

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

Part Six: 'Jacob's Sheep'

The account of Jacob's sheep while working for Laban is a small part of a much larger narrative of Jacob's life, and can be viewed as a type. The reference point for this is his wrestle with Christ, also known as Jacob's time of trouble. The time frame for Jacob's time of trouble is just after the universal Sunday law is passed with its accompanying death decree for those who refuse to worship on Sunday. (Jeremiah 30:7; EW 36) This reference point gives us the key we need for the larger overall picture of his life; and using this key allows us to work back from that time period to examine other spiritual truths in his life, in the context of a type.

These literal events in Jacob's experience provide for us the spiritual waymarks we need that allow us in turn to test our own corresponding experience.

At first glance you might wonder what bearing this article could possibly have to the study of Daniel 11:31-45. Hopefully the correlation can be seen between the experience of Gideon's men and that of Jacob's sheep. Understanding as a type, that in both cases the water is the Word of God, is really the smaller key that unlocks both accounts. In the first account of Gideon, it is the way that each man drank out of the water that determined whether he would advance or not. Likewise, in the account of Jacob. This time however it is not the method of drinking, but what was placed in the water that determined whether they would advance or not.

The First Division

The account is found in Genesis 30, and details a similar two-step process to that of Gideon's men.

In the first step, Laban and Jacob come to an agreement as to Jacob's wages. So far, all of Laban's sheep are in one group, but according to the agreement, there is to be a separation. They are to be divided into two groups and one class will remain with Laban, and another class will be given to Jacob. The separation is not based on the fact that there are both sheep and goats in the group, but is determined instead by the color and nature of their coats, or wool. The brown, speckled, and spotted animals are removed and placed in Jacob's care, and the ones that were not brown, speckled or spotted, were left with Laban. Jacob goes so far to state in their agreement that if an animal is discovered in his flock that is not brown, speckled, or spotted, it would be counted as stolen. In other words, the end result is, Laban's flock is white and Jacob's flock is not.

Up until this agreement, all of the sheep and goats of various colors have been together, but now they are in two very distinct groups that are easily distinguishable. All due to the color and characteristics of their outward appearance.

As with the first separation of Gideon's men where one class of men went home and the other class progressed to the next level, so with the sheep; one class stays home and the other moves to the next level with Jacob.

The Significance of the Color of the Sheep

In studying this as a type, the Bible lets us know that sheep represent people. (See Isaiah 53:6, Ezekiel 36:37, and Psalms 23) In this case, it is the color that defines the characteristic of each sheep. To put this in perspective, if someone were to ask what color should our robe of righteousness be, we of course would say, it should be white, as our robes are to be white and without spot or blemish.

So, if these sheep are progressing to the next level, shouldn't the white sheep be the ones to get the nod instead of the brown, spotted, and grizzled ones?

It all depends on how you look at it.

To understand this, is to realize that these white sheep represent a class of people who see themselves in a certain way. In other words, those who see themselves as white, only portray themselves as white, but the reality is they are either self-righteous or legalistic. You could say that they are **"rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing."**

On the other hand, those who view themselves as brown, speckled, spotted or grizzled, see themselves as under condemnation. They see and recognize the fact that their robes are not white. They perceive that they have a problem and seem to be unable to grasp the hand of Christ. They see that they are failing to attain to Christian perfection. You could say of this group that they are **"wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked."** No 'white' sheep would ever view itself in that perspective, and that is why Jacob could say that if one were found in his group it would be counted as stolen.

This same concept can also be seen in the selection process with David and his men. David is a representative man and is a type of the 144,000, and as such it is interesting to note the condition of the men who were drawn to him. 1 Samuel 22:2 tells us that **'everyone that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.'** **Distress**—those who see that their characters do not fully reflect the character of Christ; **In debt**—those who try hard to keep the law but constantly fail, as they do not understand true righteousness by faith. They find themselves always in debt to the law; **Discontented**—those who are not content with their present religious' experience.

