

## THE BIBLE AND DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK, THE TRIBULATION PERIOD

Dispensationalists tell us Daniel's seventieth week has been postponed and will become the tribulation period. Where in Scripture is this specifically stated or even implied? It is not found in the Bible. If the Bible teaches that Daniel's seventieth week is already fulfilled, then the dispensational position cannot be held as biblically tenable. Yet dispensational *futurism* is built around the postponement of Daniel's seventieth week.

If Daniel's seventieth week were postponed, it would mean that the Messiah has not yet been cut off. But Daniel says that the Messiah was to be cut off after the seven weeks and the sixty-two-week period of time, which together make up sixty-nine weeks. It is after this time that the Messiah was to be cut off (Dan. 9:26). This would mean that the Messiah had to be cut off during the seventieth week. Since this does not fit the dispensational scheme, they postponed the seventieth week without biblical warrant until after the "Church Age." This is to become the tribulation period.

In his book *God's Plan of the Ages*, Talbot says that the crucifixion was at the end of the sixty-ninth week (Talbot 1946, 155), whereas Daniel 9:26 states that the Messiah would be cut off *after* the sixty-nine weeks, which would be in the seventieth week. This, is a direct violation of what Daniel 9:26 says. It seems dispensationalists do not care how they handle or violate God's Word to make their system work.

Dispensationalists also tell us that because the week has been postponed, Daniel 9:24 is still unfulfilled, but that it will be fulfilled by Christ in the millennium. This is dangerous, because it takes away what Christ the Messiah has already accomplished by His death on the cross. "Seventy weeks are determined for your

people and for your holy city to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy” (Dan. 9:24). This Christ did!

The fulfillment of Daniel 9:24 by Christ is seen in the following references:

- Isaiah 53:5, 8; Hebrews 9:15: Christ has already taken care of transgression.
- Hebrews 9:26: Christ has already made an end of sins.
- Hebrews 10:18: Christ’s sacrifice was sufficient, and there will never be another sacrifice for sin.
- 2 Corinthians 5:19: Christ already has made reconciliation for iniquity.
- 2 Corinthians 5:21: Christ already has brought in everlasting righteousness.
- 1 Corinthians 1:30; Jeremiah 23:5-6: Christ is our righteousness.

There is no greater righteousness to come than the righteousness of God given us in Christ.

Based on these scriptures, Daniel 9:24 cannot be in the future. This prophecy has been fulfilled.

Harold J. Ockenga has this to say on Daniel 9:24: “Daniel is definite concerning the work of Christ in His first coming by saying, ‘to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.’ This is what Christ did when He came the first time” (Ockenga 1956, 174-175).

## CHRIST IS THE COVENANT MAKER OF DANIEL 9

Daniel 9:27 states, “Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week.” Isaiah 42:6 states that Christ was given as a covenant to the people (Isaiah 49:6-8 says the same thing). Matthew 4:15-16 confirms that Isaiah 49:6 has been fulfilled. Likewise, Isaiah 49:8 is confirmed as being fulfilled in 2 Corinthians 6:2, where it is applied to New Covenant ministry. Jesus said He inaugurated the New Covenant (Luke 22:14-20).

Malachi 3:1 states that at that time Christ’s forerunner would be sent, “The Lord whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple even the Messenger of the covenant.” This Jesus did. There is not one verse in the Bible stating that the antichrist will make a covenant.

Luke 3:23 states that Christ was thirty years old when He began His public ministry. This is an affirmation of Numbers 4:3. By all accounts, Christ’s ministry lasted for a period of three and half years. He was then crucified. This brings us to the middle of the seventieth week, which is prophetically confirmed by Zechariah 11:4-14:

- The Messiah was to come as a shepherd (Zech. 11:4-9). This Christ did. He was the Good Shepherd of John 10 and the fulfillment of Genesis 49:24.
- Zechariah 11:7 says the Good Shepherd will come with two staves, one called “beauty” (grace) and the other “bonds” (unity), in order to unite the broken unity between Judah and Israel. John 1:17 states, “For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”
- The Good Shepherd was not accepted by His own people. In Zechariah 11:8 we read, “My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.” John 1:11 says, “He came to His own and His own received Him not.”

## CHRIST IS THE COVENANT BREAKER

Zechariah 11:10 states that when the Messiah was rejected, He broke the shepherds' staff "that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples." It is right here that dispensationalists tell us the antichrist makes and breaks the covenant. There is no place in the Scripture that even hints at the antichrist making and breaking a covenant. It is all added to make up a good story. It is Christ who made the covenant, and the Scripture states that He broke the covenant.

When was this covenant broken? It was broken when Christ was crucified. Zechariah 11:12 reads, "Then I said to them, 'If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not refrain.' So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver." Matthew 26:15; 27:3 affirms that this was fulfilled in Jesus Christ at the crucifixion, whereas Talbot said Christ was crucified at the end of the sixty-ninth week (Talbot 1946, 156). Who is telling us the truth?

