

GOD'S PLAN FOR THE AGES

A Comprehensive View of God's Great Plan from
Eternity to Eternity Illustrated with Chart

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CHAPTER TWELVE

THE EVENTS OF THE SEVENTIETH WEEK OF DANIEL

In our last lesson we saw that, in so far as God has revealed the future to us in His "Word, the next great event will be the translation of the church. The day or the hour of that event God has not revealed to us, and it behooves us to avoid all teaching which sets dates for the Lord's return.

While we have reason to believe, according to the Scriptures, that this age is rapidly drawing to a close, yet to advance human theories as to the time of the second coming of Christ is not according to the Scriptures. We do know that when the last member of the bride of Christ has been added to the church, then she will be translated, forever to be with Him. But this Church Age is a period of unmeasured interpolation upon God's plan for the nation of Israel.

Immediately after the rapture of the church the judgment seat of Christ and the marriage supper of the Lamb will take place in heaven, while on the earth the seventieth week of Daniel will run its course. We studied last time about this heavenly scene; today we want to outline the events which will transpire on earth during the brief period known to students of the prophetic Word of God as "**the seventieth week of Daniel.**"

It is impossible to make an analytical study of this period in our present series of lessons; in fact, it is our purpose here, rather, to get a bird's-eye-view of God's great plan of the ages — from the past eternity to the future eternity.

If we want a detailed study of the seventieth week of Daniel, we shall find it in the books of Daniel and Revelation. In our lesson today, however, we shall attempt only to outline the events of this darkest period of the world's history, yet to come to pass.

A glance at our chart will remind us that, from the time of Adam, there have been two lines of development in the earth:

- (1) The line of sin; and
- (2) The development of the Messianic promise.

We shall see in our lesson today that under the Antichrist, who will reign over the earth during the seventieth week of Daniel, there will be the heading up of all sin, the characteristics of which have been revealed in other dispensations. And the Messianic promise, which was fulfilled in part from the Incarnation to Calvary, and which is being fulfilled in the High Priestly work of our risen Lord, will find its complete and final fulfillment in the personal, visible, bodily return of Christ in glory — to put an end to the reign of the Antichrist, and to establish the millennial kingdom.

If men would but follow these two lines of development, as set forth in the Word of God, they would realize the awful reality of sin, and kneel at the cross of Christ, the only Saviour and Lord. But false teaching today minimizes sin, even denying its existence, thus denying also the Saviour of sinners.

The day will come when men shall see sin fully developed in the person of the Antichrist. He will be devil-possessed and devil-controlled. And unregenerate man will find out in that day that our patient God, who throughout past dispensations has sought to turn men away from sin unto Himself, will execute judgment upon a God-dishonoring, Christ-rejecting, Spirit-resisting world. His patience will have come to an end when He returns to purify the earth with His righteous judgments. It is a solemn lesson with which we have to do today!

The Prophecy Of The Seventy Weeks

As we begin to consider the events that are to take place on the earth between the translation of the church and the return of Christ in glory, with the church, to establish His kingdom, let us get clearly in mind the Bible record concerning Daniel's vision of the seventy prophetic weeks of years. In this connection, let us quote a few excerpts, adapted from our study of some months ago on "*The Great Prophecies of Daniel.*"

If we are to understand this portion of the Word of God, we must keep three facts clearly in mind:

1. That the seventy weeks were 'determined upon' Daniel's people and Daniel's holy city: 'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city' (Daniel 9:24). This particular prophecy, therefore, has nothing to do with the Gentiles; nor has it anything to do with the church of this dispensation.

2. That the seventy weeks were to be seventy weeks of years, not days. Seventy sevens, as it is in the Hebrew, was the specified time given, in which certain events in connection with Israel were to be fulfilled. At the end of the program of the seventy weeks, the Messiah will usher in everlasting righteousness and begin His reign. Of course, seventy weeks of years are: 70x7, or 490 years. Therefore, 490 years was the specified time for the fulfillment of the prophecy.

3. That the seventy weeks were to be divided into three parts:

- (1) 7 weeks, or 49 years;*
- (2) 62 weeks, or 434 years;*
- (3) 1 week, or 7 years.*

In other words, God mentioned three events that were to take place as the 'Jewish clock' ticked off the seventy sevens of years. The first of these was to occur at the close of the first seven weeks; the second, at the close of the next sixty-two weeks; the third, in connection with the seventieth week.

