

The Book of Daniel - Number Fifty

Unlocking the Prophetic Mysteries of Daniel 8: Palmoni's Revelation

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In Daniel chapter eight, Daniel is given a vision of the kingdoms of Bible prophecy, and thereafter he hears a heavenly dialogue represented by a question and an answer.

Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot? And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. Daniel 8:13, 14.

The first twelve verses represent the vision, and verses thirteen and fourteen identify another vision. As with the two different Hebrew words that are both translated as “take away,” and the two different Hebrew words that are both translated as “sanctuary,” in Daniel chapter eight there are also two different Hebrew words, that are both translated as “vision.”

When it comes to the two words translated as “take away,” the theologians of Adventism argue that the words should both be understood to mean “remove.” When it comes to the two words translated as “sanctuary,” the theologians of Adventism argue that the words should both be understood to mean “God’s sanctuary”, and when it comes to the two words translated as “vision,” the theologians of Adventism, once again, gloss over the distinctions between the two words. The distinction was important enough to Daniel, that he purposely used two very different Hebrew words, so we should identify and uphold the distinction. The word “vision,” in verse thirteen is the Hebrew word “chazon,” and it means a dream, revelation, or oracle—a vision.

The word “vision,” occurs ten times in Daniel chapter eight, but it represents two different Hebrew words. “Chazon,” that is located in verse thirteen, is also found in verse one, then twice in verse two, of course verse thirteen, and one time in verses fifteen, seventeen and twenty-six. Seven of the ten times the word “vision” occurs in Daniel chapter eight, it is the word “chazon,” simply meaning “a vision”.

The other three times the word “vision” occurs in Daniel chapter eight, it is the Hebrew word “mareh,” meaning a view; or an appearance. In chapter eight, the Hebrew word “mareh,” is also translated one time not as “vision,” but as “appearance,” thus identifying more perfectly the meaning of the word. Why did Daniel use two different Hebrew words, that are so close in meaning that the translators would treat them as the same word? Does it matter?

“Every principle in the word of God has its place, every fact its bearing. And the complete structure, in design and execution, bears testimony to its Author. Such a structure no mind but that of the Infinite could conceive or fashion.” Education, 123.

The answer to the second question is Yes, that it really does matter why Daniel made the distinction, so it therefore becomes the responsibility of the student of prophecy to seek to understand the first question, which asks why Daniel made the distinction. The distinctions he made concerning the word translated as “sanctuary,” and the word translated as “take away,” have eternal consequences, so why would anyone expect less of an importance with the word translated as “vision?” “Every fact” has “its bearing” “in the word of God,” and impacts the prophetic “structure,” and the fulfillment of the prophecy when it is “executed.”

As we begin to consider the word “vision,” in chapter eight, a “fact” that has “bearing” on Daniel’s testimony, is who it was that answered the question of Daniel eight, verse thirteen with, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

There are four facts that have a direct “bearing” upon Daniel chapter eight, which I intend to address. One is that the vision of the Ulai River has been identified as a prophecy for the last days, and it is also the symbol of the “knowledge” of the book of Daniel which was “unsealed” at the “time of the end” in 1798.

“There is need of a much closer study of the Word of God. Especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy, but we should call attention to what the prophets and the apostles have written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy, and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted.

“Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. God alone is represented as great. In the vision of the prophet He is seen casting down one mighty ruler and setting up another. He is revealed as the monarch of the universe, about to set up His everlasting kingdom—the Ancient of days, the living God, the Source of all wisdom, the Ruler of the present, the Revealer of the future. Read and understand how poor, how frail, how short-lived, how erring, how guilty, is man in lifting up his soul unto vanity.

“The Holy Spirit through Isaiah points us to God, the living God, as the chief object of attention—to God as revealed in Christ. ‘Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace’ [Isaiah 9:6].

“The light that Daniel received direct from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon have come to pass.

