

Questions About the Gap Theory, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Doctrinal Errors of Protestants, Catholic and Orthodox Faiths

By Pastor Ed Anderson

The pastor mentioned a "doctrinal trick known as the Gap Theory"...does this pastor have a study, video link, or a list of the doctrines of the 7th Day Adventist Church and their supporting Scriptures.

According to the Word of God, what are the known doctrinal errors of mainstream Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox faith?

Answer:

Excellent and thoughtful questions. Let's take this step by step, because what you're asking gets to the heart of what distinguishes **Seventh-day Adventists** from other Christian traditions, and also clarifies what's truly biblical versus what's based on human tradition.

1. The "Gap Theory"

The **Gap Theory** are actually two theories.

There is a belief that there is a long, undefined period of time between **Genesis 1:1** ("In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth") and **Genesis 1:2** ("And the earth was without form, and void...").

This idea tries to reconcile the Bible with evolutionary geology—proposing that millions of years elapsed between those verses.

Why we reject it:

- Scripture presents creation as a continuous **six-day event**, followed by a Sabbath (Exodus 20:8-11).
- There is no linguistic or contextual reason to insert a "gap" of ages.
- Accepting the Gap Theory undermines the plain reading of Genesis and the sanctity of the Sabbath, which memorializes a literal six-day creation.

But there a second “**Gap Theory**” and is far more spiritually dangerous when it’s applied to **Daniel’s 70-week prophecy (Daniel 9:24–27)**. Here’s a clear, biblically grounded explanation of that version of the doctrine and why historic Protestants before the 20th century reject it completely:

The “Gap Theory” and Daniel’s 70 Weeks

The **Gap Theory**, in prophetic interpretation, teaches that there is a mysterious *gap of time*—usually about 2,000 years—between the **69th** and **70th week** of Daniel’s prophecy in **Daniel 9:24–27**.

According to most modern evangelical and dispensational teachers, the first 69 weeks (483 years) ended with Christ’s triumphal entry or crucifixion, but the final 70th week was *postponed* and will supposedly occur in the future during a seven-year “tribulation” after the secret “rapture” of the church.

Why This Teaching Is a Doctrinal Trick

The “gap” is never mentioned anywhere in Daniel 9 or in any other prophetic timeline in Scripture. The passage reads as **one continuous prophecy**, not a broken one.

Daniel 9:24–27 says plainly: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city... to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity... (*Daniel 9:24*)

These 70 prophetic weeks (490 years) were “**determined**” (**cut off**) for Israel from the larger 2,300-year prophecy (Daniel 8:14).

The fulfillment is seamless and historically verified:

Prophetic Event	Fulfillment	Year
Decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem	Ezra 7 – Decree by Artaxerxes	457 B.C.
69 weeks (483 years) later: “Messiah the Prince” appears	Baptism of Jesus	A.D. 27

“In the midst of the week” He causes sacrifice and oblation to cease	Crucifixion of Christ	A.D. 31
End of the 70 weeks (490 years)	Gospel goes to Gentiles (Stephen stoned)	A.D. 34

No gap, no pause, no postponement — only **one continuous timeline** of redemption pointing directly to **Jesus as the Messiah**.

What the “Prophetic Gap” Does theologically

The *futurist gap theory* was first developed by **Jesuit theologians (Francisco Ribera, Manuel Lacunza)** during the Counter-Reformation to divert attention away from the papal system identified in prophecy by the Reformers as the “little horn” and “antichrist” (Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4).

Later, in the 1800s, this theory was revived by **John Nelson Darby** and spread widely through the **Scofield Reference Bible**, becoming the foundation for modern **dispensationalism**—which teaches:

- a future rebuilt temple in Jerusalem,
- a seven-year tribulation,
- a secret rapture, and
- a future Antichrist appearing after the church is gone.

All of these depend entirely on that *invented prophetic gap*.

