

Daniel's 70th Week

Past? Or Future?

Bible prophecy is said to be one of the proofs of the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures. Peter speaks of it as a "more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye would do well that ye take heed, as unto a light in a dark place." I Peter 1:19. But most of the so-called teaching and preaching on Bible prophecy these days has to do with a series of events which center around a seven-year period which the Futurists declare is the Tribulation Period of these last days.

Seven Years of Tribulation?

And how do they come up with a tribulation period of 7 years? They do it by declaring that the 70th week of Daniel's 70-week prophecy did not fulfill after the 69th, but must be amputated to await a future fulfillment at the close of this age. This 7-year period, they say, begins with the rapture of the church. And immediately thereafter some Antichrist appears on the world scene who then makes a covenant with the Jews. At the end of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years the Antichrist breaks this covenant and turns on the Jews with an awful slaughter, and this is the Great Tribulation. This tribulation period

is climaxed by the return of Christ with His saints to set up His kingdom.

But what shall we say of these things? Is this Bible prophecy? Or tradition that makes the Word of God of none effect? Let us turn to the Scriptures and see.

The Occasion for the 70-week Prophecy

First of all, let us see what was the occasion for this 70-week prophecy. Daniel, you will recall, had been carried captive into Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar along with that Judah remnant inside the walled city of Jerusalem. And Daniel 9:2 gives us to believe that Daniel was studying the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11, 12) where we are told that this Judah remnant were to serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. This captivity was nearing completion, and the burden that seemed to be on Daniel's heart was, when this captivity is completed, then what?

In seeking the answer to this question, Daniel set himself to seek the Lord by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth and ashes. And it was while Daniel was praying, and confessing his sins, and those of his people, that the angel, Gabriel, came to him, apparently in a vision, telling him that he was come forth to give him understanding in the revelation he was about to give him.

The angel Gabriel then proceeds to tell Daniel that 70 weeks of years had been determined by God upon Daniel's people (the Judah remnant in Babylon), and the city of Jerusalem. Dan. 9:24. And in this 70 week period, 6 things were to be accomplished—every one of which were dependent upon the finished work of Christ on Calvary. Read Dan. 9:24 for yourself and see that this is so.

A 70-week Charter Given to the Judah Remnant

Prophetically speaking, this 70 weeks of years was a period of 490 years, each week being a period of 7 years. This 70 week period was actually a charter from God guaranteeing this Judah remnant protection and existence for 490 years. And since the 6 things that were to be fulfilled in this period were dependent upon the work of Christ on Calvary, we must gather that God was going to bring this Judah remnant back to Jerusalem to provide the environment for Christ's first coming. National Israel, remember, had been taken captive into Assyria at least 130 years before Nebuchadnezzar came up and besieged the walled city of Jerusalem. They were long gone; and it is completely ridiculous to imagine, as some do, that national Israel joined up with this Judah remnant when they went back to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and Nehemiah.

Not a Prophecy of National Israel

In other words, this is *NOT* a prophecy with regard to national Israel, but of that Judah remnant in Babylon, to whom, as Paul intimates in Rom. 3:1, 2, had been committed the oracles of God. With national Israel divorced and put away, this Judah remnant were made the temporary custodians of the kingdom of God. That this is so we find Jesus in Matt. 21:43, taking the kingdom from these Jews, and giving it back to a *nation* that would bring forth the fruits thereof. This nation is not the Church. How could it be? It is none other than national Israel — those "other sheep" of whom Jesus speaks in John 10 who would "hear His voice." (Modern Anglo-Saxondom).

The Futurist Theory

Now popular prophetic preaching would have you believe that Christ was crucified in the 69th week of Daniel's prophecy. And since the Jews, whom they claim to be Israel, rejected Christ, and since Bible prophecy has largely to do with Israel, then God's clock stopped, so to speak, with this Christian dispensation. Israel, they would have us believe, has been sidetracked while the Gentile Church Special runs its allotted course. And since the prophets did not write of the Gentiles, then this Christian era is supposed to be a big gap which they did not see, and in which no prophecy is fulfilled. Not until the church is completed and Christ returns to take the church off to heaven, will God's clock begin to run again. The rapture of the church, in other words, marks the end of the Church Age, and the beginning of Daniel's 70th week. Immediately the Church is taken out of the world, some character called, "the Antichrist", makes his appearance. Then begins the Tribulation Period, they say, which will comprise this 70th week of Daniel's prophecy.

A Tradition Based on Two Errors

Now to be sure all this makes interesting preaching, and it is the sum and substance of most of the prophetic preaching you hear these days. But again, what saith the Scriptures?

