

THE GRAINS OF EZEKIEL 4

Introduction: This study will reveal a special 430 years probationary time prophecy, its meaning and significance to the SDA church in history. It will also draw attention to an indisputable spiritual diet to attain to Righteousness by Faith today, give an understanding of God's command to those with this diet (their mission) and show what befalls those who fail to receive and eat this heaven-sent diet.

Prayer Thought: **GC 148** "The Reformation did not, as many suppose, end with Luther. It is to be continued to the close of this world's history. Luther had a great work to do in reflecting to others the light which God had permitted to shine upon him; yet he did not receive all the light which was to be given to the world. From that time to this, new light has been continually shining upon the Scriptures, and new truths have been constantly unfolding." {GC 148.4}

1. *Is this subject historic or prophetic?*

- The message was directed to all 12 tribes (**Ez. 4, 5, 6; 9: 9**) but 10 of the tribes were already scattered since 721 B.C (**2Kg. 17: 23**).
- The future tense is used – **Ez. 4: 13**.
- Ezekiel himself, not some gentile king, is told to besiege the city.
- He did not understand the vision – **Ez. 3: 15**
- Judah spent 70 years in captivity, not 430 years.

2. *Read Ezek. 4: 1-3 - Why symbolism of siege and warfare?*

- This was the experience of the Jews in Ezekiel's day because of their sins. Thus God employed their familiar experience to teach and inculcate vital truth.
- Also, Jerusalem, the church is symbolically depicted here as having become so estranged from God that, to rescue her, He has to do battle with her, so to speak, to effect a great revival and reformation.

3. *The meaning of the symbols*

- "take thee a tile... and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem.": a tile instead of paper is used because it is everlasting, not subject to decay. Thus it denotes that the city Jerusalem is one that will stand eternally: a people that shall never die. See **Isa. 33: 20**.
- "Lay siege against it": a siege is undertaken by an army to compel its enemy to surrender. This denotes that the "enemy" has taken over the church and God will invade it with an army of reformatory workers and compel it to surrender.

8T 250. 3 “Unless the church, which is now being leavened with her own backsliding, shall repent and be converted, she will eat of the fruit of her own doing, until she shall abhor herself. When she resists the evil and chooses the good, when she seeks God with all humility and reaches her high calling in Christ, standing on the platform of eternal truth and by faith laying hold upon the attainments prepared for her, she will be healed. She will appear in her God-given simplicity and purity, separate from earthly entanglements, showing that the truth has made her free indeed. Then her members will indeed be the chosen of God, His representatives. {8T 250.3}

- “Build a fort against it”: a “fort” or fortification is built for defense purpose. However, this fort is “against it”. This means to make sure none escape, good or bad, that all hear the message of the hour.
- “Cast a mount against it”: spare no effort, take precautions to secure the city
- “Set also the camp against it”: a temporary lodging place for workers, Headquarters from which to carry on the work. Make preparation to remain there until the city is conquered.
- “Set battering rams against it”: that is, chief leaders battering with clear cutting and convincing Bible truth. “This is the very obvious necessity for having in every branch of the work capable men to wisely lead.” **ISR tr. 75.**
- “An iron pan”: a virtual wall of separation, a separation of principles between the reformatory army and the city.

5T 209 “...The universal scorn thrown upon true piety and holiness leads those who do not connect closely with God to lose their reverence for His law. If they were following the light and obeying the truth from the heart, this holy law would seem even more precious to them when thus despised and set aside. As the disrespect for God's law becomes more manifest, the line of demarcation between its observers and the world becomes more distinct. Love for the divine precepts increases with one class according as contempt for them increases with another class.” {5T 209.1}

- “A sign to the house of Israel”: The division of the ancient kingdom into two – ten tribes (Israel) and two tribes (Judah) typifies a similar division in Christendom today (James 1: 1). The Protestant churches being the majority, typifies the ten tribes (Israel) and Seventh-Day Adventists typifies two tribes (Judah). Thus the siege is an example to the Protestant churches, showing them how God should be worshipped. See **Jer. 31: 6-8.**

4. Read Ezek 4: 4 – 6, the 430 years time prophecy

- Here is shown a 430 years time prophecy in two sections – 390 years & 40 years respectively for antitypical Israel (the Protestant churches) and Judah (the SDA church).
- Ezekiel lying down, bearing their iniquity, indicates a special period of grace allotted to the church during which time God bears or tolerates and pardons their iniquity. Thus Ezekiel typifies Christ who bears His children’s iniquity.

