

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel

(Sermons in English)

Introduction

We are in the Last Days when prophetic events are happening, and where prophetic events begin to happen, confusion automatically results. People were ask about the war in Iraq and what is happening in the Middle East and how to understand it biblically in light of biblical prophecy.

If we just watch the news we can get really confused as to what is going on, but when we look at these things in the light of the Bible, things become very clear.

As we see prophecy beginning to be fulfilled, and it is being fulfilled faster and faster, confusion emerges. We *are* in the Last Days; God *did* put these things in His Word for a reason, and the reason is He wants us to understand these things.

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city...

(That is Jerusalem.)

...to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah...

(...”an anointed one”...)

...the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (Dan 9:24-27)

We have two princes in this passage. In verse 26 we obviously see the Messiah—Jesus, but there are people who teach (usually extreme Calvinists) that Jesus is also the second prince. Now the second prince is Antichrist. They are confusing Christ with the Antichrist. Let us begin at the beginning.

Understanding Eschatology

There are four ways to understand eschatology, four ways to understand Last Days prophecy in Western theological thought:

Preterism says these things *already* happened and have no future meaning, that they already happened in the Early Church or whatever and they have no future meaning. Revelation has no future meaning in this view at it has all happened already. This is the eschatology of the Kingdom-Now people who say there will be no Antichrist, no falling away, no Rapture, that the Church will go from strength to strength, and Satan is bound. (If Satan is bound I want to know who keeps letting him go.) Additionally they say that the church is going to conquer the whole world for Christ before He comes. Now it is not logical to believe such nonsense, but there is not much logic in the people who preach such nonsense. This is Preterism.

There are two forms of Preterists. First are the liberals, the unsaved so-called theologians. What they say is, “Well, Isaiah could not have known a king named Cyrus would come along 200 years later and send the Jews back to Israel from the Captivity in Isaiah 44-45, so therefore Isaiah could not have written the book of Isaiah. It had to be somebody they call “Deutero-Isaiah” who came along after the fact and took something that already happened and made it look like a prediction called an “*ex vaticina interpolation*.” Their presupposition is, “We cannot be sure there is a God, if there is He does not know the future, and even if He did He would not tell Isaiah, so therefore Isaiah and Daniel could not have been so accurate in what was predicted. Somebody had to come along hundreds of years later and make believe.” That is what the liberals say.

Then we have Historicism. There are people who say they are born again, who are Evangelicals, who believe in a form of Preterism, and these are the ones who say that Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation were fulfilled in 70 A.D.

Historicism is what some of the Reformers believed. They would say, “Well, there are many antichrists; we should not look for these two people in the book of Revelation, that is simply literary illustration. The papacy is an ongoing institution – it is an antichrist institution; so every Pope is the Antichrist.” You go to Northern Ireland, the Presbyterians believe this. They go so far as to say “the restrainer” in [2 Thessalonians 2:7](#) who restrains Antichrist from coming was pagan Rome and when the Visigoths conquered pagan Rome in the 5th Century, then the papacy came to power. That is how far they take it. The restrainer is the Holy Spirit, but they actually say it was imperial pagan Rome. This is Historicism.

Then there is Poemicism. Poemicism says, “Well, the book of Revelation is only poetry. It is given only to encourage the Church that Jesus will come back one day. It is given to encourage us at times of persecution. We should not take it as having any specific meaning, it is like poetry. It is just to cheer us up when things are tough.” Lutherans go with this. Luther basically rejected the book of Revelation and so Lutherans are stuck with the fact that the founder of their church did not like it. So what are they going to do with it? Well, it is poetry to them.

Then there is Futurism. Futurists are people like the late Barry Smith, my friend, and Hal Lindsay and these people say that there will be an Antichrist, there will be a mark of the beast, there will be a falling away.