“Consider the circumstances of the Jewish nation when the prophecies of Daniel were given. The Israelites were in captivity, their temple had been destroyed, their temple service suspended. Their religion had centered in the ceremonies of the sacrificial system. They had

made the outward forms all-important, while they had lost the spirit of true worship. Their services were corrupted with the traditions and practices of heathenism, and in the performance of the sacrificial rites they did not look beyond the shadow to the substance. They did not discern Christ, the true offering for the sins of men. The Lord wrought to bring the people into captivity, and to suspend the services in the temple, in order that the outward ceremonies might not become the sum total of their religion. Their principles and practices must be purged from heathenism. The ritual service ceased in order that heart service might be revived. The outward glory was removed that the spiritual might be revealed.

“In the land of their captivity, as the people turned unto the Lord with repentance, He manifested Himself unto them. They lacked the outward representation of His presence; but the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone into their minds and hearts. When they called unto God in their humiliation and distress, visions were given to His prophets which unfolded the events of the future—the overthrow of the oppressors of God’s people, the coming of the Redeemer, and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom.” Manuscript Releases, volume 16, 333–335.

The “fact” that the vision of the Ulai River was given for the last days demands that a student of prophecy makes the effort to understand what it has foretold of the events represented in the vision. The prophetic “matters” associated with the vision of the Ulai River were “shaped” by the “Holy Spirit” “both in the giving of the prophecy, and in the events portrayed.” What was happening with a prophet when they receive a vision, as well as the events of prophecy the prophet identifies are to be studied, with the knowledge that both are a prophetic representation of what will be fulfilled in the last days. The previous passage emphasizes that we should recognize that Daniel was in the captivity of the “seven times.”

Daniel represents those who recognize their captivity at the conclusion of the three-and-a-half days of Revelation eleven, who then turn to the Lord with repentance, fulfill the Leviticus twenty-six prayer, separate the precious from the vile, and then the Lord fulfills his promise to gather those who have been scattered, as he manifests Himself unto them. Their “chief object of attention,” then is “God as revealed in Christ.”

The “bearing” of the vision of the Ulai River, and how it contributes to the “structure” of the prophetic message which was “designed” by Christ, is the first “fact” we have briefly considered, and the passage cited identifies that our chief object should be the revelation of God, as “revealed in Christ.” In Daniel chapter eight, Christ is not presented as He was by Isaiah, when Isaiah identified that Christ’s “name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” In Daniel chapter eight, God is revealed in Christ as Palmoni, meaning the Wonderful Numberer, or the Numberer of Secrets.

That “fact” demands that the “bearing” of the name “Palmoni” must be sought for, along with how that name contributes to the “structure” and “design” of the prophecy. A third “fact” in Daniel chapter eight, that should be recognized, is that it is in that chapter that the central doctrinal pillar of the Millerite movement is set forth. Miller’s brightest jewel was found in verse fourteen, and we should seek to understand the “bearing” that “fact” has upon the vision of the Ulai River, that is

now in the process of fulfillment.

In Miller's dream, when the casket was placed upon the table in the center of his room, it shone with the brightness of the sun, but in the last days the casket is larger and shines ten times brighter than it shone when initially placed upon Miller's table. What is it about the vision of the Ulai River, that includes the central pillar to the Millerite movement, that increases the light of that doctrine by ten times in the last days? What is revealed in the last days that was not revealed at the time of the end in 1798? What are "the events" of the vision of the Ulai River, which Sister White says "are now in the process of fulfillment?"

If we candidly bring these first three facts together (the vision of the Ulai, Christ revealed as Palmoni and the central doctrinal pillar), we should be willing to accept a simple premise that will impact our study of the vision of the Ulai River. Those combined facts inform those who wish to see that the message that was unsealed in 1798 was a message that was "hung upon time." Without the element of predictive time prophecy Miller's message would not have existed.

The fourth "fact" that has bearing on this chapter is that the Millerites presented a message based upon prophetic time. To emphasize this fact, God was revealed in Christ, in verse thirteen and fourteen as the Wonderful Numberer (Palmoni). The idea that the vision consisted of only identifying October 22, 1844, as the conclusion of the twenty-three hundred days of verse fourteen, is to throw cold water on the revelation of God being revealed through Christ as Palmoni.

The theologians of Adventism have diligently worked to bury the significance of the question of verse thirteen of Daniel chapter eight in order to produce the flavor in their dish of fables, that they have determined will keep the unlearned with the itching ears, from being concerned about the truths connected with the central pillar of Adventism.