The Biblical View (Historicist Understanding)

The **historicist** reading—held by early Protestants, Adventists, and Reformers like Luther, Wesley, Calvin, and Wycliffe—teaches that:

- The **70 weeks** of Daniel 9 point **unmistakably to Christ’s first coming**.
- There is **no gap**; the timeline runs continuously from 457 B.C. to A.D. 34.
- Jesus is the **Messiah who confirms the covenant** (not a future Antichrist).
- The “sacrifices and offerings” ceased because **Christ’s death fulfilled them** (Hebrews 10:10-14).

Why It Matters Prophetically

The Gap Theory shifts attention *away from Christ* to a *future Antichrist*, confusing the gospel timeline and weakening confidence in fulfilled prophecy.

By contrast, the continuous 70-week prophecy **proves** that Jesus is exactly who He claimed to be—the long-awaited Messiah—and that **God’s prophetic clock never stopped**.

“After the sixty-two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself...” — *Daniel 9:26*

Every week, every day, every fulfillment leads straight to the cross.

2. List of CORE Doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

(With supporting Scriptures — summarized)

1. **The Bible as the Only Rule of Faith** — 2 Tim 3:16–17; Isa 8:20
2. **The Trinity** — Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14
3. **Salvation by Grace Through Faith in Christ** — Eph 2:8-9; Rom 3:24
4. **Baptism by Immersion** — Mark 16:16; Rom 6:3-6
5. **The Ten Commandments as God’s Moral Law** — Ex 20:1-17; Matt 5:17-19
6. **The Seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday)** — Gen 2:1-3; Ex 20:8-11; Luke 4:16
7. **The Sanctuary and Christ’s High-Priestly Ministry** — Heb 8–9; Dan 8:14
8. **The State of the Dead (Unconscious Sleep)** — Eccl 9:5-6; John 11:11-14
9. **The Second Coming of Christ (Literal, Visible, Imminent)** — Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thess 4:16-17
10. **The Millennium and End of Sin** — Rev 20; Mal 4:1-3
11. **The New Earth** — Rev 21-22
12. **Spiritual Gifts and the Gift of Prophecy** — 1 Cor 12:4-11; Rev 12:17; 19:10
13. **Healthful Living and Stewardship of the Body** — 1 Cor 10:31; 3 John 2
14. **Tithes and Offerings** — Mal 3:10; Matt 23:23
15. **Christian Conduct and Modesty** — 1 Pet 3:3-4; 1 John 2:15-17

You can view all 28 Fundamental Beliefs with detailed explanations and Scripture references here:

<https://www.adventist.org/beliefs/>

Many pastors also teach through them in video form—check YouTube for “Amazing Facts 28 Fundamental Beliefs” or “Mark Finley Adventist Doctrines.”

3. Doctrinal Errors Found in Mainstream Christianity (According to Scripture)

Roman Catholic Church

- **Sunday sacredness** instead of the biblical Sabbath (Dan 7:25; Ex 20:8-11).
- **Immortality of the soul** and veneration of saints (Eccl 9:5; 1 Tim 2:5).
- **Purgatory and indulgences** (Heb 9:27; 1 John 1:7).
- **Confession to priests** (1 John 1:9).
- **Elevation of tradition and papal authority above Scripture** (Mark 7:7-9).

Mainstream Protestant Churches

- **Retained Sunday worship** from Rome (not found in Scripture).
- **Eternal torment in hell** rather than final destruction of the wicked (Mal 4:1-3).
- **Denial of the continuing authority of God’s law**, claiming it was abolished (Matt 5:17-19; Rom 3:31).
- **Predestination or “once saved, always saved”** (Phil 2:12; Heb 6:4-6).

Eastern Orthodox Churches

- Similar to Catholicism in **veneration of icons, immortal soul, and Sunday observance**.
- Teach **theosis** (divinization of man) that can sometimes blur the line between Creator and creation.

4. Closing Reflection

Adventists don’t claim exclusive truth, but believe God is calling all believers back to **“the faith once delivered to the saints”** (Jude 3).

The final call of Revelation 14:6-12 — the **Three Angels’ Messages** — centers on:

- **Worshiping the Creator** (Sabbath truth)
- **Rejecting Babylon’s confusion** (false teachings)
- **Remaining loyal to Jesus by faith and obedience**