Turning now to Daniel 9:25, we learn what these three events were to be:

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

This is exactly what happened. It was forty-nine years, or ‘seven weeks’ of years, between the beginning and the completion of the work of rebuilding Jerusalem; and this was done ‘in troublous times.’ Thus was the first event of the prophecy fulfilled, as recorded in the book of Ezra.

Following the close of the first seven weeks, there was another period of sixty-two weeks, totaling thus far sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years. At the close of this second period the Messiah was to be ‘cut off, but not for himself (Daniel 9:26). And that really happened — the second event in Daniel’s prophecy. Able chronologists, such as Sir Robert Anderson, have shown that from the time of the commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem unto the cross of Christ, there were exactly sixty-nine sevens, or four hundred and eighty-three years.

The Jewish clock had been ticking all the while; and at the time when the Son of God was crucified, it had ticked off sixty-nine sevens of years. The clock then stopped; and for more than nineteen hundred years there has not been another ‘tick’ from it. The last was at the end of the sixty-ninth week; and after the crucifixion of the Messiah Daniel’s **‘people’** and Daniel’s **‘holy city’** were set aside.

Christianity fills up the interval, which has already lasted more than eighteen centuries. With these centuries of Christianity, Daniel’s seventy weeks have nothing to do. They were **‘determined’** upon Daniel’s people and Daniel’s holy city.

When the end of Gentile dominion is reached, and when the church has been translated, then the last of the seventy weeks will run its course, Jerusalem and the Jews once again occupying the center of the stage.

You will have no difficulty in understanding the great interval between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth weeks if you bear in mind the fact that God never reckons time with the Jews when He is not dealing with them as a nation; when He ceases to deal with them as a nation, the Jewish clock stops.

At the close of the sixty-ninth week the Messiah was '**cut off**'; the destruction of Jerusalem followed; the Jews were scattered among the nations of the world; and for nearly two thousand years God has ceased to deal with them as a nation. Thus it is that between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, there comes this present Church Age, which is a great parenthesis in God's program for Israel.

Paul tells us in the third chapter of Ephesians that '**the dispensation of the grace of God**' was '**not made known unto the sons of men . . . in other ages.**'

After the Church Age is complete and the rapture has taken place, God will reach down and take hold of the pendulum of the Jewish clock, as it were, and start it going again. Then it will tick off the seventieth week, which will culminate in the personal, visible, bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ, thus bringing to pass the third event in the threefold division of the seventy weeks of Daniel, and completing this great prophecy in every detail.

The sixty-nine weeks were weeks of years; therefore, we know that the seventieth week will be a week of years, and that the period between the translation of the church and the return of Christ in glory will be seven years.

To summarize what we have been saying, let us quote again the Prophet Daniel:

Daniel 9:24 — "**Seventy weeks** ($70 \times 7 = 490$ years) **are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city.**"

Daniel 9:25 — "**From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem . . . seven weeks** ($7 \times 7 = 49$ years)."

Daniel 9:26 — "**And after threescore and two weeks** ($62 \times 7 = 434$ years) **shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.**"

The parenthetical period, known as the Church Age, intervenes between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks.

Daniel 9:24 — Only the seventieth week is yet to be fulfilled — "**to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins . . . to bring in everlasting righteousness . . . and to anoint the Most Holy.**"

Now looking further into the prophecy, we see that the seventieth week is to be divided into two periods of three and one-half years each, the latter half being shortened "**for the elect's sake**" (Matthew 24:22); that is, for the sake of the Jewish remnant in that day.

Continuing our reading in Daniel 9:27 we find that the Antichrist “shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.”

This will be a covenant with Daniel’s “**people**,” to extend throughout the seventieth week, according to the promise of the Antichrist. He will guarantee to Israel protection and religious freedom, in return for their allegiance to him as their sovereign. The temple worship will be restored; but in the midst of the week; that is, after three and one-half years, the Man of Sin will break his covenant with Israel, causing “**the sacrifice and the oblation to cease**” (Daniel 9:27).