- During this period God expects the church to attain through His grace to righteousness by faith.
- Ezekiel lying on his *left side*, the side that retains food, shows that the doctrines (symbolized by the grains in verse 9), will be retained during the 390 years. His lying on his *right side*, the side that allows food to be emptied, denote a fast or absence of new doctrines during the 40 years.
- The 430 years parallels that of the children of Israel in their sojourning and affliction. Read **Ex. 12: 40** – the sojourning of the children of Israel was 430 years. Read **Gal. 3: 16, 17** – From the call of Abraham to the giving of the law at Mount Sinai was 430 years. Since Ezekiel’s prophecy represents the church among the Gentiles (the Christian era – **Ezek. 4: 13**) a similar experience must mark the beginning of this antitypical 430 years. The only such period of darkness in the Christian era was experienced during the Dark Ages, when God called Martin Luther in the year 1500 to become an advocate of His law by having him read **Rom. 1: 17** in the Latin Bible and proclaiming the doctrine of “justification by faith.” Similarly, Abraham was called the “father of the faithful.”

5. Read Ezek 4: 9, 12, 13. When did the prophecy begin?

- Accordingly, it must be when the people of God are subjected to eating spiritual food symbolized by wheat, barley, beans, lintels, millet and fitches, while among the Gentiles. Notice that the bread is to be defiled, showing that the doctrines symbolized by these grains are to be polluted.
- It is widely understood that during the period of the canonizing of the New Testament Scriptures to the call of Martin Luther in 1500, the truth was cast to the ground (**Dan. 8: 12**) and that it began to be lifted first by the Lutherans preaching the doctrine of faith (symbolized by wheat), the beginning of the reformation.

6. The Meaning of the Grains

- **Wheat**-Justification by Faith (Martin Luther – Lutherans)
As wheat is the first necessity to man's physical diet to keep him healthy, just so faith is the first necessity in man's spiritual diet, for "without faith, it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).
- **Barley** - Holy Spirit (John Knox - Presbyterian)
As barley is the second necessity in man's physical diet to keep him healthy, just so the Holy Spirit is the second necessity in man's spiritual diet, for before He can work in our lives, we must believe that He exists. In Judg. 7:13, 14 a cake of barley overturn the Midianite tent, showing that God represents the barley as the Holy Spirit.
- **Beans** - Salvation by Grace (John Wesley - Methodist)
As beans are the third necessity in man's physical diet to keep him

healthy, just so Grace is the third necessity in man's spiritual diet. Beans have been perverted by adding pork, and the meaning of grace has been perverted by so-called Christians which lead to a presumptuous trampling of His precepts.

- **Lentils** - Baptism by Emersion (Alexander Campbell - First Day Baptists) As lentils, the fourth variety of food in man's physical diet is not so universally relished as beans, likewise Baptism by emersion is less commonly esteemed and practiced than Grace.
- **Millet** - the 2300 days (William Miller - First Day Adventists) Millet, the fifth grain, is neither commonly known nor used, and is generally regarded as of little worth, likewise the 2300 days is known and believed by only a few and considered of little value as a Bible doctrine.
- **Spelt** - Sabbath in connection with the Sanctuary (Ellen White - SDA) Spelt, the sixth grain, is an ancient cereal, and a little better known than is millet, likewise the Sabbath in connection with the Sanctuary is the most ancient of Bible doctrines and is a little better known than the 2300 days.
- **"All in one Vessel"** - The "one vessel" in which all of these doctrines were put into before being "baked" (revealed and interpreted) is the Bible; after being "baked," the one "vessel" in which all of these doctrines are found is the Seventh-day Adventist church, which believes all of these doctrines.

7. Read Ezek. 4: 7, 8

- “set thy face toward the siege” – undertaken it like a mighty army general.
- “thine arm shall be uncovered” – the might of the reformation would be revealed.
- “I will lay bands upon thee” – the certainty of the siege taking place.

