

THE GREATEST PROPHECY EVER FULFILLED

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Message #2.

In our first message in this series on Daniel 9, 20 thru 27, we gave you an overall view of this GREATEST PROPHECY EVER FULFILLED by showing you that in it we see both the GOODNESS of God in sending Christ, His dear Son, to die for His people; and His SEVERITY in bringing the Jewish nation to a state of desolation and wrath because of their continued sin in rebellion against Him, and their sin of rejecting and crucifying the Lord of Glory.

These Scriptures in Daniel 9 are very explicit that this work of the GOODNESS of God and the SEVERITY of God would be done in a framework of 490 years, or seventy weeks of days—a year for a day—reaching from the time that King Cyrus of Persia gave the decree for the Jews to go out of Babylonian captivity (Ezra 1,1 thru 4,) unto the baptism of Christ, the Messiah, by John the Baptist in the river Jordan, This was 483 years, and then into 3 and one half years of the 70th week, when He should be cut off for His people.

Now in our present message we will seek to give a verse by verse exposition of this GREATEST PROPHECY EVER FULFILLED beginning at verse, 24. Listen now as we proceed! The seventy weeks (or 490 years) as we explained in our last message were determined upon the people of Daniel who were the Jews, upon their city, and upon their sanctuary or temple. THIS IS WHAT THIS PROPHECY IS ALL ABOUT, God's dealings with the Jewish nation, with the Jewish people' with the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish sanctuary or temple in a framework of 70 weeks or 490 years. And the central figure, the One who stands out above all, is Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God. Let us keep this in mind.

You will notice that the first 49 years or seven weeks according to verse,25 were spent in rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, its walls and temple in very troublous times which was accomplished under Zerubbabel, Joshua, Ezra and Nehemiah as recorded in the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah.

It is marvelous to me to see God's hand of providence in moving to fulfill this prophecy. You see God had given to the Prophets, Jeremiah and Isaiah, the exact length of time that the Jewish nation would stay in Babylonian captivity and when and by whom they would be released from this captivity. Jeremiah gives us in his

prophecy, chapter 25,11 - 12, these words, "And this whole land shall be a desolation. And an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord."

Then in Isaiah 44, verses 26 thru chapter 45, verse 3, Isaiah sets forth in prophecy that God would raise up King Cyrus of the Persians to conquer Babylon, set His people free, and decree that the people should go back to Jerusalem to rebuild. Listen to these words' "Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof, that saith to thee, Be dry, and I will dry up thy rivers, that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." As we have already stated, this prophecy and its fulfillment is recorded in Ezra 1, 1 thru 4 and 2nd Chronicles, 36,22 thru 23.

Now I want you to notice the word, "DETERMINED" in verse,24 and 27. The word means, having ascertained, having calculated, having fixed precisely, having settled conclusively in one's mind what he is going to do; he has resolved to carry it out. This is precisely what our God has done in this prophecy. He determined that there would be 490 years in which certain things would happen and then He did them. This period of time would stretch from the going forth of the Jews out of Babylonian captivity to the cutting off of Messiah upon upon the cross in the 70th week or in the last seven years.

We have already looked at one of them in verse 25, that there would be the building of Jerusalem again, its streets, walls and temple in troublous times. Then would follow a period of 441 years or 63 weeks in which there would take place these things recorded in verse, 24, (1) to finish the transgression, (2) to make an end of sins (3) to make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) to seal up the vision and prophecy, (6) to anoint the most Holy One, and then, of course, the things set forth in verse, 27, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

It is very essential to a right understanding of this prophecy to keep in mind that these things of verse 24 & 27 were to be fulfilled and now have been fulfilled by Christ being cut off in the middle of the 70th week. And what followed immediately after this? His resurrection from the dead, and His ascension into heaven and the utter desolation of the Jewish nation in A.D. 70.

Let us now look at each of these SIX THINGS in detail that are recorded in verse, 24, and then following we will consider the things recorded in verse, 27.

