

## **Ezekiel Chapter 9: Its Literal Fulfillment**

*By Louis Shitandi (Emphasis supplied by author)*

Study the 9th chapter of Ezekiel. **These words will be literally fulfilled**; yet the time is passing, and the people are asleep. They refuse to humble their souls and to be converted. Not a great while longer will the Lord bear with the people who have such great and important truths revealed to them, but who refuse to bring these truths into their individual experience. The time is short. God is calling; will you hear? Will you receive His message? Will you be converted before it is too late? Soon, very soon, every case will be decided for eternity. Letter 106, 1909, pp. 2, 3, 5, 7. (To "The churches in Oakland and Berkeley," September 26, 1909.) {1MR 260.2}

Here Sister White says that the words of Ezekiel 9 will be literally fulfilled. There have been teachings among us claiming that this will be fulfilled in the literal slaughter of unfaithful Seventh-day Adventists. These teachings were initially advanced by Victor Houteff the founder of the Shepherd's Rod movement. In this paper we examine this teaching and refer to the Rod's system of theology as "the Specimen." "These **words will be literally fulfilled**" is what Sister White said about Ezekiel 9. The Specimen takes this at the center of all its conclusions on Ezekiel 9 and other Scripture that speak on the events of Ezekiel 9 – the Sealing of God's people. This is the pillar on which the Specimen's interpretation of Ezekiel 9 and related Scripture hinges and swings.

### **Question: What does it mean that Ezekiel 9 will be literally fulfilled?**

Ask the Specimen. It will tell you that the literal fulfillment of Ezekiel 9 means that there will be five literal angels doing the slaughter. There will be one literal angel doing the marking on the foreheads. In other words, Ezekiel 9 is without symbolism.

We can continue with that principle and continue to say that...

1. The marking angel will go first to the General Conference offices and examine the GC President. If he is worthy of the mark, the angel then takes out his ink, dips the pen and puts a mark on the President's on the forehead. Perhaps it will be blue ink, maybe red or black – Ezekiel doesn't tell us, but a mark will be left on the President's forehead.
2. The angel then goes to the next office and finds someone not worthy of the mark, for example, and therefore passes by. This angel continues throughout USA and when he finishes his work in America, he probably goes to Europe and does the same with every member of the SDA church from the highest office downwards.
3. Now come the other five. They follow the first one and look at the foreheads of the people whether they have the blue or red or whatever-color mark. If they have it, well and good – if not, a sword is drawn out and the head goes or the body is so mutilated that no life remains in the person.

We may continue with the same principle – that Ezekiel 9 is to be literally fulfilled, with no symbolism behind it. You might wonder at the conclusions you will arrive at when you continue with applying this principle on other parts of the same vision as given in chapter 10.

### **So what does it mean that Ezekiel 9 will be literally fulfilled?**

Let's ask the one who used those words, for her to tell us what she meant.

### **Commenting on Daniel 2 Sister White writes:**

Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding. Dan. 2:20,21.

Behold the Jewish captive, calm and self-possessed, in the presence of the monarch of the world's most powerful empire. In his first words he disclaimed honor for himself and exalted God as the source of all wisdom.

To the anxious inquiry of the king, "Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?" he replied: "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." . . .

In the annals of human history, the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as if dependent on the will and prowess of man; the shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, above, behind, and through all the play and counterplay of human interest and power and passions, the agencies of the All-merciful One, silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will. . . .

In the history of nations the student of God's word may behold the **literal fulfillment** of divine prophecy. Babylon, shattered and broken at last, passed away because in prosperity its rulers had regarded themselves as independent of God, and had ascribed the glory of their kingdom to human achievement. . . . The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt; and these sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral worth. The power exercised by every ruler on the earth is Heaven-imparted; and upon his use of the power thus bestowed, his success depends. . . . To recognize the outworking of these principles in the manifestation of His power who "removeth kings, and setteth up kings" -- this is to understand the philosophy of history. [Conflict and Courage 250.]

About William Miller's study of Daniel and Revelation, Sister White writes:

With intense interest he studied the books of Daniel and the Revelation, employing the same principles of interpretation as in the other scriptures, and found, to his great joy, that the prophetic symbols could be understood. He saw that the prophecies, so far as they had been fulfilled, **had been fulfilled literally**; that all the various figures, metaphors, parables, similitudes, etc., were either explained in their immediate connection, or the terms in which they were expressed were defined in other scriptures, and when thus explained, were to be literally understood. "I was thus satisfied," he says, "that the Bible is a system of revealed truths, so clearly and simply given that the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."--Bliss, page 70. Link after link of the chain of truth rewarded his efforts, as step by step he traced down the great lines of prophecy. Angels of heaven were guiding his mind and opening the Scriptures to his understanding. {GC 320, 321}

Consider the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation that Wm. Miller must have studied. They "**had been fulfilled literally**"!! So using the Specimen's principle we can say that a lion came out of, say, the Mediterranean sea? Or was it the Indian Ocean? Wherever it came from, it had two wings etc. etc. and a man's heart was given to it and it walked on two legs etc. etc. Apply the same principle to the other four beasts of Daniel 7. Continue to Daniel 8, 9 and see the conclusions.