True Eschatology - Multiple Fulfillments

These are the four ways people look at it in the Western world, but that is *not* the way Jesus and the Apostles looked at it. This passage talks about the “*shiqutz ha meshomem*” – the “abomination of desolation”. The abomination will come and one who makes desolate. Jesus spoke of the abomination of desolation in [Matthew 24:15](#)...

“Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

The Western world says one of these four are true. The Judeo-Christians of the 1st Century, the Apostles and those taught by the Apostles, did not say that. They said *all four* were true.

The abomination of desolation spoken by Daniel already happened by the time Jesus spoke of the abomination in Matthew 24. By the time the abomination of desolation was spoken of by Jesus in the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24, it happened about 160 years earlier in the days of the Maccabees. This is the Jewish feast of Hanukkah which Jesus Himself celebrated in John 10. In English our Bible would call it “The Feast of Dedication”. So Jesus knew it already happened. He took something that already happened and made it a prophecy. Jesus used Preterism.

But unlike Preterists, He said it is going to happen again—multiple fulfillments. He used Historicism. He took something that happened and said it is going to happen again, and so it does. It happened in 70 A.D. If we read Josephus, when the prophecies of Jesus and Daniel were fulfilled for destroying the temple, the Romans set up pagan ensigns on the Temple Mount and began to worship them where the Holy of Holies had been. That was an abomination of desolation. The Emperor Hadrian came along and built a temple to Jupiter, the Roman version of the Greek god Zeus and *that* was an abomination of desolation. Today on the Temple Mount we have the Mosque of Omar with an inscription in Arabic from the Quran that says, “God has no son”. In 1 John, that which denies the Father-Son relationship is antichrist. ([1 John 2:22](#)) Jesus used Historicism.

Then there is Poemicism. Jesus appears to John on Patmos during the persecution by the Emperor Domitian. John is the last apostle left; the others had all been martyred, and people were wondering, “When is He coming?” They expected Him, by and large, to come in their lifetime. The church had to be encouraged that He *was* coming, that He was going to keep His Word, that it did have an eternal future. Jesus used Poemicism.

Yet going back to the abomination, He said it will happen again and again and again. Each time there was an abomination on the Temple Mount—it happened with Julian the Apostate, Constantine’s nephew, there have been *many* abominations—each one of them is a foreshadowing of the final one. In other words, the Western church says we can only be *one* of the four; however, Jesus and the Apostles were *all* four. It is not *one* of the four, it is *all* four.

Partially Right, But Not Entirely Right

Some of these people are right in what they say but wrong in what they omit. What they are saying is not always completely wrong, it is what they are *not* saying that makes it wrong in part.

The people with this Preterist view say, “Well it all happened in 70 A.D.” In the Olivet Discourse Jesus spoke of the Last Days on the Mt. of Olives in Matthew 24-25. It is not just chapter 24; it is chapter 24 *and* 25. Yes, it had a partial fulfillment in 70 A.D.—it partially happened. The believers fled from Jerusalem under Simeon and they thought that would be the Rapture. That happened. However, did Jesus separate the sheep from goats in 70 A.D.? ([Mt. 25:31-46](#)) Preterists would say, “Yeah, the Jews who believed were separated from the ones who did not.” But then did He give people their eternal reward based on what they did with their talents in 70 A.D.? That is Matthew 25. When did Jesus give people their eternal reward based on what they did with their gifts in 70 A.D.? It never happened in 70 A.D. When did the bridegroom come for the bride in 70 A.D.? The wise and foolish virgins is in Matthew 25 as part of the Olivet Discourse. Did Jesus come back for His bride in 70 A.D.? No, He did not.

It is a complete nonsense. They take the *partial* fulfillment and try to make it the *total* fulfillment. They take the Preterism, but they forget what it means for the future. That is not how Jesus handled Daniel 9. Jesus said, “Yes, it already happened, but it is going to happen again.” He did not say it was *one* fulfillment, it is *multiple* fulfillments with one *final* one when He comes back for the Bride.

Let Us Put This In Context

The first thing in this context we should realize is Daniel was told that this message applied not primarily to the Church but to the Jews.

