

the *Scarlet Threads* reprint series

DANIEL:

What he saw, what he didn't see

From July to December of 1995, the *Scarlet Threads* newsletter carried a study of the prophetic ministry of Daniel, showing its relevance to the religious scene of our day. Here is that series of articles.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past few weeks, the book of Daniel has become a treasure-house to me. It's not something I can readily explain, but it is something that I must share with you.

There are, as you might expect, several ways that Daniel's work is viewed:

"It's a good book, but it's all past and irrelevant to our situation today."

"Frankly, I don't get into Bible prophecy too much. I'm more interested in loving my neighbor."

"You need to understand: Daniel was written after the fact. Though it is beautiful Hebrew literature, Daniel is not prophecy!"

"I've tried to understand it, but can't. I guess there's just some things that were meant to be mysteries."

"Daniel? We do our best to find the "word" within Daniel, but we can't get hung up on whether every detail is literal truth."

Anathema on such views, **which are all very common!** Over a dozen times the word **understand**, often in the imperative, appears in this book. Including this final warning, unhidden in meaning:

"...none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."

Now my friend, do **you** understand the book of Daniel? Isn't it about time you dug in and tried? I'll dig in with you. And although no one claims inerrancy in the following exposition, many hours of searching and prayer have brought me this far. I am confident that more searching and more prayer will bring even greater depths of understanding, but such as I have I give unto you...

My underlying assumption in reading this book is that it is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable! Every word of Daniel was given by the Holy Spirit. Every prophecy was given **before** the fact, specifically in the 500's and 600's B.C.

But why talk of Daniel in this newsletter, that is committed to telling the story of "Babylon"? I believe that Daniel gives us keys to the Mystery found nowhere else in Scripture.

I will not be discussing the historical portions of Daniel, except where background is needed. Rather I will focus on the prophecies, all of which number seven:

1) Nebuchadnezzar's vision of Gentile history, chapter 2:29-45.

2) Nebuchadnezzar's vision of his own destiny, chapter 4:4-33.

3) The handwriting on the wall, chapter 5:18-30.

4) The four beasts, Gentile history lesson repeated, chapter 7:1-27.

5) The ram and the male goat, more specific history of Daniel's time and the future, chapter 8:1-26.

6) The seventy weeks of Jewish history, chapter 9:20-27.

7) Persia, Greece, and an end-time king, chapters 10:18 through 12:13.

THE GREAT STATUE, chapter 2

Shall we begin? Daniel was brought to Babylon as his people were attacked and plundered by a newly-revived Babylonian Empire in the early 600's before Christ. He and other Jewish young men were brought to a special training course

and given favor in the Babylonian kingdom. He kept his faith in the true God, and we see throughout the book how he won the respect of peers and kings through this difficult experience, which lasted his entire life! He is aged 16 as the book opens. But more like 90 when it closes. Daniel spends his entire adult life as a prisoner in Babylon.

The first prophecy of the book is not from Daniel but from his “supervisor”, the great king Nebuchadnezzar, who seems to have had a heart that God was able to touch from time to time. One night he was unable to sleep, thinking of his future, and what things would be like then...we’ve all had nights like that?

When he finally dozed off, God gave him a vision of a giant statue whose various body parts were differing elements. Daniel, after consulting with God, not only tells Nebuchadnezzar what he dreamed, but exactly what each body part means. It is important that we listen in on this description of world history:

The head of the statue was gold, and stood for the superior wealth and majesty of the present king and kingdom, Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon.

As the human body becomes two parts at the arms and chest, so history will take such a division, Daniel sees next. The Medes and the Persians were two arms of the same world power, and their predicted rule is recorded at the end of this same book of Daniel!

Then the body comes back together in the “belly and sides.” So history reunites under Greece. No Bible-believing scholars disagree with these facts, nor that the fourth kingdom was to be Rome.

But we must look closer at the fourth kingdom, as the Holy Spirit directs Daniel to do. It is to be known for its strength, if not its *brutality*. Rome was. It was to parallel the human figure in that it would be two parts. Rome was, east and west. It was to be the longest part of history, as legs are the longest part of the body. Rome was...excuse me, Rome *is*.

Rome is the *last kingdom on earth* until the “feet and toes.” Again perfectly paralleling the human body, the “legs” of history will flow into the “feet” of history. But in Daniel’s man, the strength -not the identity - of the kingdom is changed in the final disposition of that people.