If you examine at the Specimen's conclusions on Daniel 7, it will say that the beasts are symbols of Babylon, Medo-Persia etc and are therefore not literal. But Sister White whom the Specimen quotes on Ezekiel 9's literal fulfillment also says that these Daniel and Revelation prophecies were fulfilled literally. So you see, the erroneous views of the Specimen are a result of inconsistency in the application of principles of interpretation whether its principles are right or wrong.

In the GC quote cited above you read that "the **prophetic symbols** could be understood. . . . the prophecies, so far as they had been fulfilled, **had been fulfilled literally.**"

From that single sentence you can get it clear that symbolic prophecy can have literal fulfillment and that the literal fulfillment does not make the symbols any bit non-symbolic.

## Some more SOP quotes on prophecies that were literally fulfilled:

For forty years Jeremiah was to stand before the nation as a witness for truth and righteousness. In a time of unparalleled apostasy he was to exemplify in life and character the worship of the only true God. During the terrible sieges of Jerusalem he was to be the mouthpiece of Jehovah. He was to predict the downfall of the house of David and the destruction of the beautiful temple built by Solomon. And when imprisoned because of his fearless utterances, he was still to speak plainly against sin in high places. Despised, hated, rejected of men, he was finally to witness **the literal fulfillment** of his own prophecies of impending doom, and share in the sorrow and woe that should follow the destruction of the fated city. {PK 408.1}

In the history of nations the student of God's word may behold **the literal fulfillment** of divine prophecy. Babylon, shattered and broken at last, passed away because in prosperity its rulers had regarded themselves as independent of God, and had ascribed the glory of their kingdom to human achievement. The Medo-Persian realm was visited by the wrath of Heaven because in it God's law had been trampled underfoot. The fear of the Lord had found no place in the hearts of the vast majority of the people. Wickedness, blasphemy, and corruption prevailed. The kingdoms that followed were even more base and corrupt; and these sank lower and still lower in the scale of moral worth. {PK 501, 502.3}

Let's look at another portion of scripture, [See Psalms 64]:

"Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer; preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity: who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: that they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep. {RH, March 15, 1906 par. 1}

**"But God shall shoot at them with an arrow;** suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make **their own tongue to fall upon themselves:** all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory." [See Psalms 64:7,...]

**This scripture will be literally fulfilled.** Everything is to be shaken that can be shaken, that those things that can not be shaken may remain. I am amazed as I consider the past, present, and future of the people of God. The Lord will have a pure, holy people,--a people who will stand the test. Every believer needs now to search his heart as with a lighted candle. {RH, March 15, 1906 par. 3}

Consider the last quote. It has it that "God shall shoot at them with an arrow." Apply the same principle, because sister white says "**this scripture will be literally fulfilled.**" We expect God to **shoot at them with an arrow,** maybe it will be a golden arrow or silver perhaps, and **their own tongue to fall upon themselves.**

### An Encouraging James White Dream. By Arthur L. White

Now we consult contemporaries of Ellen White on their combined usage of the words "literal" and "fulfillment." This is from Biographical Books Vol. 2:

In his next report to the Review James White related a dream that he had at Wright. Four years earlier, while at Monterey, just before a special outreach for the youth (see Ellen G. White: The Early Years, chapter 32), he had dreamed of catching many small, plump fish. In the weeks that followed, many young persons were converted, first at Monterey, then at Wright, Greenville, Orleans, and finally at Battle Creek. He recounted that "for twenty-four years, we have probably dreamed of catching fish a hundred times, just before an ingathering of souls. The size of the persons, and their moral worth, is generally **represented** by the size and value of the fish."--RH, Feb. 5, 1867. Of the dream at Wright, he wrote: {2BIO 165.1}

Mrs. White and self were fishing, and with much effort caught large fish. But four of the fish caused us much trouble. They were restless, and would get out of the boat into the water, when we would with difficulty pull them into the boat again.

This was repeated several times, and we caught no more large fish. We saw no small fish, as they were kept away by the large ones. But when the large ones were all caught out of the way, the water was immediately alive with small fish, plump and beautiful, which we readily caught. I awoke, and behold, it was a dream.--Ibid. {2BIO 165.2}

Before leaving Wright, they witnessed **the literal fulfillment of this dream**. During the six weeks they were there, Ellen spoke twenty-five times, and James, twelve. As James was recovering from his long illness, she found that she must carry the heavy part of the burden, but she was careful to see that her husband led out. As they labored especially for the members of the church, Ellen found that her husband was a great help. {2BIO 165.3}

**Note:** Before leaving Wright, they witnessed **the literal fulfillment of this dream**.

Does that mean that the fulfillment of the dream was when they were in a boat in real-life, catching fish etc etc as narrated there?

