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RESPONSE TO 2520 PROPHECY

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The “Longest” of the Prophetic Periods

Some point out the fact that Ellen White speaks of “prophetic *periods*,” plural, that extend to 1844, which they see as proving that she must have meant both the 2300-day/year prophecy and the 2520. The reasoning is that since she used the plural, this means that there must be more than one prophetic period that reaches to 1844. And since none of the other generally accepted prophetic periods—the 1260, the 1290 and the 1335—conclude in 1844, she must have meant to call attention to the 2520.

But when we read the statements in their context and take into account other statements she made on the topic, we discover that she did not have the 2520 in mind at all. First, let’s notice the statements in which she speak of the Prophetic *periods* extending to 1844:

“The preaching of definite time called forth great opposition from all classes, from the minister in the pulpit down to the most reckless, heaven-daring sinner. ‘No man knoweth the day nor the hour,’ was heard from the hypocritical minister and the bold scoffer. Neither would be instructed and corrected by those who were pointing to the year when they believed the prophetic periods would run out, and to the signs which showed Christ near, even at the doors” (EW, p. 235).

“The believers in this message were oppressed in the churches. For a time, those who would not receive the message were restrained by fear from acting out the sentiments of their hearts; but the passing of the time revealed their true feelings. They wished to silence the testimony which the waiting ones felt compelled to bear, that the prophetic periods extended to 1844” (EW, p. 237).

It is evident that Ellen White is here talking about the prophetic periods as a unit: the 1260, the 1290, the 1335 and the 2300. She simply states that, “the prophetic periods extended to 1844.” And they did, with the 2300-day/year prophecy being the longest. Her statement that the prophetic periods (plural) run out in 1844 means that the last and longest one of the group reached to 1844.

I will now share an absolutely clear statement from the pen of inspiration that explicitly negates the 2520 as one of the prophetic periods:

"The experience of the disciples, who preached the 'gospel of the kingdom' at the first advent of Christ, had its counterpart in the experience of those who proclaimed the message of His second advent. As the disciples went out preaching, 'The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand,' so Miller and his associates proclaimed that the longest and last prophetic period brought to view in the Bible was about to expire, that the judgment was at hand, and the everlasting kingdom was to be ushered in. The preaching of the disciples in regard to time was based on the seventy weeks of Daniel 9. The message given by Miller and his associates announced the termination of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, of which the seventy weeks form a part. The preaching of each was based upon the fulfillment of a different portion of the same great prophetic period" (GC, p. 351).

Please notice that Ellen White here names the 2300-day/year prophecy "the *longest* and last prophetic period." This could not be the case if there were such a thing as a 2520-year prophetic period, since 2520 is "longer" than 2300. Either Ellen White is wrong to specify the 2300-day/year prophecy as "the *longest*" prophetic period or the 2520 is *not* a valid prophetic period. Both cannot be correct. Clearly the 2520 was nowhere on Ellen White's radar, which explains why she never once mentions it in her voluminous writings. If we take her statement here in *The Great Controversy* for what it plainly says, the entire notion that the "seven times" of Leviticus 26 is a 2520-year prophecy utterly collapses. Plain and simple, the 2300-years prophecy is "the longest and last prophetic period."

With this statement taken into account, all that can legitimately be derived from the quotations that speak of "prophetic *periods*" is that the group of prophetic periods delineated in Daniel and Revelation reach no further than 1844. To read into these statements that she was pointing us to the 2520 is an extrapolation that is not there.

Ellen White's Endorsement of the Charts

The second point raised from the Spirit of Prophecy is Ellen White's endorsement of the 1843 and 1850 charts, which some take to indicate an endorsement of the 2520.

I will first point out the fact that even though she lived through the Millerite movement and then lived as a prophetic witness through the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, **Ellen White never once wrote a single line regarding the 2520.** Her silence is eloquence.

