

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

Last week we finished the book of Ezekiel and started the book of the Prophet Daniel. Of course we are only looking at the prophecy that sets the stage for where we are today in God's overall timetable. In that sense, we looked at the prophetic dream of Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel Chapter 2 and discussed the events that led to Daniel's interpretation for the King of that dream. As you recall, the King knew his "wise men" would lie to him about the dreams meaning so he devised a plan where they would first have to tell him what the dream was, and then interpret it. In this way, Nebuchadnezzar was assured that they were telling him the truth. *Listen to the audio on website for more details.*

As it turned out, they could not do it and the king was furious and arranging for them all to be killed. Daniel and the three others...Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were included in the sweep up of those considered "wise men". Daniel had not heard of the king's request and order so he went to the king and asked for permission to interpret it. This is all recorded in Daniel.

The dream recalled a Statue which had a head of Gold, a breastplate and arms of silver, a waist area of Bronze, two legs of iron, and feet of a mixture of iron and clay. In addition there was a huge rock, not of human origin that was flung against the statue and broke all the pieces into utter destruction.

Daniel relayed to the king that this was dream given him by God, to show him what was to come. The statue represented 5 kingdoms to come. His was the Head of Gold, to be followed by the Medo/Persian kingdom of silver, followed by the Greek empire of bronze, and followed by the Roman Empire of Iron. These actually are represented in history by these kingdoms and you can listen to the audio of my teaching in Daniel to get the fuller picture.

The final two items...the feet of mixed iron and clay, and the rock are yet to come in history, so they are considered future prophetic events. The empires in history are accepted by all reliable biblical scholars, but the last two events have some variance of interpretation and fulfillment expected.

Most believe the feet represent what is called the "Revived Roman Empire" and will be a mix of iron and clay making it clear it will be a weak mixture of countries and unmixable traditions. The Rock is pretty universally understood as God (or Christ in our understanding), coming to do away with these false governments and structures by smashing them.

Again, we talked about this in more detail last week. Today I want to give you some insight into timing and the sequence of events, also described in the book of Daniel.

Daniel's Third Vision: The Seventy Sevens of Israel and the Place of Israel in the times of the Gentiles.

Daniel Chapter 9

9 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—² in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures,

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. ³ So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

Daniel found in the prophetic scripture of Jeremiah the word of the Lord that the desolation of Jerusalem would last 70 years. This understanding confirms the power of the prophetic Word and the fact that it came true as written confirms that it is a prophecy of the Lord. Daniel pleaded with the Lord about Jerusalem and its restoration.

*²⁰ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill— ²¹ while I was still in prayer, **Gabriel**, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. ²² He instructed me and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. ²³ As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision:*

²⁴ “Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place.

*²⁵ “Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the **Anointed One**, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶ After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death 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. 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 at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him*

This is one of the most encompassing yet concise prophecies in the Bible about the Times to come. It seems complicated but it isn't. I will walk you through it and how to interpret it.

This prophecy needs to be placed along side of the previous prophecy of the Gentile Nations so that the events can be correlated and the power and insight can be understood. In Hebrew thought, the number Seven was a complete number, in that it is Seven days in a week. Even a quick reading gives you some basic facts.

The anointed one spoken of is the Messiah, or who we call Christ the Lord...Jesus Christ. From the time the word to rebuild the city is proclaimed, there will be Seventy Sevens and Sixty Two Sevens. After the Sixty two Sevens, the Anointed One, will be put to death. The people who rule at that time will come and destroy the city and the sanctuary. War will continue until the time of destruction and desolation is complete. THEN, the ruler of this people will confirm a treaty with many for SEVEN years, but at the

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

midpoint of the seven years, this leader will end the sacrifices at the temple, and desecrate it. He will then set up another abomination of a worship system, and will continue until the “end that is decreed” for him and the wrath that follows is poured out on him.

This has not happened yet, but all of the empires except the last one have come and gone. The link is that the people who destroyed the city and temple after the death of Christ (70ad) will be a part of the last empire so people call it the Revived Roman Empire.

What do we make of all the numbers? And what is the correlation to the Rock in the 5 Empires prophecy? *Glad you asked !!*

Hang in with me for a few minutes as I try to explain it all so we can all understand it. If we take the scripture as literal, *and I do...* then we see several major events within the Seventy Sevens. We see

1. **“to finish transgression”** – This most probably refers to Israel’s tendency to apostasy which must be brought to a close
2. **“to put an end to sin”** - This means either bringing sin to its point of forgiveness or bringing sin to its final judgment. It could also mean to “seal up sin” which encompasses both and indicates not only bringing sin to its end, but also forgiving sins in the past, present and future”
3. **“to atone for wickedness”** – This represents both the death of Christ on the cross that is the basis for all grace and forgiveness, but also the restoration of Israel in and before the Second Coming. **Atone** means “to cover”.
4. **“to bring everlasting righteousness”**- This event relates to the Cross and also to Israel individually and nationally at the Second Coming and the period of renewal in the tribulation period.
5. **“to seal up the vision and prophecy”** – This event tells us the words were not to be interpreted until the completion of the rest of the scripture...aka the NT. The word “seal “ implies completion and safe guarding contents by a seal of protection. These words and vision were sealed and protected until the completed revelation was delivered.