He will demand that he be worshipped as God; Israel will refuse to worship him; and the persecution which he will bring upon God’s Chosen People is what the Bible calls “**the Great Tribulation**.”

This time of great sorrow will take place during the latter three and one-half years of the seventieth week of Daniel, referred to in Daniel 7:25 as “**a time (one year) and times (two years) and the dividing of time (one-half year)**”; that is, three and one-half years. Revelation 13:5 describes this same period as “**forty and two months**”; and Revelation 11:3, as “**a thousand two hundred and threescore days**.” These, of course, are other ways of designating the extent of this period as three and one-half years, of three hundred and sixty days each.

In order to deliver His people out of this “**time of Jacob’s trouble**,” the Lord Himself will return in glory, purify the earth, and set up His kingdom of peace and righteousness. And, as we have already seen, this will bring to a close the seventieth week of Daniel.

The Revelation Of The Man Of Sin

Now let us go back over the ground we have sought to cover in outline, in order to fill in a few brief details.

In our last study we saw that the Antichrist cannot be revealed until the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is “**taken out of the way**” (II Thessalonians 2:7). In other words, the church, which is “**the temple of the Holy Spirit**,” must be translated before the seventieth week of Daniel begins to run its course. Then that “**lawless**” one will be revealed, “**whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders**” (II Thessalonians 2:8, 9; compare Revelation 19:11-21; 20:10).

This Man of Sin is described by prophet and apostle, and by the Lord Jesus Himself. His satanic personality is graphically portrayed in the very names by which the Holy Spirit calls him. Here are some of them: “**The prince that shall come**,” “**the king of fierce countenance**,” “**the king who understandeth dark sentences**,” “**the man of the earth**,” “**the shaker of nations**,” “**he that cometh up out of the pit**,” “**the man who maketh the earth to tremble**,” “**the wicked one**,” “**the lawless one**,” “**the man of sin**,” “**the man whose coming is after the power [energy] of Satan**,” the man who says, “**I will be like the Most High**.” His portrait is given on many pages of the Word of God.

With supernatural power — with satanic power — and with amazing rapidity he will do three striking things:

- (1) He will bring to pass the revival of the old Roman Empire in a league or confederacy of nations;
- (2) he will unify professing Christendom — the true church will have been translated, but the apostate church will be in accord with him;
- (3) he will make Zionism a political factor by forming a covenant or treaty with Israel, who will be established as a nation once again in the land of Palestine.

This Man of Sin will be the last world-emperor under Gentile dominion. Not only will he unify the political forces on the ground of the old Roman Empire, but he will also consolidate professing Christendom. Church and State will once more link hands. And to Israel he will make fair promises. He will give to the Jews full possession of the land of Palestine.

Whether the Mosque of Omar, which now stands on the old temple site, will be destroyed, or whether it will be converted into a Hebrew temple, we do not know; but we do know that the Jews will have their temple worship restored — on that very spot; for the Mosque of Omar is built upon the very site of the Jewish temple of old. Israel will be deceived in these fair promises, which Jeremiah describes as “**a covenant with hell.**”

With Europe in its present state of chaos, with persecuted Israel building her hopes on Zionism, it seems as though the time were drawing near for the appearance of Satan’s superman. The world is looking for a leader. And he will come “**with lying wonders**”!

The Preaching Of “The Gospel Of The Kingdom” By The 144,000

Even during this darkest period of the world’s history, God will not leave Himself without a witness in the earth. The true church, as we have seen, will be with the Lord; but God always has a testimony to Himself in the world. During the seventieth week of Daniel His missionaries will be 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe; and they will go throughout the nations, preaching “**the gospel of the kingdom.**”

You will remember that in our study of Matthew we noted the difference between “**the gospel of the grace of God**” and “**the gospel of the kingdom.**”

John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, the twelve disciples, then the seventy preached “**the gospel of the kingdom,**” saying: “**Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**”

That kingdom and its King were rejected by Israel; and since then “**the gospel of the grace of God**” has been preached for nearly two thousand years — the gospel of salvation by faith in the finished work of Christ on Calvary.

When the 144,000 Jews go forth, preaching “**the gospel of the kingdom,**” they will proclaim the same message which John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and His disciples heralded.