Following that end-time amalgamation of kings (that don’t seem to mix too well), the God of Heaven sets up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, *while in the process of destroying these other kingdoms!*

So Daniel tells us that Jesus’ ride into Jerusalem, his resurrection, his coming in the form of the Spirit on Pentecost are *not* to be construed as the “kingdom” that is to come. Daniel sees here an *earthly* manifestation of the Kingdom that *begins* in the hearts of men during the years of the Church, and is brought into being *only* when all others are removed.

Also we learn from Daniel that from the end of the Grecian Empire until the end-time manifestation of Rome as a tenation confederation (still future), only the fourth kingdom reigns! *All of Christian history is likewise Roman history!* Yes, there was a “decline and fall of the Roman Empire,” but *never a death!* Rome lives! At this hour 1 out of every 5 people on earth is directly controlled by her. Millions more feel her indirect influences.

In the 50’s, the 10-nation confederation we now call the common market, or “The United States of Europe,” began to surface. Yes, “12” is the number now. And yes, the “Eastern” Empire is not fully represented. Give them time. They will line up to God’s Word when it is finished.

Oh yes. The treaty that put the common market together? You’re way ahead of me. Yes, it was signed in Rome. The nations in the original mix? Right again: all Roman Catholic-dominated countries, reminding one of the old “Holy” Roman Empire.

THE COMING KINGDOM

We’ve come only to the second chapter of Daniel, but already we need to do some serious travelling. There is a literal host of Scriptures that pick up on the “Kingdom” theme of Daniel, and strongly suggest that a figurative “spiritual” kingdom won’t fill the bill.

Of course it is clear that the present age contains Kingdom people. “The Kingdom of God is within you.” Or “among” you, if you prefer. There is an unseen realm in the world, made up of King Jesus and His personal love slaves. But the Scriptures I am about to share are adequate proof that these slaves will one day *reign* with Jesus.

Start with me in I Corinthians 15:24. After the coming of Jesus, He delivers the “kingdom” to His Father. How long after? Verse 25, when “He has put all enemies under His feet.” Including death. All things will be subject to Jesus. Are they now? The companion verse, Hebrews 2:8 says no... “now we do not see all things put under Him.” But we shall! Oh, we shall!

Turn to Revelation 20:verses 1-6. In those 6 verses you will see the phrase “thousand years” used 5 times! During that period, Satan is bound, and the believers are given rule and priesthood with Christ over the entire earth! Sounds to me like a literal Kingdom, a literal fulfillment of that which the prophets had seen hundreds of years before.

Like in Isaiah 2. (I am abbreviating) “In the latter days, the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it. Out of Zion will go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. *He shall judge between the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples.*”

That’s not happening today.

Other passages tell of longer lives, a cleaner atmosphere, brighter light, and other very material details. The Jews believed all this so much that the coming of a suffering servant -though also foretold by Isaiah- confused them. They expected that literal kingdom right up to the time of the ascension. And Jesus never denied they would have it. He merely let them know

that their timing was wrong. (Acts 1:6-7,2:30 ff)

THE “GAP”

One problem they were having was one which the prophets obviously had too. The Holy Spirit, though giving perfectly true statements to His men, did not inform them of the huge period of time between some of these prophecies. We’ve come to know this as the “gap” today. And since this is not a Biblical word, the idea has fallen into disrepute. You will see from the following Scriptures, though, that the gap -or call it what you like - is the only way to explain some prophetic statements. Listen carefully, now!

Isaiah9:6-7...Unto us a child is born. (First Coming)...and the government shall be upon His shoulder! (Second Coming). Look as you will, you will not see Jesus ruling this planet in Bible days or in any period thereafter. Satan is called, for now, “The prince of this world...” The corrupt condition of things is clear witness to this fact.

The same thing happens in Isaiah 61:1-2. You may recall that this is the passage Jesus quoted in His first recorded lesson, Luke 4:18. “ The Spirit of the Lord God is (presently) upon Me. The Lord has anointed Me to preach (now) good tidings to the poor...to heal (now) the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty (now) to the captives, and the opening of the prison (now) to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Isaiah doesn’t stop there. Jesus does! For the next phrase, “the day of vengeance of our God,” is still future. Another gap! The prophet didn’t see it, the readers couldn’t have known. But Jesus knew.

Isaiah is not the only “gap” minded prophet. Turn to Zechariah 9:9-10... “Rejoice, Zion! Your King is coming to you...lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey...” Undoubtedly the first coming of Jesus. But read on.

“He shall speak peace to the nations. His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.” It takes a whole lot of stretchin’ to say that that verse has already taken place. It takes in fact what is called “eisogesis” . That word means that a person has a pet doctrine and he brings it to the Bible with him every time he opens the Book. This as opposed to *exegesis*, which is letting the Bible speak for itself.