Now let me try and string these events together with the view of the statue we previously discussed. These “seventies” refer to years and not weeks or days, so 70 “weeks” refers to Seventy 7 year periods or 490 years.

In Daniel 9:25 the scripture tells us that it starts “when the word goes out”. As you might expect, there is much disagreement on when the start of this time happens, but if one considers the decree had to do with rebuilding the CITY, not the TEMPLE, we can infer that it happened near the end of 444 BC because the city was rebuilt under Nehemiah (Neh 2:1-8) at this time. The last month of the year 445BC.

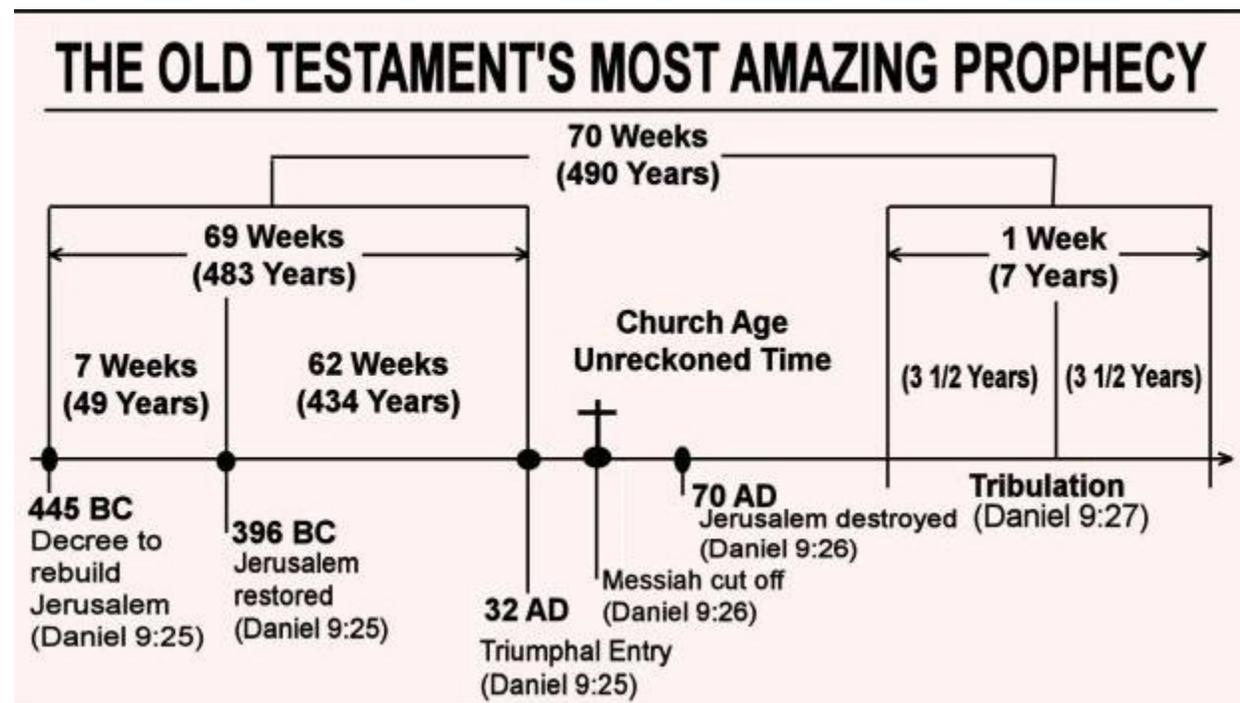
Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

In the Jewish calendar, interestingly and prophetically, the time between 445BC and 33AD is 483 years. So since the 33AD timeframe is the best scholarship on the crucifixion of Christ, we see the time fits. The 490 years is divided up this way: 7 weeks of years - 49 years to build the streets and trench for times of trouble; then 62 weeks of years 62x7 or 434 years which sums to 483, then the final “week” or 7 years to add to a total of 490 years.