8. Read Ezek. 4: 10, 11, 16, 17

These verses show that the doctrines were revealed a little at a time; not all the light on the subject. They were to use the doctrines sparingly until their supply (of bread and water) is exhausted and they become real hungry during the 40 years period, so that they may discover their mistakes

9. Read Ezek. 4: 12-15

- “Eat as barley cakes” - barley symbolizes the Holy Spirit, hence these truths were to be received and indited by the Holy Spirit.
- "Bake on dung fire" – the doctrines would be defiled by private interpretation

8T 250 “...I saw our Instructor 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?.." {8T 250.2}

"Eat defiled bread" - Man's interpretation of the Word being mingled with God's holy truth, the "bread" has been defiled and it is this that the people of God have been eating.

10. *The significance of the 40 years fast and its consequent results.*

All of these doctrines were to come within the 390 years. Adding 390 to 1500 we arrive at 1890. In 1890 the 1888 message was rejected, sending antitypical Judah on a spiritual fast.

ISM 234 “An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren {E.J.} Waggoner and {A.T.} Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world. {ISM 234.6}

TM 76 “That men should keep alive the spirit which ran riot at Minneapolis [SEE APPENDIX.] is an offense to God...” {TM 76.3}

TM 79, 80 “The perils of the last days are upon us. Satan takes the control of every mind that is not decidedly under the control of the Spirit of God. Some have been cultivating hatred against the men whom God has commissioned to bear a special message to the world. They began this satanic work at Minneapolis. Afterward, when they saw and felt the demonstration of the Holy Spirit testifying that the message was of God, they hated it the more, because it was a testimony against them. They would not humble their hearts to repent, to give God the glory, and vindicate the right. They went on in their own spirit, filled with envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings, as did the Jews. They opened their hearts to the enemy of God and man. Yet these men have been holding positions of trust, and have been molding the work after their own similitude, as far as they possibly could. . . .” {TM 79.3}

TM 91, 92 “The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. [SEE APPENDIX.] This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure.” {TM 91.2}

TM 467, 468 "...The true religion, the only religion of the Bible, that teaches forgiveness only through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, that advocates righteousness by the faith of the Son of God, has been slighted, spoken against, ridiculed, and rejected. [SEE APPENDIX.] It has been denounced as leading to enthusiasm and fanaticism..." {TM 467.2}

The fast signifies the absence of progressive truth.

2T 606 – "I said further: As the word of God is walled in with these books and pamphlets, so has God walled you in with reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragements. Here you are crying before God, in the anguish of your souls, for more light. I am authorized from God to tell you that not another ray of light through the Testimonies will shine upon your pathway until you make a practical use of the light already given..." {2T 606.1}

Notice that there are only six grains, and God's perfect number is seven. Therefore, there must be a seventh grain, but it will be pure, not defiled. This is why it is not included with the others that were baked on down. When will it arrive? It must arrive after the 40 years fast. Adding 40 to 1890, we arrive at the year 1930. Thus new light was to be given in 1930. It would come unsparingly, not 'by weight' nor 'by measure'. It was during this time that the Shepherd's Rod message was revealed and published to the SDA church (Judah) ending her fast. Therefore, the Rod (**Rev. 18: 1**) is identified as the seventh, pure and undefiled grain. Any claimant of truth (heaven-sent message) between the years 1890 and 1930 was a false one.

11. *Why the need to feast on this food today?*

To attain to the righteousness of Christ by faith, now that antitypical Ezekiel is no longer lying down, i.e. bearing the iniquity of God's people. Since the period of grace is over we need now to walk by faith or perish. See **Heb. 10: 38, 39**. Those who fail to eat of this food will remain in their Laodicean condition without the 'gold tried in the fire'. Being left without the seal of God they will perish in the judgment of **Ezekiel 9**. They will bear their own iniquity.

Conclusion: We see that God can no longer wink at our ignorance since we today have so much light. We must therefore walk by faith and reach the standard of righteousness in Christ that God desires for His people. The Shepherd's Rod message came to help us walk by faith and become members of God's kingdom of Glory. The choice of feeding at the bountiful table of the Rod or at the tables 'full of vomit and filthiness' (**Isa. 28: 8**) is now ours make.