

Advanced Bible Studies

for
Seventh-day Adventists

The Grains of Ezekiel Chapter 4



*“Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things;
hold fast that which is good.”—2 Thessalonians 5:19, 20*

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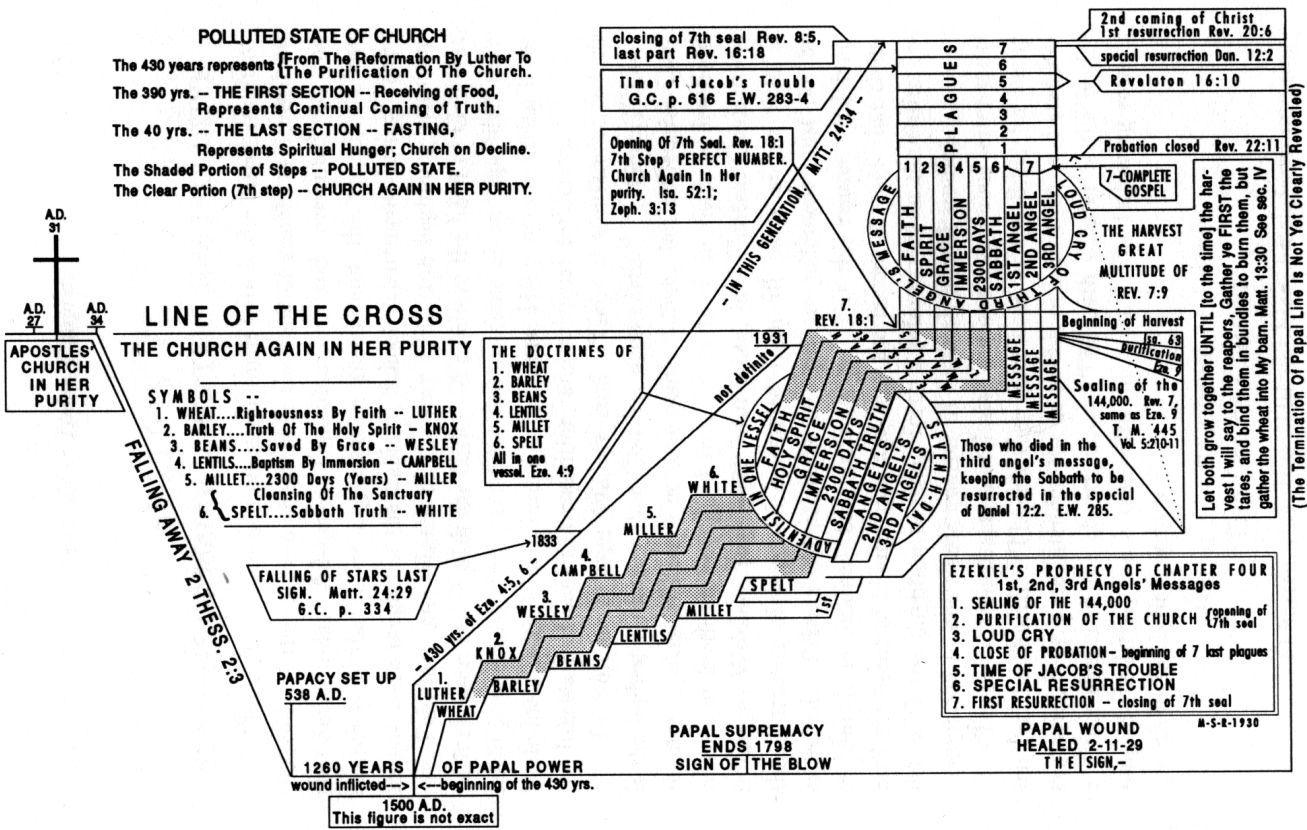
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SECTION V.
THE PROPHECY OF EZEKIEL FOUR
(What Transpires Within The 390 Days)

“For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: So shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.” Eze. 4:5, 6. The prophecy of the fourth chapter of Ezekiel finds its fulfillment in our day. This prophecy could not possibly refer to Israel after the flesh, though it deals with a period of 430 years in about the same manner as the prophecy made to Abraham. “And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their’s, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years.” Gen. 15:13. But Ex. 12:40 says, “Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years.” So the prophecy to Abraham was made in two sections, first being 400 years, and then to 430 years. Ezekiel’s prophecy is made exactly the same way, in two sections, but not the same number of years in each section. Instead of 400 years, we have 390 years, and instead of 30 years, we have 40, making the same total of 430 in each case. If this prophecy had a reference to the prophecy made to Abraham, there should have been the same number of years in each section, but since it is not the same, it must be another period of time.

