

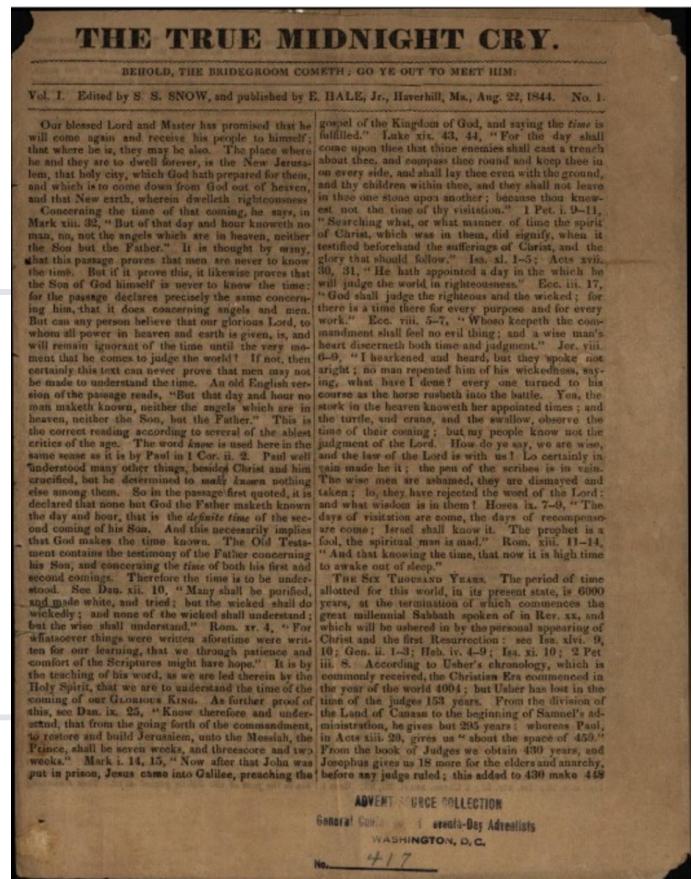
The True Midnight Cry (1844)

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The True Midnight Cry was a Second Advent periodical edited by [Samuel S. Snow](#) (1806-1890) and published by Ezekiel Hale, Jr.¹ (1788-1868), in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Only a single issue was released, consisting of four pages and dated August 22, 1844. The publication, described as a “small sheet,” was sold at fifty cents per hundred copies.² The main article, authored by Snow, presented his conviction that Jesus would return literally on or before October 22, 1844. Snow outlined “his reasons for believing that the end, and that our blessed Lord will come, to the astonishment of them that dwell on the earth, and to the salvation of those who truly look for him, on the tenth day of the seventh month, of the year of Jubilee, which is the present year 1844.”³ He contended that mainstream Millerite periodicals were too slow in disseminating his views.⁴ As a result, *The True Midnight Cry* became one of the most influential periodicals of the Millerite movement and crystallized the “seventh-month message” or “seventh-month movement” centered on the anticipated return of Christ as the Bridegroom on October 22, 1844.

This Bridegroom perspective, grounded in the parable of Jesus in Matthew 25:1-13, provided a strong rationale for Snow’s expectation of Christ’s literal return as a fulfillment of biblical prophecy.⁵ Acknowledging the spring disappointment, which he referred to as the “alarm,” Snow likened the movement to the ten virgins who slept while the “bridegroom tarried.” At midnight, the proclamation was made: “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh.” Interpreting a 24-hour day as representing a year in biblical prophecy, Snow calculated that a single night corresponded to approximately six months, during which the authentic “midnight cry” should be proclaimed.⁶



The True Midnight Cry, August 22, 1844.

He emphasized that this six-month period, from spring to fall 1844, marked the critical time for issuing the “midnight cry” (verse 6), combining theological justification with apocalyptic urgency and thereby intensifying the call for final preparation for Christ’s Second Advent.

