

And the Stars of Heaven Fell.--The voice of history still is, *Fulfilled!* Being a much later event than the darkening of the sun, there are multitudes in whose memories it is as fresh as if it were but yesterday. We refer to the great meteoric shower of Nov. 13, 1833. On this point a few extracts will suffice. {D&R 1897 U.S. 422.7}

"At the cry, 'Look out of the window,' I sprang from a deep sleep, and with wonder saw the east lighted up with the dawn and meteors. . . . I called to my wife to behold; and while robing, she exclaimed, 'See how the stars fall!' I replied, 'That is the wonder;' and we felt in our hearts that it was a sign of the last days. For truly 'the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Rev.6:13. This language of the prophet has always been received as metaphorical. Yesterday it was literally fulfilled. The ancients understood by *aster* in Greek, and *stella* in Latin, the smaller lights of heaven. The refinement of modern astronomy has made distinctions between stars of heaven and meteors of heaven. Therefore the idea of the prophet, as it is expressed in the original Greek, was literally fulfilled in the phenomenon of yesterday, so as no man before yesterday had conceived to be possible that it should be fulfilled. The immense size and distance of the planets and fixed stars forbid the idea of their falling *unto the earth*. Larger bodies cannot fall in myriads unto a smaller body; and most of the planets and all the fixed stars are many times larger than our earth; but these fell toward the earth. And how did they fall? Neither myself nor one of the family heard any report; and were I to hunt through nature for a simile, I could not find one so apt, to illustrate the appearance of the heavens, as that which St. John uses in the prophecy before quoted: 'The stars of heaven fell unto the earth.' They were not sheets, or flakes, or drops of fire; but they were what the world understands by falling stars; and one speaking to his fellow, in the midst of the scene, would say, 'See how the stars fall!' And he who heard would not stop to correct the astronomy of the speaker, any more than he would reply, 'The sun does not move,' to one who should tell him, 'The sun is rising.' The stars fell 'even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.' Here is the exactness of the prophet. The falling stars did not come as if from several trees shaken, but from *one*. Those which appeared in the east fell toward the east; those which appeared in the north fell toward the north; those which appeared in the west fell toward the west; and those which appeared in the south (for I went out of my residence into the park), fell toward the south. And they fell not as *ripe* fruit falls; far from it; but they flew, they were *cast*, like the unripe, which at first refuses to leave the branch, and when, under a violent pressure, it does break its hold, it flies swiftly, straight off, descending; and in the multitude falling, some cross the track of others, as they are thrown with more or less force, but each one falls on its own side of the tree."--*Henry Dana Ward. New York Journal of Commerce, Nov. 14, 1833.* {D&R 1897 U.S. 422.8}

"Extensive and magnificent showers of shooting stars have been known to occur at various places in modern times; but the most universal and wonderful which has ever been recorded, is that of the 13th of November, 1833, *the whole firmament, over all the United States, being then, for hours, in fiery commotion.* No celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country since its first settlement, which was viewed with such intense admiration by one class in the community, or with so much dread and alarm by another. . . . During the three hours of its continuance, the day of judgment was believed to be only waiting for sunrise."--*Our First Century, p. 329.* {D&R 1897 U.S. 424.1}

"I was suddenly awakened by the most distressing cries that ever fell on my ears. Shrieks of horror and cries for mercy could be heard from the negroes of three plantations, amounting in all to be some six or eight hundred. While earnestly and breathlessly listening for the cause, I heard a faint voice near the door calling my name. I arose, and taking my sword, stood at the door. At this moment I heard the same voice beseeching me to rise, and saying, 'O my God! the world is on fire!' I then opened the door, and it is difficult to say which excited me most, the awfulness of the scene or the distressed cries of the negroes. Upward of one hundred lay prostrate on the ground, some speechless, and others uttering the bitterest moans, but with their hands raised, imploring God to save the world and them. The scene was truly awful: for never did rain fall much thicker than the meteors fell toward the earth; east, west north, and south, it was the same. In a word, *the whole heavens seemed in motion.* --*Id. p. 330.*

"Arago computes that not less than *two hundred and forty thousand meteors were at the same time visible above the horizon of Boston.*" And of the display at Niagara it is said that "no spectacle so terribly grand and sublime was ever before beheld by man as that of *the firmament descending in fiery torrents over the dark and roaring cataract.*"--*Id., ib.* {D&R 1897 U.S. 425.1}