Again, the prophecy of Israel after the flesh is that they should sojourn and be afflicted 430 years, but this prophecy of Ezekiel says in verse 13, “And the Lord said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them.” Therefore it is evident that this prophecy refers to another period of time, and experience, than that of the experience of Israel in Egypt. The prophecy made to Abraham of 430 years ended at the time the children of Israel went out of Egypt, which is according to Bible chronology (King James’ Version) 1491 B. C. According to the same chronology, the 430-year period of the children of Israel had ended 896 years before Ezekiel was even given the vision of his prophecy, and he put the prophecy in the future, for he uses future tense. “Even thus *shall* the children of Israel eat their defiled bread.” So it is altogether impossible for one to form a conclusion that these two prophecies deal with

the same period and experience of Israel down in Egypt.

This period (by Ezekiel) had no reference to Israel after the flesh in Ezekiel’s time, for the Lord said (Eze. 4:5), “For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: So shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of *Israel*.” In this verse the Lord said the 390 days (or years) are for the iniquity of the house of Israel, but in the next verse the 40 year period has reference to Judah. “And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of *Judah* forty days.” Therefore, Israel and Judah are referred to.

The kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel was divided into two divisions in their early years; namely, Israel and Judah. But at the time Ezekiel had this vision there was only one division, for the ten tribes had been conquered and carried away in 721 B.C., 126 years before this prophecy was made, according to the same chronology. Being in the future, the prophecy, then, could have no reference to Israel after the flesh. This 430 year period has never yet been applied to any time, or people, in the past, and therefore, has never been explained, just the same as many other prophecies that were never understood until they met their fulfillment. If the time of its fulfillment has come, *then only* shall we understand this prediction.

We begin with the fourth verse and onward (we shall later take the first three, and last two verses). Israel after the flesh was a *type* of Israel by the promise (144,000), as explained on pages 64-113. The experiences of the children of Israel in Egypt was a photograph of our denomination, thus their experience is being reproduced in every particular with this people, and if there are 430 years connected with Israel after the flesh, then the same period of time must be connected with the true. The 430 year period (by Abraham) did not have to do only with ancient Israel, but with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well. The prophecy to Abraham of the 430 years began with the call to come out of Ur, and ended at Mt. Sinai; but this 430 years which ended at Mt. Sinai was a type as explained on pages 108-109.

The typical 430 years prophesied to Abraham began in the true (our time) with Martin Luther, as explained on pages 108-111, therefore both prophecies—the one to Abraham and the one to Ezekiel—refer to the same period in our time. The one to Abraham stands as a type, but the other is a direct prophecy, and both run parallel in our time. We may suppose the 390 year period began in

about 1500 A. D., (when Luther found the Bible), and ended in 1890 A.D., where the 40 year period began, which would end in 1930. However, we cannot point out the exact day or month, or even the year, because (1) we do not know the exact day of the call of Luther; (2) prophecy deals with the Jewish, or perhaps the Hebrew year, therefore, it is a matter of months that we cannot determine. It may run until 1931, or even after, if the coincidences as explained on chart, pages 112, 113, were not divinely designed to point out this fact. The question may be asked, Why would God make a double prophecy for the same thing?—because the old prophecy (the type) only gives the details from the beginning of the third angel's message to the fulfillment of Ezekiel 9. The prophecy by Ezekiel gives the information in detail from the beginning of Luther's reformation to Ezekiel 9, marking of the 144,000, and unrolling of the scroll. ("Not all in regard to this matter is yet understood, nor will it be understood *until* the unrolling of the scroll." Volume 6, page 17.)

