

Daniel 11: “The Takedown of the USA and Adventism”

Part Four: 'Samson's Descent into Laodicea'

If we look at our Seventh day Adventist church from a perspective of size and organization, it would surely seem that we are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing. Our financial status is impressive, along with our various medical institutions, schools, universities, etc. We are also well supported by ministries that operate from within the church and without.

But how is it with our souls? Do we truly understand the Three Angels' Messages as we should? Do we know how to become those messages ourselves? Do we know how it is that we “enter the sanctuary above and unite with Christ in working out our own salvation with fear and trembling, so we shall not be weighed in the balances and found wanting?” (MS 168, 1898.20)

When we look at the life and experience of Samson, we see high points followed by corresponding low points. Though there were several victories in the career of Samson, ultimately they did not check his downward trend. This trend was set in motion when he turned aside to look at the lion, and ate of the honey. In this article, we are going to look at the lowest point in his experience in order to gain the perspective of our present low point as Laodicean Adventists.

Samson's Condition

“...And knowest not that thou art wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...” Rev. 3:17

In the account of Samson's fall, we find a perfect description of the Laodicean condition, as he was most certainly wretched, miserable, poor, and blind. When brought out for the Philistines to make sport of, he was undoubtedly naked or nearly so, in order to highlight his massive physique. Making the connection between his condition and our condition as Laodicean Adventists, gives us the key we need to understand the rest of this portion of his story.

Samson's Employment in Prison

Verse 21: *“But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass, and he did grind in the prison house.”*

Here is poor Samson; blinded and bound, and on top of that, forced to grind in the prison house.

Question: So, what exactly do grinders do?

Answer: They grind up the corn and wheat.

For what purpose?

To put it in a form that can be more easily utilized and digested.

It doesn't work well to just throw a few handfuls of raw wheat in a pan, along with some olives and other necessary ingredients, and somehow expect to produce a good loaf of bread. That would not be very edible! The wheat must be ground into a usable form, just as the olives, or oil, must also be in a usable form. In other words, the oil, or Holy Spirit, must come to us in a usable form (the method) in order that the bread, or Scriptures, can be put into a lesson we can digest.

Isn't that what our Adventist scholars and theologians do as well? They take the things of Scripture that are hard to understand, and grind them into usable lessons for us? Something we should be able to eat, and digest, causing us to grow spiritually?

But wait! Samson was in prison, and not just any prison, but a Philistine prison. Not only that, he is bound by fetters of brass—not iron, not silver, nor gold: but brass. And he's blind!

Hmmm...

In this type, the Philistines represent Protestantism. As we have seen, the three hundred foxes which went through the Philistine country, are the same as the three hundred charts, which went through the Protestant churches, and brought out those who were ready to be harvested. The Protestant churches recognized the Millerite proclamation of the first and second angel's messages, presented through the 1843 chart, as a fire which swept through their ranks, as the "destroyer of their country."

But now Samson is blind. He has lost his eyes. Not one eye or three eyes, but two. Two things. Remembering that just a couple of years before 1852, when Adventism started into its Laodicean condition, they had two things that contained the prophetic understanding of the three angels' messages—the 1843 chart along with the addition of the 1850 chart. The first and second angel's messages were contained on the 1843 chart, and the third angel's message along with the repeat of the first two were contained on the 1850 chart. The way they arrived at that prophetic understanding was through a very specific method of study.

But here is Samson, confined in a Philistine prison, and using a Philistine millstone to grind Philistine wheat. In other words, Adventism, in its Laodicean condition, has lost its ability to see prophetically because it is grinding the wheat, so to speak, using Protestant methodology. The prison represents the overall system, or box, which confines him, and the millstone represents the Protestant methodology, as it is what actually grinds the wheat. The Philistine wheat in this case represents the many different versions of the Bible published by the various Protestant publishing houses.

Protestantism relies on the Historical Grammatical, and Higher Critical methodologies to form its conclusions, also on the many different versions and translations of the Bible, and we have fully embraced all of this in our own interpretative processes. This is the precise thing that has changed—that is, we no longer study as did our pioneers.

In other words, it seems that our ‘modern scholars’ dismiss the technique of our pioneers as a method of interpretation that is not sound, and in so doing, they overlook the simple fact that the method the Millerites used gave us the platform of truth that we now stand on, including all of our prophetic understanding that was based on time. The method they used was able to give the trumpet the certain sound.

And Bound Him with Fetters of Brass

But what has produced these methods of interpretation in the first place? To rephrase the question, what is the overall system that limits us to these methods, and prevents us from utilizing a method that would allow us to arrive at the correct interpretation? Understanding what these fetters do, and how they accomplish their task, will help us to see this system for what it is.