These signs in the sun, moon, and stars, are the same as those so strikingly predicted by our Lord, and recorded by the evangelists in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21. In these records, not only are the same signs given, but the same time is pointed out for their fulfillment; namely, a period commencing just this side of the

long and bloody persecution of the papal power. In Matt. 24:21, 22, the 1260 years of papal supremacy are brought to view; and "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (verse 29) the sun was to be darkened, ect. Mark is still more definite, and says, "*In those days, after that tribulation.*" The days, commencing in A.D. 538, ended 1798; but before they ended, the spirit persecution had been restrained by the Reformation, and that tribulation of the church had ceased. And in this period, exactly at the time specified in the prophecy, the fulfillment of these signs commenced in the darkening of the sun and moon. {D&R 1897 U.S. 425.2}

The first instance of the falling stars worthy of any notice, though others of local and minor importance may be mentioned before it, took place in 1799. To the great display of 1833, by far the most brilliant of any on record, we have referred. Of the extent of this shower, Professor Olmstead, of Yale College, a distinguished meteorologist says:-- {D&R 1897 U.S. 425.3}

"The extent of the showers of 1833 was such as to cover no inconsiderable part of the earth's surface; from the middle of the Atlantic on the east to the Pacific on the west, and from the northern coast of South America to undefined regions of British possessions on the north, the exhibition was visible, and everywhere presented nearly the same appearance." {D&R 1897 U.S. 425.4}

From this, it appears that this exhibition was confined exclusively to the western world. But in the year 1866, another remarkable occurrence of this kind took place, this time in the East, nearly as magnificent in some places as that of 1833, and visible so far as ascertained, throughout the greater part of Europe. Thus the principle portions of the earth have now been warned by this sign. {D&R 1897 U.S. 425.5}

Observation has shown that these meteoric displays occur at regular intervals of about thirty-three years. The skeptic will doubtless seize upon this as a pretext for throwing them out of the catalogue of signs. But if they are not more than ordinary occurrences, the question is to be answered why they have not occurred regularly and prominently centuries in the past as in the last hundred years. This is a question science cannot answer, nor can it offer anything more than conjecture as to their cause. {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.1}

One significant fact will be noticed in connection with all the foregoing signs: they were each instinctively associated in the minds of the people, at the time of their occurrence, with the great day of which they were the forerunners. And on each occasion the cry was raised, "The Judgment has come; the world's at an end." {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.2}

But the objector answers, These phenomena in the sun, moon, and stars cannot be a sign of the end, because there have been many instances of such occurrences, and pointing to some ten other periods of remarkable darkness besides that of 1780, and to several occasions when stars or meteoric showers have fallen, he asks, with an air of triumph, which one we will take for the sign. That this is not a fanciful representation of the objection, the following facts will demonstrate. {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.3}

In 1878 we noticed in one of the leading dailies of Chicago a question from a correspondent in Vermont, and the reply given by the paper, as follows:-- {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.4}

"Will you give the causes (and proof) of the 'dark day' in 1780, the 19th of May, I believe? An 'Advent preacher' has been preaching in this neighborhood, and alluded to it as a sign of the destruction of the world." {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.5}

And the reply is given thus:-- {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.6}

"The dark day of 1780 was produced by entirely natural causes, and was about as much a sign of the destruction of the world as of the advent of the potato-beetle. The darkness, said Dr. Samuel Tenney, of Exeter, N.H. was produced by common clouds. Between these common clouds and the earth intervened another stratum of great thickness. As the stratum advanced, the darkness commenced, and increased with its progress. The uncommon thickness of this stratum was occasioned by strong currents of wind from the southward and westward, condensing the vapors and drawing them in a northwest direction. The density of this stratum was owing to the vapor and smoke it contained. These so-called dark days have not been uncommon, being known in 366 B.C., 295 B.C., 252 B.C. A.D. 746, 775, 1762, 1780, 1783, 1807, 1816. The one was as prophetic as any other, and no more so." {D&R 1897 U.S. 426.7}