It makes it clear that there is a 430 year period from the reformation by Luther to the purification of the church, as we shall endeavor to prove by Ezekiel's prophecy which we quote here. "Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: According to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: So shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year. Take thou also unto thee wheat and barley, and beans, and lentils, and millet, and fitches [margin, spelt], and put them in one vessel, and make thee bread thereof, according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon thy side, three hundred and ninety days shalt thou eat thereof. And thy meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight, twenty shekels a day: From time to time shalt thou eat it. Thou shalt drink also water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: From time to time shalt thou drink." Ezek. 4:4-6, 9-11.

Ezekiel was commanded to lie on his left side for 390 days during which time he was to eat and drink. After the 390 days were ended, he must turn to his right side and lie for forty days, but during this time he must *not* eat. The 390 days are 390 *literal years* according to the last part of Ezek. 4:6. As we have made the application, the 390 years began with Luther and ended in 1890.

During this period of time Ezekiel was told to eat and drink while he lay on his left side. What is he told to eat?—six varieties of food; namely, wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt (margin). We are not to understand these six varieties to be material food to sustain physical life, but as symbols of spiritual food (doctrines) of six varieties to sustain spiritual life. Had these not been symbols of truth, the Lord would not have asked Ezekiel to get a specified number of cereals, and that he should put them in one vessel, and bake them into a certain cake, and eat them at a specified time, in a particular way, with a fixed measure of water. These six doctrines may be represented by six steps upward (Reformation; an effort to bring the church to her state of purity.

WHEAT, SYMBOL OF FAITH

The first portion of spiritual food or truth which we were to receive, represented by the wheat, was "faith", as taught by Luther, as his doctrine was "The just shall live by faith". The wheat, which symbolized the doctrine Luther gave us must be perfect in itself to make a perfect symbol of that doctrine. Note the truth of the wheat: It has always been used by all generations, and everybody uses it and it is hard to get along without. Just so, all must have the doctrine of "faith". "Without faith it is impossible to please Him" so the Bible says. Not only Christians, but other religions must have faith as well as they must have wheat. Even the infidel, and the atheist must exercise faith in whatever he may believe. We can see that inspiration used the right kind of symbol to represent the doctrine of "faith."

BARLEY, SYMBOL OF SPIRIT

The second portion of food, or truth which we were to get was represented by barley. John Knox was the next man who made the second step by teaching the doctrine represented by the barley which was the truth of the "Holy Spirit." Barley is not so commonly or widely used as wheat. In fact, few people would use it, and at that, very seldom. Many people do not know what barley is; so with the doctrine of the "Holy Spirit". While the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is believed by some Christians, it is not believed by others. Some do not understand what the truth of the Spirit is, even as some do not know what barley is; so the symbol representing the second doctrine is perfect, even as the first. Gideon's experience with the Midianite's dream of the barley cake overturning

the tent proves the same. Read Judges 7:13, 14.

BEANS, SYMBOL OF GRACE

Beans are just as widely and commonly used by all the people and all generations the same as wheat. John Wesley, the third man on the stage of action as a great reformer, made the third step upward by teaching the doctrine of "Grace", which was represented by the beans. All believe in grace. So much so, that men no longer fear God, and have declared His law void. He is too gracious, and too merciful, they say, and as we are under grace, God will do neither good nor evil. Thus, Christians these days have perverted its true meaning, even as they all love beans, and have perverted the proper name by calling them "pork and beans." What more fitting symbol could have been chosen to represent the doctrine of grace than the one God has selected?

LENTILS, TYPE OF DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM BY IMMERSION

Lentils are used to represent the fourth portion of truth. Alexander Campbell is credited with making the fourth step upward by teaching the doctrine of baptism by immersion, symbolized by the lentils. The variety (lentils) representing the fourth doctrine (baptism by immersion) is not known or used even as much as barley: so with the truth of immersion. Baptism by immersion in the old-fashioned way is not generally practiced, even as lentils are not generally used. Again God has used the right kind of symbol to represent this portion of truth.

