

DANIEL'S PROPHECY

By

Curtis Dickinson

In the first invasion of Judah by Babylon, long before the captivity of the whole nation, the leaders and most promising young men were carted off to Babylon where they were trained and used in various capacities. Since the defeat and captivity of the nation was according to Divine purpose as punishment for the nation's disobedience, the faithful citizens cooperated and were elevated to places of leadership in Babylon, where they continued to serve God and thus prove helpful to their own people. Such was the case of Daniel.

Daniel had already learned from the book of Jeremiah that the captivity was to last 70 years (Dan. 9:2). But it was left to Daniel to reveal the timetable for the coming of the Christ, which is recorded in chapter 9, verses 24–27.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” (Vs. 24).

The seventy weeks are generally understood to mean seventy weeks of years for a total of 490 years. It was to begin when Cyrus gave the command to rebuild Jerusalem. “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times” (Vs. 25).

This is a total of 69 weeks, or 483 years. While there is some disagreement as to the exact time the decree of Cyrus was issued, there is common belief that this 69 weeks measured up to the time of Christ. But what of the 70th week? Did it follow the 69th, as one would certainly expect it to, since Daniel was giving a prophecy to be fulfilled in 70 weeks, or is the 70th week yet in the future? The text gives the answer.

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” (Vs. 26–27).

A predominant doctrine of prophetic preaching today holds that these two verses in the prophecy are yet to be fulfilled, and that the 70th week refers to an Antichrist who will make a covenant with the Jews, offer sacrifices in a rebuilt temple at Jerusalem and then break the covenant after three and a half years, causing the sacrifices to cease. Beside focusing attention on worthless speculations, such a futurist concept denies the fulfillment which has already occurred, and thus diminishes the “faith once and for all delivered”.

The principle revelation of the prophecy is the cross of Christ and the end of Israel as a nation, signaled by the destruction of the city. The time was “determined” as 490 years after the decree of Cyrus. But if one is to separate the last seven years from the first 483, then nothing is determined and the prophecy loses its significance.

For the timing to have any meaning, it must all be taken together; the 7 weeks, plus the 62 weeks, plus the final 1 week. Note then it says that “after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off” (Vs. 26). This can only mean the death of Christ. This is exactly what “cut off” means, as Isaiah said: “He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due” (Isa. 53:8). Daniel said this would be “AFTER” the first 69 weeks, and not during them, which means that the 70th week was to see the death of Christ. It was in the “midst of the week,” the 70th week, that sacrifices were to cease. The week is made up of seven years. Christ was sacrificed in its “midst” after 3 ½ years of ministry, and never again is there to be a blood-sacrifice for sins. Not only is this something that has already happened, it can NEVER happen again.

Now notice how the different parts of the prophecy are fulfilled:

1. During the first prophetic seven weeks (or 49 years) Jerusalem was restored and the streets and wall were rebuilt in the time of Nehemiah and Ezra. These were “troublesome times” because of strong opposition from enemies.
2. At the end of the 69th week, the “most Holy” was anointed. Gabriel, Peter and John all spoke of Jesus as the Holy One. Jesus spoke of His own anointing in the first public message He gave: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me...” (Luke 4:18–22). Peter affirmed this fact (Acts 10:38).
3. The Messiah was “cut off.” This is an obvious reference to our Lord’s crucifixion and death, already mentioned.
4. In killing Christ the Jews also fulfilled the prophecy “to finish transgression.” This was the final transgression that filled the cup of sin for the nation. Jesus told the Jews, “Fill you up then the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of Gehenna? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them you shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall you scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar...” (Matt. 23:32–36). The corruption of Israel, which caused their 70 year captivity, became even worse as they returned to Jerusalem with the Babylonian traditions (known as the Talmud), which Jesus said they had used to replace the commandments of God. But His judgment was delayed, delayed until they should “fill up” the measure of sin and “finish transgression” in finally killing the Son of God.
5. In dying Jesus made an end of sins. “But now once in the end of the world has he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26). This doesn’t mean that all sinning stops at the point of His death. It does mean that because of His death all who are forgiven of sin, are forgiven because of the just penalty paid in Christ’s death.
6. By His death He “made reconciliation for the sins of the people” (Heb. 2:17 and II Cor. 5:19).
7. By Christ’s death and resurrection He brought in “everlasting righteousness.” “For He who knew no sin He made to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of

God in Him” (II Cor. 5:21). None of these things can be done in the future which were accomplished “by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. 10:10).