I have been listening lately to other interpretations of prophecy that would allow me to believe that Rome is the antichrist. The Reformers believed it, and many since have, and frankly it would make things a lot easier if the Bible could be made to say it. But, as in several other things the Reformers came up with, they were wrong . It’s clear that Rome is Babylon, and a type of antichrist, but too much twisting has to take place to make the beast and the one on its back to be the same person. To make the beast and the false prophet the same institution. To say that the one burned and the one burning is all the same... well, I’ve digressed.

I was saying that the prophets didn’t see things in the same time frame we are able to see them now. Ephesians 3:4 and 5 speaks of a “mystery which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men...that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs...”

That’s what they didn’t see. The Gentile domination of the things of God in these past 2000 years. They saw lowly Jesus and King Jesus, but not the Jesus who would come back to His followers vicariously, in the Holy Spirit, to call out a people from the *Gentiles!*

We need to understand that Daniel had this same mindset from the Spirit, when we get to the 70-weeks prophecy. He saw the beginning and the ending of things Jewish , but not a whole lot more. We are thankful that God revealed to the Gentile Nebuchadnezzar at least a little of how we and the Roman Church fit into the puzzle. But we can’t make Daniel say more than he did.

In Daniel 2:44, he says that in the days of the final manifestation of the Roman Empire , which rises even in our generation, God will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed, or left to someone else. The kingdoms of this world will at that time become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. What a glorious day that will be.

note: One thing that keeps Protestants from talking about the “Kingdom” is the fact that “Jehovah’s Witnesses” and other heretics do. But don’t let them steal from us one of the most joyous messages we have at this time: ***The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand... He shall reign forever and ever...and they(believers) shall reign with Him!***

The Four Beasts (chapter 7)

Daniel, chapters 7 through 12, are pure prophecy. Let’s begin with chapter 7, verse 1:

We are in the latter days of the Babylonian kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar is off the scene, Daniel is in his 80’s. In a windy stormy vision, Daniel sees four very diverse creatures rising from the Mediterranean (Great) Sea. *All powers that have ruled the world have been connected to this comparatively small body of water.* Revelation 13 records a similar scene.

Some have tried to indicate that these four beasts rule contemporaneously, and thus are different from the body parts mentioned in chapter two. I believe historical progression can be proved , but the other connections to chapter two and chapter 8 are obvious.

The first animal is a winged lion. Such a creature was visible in statue form outside the palace of Babylon. The wings were plucked. This seems to refer to Nebuchadnezzar’s humiliation, already recorded. It becomes a man. Nebuchadnezzar’s

restoration.

Why a repeat? Repetition is one of God's way of confirming His truths to us, as in the dreams of Pharaoh interpreted by Joseph, and given that very explanation. (Genesis 41:25)

Also, there are details that can be given in one picture that cannot be given in another. This will become obvious when we come again to the fourth kingdom. Both pictures are true, but both are not readily usable as teaching aids.

The second animal is like a bear. Note it is raised up on one side. The Medo-Persian Empire had two sides, Media, and Persia. But Medo-Persia was not standing on its feet or lying on its back. It was a lopsided affair, dominated by Persia. Perfect picture!

Then comes the leopard. Would you believe, a *flying leopard*? As though a leopard itself cannot depict the ultimate in speed! Whatever it is, it moves more quickly than any creature before or after it. A perfect representation of Alexander the Great, who by the age of 33 had conquered his known world. He then grew bored, sick, and died. But the kingdom of Greece did not die. His four generals took over the four divisions of his kingdom. Thus does the Spirit signify four "heads" on this beast.

Let's take a quick trip to verse 19: Daniel is filled with questions. Not about beasts one two or three. He had seen all this before, and had even lived through the first one! (The head of gold, and the dying embers of the winged eagle were still alive in his day!) No, he wanted to understand the *fourth* kingdom, because of all the details not given before!

It is also interesting to move ahead for a minute to chapter eight, where Medo-Persia is pictured as a ram with *two horns*. First two arms, then two sides, now two horns. Greece is now a flying male goat. In chapter seven Greece was a flying leopard. I am so grateful to the Lord for having given us clear interpretations of Daniel eight. It is hard telling what "prophecy experts" would have done with these two creatures!

One more internal proof that chapters two and seven refer to the same progression of history is the way events unfold in both chapters. Four kingdoms, judgment, and the eternal kingdom of God, all come in rapid succession, giving us a panoramic view of history from Daniel's day until well beyond our own.