The Great Controversy, as her definitive work regarding the end-time message, tells the history of the Millerite Movement, the Advent Movement, the opening of the Most Holy Place, and the recovery of the great truths of the gospel that had been lost sight of through the long years of papal supremacy. It then projects forward to the latter rain movement that will close up human history, and **not once does the book mention the 2520.**

If the 2520 were a vital part of the latter rain message, then its complete absence from *The Great Controversy* could only be regarded as perhaps the greatest failure of the prophetic gift on record.

Although with good intent, no doubt, it seems to me that the advocates of the 2520 are asking us to somehow process and accept the idea that the very book that labors, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit no less!, to tell us what the final message is, has, in fact, failed to do so. We are then asked to believe that current uninspired voices are now telling us what the latter rain message is, although the inspired writings know nothing of that message.

That's a tall order.

There is a far more logical, contextual and natural explanation for Ellen White's endorsement of the charts.

When we take into account the entire scope of her writings—including the above statement that definitively names the 2300-day/year prophecy "the longest" prophetic period in the Bible—it is clear that Ellen White's positive statements regarding the charts does not constitute an agreement on her part with every detail

the early Advent believes included on the charts. Rather, it indicates her agreement with the overall message of the charts, which was to validate 1844 as the opening of the judgment.

I can easily understand how Ellen White could promote the charts while at the same time not advocating every point made on them, because that has been my own position for my entire Adventist life, and that of many others. All biblically astute and doctrinally faithful Adventists affirm the Millerite charts for the truth they convey and for the historical role they played in the Advent Movement. The overall message of the charts is truth. To read into Ellen White's endorsement of the charts an unequivocal endorsement of every detail on them is to push her in a direction the larger body of her writings never goes.

It was Ellen White's gracious and broadminded habit to speak favorably of those with whom she did not agree on all points. Most notably,

- she highly praised John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, despite the fact that it teaches immediate transport to heaven at death, a doctrine she aggressively rejected;
- she spoke positively of evangelist D.L. Moody, even though he preached eternal torment and Sunday sacredness;
- she made similar favorable endorsements of Martin Luther, John Calvin and other advocates of certain vital truths even though she was well aware of the fact that these men held certain views that she did not endorse;
- she spoke highly of Uriah Smith and recommended that he occupy a position of great influence in the church, even after he aligned himself squarely against crucial aspects of the gospel in 1888.

The point is this: Her positive statements about the Millerite charts does not equate to an endorsement of the 2520, which is made evident by the fact that she never once mentions the 2520 and clearly states that the 2300-day/year prophecy is "the longest" prophetic period in the Bible, which she could not say if the 2520 were valid. Her overall writings make very clear which aspects of the early Advent Movement she latched onto under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit—the 2300 day prophecy and the great prophetic lines of Daniel and Revelation.

It is a weak case, indeed, to say, in essence, "Ellen White never mentioned the 2520, not even in *The Great Controversy*, which was her comprehensive and definitive treatment of the end-time message, but because she spoke favorably of the Millerite charts, that constitutes her as an advocate of the 2520." It is hard to imagine a more shaky position to occupy.

What about the need for the land to rest in Leviticus 25 as the context to Leviticus 26?

There is nothing in Leviticus 25 that suggests that the "seven times" of Leviticus 26 constitute 2,520 years. What we have in chapter 25 is an explanation for ancient Israel regarding proper ecological and ceremonial land and labor management. The Lord essentially tells His people that they are to conduct themselves responsibly in relation to their farming, lending practices. This involved allowing the land to have a Sabbath rest every seven years. Then, on a grander scale, after the passage of forty-nine years, the fiftieth year was to be celebrated as a year of "Jubilee," or "liberty throughout the land" (Lev 25:10). All possessions and lands were to return to their original owners on the stated premise that nobody really owns anything, but that all things belongs to the Lord and He is gracious to cancel debts.

This was an ingenious system of sheer grace designed to protect the people from the lethal idea that humans own things and earn merit by their labor. The seven-year cycle of land rest and the Jubilee cycle was God's method of building the truth of salvation by grace alone through faith alone into the very economy of daily Israelite life.

That's the point of Leviticus 25, with no hint of a 2,520-year prophetic curse. To miss the gospel truth proclaimed in Leviticus 25 is to miss something truly grand and beautiful.