"The scripture which above all others had been both the foundation and central pillar of the Advent faith was the declaration, 'Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.' [Daniel 8:14.] These had been familiar words to all believers in the Lord's soon coming. By the lips of thousands was this prophecy repeated as the watchword of their faith. All felt that upon the events therein foretold depended their brightest expectations and most cherished hopes. These prophetic days had been shown to terminate in the autumn of 1844. In common with the rest of the Christian world, Adventists then held that the earth, or some portion of it, was the sanctuary. They understood that the cleansing of the sanctuary was the purification of the earth by the fires of the last great day, and that this would take place at the second advent. Hence the conclusion that Christ would return to the earth in 1844.

"But the appointed time had passed, and the Lord had not appeared. The believers knew that God's Word could not fail; their interpretation of the prophecy must be at fault; but where was the mistake? Many rashly cut the knot of difficulty by denying that the 2300 days ended in 1844. No reason could be given for this, except that Christ had not come at the time they expected him. They argued that if the prophetic days had ended in 1844, Christ would then have returned to cleanse the sanctuary by the purification of the earth by fire; and that since he had not come, the days could not have ended.

“To accept this conclusion was to renounce the former reckoning of the prophetic periods. The 2300 days had been found to begin when the commandment of Artaxerxes for the restoration and building of Jerusalem went into effect, in the autumn of B. C. 457. Taking this as the starting-point, there was perfect harmony in the application of all the events foretold in the explanation of that period in Daniel 9:25–27. Sixty-nine weeks, the first 483 of the 2300 years, were to reach to the Messiah, the Anointed One; and Christ’s baptism and anointing by the Holy Spirit, A. D. 27, exactly fulfilled the specification. In the midst of the seventieth week, Messiah was to be cut off. Three and a half years after his baptism, Christ was crucified, in the spring of A. D. 31. The seventy weeks, or 490 years, were to pertain especially to the Jews. At the expiration of this period, the nation sealed its rejection of Christ by the persecution of his disciples, and the apostles turned to the Gentiles, A. D. 34. The first 490 years of the 2300 having then ended, 1810 years would remain. From A. D. 34, 1810 years extend to 1844. ‘Then,’ said the angel, ‘shall the sanctuary be cleansed.’ All the preceding specifications of the prophecy had been unquestionably fulfilled at the time appointed. With this reckoning, all was clear and harmonious, except that it was not seen that any event answering to the cleansing of the sanctuary had taken place in 1844. To deny that the days ended at that time was to involve the whole question in confusion, and to renounce positions which had been established by unmistakable fulfillments of prophecy.

“But God had led his people in the great Advent movement; his power and glory had attended the work, and he would not permit it to end in darkness and disappointment, to be reproached as a false and fanatical excitement. He would not leave his word involved in doubt and uncertainty. Though many abandoned their former reckoning of the prophetic periods, and denied the correctness of the movement based thereon, others were unwilling to renounce points of faith and experience that were sustained by the Scriptures and by the witness of the Spirit of God. They believed that they had adopted sound principles of interpretation in their study of the prophecies, and that it was their duty to hold fast the truths already gained, and to continue the same course of Biblical research. With earnest prayer they reviewed their position, and studied the Scriptures to discover their mistake. As they could see no error in their reckoning of the prophetic periods, they were led to examine more closely the subject of the sanctuary.” *The Great Controversy*, 409, 410.

We have been informed by Sister White, in the same passage where the vision of the Ulai River is identified, that there “is need of a much closer study of the Word of God.” The theologians will present the subject of “prophetic periods” in the previous passage from *The Great Controversy*, as if the “prophetic periods” Sister White is limiting her commentary to, is the five prophecies that are represented within the twenty-three hundred year prophecy. After all, they claim, four of those prophecies are specifically addressed in the passage. But a “much closer study” of the subject demonstrates that the term “prophetic periods” in the plural, in Sister White’s writings more accurately refers to the two prophecies that were to be fulfilled on October 22, 1844.