Yet another evidence of correlation is the reference to *iron* in the fourth animal, referring us back to the iron of the fourth section of the statue. Still another is the presence of *ten horns*, reminding us of the *ten toes*.

The Fourth Beast

Let's follow Daniel in our desire to know more about this fourth beast, an unnamed indescribable monster, with ten horns, and then...

...a little horn. We will see this same phrase in chapter eight. This is a new detail. The ten toes imagery will not allow for such talk, but there is during the fourth beast period a little "nobody" who arises to be a big somebody.

He starts out by overpowering three of the original horns. We are told that he speaks high and mighty words against everything and everyone. He has the eyes of a man. This clue helps throw the weight of identification to an individual rather than a kingdom. Animals, and horns, can go either way. The first animal was a man, Nebuchadnezzar. The second animal was a kingdom. The third animal was Alexander, but later his four generals. The other horns are probably nations that form a confederation in the end time. Some are saying that ten world divisions are in mind. But all must conclude that the ten come from the one (or two divisions of the) Roman Empire, for Rome begins when Greece ends. That's history.

So this little horn could have been a man or a kingdom. The "eyes" thing says, man! We later see this "man" given to the burning flame (verse 11) bringing us to the book of Revelation, and God's judgment on beast and false prophet, two men!

Oh yes, men and their followers are inseparable, and a dual meaning may be possible, but let's not lose sight of the primary meaning indicated here. I believe he is "the man of sin." I believe that the Apostle Paul was using Daniel imagery when he made his denunciation of same to the Thessalonians.

Verse 12 has caused some to believe that all the kingdoms must occur at the same time in history. In the present love of label-making among the brethren, I will call these theologians "contemporaneans." I respectfully disagree, reminding us that the descendants of the Babylonians, and the descendants of the Persians, and the descendants of the Greeks, are all with us today. Their dominion has been taken away, and will be further lessened by the reign of Messiah, but their part as *subjects* in the millennial kingdom is hereby granted.

Daniel was grieved by what he saw. He did not take a vision from God lightly, nor should we. He was so troubled he got an answer, recorded in verses 17ff.

Note that verse 17 has been translated in a continuing present in some versions, as the New King James. There is a Hebrew basis for this, and an obvious need for the future not to be demanded, as in many translations. Even if the future is used, the fact that Daniel was still living in that Kingdom, (and thus a portion of it was still future) added to the weight of evidence I have already stated, alleviates the problem.

One other item I would like to note: There are saints mentioned in verse 21. Now why not pretend for a moment that you never heard the word "rapture." No one ever came to your church or college and presented this new idea. Would you believe from reading Daniel that you would escape the ultimate victory of this "little horn" over you? Wouldn't you be planning for martyrdom instead of a trip out? Some day I must discuss this more. For now, we go with the text. Saints are there. No definition of saints. No need for such. Saints meet the man of sin, and die.

The Rapture

Telling what you believe to be the truth about Scripture is not the way to win friends and influence people. Because my timetable of events did not agree with that of one of my readers, he asked that his name be taken off our mailing list. Please folks, just compare what I am saying to the Word. If it doesn't seem to be agreeable, and you feel so led, write your letter of correction. But there's no need to condemn me, hate me, or write me off as a brother, simply because our theology is 7 years apart!

For the record, I do believe in a "rapture", though I don't call it that, since the Bible doesn't. It seems to me that Matthew 24 says that Jesus, the one Jesus, will gather together His elect, the one elect, from the four winds of heaven, *after* the greatest tribulation the world has ever known. No other Scripture gives the timetable so clearly. All other passages need to be "explained". Not this one.

But we need to be discussing "the little horn," so let's move on.

The Little Horn (chapter 8)

The vision of Daniel 8 occurs during the reign of Belshazzar, the final Babylonian king recorded in Scripture. Daniel is in his 80's.

First he sees a 2-horned ram, with one horn higher, consistent with the bear on *one side*, and the 2-armed statue, found in the previous prophecies. There is a consistency in this book that begins to surface the more it is read. This is Medo-Persia, according to verse 20.

From the west comes a male goat, flying across the earth! Greece is west of Persia. Verse 21 confirms that this is Greece. And there is a correspondence between this vision and the "beast" vision, where speed is again attributed to this creature in the picture of a flying leopard. Consistent.

The goat annihilates the ram. Greece follows Medo-Persia as world-ruler. The goat grows. Alexander conquers the world. The great horn is broken, replaced by four horns. Alexander dies, and his kingdom is given to his four generals.