Fetters: *A chain for the feet; a chain by which an animal is confined by the foot, either made fast or fixed, as a prisoner, or impeded in motion and hindered from leaping, as a horse whose fore and hind feet are confined by a chain. To bind; to enchain; to confine; to restrain motion; to impose restraints on.* (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)

The Philistines were known for their workmanship with both iron and brass, yet they bound him with brass fetters. According to our definition, these fetters are accomplishing a very specific purpose. Their main function is to impede his ability to move around freely, and keep him at his task of grinding the wheat, all the while preventing his escape. When you think about it, they made doubly sure that Samson could not escape, as he was not only in prison, but also bound with these fetters, and even if he should somehow escape he would not make it far, as he was blind.

Coming down to our time, as a type, what would we look for that would bind, or limit the ability of our Adventist scholars from going to and fro in the Scriptures freely, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little? And forced to grind the wheat using the historical grammatical, or higher critical reasoning, as their method of Biblical interpretation? And all the while, these brass fetters preventing their escape from this system?

Why Brass?

Metals have great significance in the Bible, and in this case it explains how the fetters accomplished their work.

The metal used here, that of brass, as compared to iron, silver, or gold, show us the nature of how the fetters hindered, or restrained Samson. In other words, each of these metals have a corresponding characteristic.

To find out this characteristic, we need only to go to the place where each metal is described, which is found in Daniel 2. Each metal corresponds with a kingdom, and brass is used to represent the kingdom of Greece. Gold represents Babylon, silver for Medio Persia, and iron for Rome.

To understand the characteristic of each metal, we must understand the leading characteristic of each kingdom. Briefly stated, Babylon was known for its pride, (Dan.4:30, 37) Medio Persia for its infallible decrees, or commands, (Dan. 6:8, 15) Greece was known for its system of philosophy, or false education. (Acts 6:9; 17:15-21) and Rome for its reliance on the law, or legalism; (Acts 16:37; 22:25-30;)

To put these fetters in their proper perspective, it isn't pride that has caused us to embrace these methods—though it will most assuredly prevent us from giving them up; or infallibility in our adherence to them—though we make the claim that they are the only correct way to study; or legalism—which views these methods as the end, rather than a means to the end; but the fact that they are made of brass tells us that it is the system of false education that has actually corrupted the historical grammatical, and produced higher critical methodologies in the first place. As we study Daniel 11 and Revelation 13-17, we will see clearly how the principles of false education have infiltrated all of society, including Adventism.

It is highly significant that Greece was the only kingdom of the four that was to bear rule over all the earth. (Daniel 2:39) Their system of education relies on human reasoning instead of Divine revelation. These educational principles are taught from kindergarten on up through all major universities, and have penetrated to every corner of the globe in some degree. It is also equally significant that the little horn, the Papacy, which has waxed exceedingly great, originated in Greece.

As the Protestant churches are returning to its mother—Catholicism, so are we returning to our mother—Protestantism. Catholicism simply uses Protestantism as the vehicle to deliver its methods and doctrines straight to us, just as Delilah used a man to actually cut off Samson's hair, resulting in the loss of his physical and spiritual strength. This we will see clearly in the study of Daniel 11:31-45.

As some of our leading men of the past began to return to the 'accepted method' of Biblical interpretation, they also began to change their views of the Investigative Judgment, the 2300-year prophecy, the Daily, and other distinctive Adventist doctrines. As a result, they gave up our doctrines and left the church, but in doing so they also left behind seeds of doubt concerning our established method of study. It was when our young men began to attend outside schools of theology, thus relearning their [Protestant] methods of interpretation, that we began to return to our mother, the Protestant denominations.

“Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter.” Ezekiel 16:44

Mrs. White lets us know that because of their rejection of the first and second angel’s messages, the Protestant denominations experienced a moral fall in 1844, and as they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. (See GC 389)

The painful point to make, is that the system of Protestantism and their methodologies, is not our friend. More than that, it is positively an enemy to Adventism. This is true on many levels, and we are slow to perceive this fact.

Conclusion

By adopting and employing the methods of interpretation of Protestantism, we are allowing them to confine us to their system, and to remove from us our weapons. Their conclusions become our conclusions because we are using their formulas.

“Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his ax and his mattock. Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.” 1 Samuel 13:19-21

In their day, the Israelites went to the Philistines to have their implements sharpened. These implements were used to cultivate the ground, so that the crops would grow. In our day, we are going to the Protestants to have the theology of our ministers and scholars sharpened. Our ministers and scholars are to help us to grow spiritually. But the Bible records, *‘Yet they had a file.’* In other words, the Israelites had a file, but chose instead to have their tools sharpened by the Philistines. We too have a ‘file’ to sharpen our instruments, and this is the subject for the next article. Gideon’s men and Jacob’s sheep will help us see the importance of the correct method of study.