In his article, Snow addressed the passage in Mark 8:32: “But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father.” He contended that this translation was inaccurate, reasoning that Jesus Christ would surely know the time and that God had previously revealed the timing of Christ’s first coming. Snow therefore favored an alternative translation: “But that day and hour no man maketh known, neither the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”⁷ He argued that the Father had provided ample evidence regarding the timing of Christ’s return. Snow cited Usher’s Chronology of 6,000 years, beginning in 4004 B.C. and, after accounting for a discrepancy of 153 years and a fraction, placing the period within A.D. 1844. Additional evidence included the “seven times of the Gentiles” (Leviticus 26), the 2300 Days of Daniel 8:14, the Seventy Weeks (Daniel 9), and the chronology of Christ’s earthly ministry and crucifixion, calculated using the administration of Tiberius beginning in A.D. 12 and Christ’s age, which indicated the start of his ministry in A.D. 26, with Rabbinic evidence pointing to the crucifixion in A.D. 33. Snow asserted that Christ’s death and resurrection served as “testimony alone” sufficient to confirm the truthfulness of God’s Word and the certainty of the Second Advent. He further maintained that the various “types pointing to Christ and his kingdom” affirmed Christ’s return. The fulfillment of the types contained in the law by Christ’s death on the cross, and the ongoing fulfillment by “our great High Priest . . . is still fulfilling them; and when he comes the second time, he will complete their fulfillment.”⁸

Snow believed that “God is an *exact time keeper*.”⁹ He argued that the convergence of prophetic evidence, particularly the emphasis on the timing of Christ’s first coming, provided compelling support for determining the time of the Second Advent. Snow stated, “And every one who is not willingly blind must see, and feel too, that those [prophecies] which remain unfulfilled, will be fulfilled with an *equally strict regard to time*.”¹⁰ He identified the most significant “type” as the coming of the High Priest out of the Holy of Holies, which, according to his interpretation, required that Christ return on October 22, 1844.¹¹ Snow concluded that the “types which were to be observed in the 7th month, have never yet had their fulfillment in the antitype,” thereby designating 1844 as the great year of jubilee.¹²

The rapid circulation of *The True Midnight Cry* through Millerite print networks marked a significant theological turning point, fostering unity and intensifying the movement’s sense of urgency during the autumn of 1844. The periodical was reprinted on October 4, 1844, and widely distributed in the weeks leading up to October 22, 1844. Snow’s seminal article also appeared in other publications, including the Advent Herald on October 9, 1844. This article became the most significant and defining exposition of Snow’s application of the Kairite Jewish calendar to the fulfillment of the 2300 days, culminating in the date October 22, 1844. James White, Ellen White, and Joseph Bates quoted extensively from Snow’s article in their joint publication, *A Word to the “Little Flock*.”¹³ At least two copies of the periodical have been digitized and are available in the Adventist Digital Library.¹⁴

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NOTES

1. "Ezekiel Hale Jr," *Find A Grave*, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/176878722/ezekiel-hale>.

2. "THE TRUE MIDNIGHT CRY," *Vermont Religious Observer*, September 25, 1844, 3.

3. Ibid.

4. For context, see Arthur W. Spalding, *Captains of the Host: First Volume of a History of Seventh-day Adventists Covering the Years 1845-1900* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1949), 95; Idem., *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1961), 1:102.
5. George R. Knight, *William Miller and the Rise of Adventism* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2010), 159-169.
6. F. D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry: A Defense of William Miller and the Rise of Adventism* (Washington, D.C.: Review, and Herald, 1944), 213.
7. *The True Midnight Cry*, August 22, 1844, [2].
8. Ibid., [4].
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. See for context the article by Enoch Jacobs, "THE TIME," *The Western Midnight Cry*, November 29, 1844, [2-4].
12. Ibid.
13. *A Word to the "Little Flock"* (Brunswick, ME: [James White], 1847), 5.
14. *The True Midnight Cry*, August 22, 1844, https://adventistdigitallibrary.org/islandora/object/adl%3A367173/%3Fview_only%3Dtrue.

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