First "TO FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION." What does this mean and to whom does it refer? Listen now! The transgression of Israel had long been the burden of the messages of God's prophets. It was for their transgressions that they had gone into captivity, and that their land had been made a desolation for seventy years. Daniel himself had confessed this, saying in verse, 11 of his prayer, "Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us." But here in verse, 24 the angel Gabriel revealed to Daniel the distressing news that the full measure of Israel's transgression was yet to be completed; that the children were yet to FILL UP the iniquity of their fathers, and that, as a consequence, God would bring upon them a far greater desolation than that which had been wrought by Nebuchadnezzar. For, "to finish the transgression" could mean nothing less or other than the betrayal and crucifixion of their promised and expected Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must at this point bring before our hearts and minds the similar words spoken by our Lord, the Messiah, to the leaders of the people, the scribes and Pharisees of His day as recorded in Matthew, 23,32 thru 35. After bringing such a railing accusation against them because of their sins, He said, "Fill ye up the measure of your fathers. . . that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth." In these words of Christ we find first, a declaration that the hour had come for them "to finish the transgression;" and second, a strong intimation that the predicted desolations were to come as a judgment upon that generation as appears by the words, "that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth." Then looking closely at Matthew,23,36 we find the awful doom pronounced upon the beloved city and people. Listen to this awful word of judgment! "Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation." Then He added in verse, 38, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Surely there is nothing in all history comparable to the judgments that were poured out upon Jerusalem at the time of its destruction in A.D. 70, which was the finishing of the transgression and the great desolation of the Jewish people with the cutting off of them from the true olive tree (Romans, 11).

This awful judgment and desolation that awaited them was so upon our Lord's mind that His soul was made to cry out in anguish, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew,23,37).

Yes, even when our blessed Lord was on the way to the cross He thought more of the sufferings that would come upon that generation because they were to "finish the transgression" than He did of His own sufferings upon the cross. In Luke 23,27thru31 these words of compassion, love and mercy are expressed. Listen! "And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then they shall begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" What He is saying here is this, Now if He—the innocent One, the green tree was made the object of such ill treatment and plunged into suffering, what will happen to those who are guilty, the dry tree, when judgment falls upon them, like it did, in A.D. 70 in the fall of Jerusalem?

My friend, are you beginning to see this great prophecy unfold before our eyes and the awful judgment of which it speaks? Let me warn you right here, if you fulfill your transgression against God, and bow not at His feet in repentance and trust His blessed Son for salvation from your sins, you too will be cut off in the day, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2nd Thessalonians, 1,7 thru 9). Oh, my friend, have you found mercy in the hiding place which God has prepared in Christ from His wrath?

Let me repeat something right here that I stated in our previous message, no wonder Satan has blinded the minds of so many today as to the true interpretation of this prophecy concerning the 70 weeks of Daniel 9. He has done it because it reveals the SEVERITY of God, the judgment of God against sin, whether it be a whole nation or an individual. In this case it was the utter, complete cutting off of the nation of Israel, from which the nation, as such, has never and will never return. God gave them up as a nation in 70 A.D. Now certain of the Jews after the flesh will be saved in the only way any one can be saved, by repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. They can only be saved by The Deliverer who came out of Zion, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself upon Calvary's mount for sin.

This is what is told us in the second thing mentioned in verse, 24 of Daniel 9 and it is that Messiah when He was cut off in the middle of the 70th week would make an end of sins by the sacrifice of Himself. This we will go into, the Lord willing, in our next message.

'Tis finished! the Messiah dies!
CUT OFF FOR SINS, but not his own
Accomplished is the sacrifice;
The great redeeming work is done.

Finished our vile transgression is,
And purged the guilt of all our sin;
And everlasting righteousness
Is brought, for all his people, in.

'Tis finished, all my guilt and pain.
I want no sacrifice beside.
For me, for me the Lamb was slain,
And I'm for ever justified.

Sin, death, and hell are now subdued
All grace is now to sinners given;
And lo! I plead the atoning blood,
For pardon, holiness, and heaven.