Who or What Does Rebecca and Laban Represent?

In order to better understand the significance of the color of the sheep and their corresponding condition, we need to step back so we can see the type of Jacob's life in a larger context.

Jacob was first under the direct supervision of Rebecca, and then he was placed under the supervision of Laban. In other words, there were two administrators in his life. Rebecca as a woman and mother represent the church, and she is the one who induced Jacob to attempt to obtain Isaac's blessing on the birthright by deceit. The fact that she did this lets us know that she did not know how to obtain it for him legitimately. The exile of Jacob from his mother is represented in Isaiah 28:9 as **'them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.'** This is not telling us to leave the church, but to study for ourselves, and not rely on the church for our salvation.

Laban, as the brother of Rebecca, represents the law, as it was Laban who changed Jacob's wages ten times. He did not want to let Jacob go, and it also helps us to understand more clearly why the 'white sheep' remained with Laban. As Laban represents the law, so Leah and Rachel represent both the old and new covenants, and just as Laban was the father of Leah and Rachel, so the law is the father, or basis of both the old and new covenants. Jacob went for Rachel first, but found that Laban, or the law, would not permit him to take the younger before the elder. Rachel was the pretty one, and Leah was not. In other words, we all want the pretty one, or new covenant, but we must first pass through the experience of the old covenant. The study of the children of Leah and Rachel, along with those of their handmaids, gives some very interesting insights as to how the old and new covenants work in our lives.

Jacob's Watering Trough

Just as there was a second step to qualify those who would actually be used in battle in Gideon's time, so there is an additional step applied to Jacob's sheep now that they have been separated from Laban's group. In both cases they are qualified at the water, but this time it isn't based on how they drink out of the water, but what is placed in the water when they drink.

Jacob uses three special rods to accomplish two specific things:

The first objective of these rods is to cause the flocks to conceive and reproduce offspring that are of the same color and type, thus increasing the size of his flock. The second function of these rods are to selectively produce a stronger class of sheep, thus increasing the strength of his flock. In other words, the rods were only placed in front of the stronger sheep, which would in turn produce strong offspring. The rods were withheld from the weaker ones, who would only weaken the flock with weak and sickly offspring. It is interesting to note that the weak sheep were put back in Laban's flock. So now, Laban's flock consists of 'white sheep' and weak sheep, with the addition of these weaker off-colored sheep. Jacob's flock consists of strong healthy sheep that are brown, spotted, and ringstraked, grizzled, and so on.

When we look at the meaning of this word 'conceive' in the literal context of our story, we can see that it means to become pregnant with; which in turn leads to giving birth to something. In the context of a type it is the same exact concept, but it has to do with the mind:

“To form an idea in the mind; to understand; to comprehend.

To conceive of things clearly and distinctly in their own natures.

To understand; to comprehend; to have a complete idea of.” Webster’s 1828 Dictionary

These rods had nothing to do with the ability of the sheep to actually conceive, as they could conceive with or without them. The important thing to see is the fact that even though the sheep all drank out of the same water, it was the three rods that actually caused them to conceive in the desired way. In other words, those rods are the same as the leaven in Luke 13:21—*“It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”* Note: It wasn’t two measures of meal, or six measures, but three.

In the application of the rods there are two distinctions to be made—that is, two classes with two particular attributes are developed as a result of the rods being applied to the water as they drank. These rods were directly responsible for reproducing a class of sheep that were brown, spotted, grizzled, as opposed to white; and they were directly responsible for producing strong sheep, as opposed to feeble sheep.

Three Pilled Rods

It is interesting that Jacob chose three specific types of rods to accomplish his purpose of increasing the size and strength of his flock. Not only did he choose three types of wood, but he also did something to the rods that caused the sheep to react a certain way. He didn’t just cut three branches off of the same tree, but purposely chose three particular trees and cut a branch from each. He then cut away the protective bark that concealed the white layers underneath. Also, it should always be pointed out in a type, that numbers mean something. In other words, Jacob didn’t put two rods in the water, or five rods; he put three rods in.