MILLET, SYMBOL OF 2300 DAYS

The fifth portion of truth is represented by millet, and the fifth reformer was William Miller. He taught the prophecy of Daniel 8:14, which was the doctrine of the 2300 days. Millet is scarcely known, and those who do know what it is say it is of little worth, merely a wild grass with scarcely any farming value, and not desired by anybody. Nevertheless it is a good cereal. Just so with the doctrine taught by Miller. No one has any use for it and Seventh-day Adventists are practically the only people who teach it. Those who do not accept this doctrine say it is good for nothing, and charge Miller as being a false prophet. Though it is a wonderful prophecy and reveals a great truth, yet people will not accept it. "It is good for nothing, with no spiritual value, and we have no need of

it", is the cry. Again the question is asked, Could a better symbol than millet be found to represent the doctrine of the 2300 days?

SPELT, SYMBOL OF THE SABBATH IN CONNECTION WITH THE SANCTUARY

The last cereal mentioned in Ezekiel's prophecy is spelt, which represents the sixth truth or doctrine which is the Sabbath truth in the light as given by Sister E. G. White, in connection with the heavenly Sanctuary. The definition of "spelt" (as in the margin) according to the Standard Dictionary is as follows: "A cereal intermediate between wheat and barley. . . . It was the chief cereal of ancient Egypt, being probably the rye of the time of Moses, but cultivated now mainly in Switzerland, southern Germany, and northern Spain."

Spelt is an ancient cereal, used in ancient Egypt in the days of Moses, and it was the rye in the days of Joseph. So is the Sabbath an ancient truth which originated in the Garden of Eden, and was the last recorded act of Creation. It was the truth in the days of Moses, the first man in the Bible who instituted Sabbath keeping. Spelt is a little better known than millet, and has some farming value, but only in certain portions of the globe, even as the Sabbath is better known than the 2300 days. Would any dare say these are not all perfect symbols, or that it is only a certain man's interpretation, and only an accident, or just happened, and yet fit so perfectly? But thus far only one phase has been explained.

ALL IN ONE VESSEL

The Lord said to the prophet Ezekiel, "Put them in one vessel" (verse 9). It will now be considered as to whether he really did put all these doctrines in one vessel. Luther believed in the doctrine he taught, but the great enemy flooded the church with deception. Not with arguing the truth. No, no. But suggesting to the people that they now have all the truth, and that they surely were right, thus hardening their hearts against more light. Soon additional truth came, but Satan had already flooded the church with his agents, and prejudice was aroused against the new light. The result was that the majority turned down the truth. A few saw the light, and as the case generally is, they were voted out by the church. Necessity gave birth to a new movement, or denomination. Such has been the experience with the church in each advancing truth up the line to our own time.

In like manner, the truth represented by the barley (Spirit) was turned down by those who had accepted the doctrine symbolized by the wheat (faith). Knox believed in all the truth he had and also all the truth Luther taught. Thus the wheat and the barley were in one vessel and carried to the second step.

We next have the truth symbolized by the beans (grace) and presented by Wesley, who believed also in the truths previously taught by Luther and Knox, which were represented by the wheat and barley. The third step was made, and the wheat, barley, and beans were in one vessel. The fourth truth was represented by lentils (baptism by immersion) and taught by Campbell, who believed in the doctrines of Luther, Knox, and Wesley. Thus the wheat, barley, beans and lentils were carried to the fourth step, and in one vessel. The fifth truth (2300) was represented by millet, and this step upward was made by William Miller who believed in all the truths symbolized by wheat, barley, beans, and lentils. The fifth step was made and the five varieties of food of truth were carried in one vessel.

We now come to the last variety of the cereals: "spelt" (Sab-bath), in connection with the judgment. Is it not a fact that the Seventh-day Adventist denomination believes in all these truths: Thewheat (faith); barley (Holy Spirit); beans (grace); lentils (immersion); millet (2300 days); spelt (Sabbath, with the sanctuary truth)? It will be noticed the Lord said, "Put them in one vessel". He did not say in two, or more, but in *one*. There are no other people besides Seventh-day Adventists who believe in the 2300 days (cleansing of the Sanctuary), and it is this denomination (vessel) which teaches all the six doctrines as represented by the six varieties of food. Thus the prophecy meets its fulfillment in our day, and we are amazed with the difficulty to comprehend the great wisdom of the Lord our God.