It will announce the soon coming of the King.

- The gospel of grace points to a Saviour and a Bridegroom; it offers to the bride citizenship in heaven and joint-heirship with Him.
- The gospel of the kingdom will offer citizenship in His millennial kingdom, a literal, earthly kingdom.

At least fifteen cults in America alone claim to be the 144,000, but, my friend, this company will be composed entirely of Jews. Moreover, it will not be “sealed” until after the translation of the church. (See Revelation 7; compare Matthew 24:14).

This faithful remnant in Israel will present the claims of Christ and His kingdom, setting them over against the claims of the Antichrist. Many will respond to their message, both Jews and Gentiles, and will enter into the kingdom of peace and righteousness which will cover the earth when the Lord Jesus returns in glory to reign. Many will become martyrs in that day, because they will refuse to worship the Antichrist. They will come **“out of the Great Tribulation,”** having **“washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb”** (Revelation 7:14).

“The Abomination Of Desolation”

Earlier in this study we referred to the fact that the Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel in the middle of Daniel’s seventieth week. During the first three and one-half years he will have consolidated his position. Then, although he will exercise greater power than any Caesar ever had, yet he will aspire to divine honors — and he will want to be worshipped on the very spot where God has been honored. This has ever been Satan’s desire, to be worshipped, to be **“like the Most High.”** He even tried to get the Lord from heaven to worship him!

In order to compel all men to pay divine honors unto him, the Antichrist will set up his image **“in the holy place”** in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, demanding that he be worshipped as God. In so doing, he **“shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation (the Jewish temple worship) to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate.”** Thus Daniel 9:27 describes this climax of blasphemy.

Now an **“abomination”** to an Israelite is an idol of some sort. The Lord Jesus, referring to these words of Daniel, and looking forward to the time of the faithful Jewish remnant in the day of the Antichrist, said: **“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place . . . flee into the mountains”** (Matthew 24:15, 16 and following verses). The Antichrist’s covenant with Israel, made earlier in the seventieth week of Daniel, will guarantee religious liberty; but he will count this covenant as a mere “scrap of paper.” He will rob Israel of the right to worship the Lord God, and will demand that he be worshipped as God. Moreover, those who refuse to receive **“the mark of the beast,”** giving allegiance to him, can neither buy nor sell in that day. His ultimatum will be: **“Worship me or starve!”**

“The Great Tribulation”

The refusal of Israel to worship the Antichrist will be the signal for the beginning of **“the Great Tribulation.”** Then **“the people of the wandering feet”** will once more be persecuted, hunted, slain; **“for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time; no, nor ever shall be”** (Matthew 24:21). Read carefully Matthew 24:15-26 for the Lord’s description of this **“time of Jacob’s trouble.”**

We believe that the Jewish remnant will flee in that day to the land of Moab on the east of the Jordan River, where for thousands of years the cities of Petra have stood, preserved for this time of great sorrow.

In Daniel 11:41 we read that the land of Moab **“shall escape out of his (the Antichrist’s) hand.”** And these remarkable cities in this **“wilderness”** seem to be God’s place of refuge for His Chosen People in this hour.

Moreover, God will bring to a speedy end the seventieth week of Daniel; for **“except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake (for Israel’s sake) those days shall be shortened”** (Matthew 24:22).

The Lord Jesus will return in glory; He will hear the cry of His people, and come down to deliver them and a sin-weary world from the dominion of the Antichrist. He will purify the earth with His righteous judgments; then He shall reign **“from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”**

I wonder if I am talking to someone who is rejecting Christ as Saviour and Lord?

My friend, if you reject Him as your Saviour, you will meet Him as your Judge. He died on the cross to save you from sin. Will you not accept Him before it is too late? Will you not join the blood-bought company, which is His church, and meet Him **“in the air”** before the darkest period in the world’s history begins to run its course? It will be a time of anguish and sorrow and **“Great Tribulation”** — and outer darkness forever to all who refuse to take Him as a personal Saviour.

“As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matthew 24:27).

“Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way” (Psalm 2:12).

If you reject Him as your Saviour, you must meet Him as your Judge!

~ end of chapter 12 ~

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