In like manner, the three angels’ messages have a ‘protective layer’ that must be removed in order to reveal the ‘white’ or true meaning of these messages. They cannot be understood by the casual or superficial reader, and as such they require a method that will remove the covering and open to our understanding their true intent.

Jacob ‘pilled white strakes’ in the three rods. If you look up those words in the Webster’s 1828 dictionary, it lets us know that he simply peeled a set of stripes in each rod. This concept is set forth in Isaiah 28:10, where it details the principle of line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. These white stripes show that the principle of line upon line is what allows us to see the ‘white’ underneath the bark. This same concept can be seen when David played the harp for king Saul. David was a cunning player of the harp—that is, he represents a class of people who know how to bring forth a perfect melody from the Scriptures using the principle of Isaiah 28.

When you consider how a harp is put together, with its strings all lined up perfectly with the other strings, it is easy to see that they are a literal example of the spiritual concept of line upon line. Just as David went to the leadership of Israel playing his harp, so there will be a class of people who take a message to the leadership of our church.

When you compare these accounts with Gideon's men, a couple of things begin to take shape in our minds concerning the importance of Bible study, and the way in which we study the Bible.

The account of Gideon's men clearly shows us that there is an ordained method of how to drink from the water—or in our case, how to study the Bible. Jacob's sheep and David's harp takes that concept further, and not only shows us the value of utilizing the principle of line upon line in our study of the Scriptures, but it also shows us that the application of the three angels messages to our lives will give us something to share with others, thus increasing the size of the flock. As we then teach others these principles, they become stronger, and we also benefit from the teaching process and become stronger ourselves.

It is the principle of line upon line that allows us to see the true meaning of these three angels. This principle of precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, is expanded on and put in a practical form through Miller's Rules of Interpretation.

Conclusion

Just as Jacob chose three distinct trees for his rods, so Christ has chosen three distinct messages for us. These three angels' messages are composed of three separate components, each representing an experience we pass through. Understanding that the three angels are identical with the sanctuary, allows us in turn to understand the function of each. This is the result of removing the protective bark, which then allows us to see the white underneath.

Though there is much more to the type of Jacob than can be presented here, it is significant that he had to first pass through the two seven year periods with Leah and Rachel, in their order, before he was qualified to wrestle with Christ.

This is critical to understand, as this same principle applies to us in the study and understanding of our present truth as found in Daniel 11:31-45. The present truth for the Jews was found in Daniel 9, and the present truth for the Millerites was found in Daniel 8. It was only those who accepted the first message, and then were benefitted by the second, who went on to understand their present truth in the context of the third angel.

To put that in practical terms, it was only those who accepted and received the message of John the Baptist, who were then prepared to accept the message of Christ. This in turn allowed them to see and understand when Christ moved into the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. They understood that judgment had passed on the Jews, and that the Jewish nation was no longer God's chosen people on earth. Likewise for the Millerites.

Only those who accepted the first angel could then be benefitted by the second, which allowed them to follow Christ into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. They also understood that the door had closed for the Protestant churches, and that they were no longer God's true church on earth.

The same principle with the same consequences apply to us as Adventists.

Making the Transition

So far in this series of articles we have looked at cause and effect regarding the present uncertainty and confusion that attends the Adventist interpretation of Daniel 11:31-45. This uncertainty and confusion allows for multiple and conflicting interpretations, and can be traced directly to the method used to arrive at their conclusions. We have also examined other factors which influence our thinking as well.

Hopefully in this series, the principles have been established well enough to enable us to see the need for a completely different approach than the one we now employ in our study of Bible prophecy. The words of Jeremiah 6:16 certainly apply to us as we seek to understand our present truth in both Daniel and Revelation: *"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein."*

In our next article we are going to use these principles to lay out the proposal for the study of Daniel 11:31-45. From that point forward, this series of articles will be focused on the actual study of Daniel 11:31-45.