8. By fulfilling what was prophesied in the Old Testament, Christ “sealed up prophecy and vision” (Read Acts 3:18).

9. Christ, who was called the messenger of the covenant (Mal. 3:1), confirmed the covenant in His own blood. At the last supper He said, “This is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28). Christ is called the “Mediator of the new covenant” (Heb. 8:6, 9:14–15). Any forecast of a restored covenant with the Old Testament system of sacrifices contradicts a multitude of Biblical affirmations that the law of Moses was abrogated permanently for the establishment of the New Covenant (Col. 2:14 and Gal. 3:24–25).

10. Christ caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease by being Himself the final sacrifice. “He, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. 10:12). The fact that this was to occur in the middle of the 70th week has special significance, as it gives a specific time for the death of Christ. This gives understanding to the statements of Jesus with regard to the time of his death. “Mine *hour* is not yet come,” He said (John 2:4, 7:6). Just before his betrayal He said, “my *time* is at hand” (Matt. 26:18), and finally, “the *hour* is come” (John 17:1, Matt. 26:45). So ended the first half of the 70th week. But for another three and a half years Christ continued to minister to His people through the apostles, “the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following” (Mark 16:20). Then came the conversion of Cornelius, the Roman, and after that the gospel began to be preached to all the nations (Gentiles) as had been promised.

11. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple did not come within the 70 weeks, but was part of the overall prophecy concerning the end of the nation. As God had given Nineveh 40 days to repent, He gave Israel 40 years to repent, but when they failed to do so He brought destruction to them through the Roman general, Titus. The siege, begun in 67 AD led to the worst abominations a people ever inflicted upon each other, fulfilling Christ’s prophecy of a time of tribulation never known before or afterwards in all history. The final destruction of the temple and the city came in 70 AD. The promise to ancient Israel was the promise of Christ. But Israel had proven faithless and rebellious, so Daniel foresaw His coming not only as bringing in the blessing of reconciliation for iniquity and the sealing of the New Covenant by His death, but also as judgment upon the rebels.

The fulfillment of God’s prophecies constitute an irrefutable body of evidence that God’s word is true. The Most Holy has been anointed. Jesus is the Christ, with the name above every name. He is the fulfillment of prophecy. From the cross He said, “It is finished.” There is no more to be done for the redemption of man than the proclamation of this good news until He comes again.

And what are we to look forward to? Certainly not the fantastic and sensational improvisations that have men examining every national figure for signs of “the antichrist,” nor to the counterfeit nation of Israel and a rebuilt “temple.” (The church is the temple of God.) Rather we are to look to the next promised act of Christ: His coming in judgment to separate the wheat from the tares, to give immortality to all His faithful ones and destroy all the rebels.

The reward of Christ is not a temporal government, not even if it should last a thousand years. The reward is eternal; eternal life in a new creation that will stand

forever. The church will not fail nor be replaced like ancient Jerusalem and the temple. The reward is for those who hold to the faith established by the covenant sealed by the death of Christ. There are not other covenants to follow.

The message of the church today is the message of salvation and reconciliation by Christ's death. It is salvation from sin to righteousness and from death to immortal life.

.....
Copyright © Curtis Dickinson. Formatted and Posted by Ken Fortier Ministries.
Permission is hereby granted by Mrs. Regina Dickinson to reproduce and distribute
Curtis' articles to as many as possible. This statement is to remain attached to this article
for permission to be valid. Vol. XX, Number 2.
.....