

A Prophecy Fulfilled

By

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Much of the end-time scenarios presented from church, radio, and television pulpits today is not based on sound methods of biblical interpretation, but rather with a view to supporting certain pre-determined concepts and filling prophecy into current events. For example, many use Daniel's "70 weeks" prophecy to claim that Antichrist is about to make a seven-year covenant with the Jews in which he will allow them to offer animal sacrifices in a rebuilt temple, then half way through the period will break the covenant and set himself up as God.

None of this is found in the prophecy of Daniel, Chapter 9. Daniel had already learned from Jeremiah that Judah's captivity in Babylon was to last 70 years (Jer. 25:11–12, 29:10), but it was left to Daniel to reveal the timetable for the coming of the Messiah, which is recorded in Daniel 9:24–27:

24 Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.

25 Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troublous times.

26 And after the threescore and two weeks shall the anointed one be cut off, and shall have nothing: 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 even unto the end shall be war; desolations are determined.

27 And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations *shall come* one that makes desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall *wrath* be poured out upon the desolate.

This is a total of 69 weeks, or 483 years, as each week is used to represent 7 years. The "commandment" to restore the city was given by Cyrus in 457 BC. Allowing for the four-year overlap in the calendar, this brings the 69 weeks up to 26 AD and the beginning of Christ' ministry. So, what of the 70th week? Did it follow the 69th, as one would expect it to, since Daniel was giving a prophecy to be fulfilled in 70 weeks; or is the 70th week still in the future as modern "prophets" are saying? The answer is found in the text itself.

Read verses 26 and 27 again! For the timing to have any meaning, it must all be taken together: the 7 weeks, for the restoration of the state of Judah, plus the 62 weeks, plus the final 1 week, add up to a total of 70. Note that it says that “after threescore and two weeks (the 69th week) shall Messiah be cut off.” This can only mean the death of Christ, 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).

This means that the 70th week was to see the death of Christ. It was in the “midst of the week” (Vs. 27) that the sacrifices were to cease. The middle of a seven-year period would be after three and a half years. Jesus was sacrificed after three and one-half years of ministry, putting an end to all blood sacrifice that would be accepted by God. Notice how the other parts of the prophecy are fulfilled.

1. During the first seven weeks (49 years) Jerusalem was restored, in the time of Nehemiah and Ezra, in “troubled times” due to strong opposition from their enemies.
2. At the end of the 69th week, the “Most Holy” was anointed. Gabriel, Peter and John all identified Jesus as the Holy One. In His first public message Jesus said, “The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me...” (Luke 4:18–22; compare Acts 10:38).
3. By His death Jesus paid the penalty for transgression, put an end to sin’s condemnation, made reconciliation or atonement for iniquity, and brought in the everlasting righteousness of God’s people (Rom. 5:10, 3:21, 27), fulfilling prophecies in verse 24.

Christ’s atonement for sin, once and for all, is the powerful and prevailing message of the Bible. Pre-millennialists, however, impose a gap of undetermined years between the 69th and 70th weeks, putting the 70th week in the future, with its promises in verse 24 yet to be fulfilled. This is to deny that Christ “offered one sacrifice for sin forever” and that there can be no more sacrifice for sins (Heb. 10:12).

4. By fulfilling this Old Testament prophecy Christ “sealed up prophecy and vision” (Acts 3:18).
5. Jesus made “a firm covenant with many” in His own blood, which is said to be “the blood of the everlasting covenant” (Heb. 13:20). At the last supper He said, “This is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Mt. 26:28). He is the “mediator of the new covenant” (Heb. 12:24).

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 Jesus, and explains His statements with regard to it. Early in His ministry He said, “My hour is not yet come” (John 2:4, 7:6). Then, just before His betrayal, He said, “My time is at hand” (Mt. 26:18), and finally, “the hour is come” (John 17:1). So ended the first half (3 ½ years) of the 70th week., with Jesus being “cut off” in “the midst of the week,” thus “causing the sacrifice to cease.”

Inserting a gap of time (now almost 2,000 years) between the 69th and 70th week of the prophecy is unscriptural and unwarranted, and totally annuls the purpose of the prophecy, which was to indicate the time of Messiah's appearance and fulfillment of the prophecies regarding Him.

6. 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. Jehovah 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 afterward in all history (Mt. 24:21). The final destruction of the temple and the city came in 70 AD. Israel had proven faithless and rebellious, so Daniel foresaw Christ's coming, not only as bringing in the blessings of reconciliation for iniquity and the sealing of the New Covenant by His death, but also as judgment upon the disobedient nation.

The 70th week of Daniel is past history. The fulfillment of God's prophecies constitute an irrefutable body of evidence that God's word is true. **The most Holy has been anointed, has made atonement for sin, and has fulfilled Daniel's prophecy.**

And what are we to look forward to? Certainly not to the sensational and scary scenarios that have people examining every national figure in fear of discovering "the antichrist," nor to the counterfeit nation of Israel and a rebuilt "temple." God's people should be aware of the evil that is taking place in the world, but should not live in fear of it. Jesus tells us to be salt and light, calling the races of mankind to repentance while striving to become blameless children of God, holding forth the word of life (Phil. 2:15-16).

Instead of trying to fit events into already fulfilled prophecy, we are to look to the glory already obtained by Jesus, Who redeemed us and is exalted to the right hand of God, and who is coming in judgment to give immortality to all His faithful ones and to destroy all the rebels.

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