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city...”

I am not saying it does not apply to the Church, but it first of all applies to the Jews.

The people who go into this other error are usually people—not always, but usually—who are into Replacement Theology. They say the Church is “Israel” and God has no future purpose for the Jews. This is absurd. If God does not have to keep His promise to the Jews, He does not have to keep His promise to the Church. The New Covenant was not made with the Church; the New Covenant was made with the Jews.

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ([Jer. 31:31](#))

Jesus never made a covenant with the Church, He made it with the Jews. Non-Jews who accept Jesus are grafted in, Jews who reject Him are cut off from their own olive tree. But Jesus never made a covenant with the Church.

The second thing we need to understand about this context in addition to the fact it is for the Jews is that there is one Messiah, two comings. Daniel 9 tells us that the Messiah would come and die before the second temple would be destroyed.

“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. ([Dan. 9:26](#))

The Messiah would come and be cut off.

The Talmudic literature refers to this and confirms the Christian interpretation in *Yaqut*, Volume 2, page 79d of the Nazir edition 32B, also the *Midrash Bereshit*. I got it from page 243 of the Warsaw Edition. The Messiah was to exit in 33 A.D. The Sanhedrin said the same thing. The Messiah was to come and die before the second temple was destroyed.

The Jews expected Him to bring in the everlasting kingdom. That was not His purpose in His first coming; that is His purpose in His second. His first coming was to be an atonement for sin. The Jews wanted somebody to get rid of the Romans the way the Maccabees did the Greeks. That is His purpose when He

comes back, to bring in political dominion; it was not His purpose the first time. It was to be an atonement for sin. The Messiah was to come and die.

Jesus is in his native town Nazareth in the synagogue, and it says...

And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed, To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.”

And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant... ([Lk. 4:17-20a](#))

He was reading from what we call the “*Parshat Hashavua*”, the *Synagogue Liturgical Lection*. He was reading from Isaiah 61.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me To bring good news...

(...”gospel” – “*bisorah*” in Hebrew...)

...to the afflicted;

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified. ([Is. 61:1-3](#))

Jesus stops half-way through verse 2. He only reads the first half of verse 2 then He closes the book. He does not only stop half-way through the passage, He stops half-way through the verse and closes the book. Why? The *rest* He will fulfill in His second coming. He only reads up to that which He will fulfill in His first. This is “one Messiah, two comings”. He’s reading the *Parshat Hashavua*, the synagogue liturgical reading for that week from the *Haftorah*, and He stops right in the middle of the verse, closes the book and hands it to the synagogue attendant. He only reads as far as He was going to fulfill at that time: one Messiah, two comings.

What Preterists and Historicists are trying to say, in effect, is it *all* happened back then. No, it did not all happen back then; He does the rest when He returns. Of course there will be a Millennial Reign of Jesus! The original plan God had for this planet, what would have happened if Adam and Eve did not sin, is going to happen. The plans of God cannot be thwarted. Sin has merely interrupted it. The Messiah will restore what sin interrupted after He atones for sin. First He comes to atone for sin, then He restores what we made a mess of in the Garden of Eden. The original plan God had for the planet will happen. The idea, “That is it; forget it!”, no do not forget it. God had a plan and neither the devices of Satan nor the sin of man is going to thwart the original plan He had for us and for this planet. *Then* comes eternity. Nothing can thwart the plan of God. So the second thing we have to understand is one Christ/one Messiah (that is what “Christ” means), two comings.

The Division of Years

The third thing we have to understand is Jeremiah predicted it would be a 70 year captivity.

