

City and Sanctuary Destroyed

Background

It is now time to look into the issue of the destruction of the City and the Sanctuary. Daniel 9:26 says that “the people of the ruler will destroy the city.” As we studied Daniel 9:25, we understood that the Hebrew word for “ruler” or “Prince” refers to the “Anointed One,” which is the Messiah. Therefore, the “people” of the ruler must refer to Daniel’s people, God’s Old Covenant people, Daniel 9:26:

*After the sixty-two “sevens,” the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. **The people of the ruler** who will come will **destroy the city and the sanctuary**. **The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.** (NIV)*

Now you might say, “But it was not Daniel’s people who destroyed Jerusalem – it was the Romans!” That is very true! But consider the following. In Daniel 9:24 we read that a total of 490 years was given to the Jews and their holy city to “finish transgression, to put an end to sin,” etc. “The city” is a symbol that primarily refers to Jerusalem. It also includes the House of Judah. Since a city cannot “sin” or put an end to sin, it of course refers to the people in it. The 490 years was the extended period of grace that God gave Daniel’s people.

If Daniel’s people would not put an end to their sin, they would lose their status as God’s chosen nation. Since this repentance did not take place, Jerusalem ceased to be the chosen city of God when Jesus died on the cross in 31 A.D. As a consequence the favored status of Daniel’s people as God’s chosen nation was also taken away. This was the reason for the destruction of the city and the sanctuary. Jesus confirmed this in Luke 19:41-44:

*As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. **They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God’s coming to you.**” (NIV)*

As a nation the Israelites “did not recognize the time of God’s coming.” In other words; they did not accept the Messiah. Therefore, Jerusalem was destroyed because of their own choices. Jesus foretold that the Roman army would “not leave one stone on another.” Thus, the consummation of Jesus’ prophecy in Luke 19:41-44 was literally fulfilled in 70 A.D. when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Sanctuary.

The next sentence in Daniel 9:26 tells us that “the end will come like a flood.” If something comes like a flood it usually means it comes suddenly. According to some dictionaries the word for “flood,” figuratively also refers to “judgment.”

The phrase “war will continue until the end,” will be studied in detail when we come to Daniel 10-12. It is a very interesting study but too long for this newsletter.

Confirm a Covenant

Many accused Jesus of “breaking” rules and regulations. He was accused of breaking the Sabbath which He actually never did. He never broke the 4th Commandment, but He certainly broke the traditions of men! The reason is obvious. The traditions of men had become a higher authority than the Law itself. Jesus never sinned,

and consequently never broke the Ten Commandments. If He would have sinned, He could not be the perfect sacrifice for our sins, Hebrews 4:14-15, 2 Cor. 5:21.

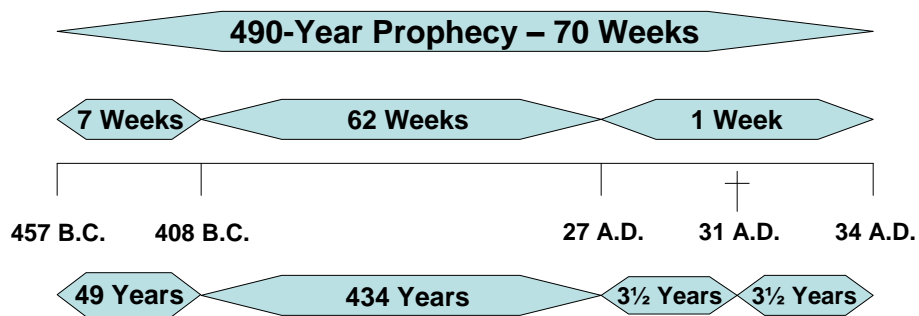
When Jesus was accused of breaking the law which in fact was traditions of men, He always lifted up the true meaning of the Word. According to Jesus, the keeping of traditions of men is only a superficial ritual. Furthermore, Jesus was often accused of blaspheming God. But, He never did! He made it very clear that everything He did came from the Father. Jesus and the Father were one! He was fully obedient to His Father! The reason I bring this up is because of the next issue. Listen to why Jesus came as the Messiah, Matthew 5:17:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. (NIV)

That was His mission! Not to break the Commandments, the Covenant, or the prophecies – but to fulfill them. I am certainly glad that Jesus mentioned the “Prophets” in this list and I am convinced that Daniel was in His mind. Let us read how the prophecy clearly says what the Messiah would do, Daniel 9:27:

He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven.” In the middle of the “seven” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him. (NIV)

The NIV puts brackets around [of the temple]. If the “Anointed One” in 9:26 is the Messiah, then “he” in 9:27 must refer to the Messiah as well. In that case, the Messiah came to confirm the Covenant with His people during the last seven years of the 490-year prophecy. His hope was that many would receive Him. Please look at the chart shown below.