BARLEY CAKE

The Lord told Ezekiel, "Thou shalt eat it as barley cakes." Ezek.4:12. Why the wheat beans, lentils, millet, and spelt made as barley cake? Why not as wheat cake, or cake of some of the other cereals? The truth of the Holy Spirit was represented by the bar-ley; as explained on page 118. For this reason Ezekiel was told to make it into barley cake, meaning the truth came by the power of the Holy Spirit, and not by the aid of men.

"I WILL LAY BANDS UPON THEE"

Quoting Ezek. 4:8, we read: "And, behold, I will lay bands upon thee, and thou shalt *not* turn thee from one side to another, till thou hast *ended* the days of thy siege." The prophet was to lie on his *left* side 390 days. During this time he was to eat the varieties of food. But why on the left side? Why not on the right? Because the symbol would not have been perfect had he lain on his right side while eating. The stomach of a man is shaped something like a crescent, with a narrow neck to the right as an outlet. If a man lies on his left side, the outlet is upward, against gravity, and consequently would be difficult to empty itself, which would cause the food to remain within it. *Had it not been for the bands* the Lord put around Ezekiel, he would have turned to his right side, thus spoiling the symbol. The meaning is that even though the great enemy tried to *force out* every truth by *prejudice* and *insinuations*, and casting out of the church those who were teaching these new truths as it has been in each instance in the past, yet God saw to it that every truth would remain until He has put them in *one vessel*, and so it is.

"THOU SHALT DRINK ALSO WATER"

"Thou shalt drink also water by measure, the sixth part of an hin: From time to time shalt thou drink." Verse 11. Water, when taken in gives life; without it, existence would be impossible. Christ, speaking to the woman at the well, said: "But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14. Christ referred to "water" as a symbol of everlasting life. The meaning of the symbol of drinking the water with the barley cakes is that souls were to be saved by each new truth (the Spirit of life).

MEAT BY WEIGHT—WATER BY MEASURE

Verses 10, 11—"And thy meat which thou shalt eat shall be by weight. . . . Thou shalt drink also water by measure." The "meas-ure" and "weight" are symbols signifying that God would only give truth by measure, a little at a time. As the prophecy reads, "from time to time shalt thou eat and drink", and so has God given light a little at a time as we could grasp it. It has come in its exact Biblical order: Faith, Spirit, grace, baptism, time of the end, and the Sabbath (Rest).

Abraham, the father of the faithful, is the

symbol of faith; Isaac, the symbol of Spirit of truth (as the Bible says he was born after the Spirit); Jacob the symbol of grace, (for as he was a sinful man, had it not been for the grace of God, he could not have prevailed.) The Exodus movement is the symbol for baptism, for we read in 1 Cor. 10:2, "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The wilderness life is the symbol of the sanctuary question at the end of the 2300 days; it was in the wilderness that the heavenly sanctuary was described by the earthly. "The promised land" is a symbol of the Sabbath rest. In the promised land they were to rest had they driven out the heathen but because of national pride and disbelief, they failed to obtain the promised rest. The disobedience of Israel in the promised land is a symbol of our failing to obey God at the present time.

EXPLANATION OF VERSES 12, 14, 15

Wonderful prophecy as it is, the saddest part now is to be told. The scripture about to be quoted has perhaps never been read publicly or reproduced in an literature, but if it was never to be studied out, read in public, or published, God would never have placed it in the Bible. However, it is there, no doubt for a purpose, and must be considered. The quotation as found in Ezek. 4:12, 14, 15, reads as follows: "And thou shalt bake it with dung that cometh out of man, in their sight. Then said I, Oh Lord God! behold, my soul hath not been polluted: For from my youth up even till now have I not eaten of that which dieth of itself, or is torn in pieces; neither came there abominable flesh into my mouth. Then he said unto me, Lo, I have given thee cow's dung for man's dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith."

The prophet was told that he could not use wood, or coal to bake the cakes upon, but that he should use "dung that cometh out of a man." To Ezekiel it was too repulsive, and he pleaded to be excused. The Lord made an allowance, not by compulsion, but for Ezekiel's sake only, by telling Ezekiel to bake it with "cow's dung." The 13th verse gives an explanation of the symbol as follows: "And the Lord said, 'Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles'." The symbol is: Every portion of truth that has come so far, has been polluted, including the last one (Sabbath), notwithstanding all the instructions given us, line upon line, and precept upon precept. The picture tells the story; symbols do not lie. Instead of being offended because we are told of our failings, we should only

praise God that in His mercy He has made a call for reformation, that we may not be left to perish in our sins, but are given an opportunity to choose whom we will serve.