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. ([Dan. 9:1-2](#))

We know from archeology and from history the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede was 539 B.C. It was 539 B.C. when Daniel wrote this. Daniel had this explained to him by the Lord through angelic medium and so forth. He was reading the Scriptures and he saw and he understood the Captivity would be 70 years. But then he gets the message it would not be 70 years simply—that is only the Babylonian Captivity, but it would be *seventy* sevens. The word is “*shavua*”. “*Shavua*” comes from the Hebrew word “seven” – “*sheba*”. There will be seventy sevens. Sevens of what? We must go back to the beginning of the chapter to figure out that it is “weeks of years” or sets of 7 years. We must go back to what he was studying in Jeremiah. It is not only going to be 70years, it is going to be 70 *sevens*. That is what it says literally. It does not say “490

years”, it says “70 sets of 7 years” or “7 sets of 70 years”; a 490 year period. What Preterists and Historicists have tried to say is it all happened when Jesus came the first time.

Look at how it breaks it down. It says there will be a period of 7 weeks—that is 49 years, and three-score and two weeks—that is 434 years. So there is a period of 7 weeks, which is of course 49 years, and then another period of 62 weeks (which is 434 years) before the Messiah would come and be cut off. And then at the end it says there is one more week, one week of 7 years.

The text does not specifically tell us why it breaks the 69 weeks into 7 and 62. However, we know that they had three decrees. The first one was the decree of Artaxerxes in the book of Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem that Daniel refers back to, ([Neh. 2](#)) then there was the decree to rebuild the temple, (Ezra 1) and then there was the re-issuing of the first decree issued by a later king who searched the records of the archives of the kings. (Ezra 7) It is likely when the people came back, as we read in Haggai, Ezra, and Nehemiah, they were lackadaisical or reluctant. Many were reluctant even to rebuild Jerusalem, and most of them were reluctant to rebuild the temple. The 49 years relates to how long it actually took to get things reestablished as a city and as a place of worship. They did not just come back and do it right away; Haggai and Ezra were fighting with them to get them to do it. That is the main reason, as far as I can deduce, why it breaks it down into the 7 and the 62. There was a period of time before things really got organized the way it was supposed to because the people were too consumed with themselves to be consumed with the things of God.

Then the final week comes at the end, *after* the Messiah is cut off. Preterists and Historicists would have us believe this happened way back when. This decree to rebuild Jerusalem was 451 B.C., but we are talking about two things that complicate it:

So to make the adjustment is about 450 B.C. and when we add the 69 weeks of years, it comes to the fact that the Messiah would have had to die in approximately 32 A.D.

The 70th Week

There are those who would tell us that this 70th week *also* happened. Now what *I* believe, and what most of my friends believe, is that we have a break between the 69th and 70th week. Why? For the same reason Jesus read half the verse in the synagogue. That is the “Time of the Gentiles”.

It is like a rugby game. There is 5 minutes left in the game, the game is due to be over at 6, there is five minutes left in the game and a player is injured, so stop the clock, freeze the game. There is *always* five minutes left in the game. If the paramedics get a doctor, get an ambulance, get him medevaced off the field, the clock starts again. Time freezes. That is what John means when saying, “Little children, it is the last hour”. ([1 Jn. 2:18](#)) Time freezes. It is always one minute to midnight. There is always five minutes left in the game. As soon as the injured player is removed the clock begins again. As soon as the “Time of the Gentiles” ends, God goes back to dealing with the Jews.

On what basis can we say this? On the basis of what Jesus said. “Lord is it at this time that You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” ([Acts 1:6-8](#)) “Oh, the kingdom will be restored to Israel, the Father has fixed that by His own authority—you worry about evangelism. Be My witnesses to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, to the ends of the earth.” *Then* He turns His grace back to the Jews and restores the kingdom.

These things could not possibly have been fulfilled in the Early Church in the time of Jesus. The 70th week could not have possibly happened.

Why Some Get It Wrong

The first reason this nonsense makes no sense is that Daniel tells us the same thing the book of Revelation does.

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice...”

Antiochus Epiphanes stopped temple sacrifice, but it could not be Antiochus because the years do not add up. That was 160 B.C. Therefore that leaves two possibilities: it is either the Antichrist who is prefigured by Antiochus, or it is Christ Himself as some people try to say.