Are you still awake? I mean, you've heard all this before. Are you prepared for verse 9? Have you considered the significance of the Medo-Persian & Greek prophecies, and why the Holy Spirit wanted this passed on down to the last generation? Hang on:

"*Out of one of them came a little horn...*" One of what? One of the four divisions of Alexander's kingdom. And what were they? Glad you asked! Your old history book will tell you that the four divisions were: Bithynia-Thrace(modern Turkey) to General Lysimachus; Macedonia-Greece to General Cassander; Syria-Babylon to General Seleucus; Egypt-Palestine-Arabia, to General Ptolemy.

Out of one of these areas, and from nowhere else on earth, will come the "little horn". Look not for a Russian, an American, an African, a Frenchman, a Spaniard...not even an Italian! He comes from within the boundaries of the old Greek Empire.

Not so hard to believe is it, with the kind of things we're seeing in the Middle East, and in old Yugoslavia?

Can we narrow it down even more? Perhaps. Read on in verse 9: This little horn "grows." He gets stronger. His kingdom or influence extends toward the "south". Thus he doesn't come from the "south." Later the king of the "south" can be identified as Ptolemy of *Egypt*. So he's not from the Egypt side of the kingdom. And toward the "east". Not from Babylon-Syria? And toward the "*Glorious Land*." (That's God's feelings about Israel coming out.) Not from Israel? That leaves Macedonia-Greece, or Turkey?

Verse 10 shows us more of the identity of this man (we can call it a man if we can call the other 4 horns generals, and the large horn Alexander! Though, yes, they all represent kingdoms at the same time. Kings need kingdoms)

He begins to exalt himself in a spiritual way. Verse 24 says that his power will not be from himself. He will rise against Jesus himself, but shall be broken. This spiritual nature of the little horn is borne out by Paul in II Thessalonians, a man of sin who sits in the temple of God calling himself God. John in the Revelation traces his history to the lake of fire. The Holy Spirit gives a consistent and clear picture of this man. I do not see how he could be called an "institution." I do not see how all this imagery can be interpreted as many men. Let us agree with Scripture that there is one *man of sin*, but **many antichrists**, that is, many who deny Christ His rightful place.

Verses 13-14 are meant to once more grab the attention of would-be drowsers. Just WHEN is all this going to take place, and for HOW LONG? The answer is as clear as the question: A period of more than 6 years, that will take place in the "appointed time", in the "time of the end."

Why the struggle against these words? Why the accusations of otherwise great men of God in our day that to believe in a future antichrist and to believe in a one-man fulfillment of Bible prophecy is to be a Catholic and a Jesuit?!

(A dear reader assured me recently that he knows I am not a Jesuit. They are tricky, and sneaky, says he, but I show my colors very obviously. Thanks?)

The little horn, the man of sin, the coming world ruler, is also, I believe, outlined in the latter portion of chapter 11, but we will discuss that when we come to it.

This tyrant will prosper greatly. Prosperity of an earthly sort is not now a sign of one's togetherness with God. He will prosper to the point of being victorious over "mighty" people, that is, the powerful, the politicians, the military geniuses...

maybe even the sports heroes?

But more, he shall prosper over “the holy people.” Now, everyone agrees that there will be “holy people” in the tribulation. (This passage does parallel with the foretold “tribulation” passages.) But there’s a major disagreement about *who* these holy people are.

Those who read pre-trib rapture into the text must find *another* “holy people,” since Christians are “gone.” They see them in the 144,000 Jews sealed in the book of Revelation. Problem. Those holy Jews are kept by a miraculous work of God from the ravages of the Enemy. Jesus told Jews living in that day and in that place, to flee. They will be hidden by God, not devoured by the beast.

Following the intro of the 144,000 in Revelation 7 is the unveiling of an innumerable company of saints. They’re from every tribe. They’re in Heaven. They have white robes. Where are they from? The great tribulation! How did they get there? Back to chapter 6, verses 10-11. Martyrdom, *not rapture!* They die, they’re given a white robe, they go to glory to wait for their brothers who are **STILL IN THE TRIBULATION!**

Are these not the “holy people” seen by Daniel 2600 years ago? Have there not been in every generation those men and women and children who laid down their lives for Jesus Christ? Shall there not be one last harvest of martyrs? Are they under the curse and “wrath of God” because they live in this last time? Not so! Blessings are pronounced on them!