The question may be asked, How have we polluted God's truth? Only one of the many references will be quoted here. Volume 1, pages 471, 472: "A great mistake has been made by some who profess present truth, by introducing merchandise in the course of a series of meetings, . . . Ministers have stood in the desk and preached a most solemn discourse, and then by introducing merchandise, and acting the part of a salesman, *even* in the house of God. . . . The burden of selling our publications should not rest upon ministers who labor in word and doctrine." Volume 8, page 250: "I saw our In-structor [Christ] pointing to the garments of so-called righteousness. Stripping them off, He laid bare the defilement beneath. Then He said to me: 'Can you not see how they have pretentiously covered up their defilement and rottenness of character? "How is the faithful city become an harlot?" *My Father's House* is made a house of *merchandise*, a place whence the divine presence and glory have departed! For this cause there is weakness, and strength is lacking'." Thus we have the proof that every truth thus far has been polluted, including the Sabbath.

THE 40 DAYS AND WHAT TRANSPIRES WITHIN

Thus far, the 390 years have been explained, and we shall now consider the 40 days,—or years. After Ezekiel had accomplished the 390 days, he was told to turn now to his right side and lie on it 40 days. Unlike the 390 days, he is not to eat anything, but fast the entire forty days, and during this period of time he must lie on his right side. As we have explained before, if one should lie on his left side the stomach can not empty itself; but now he must lie on his right side. This position would give his stomach a chance to empty itself. Naturally, if the stomach would empty and could not take other food, he would become hungry (symbol of spiritual hunger).

The symbol is, that the church has been on a spiritual decline for forty years, and has had no new spiritual food to feed upon. Some may say, "We have the Bible and the Testimonies and we feed on them." It is true we have had them, but they have been closed to us, for we did not make proper use of the truth we have had, and it is a fact that the church has had no new light upon scriptures that were not understood forty years ago.

The forty-year period began in 1890, according to the chart on pages 112-113, at which time the 390 years ended. The time has about elapsed, and now we must have food or else we shall die, and God in His mercy has remembered His people and is sending them an invitation to draw near for another good feast.

Would you, brethren draw near for the great supper? Or will you make an excuse? Will you say, "I have brought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused." Or will your answer be, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them." Or will it be that you have "married a wife and therefore, I cannot come." Remember that "the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind": From the "highways and hedges" will not hesitate; the house will be filled. "For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." See Luke 14:16-24.

SEVEN—PERFECT NUMBER

In this prophecy we find there are only six portions, and only six steps have been made. Luther, Knox, Wesley, Campbell, Miller and White. The number "six" is not a perfect number. It is evident then, that there is still another portion to follow, and a step to climb. "Seven" is the perfect, Biblical number. The question is, Why was not the seventh portion included in this prophecy? Because the six were *polluted*; defiled with man's preparation, man's thoughts, and plans *have been* injected and followed, which, in God's sight are as "dung." It is not to be so with the seventh, for it is the last; it must be pure. This last portion, pure and undefiled, is represented by the angel of Rev. 18:1, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." It is at this time that Isaiah's prophecy will be fulfilled. Isa. 52:1, 2: "Awake, awake: put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the Holy City: For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion [God's pure church]."

Note the last part of the first verse: "For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." There has always been in the church the uncircumcised, the unclean, and unconverted, in all her history, but here the prophet declares there shall be "no

more". Let us give thanks to our God for this precious promise, and for the revelation of His Word. Zephaniah also declares, "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: For they shall feed and lie down and none shall make them afraid." In Prophets and Kings, page 725, we read: "Clad in the armor of Christ's righteousness, the church is to enter upon her final conflict. 'Fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners', she is to go forth into all the world, conquering and to conquer."