Sacrifice and Offerings

With this chart the next phrase is easy to understand. “In the middle of the “seven” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering.” The middle of the last seven years is 31 A.D. when Christ died on the cross. It truly makes sense! The perfect Lamb was slain on the cross “once for all” and no more sacrifices were needed, Hebrews 9:12. The fact is, however, that the people continued to sacrifice until 70 A.D. when the temple was destroyed. But that was not according to God’s plan.

The curtain between the Holy and the Most Holy was torn from top to bottom when Jesus died on the cross, Matthew 27:51. That is a strong indication that the final atonement for mankind was done! But what happened in the Temple after Jesus' death on the cross? There are Jewish writings where Rabbis give some very interesting details regarding this. I will only mention one here.

On the Day of Atonement a crimson-colored strap was tied between the two horns of the bullock. If the strap changed color and became white, it signified that God had forgiven their sin. The strap normally turned white on this day. However, after Christ's death until the destruction of the temple, this crimson-colored strap *never* turned white. It remained red.¹ In other words, *after* the cross God did not accept this type of sacrifice anymore! Jesus was the true Sacrifice.

Desolation Because of Rebellion

The last part of Daniel 9:27 is very much the same as Daniel 12:11. We have already concluded that it was the rebellion that caused the desolation and that desolation is the same as divorce or separation from God. We have also found that the leaders of the Old Covenant people separated themselves from God at the time of the cross.

But here is an interesting dilemma. They were divorced at the cross but according to Daniel 9:24 the end for the Old Covenant people was determined to be at *the end* of the last week, i.e. in 34 A.D. What about the last 3½ years of this prophecy, the 3½ after the cross? What role did the Old Covenant people have during this period of time? Technically they divorced themselves at the cross but the prophecy tells us that their "time" ended in 34 A.D.

The answer is that God took care of them *as* His Covenant people for another 3½ years! He did it according to His promise in Daniel 9:24. God loved them and still loves them just as much as before. The time from the cross until 34 A.D. is three and a half years or 1,260 days. Without going too deep into the book of Revelation, we will read about God's intention for the Old Covenant people during this critical time. "She" in the text below refers to the woman and is a symbol for God's Old Covenant people. Please notice God's wonderful care, Revelation 12:6:

*She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne. **The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.** (NIV)*

The Male Child, Jesus Christ, was born and later on "snatched up to God." This expression refers to His ascension. Then the "woman" fled into the "desert." The word for "desert" can also be translated to "wilderness" or "desolation." The word "fled" literally means "shun," "avoid deliberately" or "run away." All these examples imply a willful act of the *woman* and not an act of God

Now comes the marvelous statement: God prepared "a place" for her and took care of this desolate woman for another 1,260 days (3½ years). According to the 490-year promise in Daniel 9, God took care of the Israelites, even after she became desolate and divorced. The Bible emphasizes this important character of God, His taking care of His people, a second time in Revelation 12:13-14:

*When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. **The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach.** (NIV)*

¹ "The Fall Feast of Israel," Mitch and Zhava Glaser, (ISBN 0-8024-2539-9)

In this passage we see the exact same story. The same words are used. The only difference is that this passage uses 3½ times (3½ years) instead of 1,260 days. The two time periods both signify literal time and correlate perfectly. The last 3½ years of the 490-year prophecy pictures a God who cares for His people, even after they “messed up” their relationship with Him.

Wing of the Temple

The Bible prophecy continues to amaze us. There are so many expressions that need to be understood and they all reveal blessings. First, how should we understand “the wing of the temple?” This expression seems to take the price of confusion! I don’t know if you have ever seen a model of the temple in Jerusalem. I have and I have never seen a “wing of the temple.” Not only that; but this wing seems to have something to do with the phrase “set up an abomination,” which we already understood to be the acceptance of the Gentiles. Let us read the text again to get the context, Daniel 9:27:

*He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven.” In the middle of the “seven” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a **wing [of the temple]** he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until **the end that is decreed is poured out on him.** (NIV)*

(Again, the NIV added the brackets.) So what does the expression “wing of the temple” mean? I believe that God has given an explanation or an interpretation for every “mystery” in the Bible. Of course, that is a thing I cannot prove. Let’s look at the word “wing” and go to Ephesians chapter 2. In this passage Paul compares the Gentiles and the Jews and, of course, he comes to the conclusion that they both are *one* in Christ.

He starts his exegesis in Ephesians 2:11 and it continues to verse 22. He talks about the dividing wall of hostility that now has been broken down through the blood of Christ; how both Jews and Gentiles are reconciled through the cross and how the Gentiles no longer are foreigners and aliens to salvation. Then Paul summarizes the passage with these verses, Ephesians 2:20-22:

*...built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And **in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.** (NIV)*

In other words, the believing Gentiles represent a “building” that has been “joined together” with the believing Jews to become *one* “holy temple in the Lord.” That must be the “wing of the temple” that Daniel is speaking about! This means; a “wing” that wasn’t there from the beginning would at a certain time be added to God’s house. The text above speaks of an addition or adoption. Romans 11:11-24 uses similar language and Paul talks about how wild branches (the Gentiles) have been grafted into the tree that represents the kingdom of God.