I have been called to be a martyr, as have you. I have not been called to be *judged*, and I shall not be. There need not be a contradiction in these two concepts. First the man of sin, the little horn, “wears out the saints of the Most High”...then God wears *him* out, and judges the planet! Perhaps those ones of us still here when Jesus comes will be the ones who endured the extra 45 days...but that’s another chapter of Daniel!

The Seventy Sevens

You’ve probably met all three kinds of Christians, too. First there’s the baby, to whom all truths are equal, and therefore unimportant. What matters to the baby is a feeling of well-being. Give me my milk, my mom, my pleasant feelings.

*Then there’s the fighter. The “teenager” if you will. He’s got the Word, at least in portions. In fact he has large portions of some Word, and no portions of others. He’s a denominationalist. He’s locked into a position, based on a solid understanding of **some Scripture**, with no desire to integrate the **rest of Scripture** into his theology. A “know-it-all.”*

*Finally is the adult. He’s not willing to cling to one portion of the Word at the expense of another. He wants the **whole** counsel of God.*

*Wanting to be this third person, I approach my continuing exposition of Daniel with fear and trembling. I’ve heard from some locked-in people, and I tend to be of the teen-age sort myself, but with Daniel, which lends itself to more than one possible interpretation in places, it is dangerous to lock in. We must keep in mind **everything** God has said about the end times.*

If I call it wrong, or seem too open in places, forgive me. I’m ready to grow. If I can’t be a part of your “group”, well, that’s OK too!

Daniel 9 introduces us to an interceding Daniel and an intervening Gabriel. 23 verses are given to setting the stage for the 4-verse prophecy. This must be important. It’s especially important if we happen to be living in the days they indicated.

I think we can assume from verse 23 that the understanding of this passage is reserved for those who have a love relationship with God and His people. This is not the place for a wrestling match with the brothers. Here is God’s love message to His beloved.

Let’s begin: Seventy weeks are almost universally understood to be seventy “sevens” as the Hebrew points out. (are we still united? Praise God!)

With the second line comes the first matter of concern. Who are “your people.”?(and where is the holy city?) I’m not prepared to “go off” here. For now it is sufficient to point out that many see in this passage a prophecy involving only *Daniel’s people, the Jews*. Others would say that all God’s people are a part of spiritual Israel, thus the church is envisioned here too.

Does it matter? Yes! But the wording itself, in this verse alone, *proves nothing!* No conclusions yet, please. Minds open. Can we go on?

So, 70 sevens, that’s 490 years, are determined upon the people of God in general, or the Jewish people in particular. What will happen during those 490 years? The rest of verse 24 tells us that transgression and sin will be “finished,” or “ended”. Reconciliation for this sin will be accomplished. Everlasting righteousness brought in. Vision and prophecy sealed. The Most Holy anointed.

A tall order for a short period of time. Did it happen? I’m going to be most unsatisfying once more and point out two very valid ways of looking at this. (Understand, one of these ways is **WRONG**, but certainly understandable!)

We could say that Jesus fulfilled every one of these things, in the first century. Thus the entire prophecy is past and essentially means nothing for us today. Calvary finished sin, reconciled man to God. Jesus was “anointed” at His baptism, or you can look for this anointing at Pentecost. All the prophecies about Jesus were thus “sealed”. End of story. Let’s study chapter 10.

Or, and I confess I lean this way, we can look around at a sin-filled world, even at Christians who sin, Jews who sin, and say, maybe in legal terms sin was dealt a heavy blow, but sin is still with us. Everlasting righteousness will come “in” when the King of righteousness, our Melchizedek, is seated on David’s throne. And even immediately after Jesus there were visions and prophecies, the last inspired one being from the apostle John. It just seems there is more to come.

Verse 25 begins the sequence of events. First a command will be given to go back and rebuild Jerusalem. Such a

command was given on March 14, 445 BC. Other commands to rebuild are recorded, but they do not mention the *city* as does this one. Next, the walls of Jerusalem will be rebuilt. Then Messiah will come. Then Messiah will be cut off. Then Jerusalem will be destroyed again. Then a covenant is confirmed. Then the sacrifices and offerings will be ended by someone. Then comes the abomination of desolation. Then comes a consummation, poured on the desolate.

And from beginning to end, notice the wording, there will be 70 periods of seven years each. 70 sevens. We like to say 490 years, because that's the time period involved. But the Holy Spirit told us to look for groupings!

Notice that *three separate groupings* are delineated besides the 70: Grouping one, a period of seven "sevens", or 49 years. From 445 BC until 396 BC, says the Spirit, is the time allotted for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, in troublous times. This time of trouble is recorded for us by Nehemiah!

