

Life in the Lion's Den

“The 70 Sevens”

(Daniel Chapter 9:20-27)

Lesson #10

Scripture: Ephesians 1:7 *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace”*

Introduction:

Have you ever seen a bumper sticker like this one?

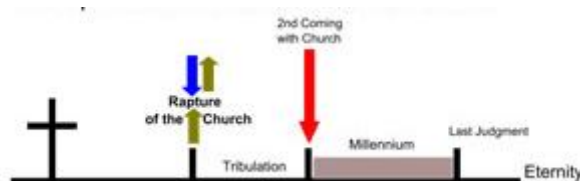


Today there is some religious thinking that is extremely dangerous and completely wrong. In view of Paul's continuous admonition in the New Testament to expose sin (Eph 5:11 & 1 Tim 5:20) coupled with the idea that this religious thought tries to use our text today in Daniel 9:20-27 as a pillar for its view point. We must stop and talk about this false religious thinking.

The false religious thinking that we are talking about is Pre-millennialism.

Sometime shortly after my wife and I were married, at the Inola Church of Christ a man brought his friend to church with him. During bible class this man spoke up and boldly explained the doctrine of pre-millennialism. Here is what he said in a nut shell:

1. The books of Daniel and Revelation are primarily a prophecy of church history from beginning to its ultimate end.
2. They begin their theology with the book of Rev chapter 20 and form their whole theological thought.
 - a. Anyway here is this false thinking in simplistic form. From the time Jesus was on the cross until His second coming, a great tribulation will happen. Then at Jesus' second coming His church will be raptured away to heaven while the rest of mankind will live here on earth during a literal 1000 year reign of Jesus in which they get a second chance to get things right before the final judgment of God.



NOTE: This thinking fails horribly in light of the fact that Jesus is currently reigning in His kingdom (Rev 11:17). At the second coming of Jesus judgment will commence (2 Thess. 1:6-9). And particularly in light of the fact that at Jesus' second coming the earth will be destroyed 2 Peter 3:10-12. And finally the Lord never instructs us to concern ourselves with end times but to live right today.

Part of the obvious problem here besides the complete overwhelming contradiction to the rest of scripture is the fact that these folks try to create historical context from a symbolic picture. In apocalyptic language historical context is always used to emphasize truth...not to establish it.

After all these years this still haunts me ...because no one could speak up and defend the truth (me included). Finally after some time of this man going on and on, an older man (brother Underwood) spoke up and said this is not what we believe and the discussion was over and would be addressed after church.

Transitional Statement:

Church, today God is simply going to point out to Daniel that although the 70 years of captivity are over and release and restoration will come....that ultimately the Mosaic Law and current covenant will be done away with at the cross of Calvary.

I. During Daniels prayer

Daniel 9:20-23

20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. 22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 23 "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

A. At the beginning of Daniel's prayer the command was issued.

1. The command for Israel's release in keeping with God's own word.

B. But if Daniel's thought is we've done our time, now let's get busy trying again...God has some drastic information for him and Israel....The 70 years of captivity was simply the beginning of the end for Israel under the Mosaic Law.

II. Gabriel gives a prophecy that points to the end of the Jewish nation under the Law of Moses

Daniel 9: 24-27

24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, 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.

25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah 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. 26 "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. 27 "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."

A. First let's define what the 70 weeks are:

1. The 70 weeks are here called a "decree"
 - a. A decree in the Hebrew takes the form of a determination of God and simply means "to cut off"
 - b. "for" your people and your holy city
 - 1) "for" here is a preposition which means above, over, on or against...Israel.
 - 2) Not just something to endure.... but God appointed against.
2. i.e. it represent a time frame for the cutting of off of Israel. Which is defined in this text as the period of time from the command to rebuild Jerusalem and its Temple, until the time of Messiah
 - a. With the cut off including Messiah ...we adequately understand that the 70 weeks refer to the end of Judaism under the old covenant system, and the inauguration of the New Covenant as prophesied with Jeremiah's mention of the New Covenant to come Jer. 31:31-34

B. There are two schools of thought about the 70 weeks

1. First and foremost the 70 weeks is not literal since a year and half is hardly adequate between Cyrus' command to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple until the time of Jesus.
 - a. Looking closer at the Hebrew word for weeks we can easily understand that it wasn't meant to be literal, because the word "weeks" simply means units of time.

2. Most scholars understand this to be 70 weeks of years, which equals 490 years which gets us approx. to the time of Christ.

a. This sets forth the right concept, because of the principle set up by the concept of 70 X 7 isn't a time frame but points to a perfected completion, with Judaism as the way to godliness.

1) As an example we might think about Jesus' words to His disciples in Matt 18:21-22 about how many times to forgive....70 X 7. This of course doesn't mean only forgive 490 times, but until God's work is completed.

b. But the 70 units of time must remain figurative / symbolic because this prophecy includes the total destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD which doesn't figure into any exact calculation of years.