It could be explained that this brings us to the opening of the seventh seal of Rev. 8:1. The church on the seventh step, under the seventh seal, and in the seventh trumpet. By this we know we are on the borders of Eternity. Would the lips of any of us utter the words, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved?" But how shall we attain this perfection? It will not be easy. Unless we make an effort we shall never reach the mark, for the enemy is not leaving one string loose. He has interfered all the way, in every step, and every part of the truth, and his plans are stronger now than ever before. Nevertheless, prophecy has declared that the 144,000 have not bowed a knee to Baal, "and in their mouth was found no guile: For they are without fault before the throne of God." At the present time the denomination employs about 10,000 evangelical workers, but what will it be when 144,000 without guile, spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, filled with the Spirit of God, compass the globe? Such is the beginning of the seventh step. No wonder the prophet declared, "the uncircumcised and the unclean shall no more come into thee". "And I shall make her a strong nation." Micah 4:7.

While the prophecy of the 430 years finds its beginning with the Reformation by Luther, and others, the lesson is for this time, and the people at this age. Never before has this prophecy been understood, and, until now no one ever received much from it, but when the time is fulfilled, God makes it known. Thus has He led His people on and on. The verses not commented on will be considered now.

THE SIEGE

"Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem." Ezek. 4:1. The Hebrew translation reads: "Engrave" upon it a city; *namely* "Jerusalem", (the city: A symbol of the church

membership). Ezekiel was told to engrave a city, and call it Jerusalem, and it must be engraved upon a tile. Paper or skin would not do, for it would not be as durable as tile. If it is engraved on a tile it cannot be erased. The thought is that the prophecy will surely come to pass, and after it once becomes history, one cannot erase the things portrayed; it is there to stay through all ages. (The tile mentioned here is not manufactured. It is a natural lumina tile, and quarried in large, self-separated slabs which in certain sections of that country is found in a great abundance. It is being largely or exclusively used for roofing and flooring.)

Verse 2: "And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it, set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about." "Lay siege against it": That is, invade the city (the church) by an army to compel its surrender; endeavor to obtain possession of the city,—the church. "And build a fort against it": A fort around a city makes it secure, so "build a fort against it" means to make sure that none escape. "And cast a mount": the word "mount" in the Greek translation is rendered (Prohómata), meaning "ramparts", which is an embankment surrounding a fort, thus making every effort and precaution to secure the city. "Set the camp also against it": That is, make temporary lodging places. The thought is,—make preparation to remain there until you have conquered the city. "And set battering rams against it round about": Or, as in margin, "chief leaders": Meaning an instrument with which to blow or strike. "Ram" is a male sheep, which is used as a symbol of God's men, and they are to batter around about until the city is taken. The instrument which they batter with is a clear, cutting, and convincing Bible Truth.

The "city" (Jerusalem) is God's church; namely, the Seventh-day Adventists (Israel). God Himself organized this church by a prophet, and there is a great deal of difference between this church, and the churches during the Reformation from Luther's time on-ward. God permitted His people to be voted out of the church by the majority in times past, and they were compelled to start another movement until the next step they were to make, and so on. In this case, God is to deal with the entire body. Those who sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the church will be sealed by the man with the writer's inkhorn. Those who are determined to do evil, that is, do contrary to the rules laid down by the Spirit of God through the Testimonies for the church will be destroyed by the five men with the slaughter

weapons of Ezekiel 9. None can escape, for the city is besieged, fortified, and made sure. It is a fact, that in every age where God demonstrated His truth and purpose in clear lines, after being rejected, that people suffered the vengeance of the all-powerful and great God. For instance, the anti-diluvians, cities of Sodom, Egypt, Canaanites, Babylon, and ancient Jerusalem.

SEPARATION IN PRINCIPLE

"Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel." Verse 3. "Take thou an iron pan, and set it for a *wall of iron* between thee and the city [church]": A symbol of an impregnable separation between the two classes. This does not mean that they do not see, or speak to one another, but a separation in principle, rule, or guide. "And set thy face against it": As a general of armies sets his face against another nation, with intent to conquer. "This shall be a sign to the house of Israel": The sign is to those who are marked or sealed; namely, the 144,000, for they are Israel, The True.