Grouping two is a period of sixty-two "sevens", or 434 years. Counting 434 years from 396 BC brings us to an adult Christ, around 30 AD. Some could pinpoint it even to his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Most have no trouble so far. But what happens now? Can we stay consistent? We've only got 69 weeks, and we need 70. There are two things we can do. One thing makes Scriptural sense, but not necessarily logical sense. The other makes no sense at all. (But there's the teenager in me!)

First, we can say that the 70th week is still future. We can say that during that 70th week, the coming man of sin makes an agreement with the Jewish nation (miraculously, there IS a Jewish nation today, though all had written literal Israel off! Miraculously there ARE world leaders, including the POPE, trying to make deals with Israel even now!), even offering it the temple mount, so that it can rebuild its temple and start its sacrifices (miraculously all these plans are underway at this moment!). We can say that he goes back on his deal three and a half years later, as the man of sin tolerates no religion that does not center on his own person. We can compare "bring an end to sacrifice and offering" of verse 27 to chapter 8:11's description of the (definitely end time) "little horn." We can take a look at Revelation's bowl judgments, described as being "poured out", and realize Daniel is discussing end times.

We're left only with the question of why the "break" in the action. And we're led back to Isaiah and other prophets who likewise talked of the first and second comings of Christ in one breath, as though they practically were contemporaneous events. And we consult brother Paul who reminds us that the prophets did not know all the mysteries that would be revealed, for example the entire Jew/Gentile church concept!

It begins to make "sense" in a Biblical way, does it not? But make sense of this:

If 483 years are fulfilled at about AD 30, and we must not break up the 490 year period (though the Spirit does,) we must stop our reckoning at the inconspicuous year of AD 37. We must assume that in that seven year period came the destruction of Jerusalem (mentioned in Daniel 9:26), the making and breaking of a covenant (we can say Jesus did that, but did it take Him 7 years?), the abomination of desolation (which Jesus called still future in His teachings), leading up to a "consummation". Just doesn't fit! And all of this we must do with the knowledge that the Book of Revelation is filled with images of a three and one half year period *yet to come*... This corresponds to the "middle of the week" statement of Daniel.

No, it seems to me that seven years of very "Jewish" history are in our future.

Meanwhile, according to Daniel, something is to take place *after* the 483 years (not during) but *before* the final 7 years: Messiah is to be "cut off," but not for Himself. No, and not for only the Jewish people, thus not a part of the 490 years! Not only that, in direct response to Messiah's being cut off, *Jerusalem and the temple are cut off* by the Roman people (hence a part of the "times of the Gentiles" and not included in the 490 years!)

Until the end, then, desolations are determined. And what better word describes Jewish history from then until now but desolation? Her final desolation will be signalled by a treaty, confirmed by "the prince who will come." A seven-year agreement, broken in about half that time, and ushering in the greatest tribulation the world has ever known.

At the end of those seven years, (which also end the "70 weeks", God will set up a kingdom that shall never end. We call it the millennium, the thousand-year reign.

The Final Prophecy of Daniel

Some may not understand that chapters 10, 11, and 12 of Daniel are all one event. That's especially helpful to keep in mind when dealing with the "break", which is no break, between chapters 11 and 12.

When Daniel is given the vision, it is so weighty that he prays and fasts from pleasant food for 3 weeks. There follows a vision of a heavenly messenger, who explains things for him. Interesting to note here is that the description given of the Messenger fits exactly the description of *Christ* given in the Book of Revelation!

He tells Daniel of the great interference He encountered on His way to visit Daniel, and of His associations with Michael. (This ought to lay to rest the wierd idea that Jesus and Michael are one. Ought to, but of course won't.)

For those who may be distressed about the idea of a Christ who does not seem to be all powerful, we must remember that if Christ's power were at any moment used to its max, annihilation would be in order for all. He is working even now under great restraint, resisting this power here, and that power there, to fulfil all the Father's purposes in the right time. Such exquisite patience and self-control.

Once more "your people", Israel, are in the focus of the coming prophecy, v. 14, and a message that is meant to include a much later time.

Daniel is overwhelmed by the vision, then comforted in tones of one we have come to know as the Comforter, but in the form of a man whom Daniel addresses as "lord" without receiving a rebuke.

The Messenger (whether a second one, or the same one, in vs. 18 ff) once more refers to the heavenly struggle, centering around "Persia", today Iran-Iraq. Persia is the chest/arms in the statue, and the bear on its side in the animal prophecy. It is now the starting point of the prophecy, instead of being in 2nd place, due to the fact that Babylon has at the time of this prophecy, been defeated, and we are in the 3rd year of Cyrus, king of Persia.