Therefore, the “wing of the temple” is best understood as a symbol of the acceptance of the Gentiles. If that is the correct interpretation of the phrase “and on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination” in Daniel 9:27, we are truly in harmony with our previous study. The “wing” refers to the Gentiles that were “set up” or accepted when they were grafted into God’s Kingdom in 34 A.D.

Who Is “He”?

But who is the “he” in Daniel 9:27? This personal pronoun is mentioned several times in this verse. Let us read it again and try to understand who it refers to. I made the word “he” or “him” bold every time it shows up to make it easy for you to see. Daniel 9:27:

*He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven.” In the middle of the “seven” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing [of the temple] he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until **the end** that is decreed is poured out on **him**. (NIV)*

We have as a matter of fact already come to the conclusion that the first “He” refers to Christ since He did everything possible to confirm the covenant during the last week of this prophecy. We have also understood that “he” who put an end to sacrifice and offerings was the Messiah, when He died on the cross. He was the true Lamb that was slain!

We just have realized that Christ our Lord was the One who “set up” the Gentiles who chose to believe in Him. He made sure that they were accepted together with the faithful ones from the Old Covenant people. So, these first three times the “he” refers to the Messiah. But how should we understand the last phrase with the pronoun “him?”

The End that Is Decreed

There are several interpretations of this phrase. Many scholars do not think the last phrase refers to Jesus. Other bible versions use other expressions instead of “on him.” Here are some examples: “on the desolate,” “upon the desolator,” “on the desolate one,” “on the one who makes desolate,” etc. But – do you see it? With the interpretation that we have spoken about here, where Christ is the center and fulfillment, it truly does not matter which translation you use. They all point to Christ – to Daniel’s Messiah! The “desolate one” can also be translated the “forsaken one.” Yes, Jesus was “forsaken” as He was crucified.

A word-by-word translation of the Hebrew text of this phrase reads as follows: “even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate” (KJV). The word “consummation” means that “destruction” is poured out “on him.” That also fits to the Messiah who was slain on the cross.

The same verse mentions “the end.” It is important for us to see that this expression refers to Christ’s death on the cross. This is in harmony with our previous study of Daniel 8. “The end” in the Book of Daniel most of the time does NOT refer to Jesus’ second coming but to “the end” of Daniel’s people as God’s Old Covenant people.

We also read about a “decree” that is “poured out on him.” The word for “decreed” or “determined” as many translations put it, primarily means “to point sharply” or if taken literally, “to wound.” Tell me, was not Christ *pierced* and *wounded* for our sake on the cross? So a better translation would read; until the end when He was wounded on the cross.

Poured Out

The expression “poured out” is also significant. The word is well translated and means what it says. It is interesting to see under what circumstances it is used. If we study this phrase in the Bible, we will find that it is used when God pours out something, either good things, like His Spirit or bad things like His anger or wrath. Daniel 9:11 also uses the same expression: God’s “curses and sworn judgments” had been “poured out” on Daniel’s people.

The conclusion of the matter is that even if the expression “poured out” is non-specific in itself, it is often used to indicate God’s curse, anger or wrath. Well, you might ask, “was God’s curse or wrath really poured out on Christ?” Let us read from Galatians 3:13:

*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written:
“Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” (NIV)*

Jesus took the curse on Himself to save us from the curse that we deserve. To save us, He took upon Himself the consequences of sin that we deserve, Romans 5:9:

Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (NIV)

Yes, “God’s wrath” was “poured out on him” on the cross. Thus, Daniel’s Messiah is the fulfillment of every word, every phrase and every sentence in Daniel 9:27. The good news is that Christ took upon Himself the wrath we deserve. If Christ took *our* wrath, we will not receive it again sometime in the future!!! Consider this when you study the Book of Revelation! Whatever the Bible defines as God’s wrath – will *not* come upon His believers. Praise the Lord!

Summary

- When the last seven years of the 490-year prophecy were about to start, the Messiah or “the Anointed One” came to confirm His Covenant with His people. This time began with His baptism in 27 A.D.
- In the middle of the last seven years, in 31 A.D., Christ died on the cross to put an end to sacrifice and offerings. In reality people continued to sacrifice until 70 A.D. when the Temple was destroyed.
- The acceptance of the Gentiles was confirmed as a consequence of Christ’s death on the cross and expressed with the symbol of a wing that was added to the temple. Because of this both Jews and Gentiles are saved by God’s grace.
- The prophecies in Daniel 8 and 9 both focus on the Messiah and His first coming.

I am eager to study the last prophecy of the Book of Daniel with you in the next few newsletters. This prophecy is found in Daniel 10-12.

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