No 2,520-year Curse is Evident in History

As one reads Leviticus 25 and 26, another obvious point begs for recognition, and it is this: the land was *not* in a state of rest from 677 to 1844.

If the curse of Leviticus 26 was meant to be taken as a 2520-year period from 677 to 1844 during which the land rested, then we can only conclude that the curse failed to occur or be enforced by the Lord. This is evident by the simple fact that nothing of the sort happened. We see nothing that correlates to a 2520-year curse occurring exactly within the parameters of 677 and 1844. In fact, Israel's history as a chosen people of God does not even extend to 1844. According to Daniel's seventy-week (490-year prophecy) prophecy, AD 34 marked the birth of a new Israel fully realized in Christ and embodied in His church. There simply is no curse of the sort described in Leviticus 26 that rested upon literal Israel, nor that transcended literal and spiritual Israel from 677 to 1844. Scripture does not testify to it, and history reveals no fulfillment of any such curse. For the fulfillment of every other Bible prophecy we see historic evidence and correlation.

Do we see a historic fulfillment of the curses delineated in Leviticus 26 resting upon Israel as a people or upon its land from 677 to 1844? That is, do we see Israel experiencing the following for 2,520 year between 677 and 1844?

“Wasting disease and fever which shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart. And you shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it . . . your land shall not yield its produce, nor shall the trees of the land yield their fruit. . . I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, destroy your livestock, and make you few in number. . . And I will bring a sword against you that will execute the vengeance of the covenant; when you are gathered together within your cities I will send pestilence among you; and you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. When I have cut off your supply of bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall bring back your bread by weight, and you shall eat and not be satisfied. . .

You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and cast your carcasses on the lifeless forms of your idols; and My soul shall abhor you. I will lay your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries to desolation, and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas. I will bring the land to desolation, and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste. . . And as for those of you who are left, I will send faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; the sound of a shaken leaf shall cause them to flee; they shall flee as though fleeing from a sword, and they shall fall when no one pursues.

They shall stumble over one another, as it were before a sword, when no one pursues; and you shall have no power to stand before your enemies. You shall perish among the nations, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And those of you who are left shall waste away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; also in their fathers' iniquities, which are with them, they shall waste away” (Leviticus 26).

Certainly we can pinpoint various episodes of Israel's history in which some or all of these things happened, but interspersed with times of repentance and blessing. But what we do not see is the above-described condition of Israelite affairs for a sustained period of 2520 years from precisely 677 to 1844. Historically, as a fulfilled prophecy, it's just not there.

For example, if the curse was lifted in 1844, I think many a historian and many a Jew would actually argue that the plight of the Hebrew people was the worse it had ever been from the time after 1844 until the mid

1900s. World War II alone bears more resemblance to Leviticus 26 than any time prior, but, alas, it does not fall within the parameters of 677 to 1844.

Moreover, we actually see the Jewish people prospering throughout the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, as the residual genetic and intellectual effect of God principles having been obeyed to a greater or lesser degree throughout their history as a people. The accumulation of Jewish wealth during this supposed time of curse has brought us into the present situation in which a sizable amount of the world's wealth is in Jewish hands. We also see during this same period of history a substantial intellectual and scientific prosperity among the Jews. It is estimated that as much as one half of all scientific advancements of the last 300 years were the product of Jewish minds.

My point is simply this: history does not bear out that Israel presided under a precisely marked off curse from 677 to 1844 composed of the elements described in Leviticus 26.

And why not? Why did the curses of Leviticus 26 never come to fulfillment? The reason the curse was never fully realized is because, as Moses explained in the gospel he proclaims in Leviticus 26, covenant faithfulness was kept in Christ as He bore the curse on behalf of all mankind.

The Great Week of Time

Then we might ask, what is the message of Leviticus 25? And will the land ever experience the Sabbath rest depicted by the seventh-year cycle and the Jubilee?