TIME OF SPIRITUAL HUNGER

"Moreover He said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break his staff of bread in Jerusalem: And they shall eat bread by weight, and with care; and they shall drink water by measure, and with astonishment; That they may want bread and water, and be astonished one with another, and consume away for their iniquity." Verses 16, 17. The 13th verse applies to the time of the 390 years; verses 16, 17, to the time of the forty years. The beginning of the 16th verse shows that there is a break in the prophecy, for we read: "Moreover He said unto me", that is, besides, or furthermore. "I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem" (I will cut down, or set it on the decrease). "That they shall eat bread by weight and with care, and drink water by measure and with astonishment": That is, sparingly, until their supply of bread is exhausted, and they become hungry. "Astonished" (astonishment): That is, we would say that we have the truth, or are God's people, but we do not understand why thus and so; power is lacking, and there is something wrong.

The 17th verse is the fulfillment of the prophecy contained in verse 16. The Douay version seems

to make it clearer from which verse 17, is here quoted: "So that when bread and water fail every man may fall against his brother, and they may pine away in their iniquity." The beginning of the verse in the Greek, and Bulgarian are the same with the exception that the word "people" is used instead of "brother". The Hebrew translation renders: "In order that they may want bread and water, and be confounded one with the other and pine away for their iniquity." "So that when bread and water fail every man may fall" (Douay): That is, in the time of the forty-year period, they will exhaust their supply of bread, and water (spiritual) and become real hungry, so that they may discover their mistake. Quoting Testimonies to Ministers, page 419: "God requires certain things of His people; if they say, I will not give up my heart to do this thing, the Lord lets them go on in their supposed wise judgment without heavenly wisdom, until this scripture (Isa. 28:13) is fulfilled. You are not to say, I will follow the Lord's guidance up to a certain point that is in harmony with my judgment, and then hold fast to your own ideas, refusing to be molded after the Lord's similitude. Let the question be asked, Is this the will of the Lord? Not, Is this the opinion or judgment of ————?" "But the word of the Lord was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken." Isa. 28:13.

Testimonies to Ministers, pages 105-107: "We are not to think, as did the Jews, that our own ideas and opinions are infallible; nor with the papists, that certain individuals are the sole guardians of truth and knowledge, that men have no right to search the Scriptures for themselves, but must accept the explanations given by the Fathers of the church. . . . Those who allow prejudice to bar the mind against the reception of truth can not receive the divine enlightenment. Yet, when a view of Scripture is presented, many do not ask, *Is it true,—in harmony with God's word?* but, *By whom* is it advocated? and unless it comes through the very channel that pleases *them*, they *do not* accept it. So thoroughly satisfied are they with *their own ideas*, that they will not examine the Scripture evidence, *with* a desire to learn, but *refuse* to be interested, merely because of their prejudices.

"The Lord *often* works where *we least* expect Him; He surprises us by revealing His power through instruments of *His own* choice, while He passes by the men to whom we have looked as those through whom light should come. God desires us to *receive* the truth upon *its own* merits,—because

it is truth. . . . But *beware* of rejecting that which is *truth*. The great danger with our people has been that of *depending upon men*, and making flesh their arm. Those who *have not* been in the habit of searching the Bible *for themselves*, or weighing evidence, have confidence *in the leading men*, and *accept* the decision *they* make; and thus *many will reject the very messages God sends* to His people, if these leading brethren do not accept them.

"*No one* should claim that he has all the light there is for God's people. The Lord *will not* tolerate this. He has said, 'I have set before thee an open door, and *no man* can shut it.' Even if all our leading men should *refuse* light and truth, that door *will still* remain open. *The Lord will raise up men who will give the people the message for this time.* . . . Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an *investigation* of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with *prejudice*, and *condemn* his ideas, while *refusing* to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians, and *investigate* the position presented, *in the light of God's word*, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas *would not* weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen *your* position if it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, *it is time that we knew it*. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us." Though one may stubbornly dispute the direct application of the scriptures quoted here, certainly none would question the lesson taught in this publication and yet claim to be in harmony with the movement.

✧ End of Study ✧

The text for this study was excerpted from the original publication entitled, *The Shepherd's Rod*, Vol. 2, pp. 114-131. (<http://www.upa7.org/PDFs/Original-Scans/2SR-book-s.pdf>)

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