It would have been a little more to the satisfaction of anyone who wishes to know the reasons of his faith, if the writer of the reply had stated where he found his evidence for all his assertions. And we would like a little light on such points as this: From whence came that "stratum of great thickness"? Of what was it composed? How was it formed? Tis cavalier's explanation amounts to just this: It was dark because there was great darkness. He simply states the fact in another form, and calls that an explanation. His own statement needs explaining as really as the one to which he refers. "The uncommon thickness of the stratum was caused by two strong currents of wind," etc. How did those winds chance to come just then, and just when there were vapors to condense? And what caused the vapors? Then how could currents from the west and south draw the vapors "in a *northwest*

direction"? Our friend must be careful, or he will make the dark day to be a greater phenomenon than we have ever claimed it to be. {D&R 1897 U.S. 427:1}

But, further, we would ask how, according to the reply above given, the words of our Lord can ever be fulfilled. He says that the *sun shall be darkened*; and he means the literal sun, for he speaks of men and things on the earth in contrast with it. Luke 21:25. And he says that when it is thus darkened, it is a sign of the end; for when we see these things come to pass, he tells us that we are to *know* that he is near, even at the doors. But according to the writer of the foregoing, there never can be any sign of this nature. He declares there never has been in the past; and suppose such a phenomenon should occur again, would it be a sign? — Not in his eyes: for the hypothesis of vapors, winds, natural laws, and common occurrences, would instantly fly to his scoffing lips. But something of this kind is to constitute a sign, for the Lord himself has declared it; and we would like to ask the objector how a darkening of the sun should differ from that of 1780 to answer to the prophecy and constitute it a sign? {D&R 1897 U.S. 427:2}

It is also urged that there have been many such events, hence it can be no sign; and seven dark days are mentioned by our writer before 1780, and three since, for which, however, he forgot to give his authority. But how does it happen that nobody has seemed to pay any attention to these days, or make any account of them? and why is it that all fix upon May 19, 1780, as the only one worthy of special note, giving it, by way of distinction, the title, *The Dark Day*? {D&R 1897 U.S. 428:1}

The answer is obvious. It occupies a pre-eminent position in this respect. It towers up far above all others as the one most remarkable and noteworthy for its awful phenomena. {D&R 1897 U.S. 428:2}

But we are not left to decide the matter from their evidence alone; for our Lord has not only told us that such an event should occur as a sign of his coming, but he has told us also *when* it should occur. “Immediately after the tribulation of those days,” says Matthew. Mark is more definite, and says, “*In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened;*” etc. Mark 13:24. The “days” are the days of papal supremacy, the 1260 years, from 538 to 1798; the tribulation may be said to have ceased about the middle of the eighteenth century. The “Days” ended within two years of the close of that century. Thus, by the fixed terms of the prophecy we are shut up to a period of about fifty years in length, and ending in 1798, in which to look for that darkening of the sun which was to be a sign of the Lord’s soon coming. {D&R 1897 U.S. 428:3}

Again, the darkening of the sun was to be the second great event to take place under the sixth seal. Rev. 6:12. The first, and the one which marked the opening of that seal, was a great earthquake, shown to be, by comparison with the preceding seals, the great earthquake of Lisbon, Nov 1, 1755. Between this point and the end of the papal period in 1798, the sun was to be darkened as a sign of the end. Here we are shut up to a period of time positively only forty-three years in length, in which to look for that darkening of the sun which was the subject of the prediction. Now it matters not if our opponents should claim seven thousand dark days instead of seven, each as notable as the one of 1780, it would not affect the prediction or the sign in the least degree. It matters not how many or what kind of dark days there may have been in other ages; we look for one which was to take place in that brief, specified period, as the predicted sign. {D&R 1897 U.S. 429:1}

We fix our eyes upon that time, and what do we behold? We find not only the darkening of the sun, as foretold, but we find a dark day so much more notable than all others, that it is set forth by way of pre-eminence as “*the dark day*,” while in general history all others are passed by in silence. {D&R 1897 U.S. 429:2}

Viewed from one point, it is very strange that people can overlook considerations of this nature which are so decisive upon this question; from another, it is not. What a man doesn’t want to see, he can very easily keep from seeing. But we apprehend the lack both of inclination and ability is accounted for by the prophet Daniel, when he says, “The wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand.” {D&R 1897 U.S. 429:3}

Of the dark day, Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary, edition of 1884, page 1604, says: — {D&R 1897 U.S. 429:4}

“Dark Day, The. May 19, 1780; so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day, extending all over New England. In some places persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. Birds sang their evening song, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barn-yard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration began about ten o’clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the southwest and the northeast. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known.” {D&R 1897 U.S. 429:5}