The answer is a resounding, *Yes!*

The Bible suggests that about six thousand years have been allotted for the great controversy to play itself out. Then will come a seventh millennium of rest. As a type, ancient Israel's seven-year Sabbath cycle and the Jubilee pointed to this grand and restful conclusion to the great war between good and evil. The one thousand-year period brought to view in Revelation 20 bears all the characteristics of land rest and liberation depicted in Leviticus 25.

This concept is also advanced by Ellen White when she speaks in terms of a divinely set limitation of six thousand years designated for the great controversy to reach its conclusion. All the timeline prophecies of Daniel and Revelation have different starting points in history and land roughly for their end-points in the period from 1798 to 1844. Add to this the fact that biblical chronology places our time at about six thousand years from Creation, and the case in favor of a millennial week of time becomes convincing.

The world was created in six days and then God rested on the seventh day. That was the literal week of Creation. Then the Fall of mankind occurred, and another week began to unfold, a millennial week of creational redemption, seven "days" consisting of one thousand years each. The biblical parallels between the literal creation week and the millennial salvation week are many.

First, we note that the Ten Commandments were given twice on tables of stone. All the commandments in both versions are the same except the fourth, the one that pertains to time. The Sabbath Commandment was given in the first version of the Law as a memorial of Creation week (Exodus 20), but in the second version creation week is not mentioned. Rather, the Sabbath is now given as a memorial of deliverance from bondage. A salvation theme is invoked, calling attention to the Passover as the delivering event, thus pointing to the Cross (Deuteronomy 5).

Secondly, the Bible frequently uses Creation language to define salvation, such as David's repentance prayer: "Create in me a clean heart, O God. . . Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation" (Psalm 51:10-12). When we come to the New Testament a frequent point is made of telling us that the one who came to save us is the one who is our Creator (John 1:1-18; Colossians 1:16-17). We can see that a parallel between creation and salvation is intended.

The Old Testament opens with the words, "In the beginning God created. . .", and the account of Creation follows. John's gospel opens with the words, "In the beginning was the Word. . .", and the account of salvation follows. The Genesis account depicts the earth as formless and pervaded with darkness. Then God

said, "Let there be light." The gospel account depicts salvation being initiated by the entrance of a new Light into the world (John 1:4-9). The state of mankind in sin is frequently depicted as a condition of darkness. Then the Savior entered as "the light of the world"—a second light, a new light, and this time as a salvation light. Paul actually quotes the activity of God on the first day of Creation week to describe how it is that the Savior initiated our salvation: "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). As a parallel to the creation of man in God's image on the sixth day, Hebrews 1:3 tells us that Jesus was the "the image of God," a direct quote from Genesis 1. Paul also calls Jesus the "second Adam" and the "new man." Then, just before the Cross event, Jesus told the Father, "I have finished the work which You have given me to do" (John 17:4). This language is lifted directly from Genesis: God "finished. . . His work. . . and He rested on the seventh day" (Gen 2:1-2). Then Jesus went to the Cross and cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30). He died on Friday as the complete new Man, resting in the tomb on Sabbath (Luke 23:54-56).

We are now living in the sixth millennial day of what we might call "the great week of time," during which we are to "put on the new man" (Eph 4:24) that was created as a finished work in Christ. Once the church comes to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4:13), then the sixth millennial day will end and the seventh millennial day will begin (Rev 20).

The concept of the millennial week demonstrates that we are living at the most significant transitional period in history, awaiting the formation of the image of God in man as the full realization of what was achieved in the person of Christ. It also demonstrates that the Sabbath is of major salvation/gospel significance as well as creation significance. The Sabbath embodies original Creation, and it is also prophetic of the final form a completely redeemed humanity will take.

It is the grand scheme of truth to which Leviticus 25 and 26 point. To miss all of this in favor of a hard-to-extrapolate 2,520-year curse is to miss, I believe, the whole point.

In Conclusion

Some have disregarded these objections to the 2520 by claiming that we lack discernment and am incapable of reasoning from cause to effect. I would simply point out that whether I lack discernment or not, I have still made a number of points that deserve to be answered and proven wrong.