27).

In the same way, those early Advent believers misunderstood the nature of the 1844 event — **but not the timing**.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church wasn't formed because of a mistake — it was formed because God raised up a movement after the correction.

In fact, the **Methodists and Baptists** (and others) **helped ignite the revival** that led to the study of prophecy. But when they rejected further light, God raised up a new movement — just like He's always done through history.

Just as:

- **Martin Luther** was raised up after the Roman Church distorted truth,
- **John Wesley** was raised up after cold formality settled in,
- So too, God raised up the **Seventh-day Adventist movement** to restore lost Bible truths — including the **Sabbath, judgment, Christ's heavenly ministry, health principles**, and a **final call to prepare for Jesus' return**.

This movement isn't built on failure — it's built on truth and fulfilled prophecy.

Rather than hiding from history, the Seventh-day Adventist Church embraces its roots:

- A humble beginning
 - A willingness to be corrected by the Word
 - And a mission to proclaim the **everlasting gospel** to the whole world
- (Revelation 14:6–12)

So in short:

The 1844 disappointment was a **turning point**, not a failure.

God used it to **purify** a movement and restore forgotten Bible truths.

Seventh-day Adventists aren't the result of a failed prophecy — they're the result of a **faithful God calling a people to prepare the world for Jesus' return.**