In Dan 9:26 it says...²⁶ *After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The term translated put to death also means “cut off” so this tells us there is a break in the count.*

The next verse begins... *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 at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.*

The “he” is the leader of this “Revived” Roman Empire, who we also know as the Antichrist. When he declares the peace treaty, the final “seven” begins. We call this the Tribulation period. What is not clear is the time between the death of Christ in 33AD and the beginning of the final 7 year period. We are living in this timeframe now. We call it the Church Age. At the end of the Church Age two events happen with a little time in between. The first is the Rapture of the Church, where all the living believers and those who have died in Christ, will be taken up to the clouds and removed from earth. This will leave **only** unbelievers on earth...Gentiles and Jews, Muslims, JWs, Mormons, Hindu and all other non believers who have not been “born again” here on earth. At this time evil and lawlessness goes on a rampage and the “man with a plan” comes on the scene to calm the storm and broker peace. When the peace treaty is signed or confirmed by him and Israel and her neighbors, the final countdown and clock begins



Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

As a word of caution: you can find many interpretations of these passages that lead to different dates to begin the count, which results in different dates of Christ's death. But whether the date is 33AD or 31AD or 30AD if you track back to circa 445BC you will find dates of decrees from Artaxerxes that could be used as the "start" time. Arguments over Jewish Calendars, Gregorian Calendars, leap years, etc are all variables so no one can be definite on exactly all things. One thing is clear however. The end of the 483 years comes as Christ is killed, and the final 7 years starts an indeterminate time later when the Antichrist begins the peace treaty. It ends exactly 7 years later with the Second Coming and the Great White Throne Judgment and start of Millennial Kingdom. Praise the Lord !!

I think it is plain that these verses are powerful and provide great insight into those things to come. In addition to these verses Daniel Ch 10-12 discusses an angelic vision of the future of the Jewish people for Daniel. Much of this has already been fulfilled but the End Times prophecies confirm the 7 year period of the tribulation and the 3 ½ year midpoint where the Abomination of Desolation takes place in the Temple. For these verses, one has to lay them beside verses in Revelation to see the full picture of the wrath to come and the judgments that will occur to the earth.

Like us, Daniel does not understand what he has been shown and written down so he asks the angel for understanding but is told to "go your way"

Daniel 12: 13 ¹³ "As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance."

So it is with us. Some will be alive during the Rapture, but most will not if the Lord tarries, but if we are Christians we will go to our rest, our spirits will go immediately to the Lord, and we will be resurrected to Glory when He comes for His Bride.

This ends what we will talk about in Daniel and the major prophets. Now we will close the Old Testament with a discussion of the Minor Prophets.

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

Discussion of the Minor Prophets

As a reminder, these are called “Minor” not because of importance or quality but simply because of their length. They are shorter than the “major prophets. They also generally deal with single issues and not grand scale prophecies. These may be grouped in your Bible and called, “the Book of the Twelve” which indicates they might have been on a single scroll in the ancient times of reading in the temple. They are generally in order of being written and they are: (Bolded have been taught be me here at FBC)

Hosea

Joel

Amos

Obadiah

Jonah

Micah

Nahum

Habakkuk

Zephaniah

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

Some are multiple chapters and others single chapters. Some are apocalyptic (Joel) and other straightforward like Jonah. All are prophetic in nature because they were written before events took place, but many of the events have already been fulfilled. We will take a quick trip through them to sift out what remains and is significant to our study.

Then we will begin the New Testament.

The book of the prophet Hosea

Hosea was a prophet that lived in the time before the Exile into Assyria for the 10 northern Tribes in the separated nation of Israel as opposed to Judah. Kings were being assassinated and the disobedience was great against God. His ministry evolved around 3 themes:

Prophecy Through the Bible - Prophets

1. The Sins of Israel and Judah
2. The punishment of from God because of their Sin
3. Their ultimate spiritual and political restoration

Hosea's life is a display of Gods judgment and restoration because He is married to Gomer, who is an adulterous wife. Their relationship represents the relationship between Yahweh and Israel, with Gomer being the adulterous Israel. Children born in the relationship are both Hosea's and not Hosea's. It is a sad commentary of the ways Israel treated the God who loved her.

It ends with restoration and God promising to retrieve them from the grave, which is an allusion to the restoration of the House of Israel in the Tribulation times and them abandoning their adulterous ways and returning to the God who still loves her. In Hosea 11:1 a prophetic verse says "Out of Egypt I have called my son". This refers to the bringing back of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus from Egypt fleeing the murderous King Herod trying to kill the future King.

Prophecy in the Book of Joel

We have done this book in verse by verse study so it will be worthwhile since it is short to listen to the audio of the discussion. Joel is a book full of symbols but is focused on the **Day of the Lord. This day has other names like the Day of Judgment.** This day is defined as any period of time where God deals directly with the human situation whether in judgment or mercy. The "Lord" in this case is Yahweh, or Jehovah, the covenant God.

It may refer to a specific day or hour, or it may be a longer time like the time between the Rapture of the Church and the end of the Millennial Kingdom. The context of its use defines the time period that it means.

Read the book of Joel for next week.