### **“Literal fulfillment”**

“Literal fulfillment” as used by Sister White on Ezekiel 9, harmonizing with the other areas where she has used the same combination of words as brought out in this paper and in other places, must mean something else than “non-symbolic fulfillment.” It is clear to prophecy students who have accepted the third angel’s message that the lion was a symbol for Babylon in Dan 7, the head of gold in Daniel 2 was a symbol of the same empire, then came Medo-Persia and the rest. These were symbols, yet they had a literal fulfillment. The Bible and SOP must harmonise if they came from the same Author. The proper understanding of “literal fulfillment” must therefore mean something other than “non-symbolic.” It can mean “remarkable fulfillment”, or “fulfilled to the very letter” not “non-symbolic.”

Concerning the James White dream cited above, it is written that “the size of the persons, and their moral worth, is generally **represented** by the size and value of the fish.”

So of a dream of which “they witnessed **the literal fulfillment**” James White says that the size and value of the fish represented. Mark that key word: **REPRESENTED**.

We now turn to Sister White’s comment on Ezekiel 9. My position is that the work of the five destroying angels of Ezekiel 9 is symbolic of the work of the seven angels of the seven last plagues and that therefore Ezekiel 9 does not have fulfillment before probation’s close and that being the general close of probation. It is synonymous to the seven last plagues:

“Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God and who murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! Unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work and in holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, they will never receive the mark of God's sealing approval. They will fall in the general destruction of the wicked, **represented** by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons. **Mark this point with care:** Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, **represented** by a mark by the man in linen, are those "that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done" in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are **represented** as being in agony, even sighing and crying. Read the ninth chapter of Ezekiel.” {3T 267.1}

“Study the 9th chapter of Ezekiel. **These words will be literally fulfilled.**”{1MR 260.2}

“They will fall in the general destruction of the wicked, **represented** by the work of the five men bearing slaughter weapons.” 3T 267

“the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, **represented** by a mark by the man in linen.” 3T 267.

“Represented” signifies the use of symbolism.

### **What Is The General Destruction Of The Wicked?**

I here let Vance Ferrell conclude this document for me:

"But the general slaughter of all those who do not thus see the wide contrast between sin and righteousness, and do not feel as those do who stand in the counsel of God and receive the mark, is described in the order to the five men with slaughter weapons: Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary' [Ezekiel 9:56]"-3 Testimonies, p.267.

Note that, according to Mrs. White's statement, the slaughter foretold in Ezekiel 9 will be fulfilled "in the general slaughter of the wicked" that is to come. When will that be? In Testimonies to Ministers, p.431-432, Mrs. White indicates that this slaughter will take place during the pouring out of the seven last plagues after the close of probation for all mankind. In another place she describes more fully that awful time of slaughter of those who, both in and out of the church, shall have sinned away their day of grace by impenitence and disobedience. Their awakening in that terrible hour is pictured thus by her pen, calling particular attention to the fate of leaders of apostasy in the religious world generally:

"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. 'We are lost!' they cry, 'and you are the cause of our ruin;' and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. " 'A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword.' Jeremiah 25:31 . For six thousand years the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now, all have made their decision; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. 'The Lord has a controversy with the nations'; 'He will give them that are wicked to the sword.'

"The mark of deliverance has been set upon those 'that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done.' Now the angel of death goes forth, represented in Ezekiel's vision by the men with the slaughtering weapons, to whom the command is given: 'Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at My sanctuary.' Says the prophet, 'They began at the ancient men which were before the house.' Ezekiel 9:1-6. The work of destruction begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people. The false watchmen are the first to fall. There are none to pity or to spare. Men, women, maidens, and little children perish together. "At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth-consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed by the brightness of His glory. Christ takes His people to the city of God and the earth is emptied of its inhabitants." -Great Controversy, p.655-657.

The statements from the pen of Mrs. White clearly and definitely show that the slaughter foretold in Ezekiel 9 will not take place until after "all have made their decision," and at the time when the seven last plagues shall fall upon those who persist in disobeying God. Furthermore, in comment on the parable of the ten virgins, Mrs. White makes it clear that there will be no general slaughter of unconverted Seventh day Adventists before the close of probation, for otherwise the unfaithful in the church, as represented by the five foolish virgins, would not be left to be found unprepared for

probation's closing hour. The lord's servant says: The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied. The ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All apparently wait for Christ's appearing. But five are unready. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall. Christ's Object Lessons, p.412.

To get Vance Ferrel's document in its entirety go to [www.parousiahope.co.ke](http://www.parousiahope.co.ke) > Highlights section. All material in that website is free to download and print and distribute.

**Don't Miss the Point:**

The study of the prophecies is what brings a revival among God's people. Unbalanced, erroneous interpretations of prophecy bring in counterfeit revivals which we call fanaticism. Some of our friends, whom we don't doubt to be honest seekers for truth, are ignorantly beginning to partake of this. It is our hope that this paper comes in handy.

"Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit." GC 563.

"The book of Revelation opens with an injunction to us to understand the instruction that it contains. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy," God declares, "and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us a great revival." {TM 113.2}

To help you understand the books of Daniel and Revelation, we have placed on our website plenty of resources to be downloaded for free.

Be blessed!!

Yours,

Louis Shitandi,

Parousia Hope Evangelism Project

[www.parousiahope.co.ke](http://www.parousiahope.co.ke)