When did Christ ever stop the sacrifice in the temple? They would say, “When He became the sacrifice we no longer needed a temple.” That is true, however the temple was not destroyed until 70 A.D. He gave the

Jews 40 years to repent and accept Him as the Messiah before He put an end to temple worship. It just does not add up.

Additionally, look at the wording.

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice... ([Dan. 9:27](#))

Where does the ministry of Jesus break up into two halves of a week? Where do you see 7 years anywhere in the gospels, or anywhere in the Bible, of Jesus? The Bible only speaks of Jesus as 3-1/2 years. No place is the ministry of Jesus shown to be 7 years, broken into two halves. No place.

Secondly, while it is not about Christ, in Revelation it is certainly about Antichrist. Jesus had 3-1/2 years of public ministry. Satan, in the person of Antichrist, will demand equal time. They are taking verse 27 which is talking about Antichrist and saying that is speaking about Jesus? When did Jesus *ever* break a covenant? He is God; God cannot break a covenant. Paul says if God breaks a covenant He would deny Himself and He cannot do that. ([2 Ti. 2:13](#)) People can break covenants, but Jesus *never* abrogated a covenant.

The Bible never breaks His ministry into two halves of a 7 year period, and He never abrogated a covenant, and He never stopped sacrifice.

The Lengths Some Will Go To

Now in order to do what they do, they have to do two things: they have to engage, at least to a degree, in the error or Replacement Theology. “God is finished with the Jews.” Some of them are radically replaced, some of them partially, but more seriously what they must do is engage in the ancient heresy of Gnosticism: spiritualize a text out of context to mean something other than what it plainly states.

There is typology where one thing is a symbol of another thing. It is true Antiochus Epiphanes is a type of the Antichrist—that is typology. But that does not negate the fact there was a literal, historical Antiochus. There is midrash where you have a *Pesher* interpretation, but the *Pesher* interpretation, or deeper meaning, never negates the plain meaning called the “*peshit*”. Never. When we begin spiritualizing texts that way, that is Gnosticism.

Calvinistic people will claim to be grammatical-historical exegesis experts. They take the Bible literally, going back to the Reformation. They are superbly guilty of the very thing they claim to be most against. Every time they see “Israel”? Spiritualize it—that is “the church”. Not all Calvinists are Replacementists, but the ones who are classic Calvinists are Replacementists. When they see the Millennial Reign of Jesus that is only a symbol—spiritualize it. Where do they get a license to spiritualize something? That is what the Catholic church did, that is what Gnostics did. “It cannot literally be 1,000 years.” But do you believe it is literally 3-1/2 years? “Yes.” Then how come time is literal in one place in Revelation but it is only a symbol in another place? It is pick-and-choose.

There were these kind of old aptitude tests in the 1940’s and 50’s, logic tests where they would actually take the pegs and try to get them into the corresponding holes. There were square ones and round ones and triangular ones. Put this one in and if that one does not fit, get the pen knife out. Well that fits and that fits. We do not like that one. “Wait a minute, we should not have cut that one. We should have left that one intact; it would have fit perfectly in here.” Now they are stuck with one that does not go anywhere. Get the pen knife out. That is what it amounts to. It just does not add up.

The math does not add up, the historical record does not add up, and the biblical texts do not add up. Verse 26 is Christ, verse 27 is plainly Antichrist. The ministry of Jesus is never divided into two halves of a 7 year period. Jesus did not give people their eternal reward based on what they did with their talents in 70 A.D. Time cannot be literal in one passage and then figurative in another. It is either *all* figurative or *all* literal. It is a *big* nonsense. And it is a nonsense that essentially emerges from people’s desires to accommodate their own presuppositions, one of which is Replacement Theology.

Overall Influence

The same deceptions and errors that came around and plagued the Early Church have made a big comeback; and as we see prophecy fulfilled, as we draw closer to the return of Jesus, the very things books like Daniel were given to *prevent* us from being confused are only confusing people more because some kooks are coming in with their baggage—things that make no sense.