While the learned editor of Webster’s Dictionary testifies so positively that “the true cause of the phenomenon is not known,” it is remarkable how flippantly many smaller minds proceed to offer their

explanations, and account for it from natural causes. Those who lived at the time, and had at least as good an opportunity to mark all its strange features and unnatural manifestations as people of the present time, were filled with awe at the occurrence, and for years, so long as those who saw it, survived, were unable to explain it; but their degenerate sons, the wondrously wise generation of the present, living over a hundred years from the time of its occurrence, and having never seen anything of the kind, assume to explain it with all the ease and nonchalance with which they would tell us that two and to make four. {D&R 1897 U.S. 430:1}

As the time when we were to look for the beginning of the signs is so definitely located, it is further objected that the falling of the stars in 1833 cannot be one of the signs, because, according to Mark 13:24,25, they also should have fallen within those days, or previous to 1798, as this event is immediately connected by the word *and* to the signs in the sun and moon. {D&R 1897 U.S. 430:2}

We reply by calling attention to the fact that there are more events than simply the falling of the stars that are linked to the series by the word *and*. Thus: “And” the stars of heaven shall fall, “and” the powers that are in the heaven shall be shaken, “and” then shall they see the Son of man coming, “and” then shall he send his angels to gather the elect. Now the language certainly is not designed to convey the idea that all these things were to take place within those days; for in that case we should have the coming of Christ itself take place before the days ended. Verse 29, stating the conclusion of the argument, says, “So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.” Matthew puts it in still stronger language when he says “So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it [margin, he Christ] is near, even at the doors.” But it would be absurd to say that we must wait until the coming of Christ takes place before we can know that the even is near, even at the doors. {D&R 1897 U.S. 430:3}

These facts, then, plainly appear; namely, that a series of associated events is given us, covering quite a period of time, beginning at some point in the past, and reaching down to, and including the second coming of Christ. The beginning of the series is placed at a point before the close of a certain prophetic period designated as “those days,” that is, the 1260 years of papal oppression upon the church; but the end of the series lies far outside of that period, as already shown. Now the question to be decided is, How many events of the series given us are to be looked for before the date by which “those days” are limited, that is before 1798, where the 1260 days, or years, terminated? The only data we have on which to frame an answer are the facts already noticed; namely, that the events begin within that period, but close outside of it, and no specified number is given as belonging to that period. {D&R 1897 U.S. 431:1}

The conclusion is therefore inevitable that if the first one of the events designated comes to pass within the specified time, the prophecy is fulfilled, though all the other lie outside of that time. Had the sun alone been darkened before 1798, it would have been sufficient to fulfill the prophecy. The moon even might have been darkened this side of 1798 without vitiating the prophecy in the least degree. The sun and moon were darkened together in 1780, eighteen years before the days ended; the stars fell in 1833, thirty-five years after the end of the days. We have reached the year 1897, ninety-nine years this side of the ending of the days, and the shaking of the powers of heaven will be completed not far hence, as other prophecies show; and in immediate connection with that, as Joel and John plainly declare, the coming of the Lord is to take place. {D&R 1897 U.S. 431:2}

If the objector still insists that according to our application the stars should have fallen before 1798, because the prophecy says, “*And the stars of heaven shall fall,*” we reply that then all the other events should also have taken place before 1798; for they are all connected in the same way. But this we have shown to be impossible. {D&R 1897 U.S. 432:1}

The real intent for Why this has been removed from SDA theology can be seen at the link below, it is an attempt to discredit TRUTH, this church, and its Founders.

<http://www.atomorrow.net/fluxbb/viewtopic.php?id=71>

EG White said:--

The Saviour gives signs of His coming, and more than this, He fixes the time when the first of these signs shall appear: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and ***the stars shall fall from heaven,*** and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall

see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." {DA 631.2}

At the close of the great papal persecution, Christ declared, the sun should be darkened, and the moon should not give her light. Next, the stars should fall from heaven. And He says, "Learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24:32, 33, margin. {DA 632.1}

Christ has given signs of His coming. He declares that we may know when He is near, even at the doors. He says of those who see these signs, "This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." *These signs have appeared.* Now we know of a surety that the Lord's coming is at hand. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," He says, "but My words shall not pass away." {DA 632.2}