There are five specific time prophecies that Gabriel identified for Daniel that are part of the twenty-three hundred years. The first identifies forty-nine years, when the “streets and walls would be built in troublous times.” The second was Christ’s baptism after four hundred and eighty-three years from the starting point of 457 BC. The third was His crucifixion, the fourth identified when

the gospel would go to the Gentiles at the end of the four hundred and ninety-years that were set apart especially for the Jewish nation, and the fifth, and only the fifth, time prophecy, ended on October 22, 1844. The previous four time prophecies ended well before 1844. So, what does Sister White actually mean when she uses the expression “prophetic periods” in the plural, that were to end in 1844?

Addressing the first disappointment of the Millerites she identifies the answer to that question:

“I saw the people of God joyful in expectation, looking for their Lord. But God designed to prove them. His hand covered a mistake in the reckoning of the prophetic periods. Those who were looking for their Lord did not discover this mistake, and the most learned men who opposed the time also failed to see it. God designed that His people should meet with a disappointment. The time passed, and those who had looked with joyful expectation for their Saviour were sad and disheartened, while those who had not loved the appearing of Jesus, but embraced the message through fear, were pleased that He did not come at the time of expectation. Their profession had not affected the heart and purified the life. The passing of the time was well calculated to reveal such hearts. They were the first to turn and ridicule the sorrowful, disappointed ones who really loved the appearing of their Saviour. I saw the wisdom of God in proving His people and giving them a searching test to discover those who would shrink and turn back in the hour of trial.

“Jesus and all the heavenly host looked with sympathy and love upon those who had with sweet expectation longed to see Him whom their souls loved. Angels were hovering around them, to sustain them in the hour of their trial. Those who had neglected to receive the heavenly message were left in darkness, and God’s anger was kindled against them, because they would not receive the light which He had sent them from heaven. Those faithful, disappointed ones, who could not understand why their Lord did not come, were not left in darkness. Again they were led to their Bibles to search the prophetic periods. The hand of the Lord was removed from the figures, and the mistake was explained. They saw that the prophetic periods reached to 1844, and that the same evidence which they had presented to show that the prophetic periods closed in 1843, proved that they would terminate in 1844.”
Early Writings, 235–237.

The “prophetic periods” were the “prophetic periods” that “reached to 1844,” which the Millerites had initially believed reached to 1843. The “prophetic periods” that reached to 1844, were three prophetic periods,” and all are represented upon Habakkuk’s tables. One of the three periods simply “touches” 1844, and the other two reach to October 22, 1844. The thirteen hundred and thirty-five days reached to the very first day of 1844, when the first disappointment of the Millerites arrived, and the tarrying time of both Habakkuk chapter two, and of the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew twenty-five began.

The twenty-three hundred days of Daniel chapter eight, verse fourteen reached to October 22, 1844, and the twenty-five hundred and twenty years, of the “seven times” against the southern kingdom of Judah ended there as well. Palmoni introduces himself as the Wonderful Numberer in verse thirteen of Daniel eight, and the prophetic “structure” and “design” that he then set forth

included at least ten interconnected time prophecies.

We will begin to consider these truths further in the next article.

“Christ gave to the world a lesson that should be engraved on mind and soul. ‘This is life eternal,’ he said, ‘that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.’ But Satan works on human minds, saying, Do this or that action, and ye shall be as gods. By deceptive reasoning he led Adam and Eve to doubt God’s word, and to supply its place with a theory that led to transgression and disobedience. And his sophistry is doing today what it did in Eden. When Christ came to our world, he selected humble fishermen as the foundation of his church. To these disciples he tried to explain the nature of his kingdom and mission. But their limited comprehension imposed a restraint upon him. They had been receiving the sayings of the scribes and Pharisees, and therefore much of what they believed was untrue. And though Christ had many things to say to them, they were unable to hear much of what he longed to communicate.

“Christ finds the religionists of this time so full of erroneous sentiments that there is no room in their minds for the truth. With the education given, teachers mingle the sentiments of infidel authors. Thus they have sown tares in the minds of the youth. They give utterance to sentiments that should not be presented to young or old, never thinking of what kind of seed they are sowing, or of the harvest they will have to garner as the result.” Review and Herald, July 3, 1900.