Chapter 11 is where the explanation of Daniel's vision begins, as explained to him by the heavenly Messenger. It is a true accounting of history, but of course told in advance. Thus, prophecy. Here is what actually took place in history in startling fulfillment of every word: (Please open your Bible to Daniel 11:2. I use *Halley's Bible Handbook* as my history source)

v. 2: Cyrus, Cambyses, Darius Hystaspes are the three kings, with Xerxes being the fourth.

v.3: Alexander

v.4: His 4 generals, not his family, inherited his kingdom, and divided it. The divisions were, essentially, Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt.

v.5 the south is Egypt, and Ptolemy I the king. His prince was Seleucus Nicator, who became king of Syria, greater than Ptolemy. Seleucid kings become the "king of the north."

v.6 daughter of Ptolemy is Berenice. She marries Antiochus II, and is murdered.

v.7-8 the "shoot" is Ptolemy III, who to avenge her death invades Syria and wins a great victory.

v.9-13. Sons Seleucus III and Antiochus III. The latter defeated by Ptolemy IV, but returns with great army against Egypt.

v.14. Jews help Antiochus in this effort.

v.15-16 Antiochus victor over Ptolemy & Egypt. Also over Palestine.

v. 17 Antiochus gives his daughter Cleopatra in marriage alliance to Ptolemy V. It backfires, and she stands with her husband.

v. 18-19 Antiochus invades Asia Minor/Greece, but defeated by Rome, Magnesia, 190 BC. Goes home and is slain.

Thus the Lord brings Daniel and us through over 300 years of history in a short time. Why? I believe this background is being laid so that we might in these days trace the very ancestry and part of the world where end-time prophecy will be played out. The text now introduces a "contemptible" person. And though history has already provided this man, we get a few more clues about the final man of sin.

vs21-35-Antiochus Epiphanes fits this man in his vileness, his deceitfulness. He pretends to be the friend of Ptolemy, but is his sworn enemy. He attacks Jerusalem, killing, capturing, and selling Jews into slavery. Invades Egypt again, forced by Rome to stop, so he vents his anger on Jerusalem, desecrating the temple (thus the abomination that makes desolate...but Jesus called it future in his day.) and taking away the daily sacrifices.

He is helped by apostate Jews, and opposed by the heroic Maccabean brothers.

Though he is not the little horn, he is a true picture of same. When the little horn does his work, history will be finished. But it will be a similar work. World conquest. Hatred of Israel. Heart moved against holy covenant. Sacrifices taken away. Abomination that makes desolate (antichrist HIMSELF will sit in the temple, even as antichrists through history have been sitting in the temple known as the church!).

Clear prophecy with clear fulfillments. So far. But something happens, say Halley and other scholars, in verse 36. The water is muddied.

v.36 "The King" is mentioned again, but it is not clear what king is being discussed. He is blasphemous. He prospers in the very end times, until the wrath of God has been poured out.

v.37 He is a single man, perhaps homosexual. He rejects his people's religion. He grows rich and powerful.

v. 40. He is attacked by the king of the south AND the king of the north. (Thus he is not either of those, as was Antiochus!).

v.41ff His path of destruction takes him to the Holy Land. He makes his glorious headquarters there, but comes to an inglorious end.

The story does NOT end there. Chapter 12 continues, AT THAT TIME (thus this king is an END-TIME king!) is the resurrection, FOLLOWING a great period of tribulation!

Daniel is here instructed to seal these things up til the time of the end. How the Holy Spirit has worked with Daniel in this "sealing" is evident by the gross ignorance of the Book of Daniel until our own day, when so many of God's people are receiving the message.

The final segment of prophecy involves again the three and a half year period given as a limit to the happenings described. An additional 45 days is added on as a special blessing for those who will probably be asked to endure even more horrors than the "normal" tribulation saints.

What a glorious book! It becomes more clear, more obvious, with every reading. I encourage every brother and sister to dig in again. If I have erred in interpretation, show me from Scripture and history. If you have, be corrected. Let us strive to be knowing His perfect will in all things. Our *visible* unity can only come about as we are in perfect agreement on God's Word. Our actual unity is of course guaranteed by His Spirit!

*For a thrilling audible exposition of these wonderful truths, write to **Grace To You, PO Box 4000, Panorama City, CA, 91412**. Teacher **John MacArthur** put together this 8-tape series, called "The Future of Israel" quite a few years back. I still reserve the right to question a pre-tribulation rapture for believers, but other than that commend to you this dynamic package!*

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