The fact of the matter is, there isn't one verse of Scripture to support this so-called Bible prophecy. It is nothing but tradition that supplants true Bible prophecy, and makes the Word of God of none effect.

This whole ridiculous theory is built around two fundamental errors. The first one

is that the Jew, a religious sect classed with Protestants and Catholics, are all of Israel. And the second erroneous assumption is that the 70th week did not fulfill after the 69th some 1900 years ago.

Nothing Fulfilled in the First 69 Weeks

If you will turn with me to Daniel 9:24-27, and see what Gabriel has to say about this 70-week nation, you will discover that this whole prophecy is Messianic. *The first 69 weeks* of this prophecy simply brought them to Christ, and His public ministry. *Not one thing* predicted in v. 24 was fulfilled in the first 69 weeks, or 483 years. They simply brought them to Messiah.

Now don't take my word for it. In Dan. 9:25 we find Gabriel saying to Daniel, "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem *unto* Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks", etc.

Now when I went to school, seven and sixty-two made sixty-nine. And in language as clear as words can make it, Gabriel declares that 69 weeks, or 483 years from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, would bring them *UNTO* Messiah. While there is some slight disagreement as to the exact date involved when the commandment was given to restore and build Jerusalem, I believe that 457 B.C. is the correct date, or, from the year of Ezra's mission. And 483 years from 457 B.C. bring you to the year 28 A.D., the year in which Jesus was baptized by John, and in which He began His public ministry.

Christ Begins Public Ministry in 70th Week

What we are saying here, is, that Christ began His public ministry at the beginning of the 70th week, immediately after the 69th. And Gabriel confirms this claim in Dan. 9:26 where he says, "And *after* threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for Himself." Gabriel is not here contradicting himself by saying that Christ would be cut off in 62 weeks. No, as the previous verse explains, seven weeks had already passed, or 49 years. This probably covered the troubled period of Ezra and Nehemiah. This left 483 years still remaining to bring them "unto" Messiah. So that what Gabriel is saying here, is, that *AFTER* the 69th week Messiah would be cut off. Now what comes after 69? Why 70, of course. Then where is the rhyme or the reason in saying that Christ performed His public ministry in the 69th week, when Gabriel clearly says that it was *after* the 69th, or in the last or 70th week?

Then on what Scriptural ground do preachers and theologians amputate that 70th week to make it comprise the Tribulation Period of these last days? There is none whatever. Then all the doctrines of Futurism built around this amputated 70th week go up in smoke. They are simply the figment of man's imagination.

The 70-week Prophecy is Wholly Messianic

As we have previously stated, this whole prophecy is Messianic. For a brief moment in verse 26, Gabriel interjects a paranthetical statement about the "prince that shall come" who will destroy the city and the temple. But immediately in verse 27, Gabriel returns to the theme of Messiah. By no stretch of the imagina-

tion, or any rule of grammar, can the "he" of verse 27 be the antecedent of "the prince that shall come" in verse 26. The subject matter of verse 26 is the Messiah who shall be cut off. The rest of the verse is paranthetical, dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. under the Roman General Titus.

Yet the Antichrist theorists pounce on this 26th verse and make the "prince that shall come" to be their man, "the Antichrist." And they then proceed to apply the Messianic prophecy of verse 27 to some Antichrist. On the basis of this verse, they maintain that the Antichrist is to "make" a covenant with the Jews for one week (Daniel's 70th week) and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease. In other words, this is where the Antichrist turns on the Jews and Great Tribulation begins.

No Mention of any Antichrist

Let us look at this for a moment. No mention of Antichrist is made here, or anywhere else in the Bible until you come to the Epistles of John. And here it does not refer to a person, but anyone who denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. Gabriel does *not say* that some Antichrist "makes" a covenant with the Jews. He rather says, "*He shall confirm* THE COVENANT with many for one week. Just what covenant could some Antichrist confirm with the Jews? None whatever. This is rather a direct reference to what Jesus did in His death on the cross. In Matt. 26:27, 28 when Jesus took the cup and gave it to the disciples, He said, "Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The New Covenant had been promised to Israel in Jer. 31:33, and

Christ was here confirming it to Israel near the middle of the 70th week.

And when Jesus Christ died on the cross, He was the Antitype of the animal sacrifice for sin. There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. The one perfect sacrifice had been offered, once for all. He therefore caused "the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." To imagine that at this late date some fictitious Antichrist would reestablish the animal sacrifices with the Jews and then cause them to cease, is completely absurd, unscriptural and ridiculous. And finally, it is a matter of history that Christ was "cut off" after $3\frac{1}{2}$ years of ministering. He was crucified in the middle of the 70th week, and it is long a matter of history. May God be pleased to open our eyes to the acknowledging of His Truth.

THE NATIONAL MESSAGE

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