C. First we have 7 weeks dedicated to the rebuilding of the restoration of Jerusalem

1. This decree was made by Cyrus in 539 BC (Ezra 1:1-5)

D. At the end of the 7 weeks, there is another 62 weeks until Messiah comes. $7 + 62 = 69$ weeks.

1. Here is where the pre-millennialism stops the spiritual clock and say that the 70th year won't happen until Christ comes again rapturing His church and giving spiritual delinquents 1000 years to change their minds.

a. The problem of course is that this text places Jesus smack dab in the middle of the 70th week.

E. Next, Daniel is told of 6 things that must happen during the 70th week

1. Finish the transgression

a. The Jews had transgressed God's law in so many ways. Now they are going back to Jerusalem only to fall into sin again, but the completion or pinnacle of sin will ultimately be the rejection of the Messiah Christ.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16

14 For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea, for you also endured the same sufferings at the hands of your own countrymen, even as they did from the Jews, 15 who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, 16 hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost.

2. Make an end of sin

- a. Jesus put an end to sin on the cross of Calvary, in that the sins of the whole world were heaped on Jesus

2 Corinthians 5:21

21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Hebrews 9:26

26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

3. Atone for iniquity

- a. "atone" here means to cover over, pacify, propitiate or atone for sin
- b. Christ' sacrifice on the cross with the shedding of His blood provided the perfect pleasing sacrifice that would be acceptable to God, for all those who would trust in His sacrifice.

Romans 3:25-26

25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

1 John 2:2

2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.

4. To bring in everlasting righteousness

- a. The Old Testament had predicted the coming of the King of Righteousness.... Isa 9:6-7; 11:1-5 & Jer. 23:5-6
- b. Jesus is our everlasting righteousness

2 Corinthians 5:21

21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 Corinthians 1:30

30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,

5. Seal up vision and prophecy

a. In relation to this context, by the end of the 70 weeks prophecy and visions will end... i.e. man will have the total package of God's will laid out before them.

1) Hence Paul's explanation in 1 Cor 13:8-10 that prophecies and miracles would cease

2) And by the time of the writing of Jude 3 (81 AD)

Jude 3

3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

3) Hebrews 2:3 help us understand even more the completed message of God through Jesus.

Hebrews 2:3

3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

6. And finally to anoint the most holy

a. This can refer to a person or place....NAS makes it "most holy place"

1) The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus at His baptism Isa 11:2; 61:1-2 & Matt 3:15-17

2) Jesus also anointed the Most Holy Place in God's presence in heaven.

Hebrews 9:12

12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Hebrews 9:24-26

24 For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

NOTE: These six things all happened during the 70th week (time of the Messiah)

F. Then verse 26 says after the 62 weeks....which puts us into the 70th week

1. Messiah will be cut off.

a. John 1:11 says Jesus was rejected by His own people.

1) Read Matt 27:27-54

b. Lev 7:20 "cut off" is connected with the death penalty...killed

c. Isaiah 53:8-9

*8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away;
And as for His generation, who considered
That He was cut off out of the land of the living
For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke
was due?*

*9 His grave was assigned with wicked men,
Yet He was with a rich man in His death,
Because He had done no violence,
Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.*

d. Therefore the Messiah's cutting off is His crucifixion on the cross of Calvary. (26-30AD)

2. The Messiah will make a firm covenant with the many for one week

a. The New Covenant spoken of by Jeremiah in Jer. 31: 31-34

b. "*firm*" speaks to the everlasting intended purpose of God through Christ and the New Covenant.

3. Also in the middle of this 70th week the Messiah by His death will put and end to sacrifices and grain offerings.

a. Heb. 10:8-10,18 clearly show us that the O.T. sacrifices in the temple were no longer acceptable after Christ shed His blood and provided the intended sacrifice of God.

4. Then during the 70th week Jerusalem and its sanctuary will be destroyed permanently.

a. Read Matt chapter 24....keep the context of verse 34

a. And it was under the leadership of Titus the son of Vespasian in 70 AD.

b. "*on wing of abomination*" more than likely refers to the Jews rejection of Christ, but could also have reference to Zeus,

whose statue was set up in the temple of God under Antiochus Epiphanies 164 BC, and whose appearance was seen on the Roman standards as they destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD under Titus.

- c. Interesting to note also that God pours out the order of destruction on the one who brought destruction also (Titus). Titus later dies mysteriously of a fever at the age of 42.

Conclusion:

Church simply put Daniel points us to Christ and the ushering in of the intended will of God under the New Covenant blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

God could not have loved His people more than to offer an end to sin through blood of His only begotten son.

Maybe sin is really a big thing after all.