The covenant was broken in the middle of the week, three and a half years after Christ began His public ministry. This is the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27, which states that a covenant was confirmed for one week and in the middle of the week the prophecy also states that He would cause sacrifice and offering to cease. Since Calvary, the sacrifice of His Son, God refused all Old Testament sacrifices and offerings. He caused them to cease in His sight. Antichrist could never do this. How unscriptural can a doctrine get? Dispensational eschatology hinges on the idea that the antichrist will do something Christ the Messiah has already done and alone could only do. This is not a supposition; it is solely based on Old Testament prophecy and New Testament fulfillment.

## CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS OF DANIEL'S SEVENTIETH WEEK

Because the Bible affirms these truths, there is no room for an antichrist or a tribulation to come after the *parousia* of Christ. The dramatic composition of an antichrist to come and fulfill Daniel's seventieth week is an improbable plot. It has turned into a moneymaking scheme on behalf of those who are supposedly "left behind" to go through the great tribulation. I recently read an article from the *Los Angeles Times* by Neal Gabler with the headline, "Why Let Truth Get in the Way of a Good Story?" Dispensationalism has a good story, but the Bible has the truth.

The Bible teaches that the first half of Daniel's seventieth week was fulfilled at the middle of the week at the time of the cross. This proves that Christ is both the covenant maker and the covenant breaker, which destroys the theory that the antichrist will ever make or break a covenant with the Jews. This also eliminates the theory of a secret rapture at the beginning of that week, because the week has already been fulfilled. What is going to happen to all the charts that have been made on the subject? It is peculiar that the adherents of this system seem to speak with an air of authority as if by divine inspiration, though there is no biblical truth in it.

But someone may ask the question, "How about the last half of Daniel's seventieth week?" Is it not reasonable to believe that if the first half of the seventieth week followed the sixty-ninth week, the last half would also follow the first half? To say otherwise is to go beyond what is written (1 Cor. 4:6). Daniel 9:24 states that seventy weeks are determined upon "your people." Daniel's people were the Jews. The crucifixion of Christ on the cross was the fulfillment of the first half of the week. After this, there was something yet to

take place among Daniel's people that would forever close out the nation of Israel from being God's chosen people and sole heirs of the covenant that they broke.

Chronologically, history tells us that it was about three and a half years after Calvary that Stephen's message in Acts 7 and Saul's persecution and conversion in Acts 9 took place. The Jews rejected Stephen's message because they were stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears. They resisted the Holy Spirit speaking through him concerning their own history (Acts 7:51-60). What is the impetus here? The Jews killed God's messenger who told them the truth.

After his conversion, Paul, who was present and heard Stephen's message, put this same truth in similar terms. He picks up his message in Acts 13 from Stephen's message in Acts 7. Paul, preaching to the Jews of his day, gave them their history as was written in the Old Testament. The prophetic Messiah had come and fulfilled the covenant of David that was promised to Israel (Acts 13:32, 37). However, Israel did not recognize Christ to be their Messiah (vv. 27-41), so they had Pilate put Him on the cross and kill Him. But God raised Him from the dead to grant the forgiveness of sins.

Verses 45-46 tells us the Jews judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, so now the message was to go to the Gentiles. In 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16, Paul, writing of the Jews, said, "Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they may be saved, so as always to fill up the measure of their sins; but wrath has come upon them to the uttermost." Jesus had already said to the Jews in Matthew 23:32, "Fill up then the measure of your fathers' guilt."

Thus ends the seventieth week, with the official rejection of the gospel of Christ by the Jews. God had opened the door so the Gentiles could now also become His people. All believers are now

God's holy nation, a kingly priesthood, and 1 Peter 2:9 and Matthew 21:43 were now affirmed. The kingdom was taken from Israel and given to believers (1 Pet. 2:4-10). All believers of all races would now be the Israel of God (Gal. 6:15-16). The Bible is simple on this point. Why make it complex?

The rapture, or the catching up of God's people to be with Christ in the air, does not happen seven years *before* the second coming, but takes place *at* the second coming. This is because Daniel's seventieth week has been fulfilled and is now in the past. Because of this, there is no such thing as a secret rapture that will occur seven years before the second coming. This also means that the *parousia* and the apocalypse of Christ are one and the same event and are not divided by a seven-year period of time.

The resurrection will also take place at this time. When did Jesus say the dead believers would be resurrected (John 6:39-40, 44, 54)? Why four times in one chapter did Jesus say, "I will raise them up in the last day"? In John 11:24, who taught Martha and where did she learn to say her brother would be resurrected on "the last day," not seven years before the last day?

The Bible then eliminates the possibility that a resurrection occurs seven years before Christ comes in glory. It also eliminates the seven-year tribulation period as being the seventieth week of Daniel because it has already been fulfilled. Needless to say, believers will go through tribulation until Jesus comes.

An article that appeared in the *Christian Beacon* gives us some insight into the problems of the doctrine of a pre-tribulation rapture. It is entitled "Prepare for the Rapture?"

The two-thousand-member First Assembly of God congregation in North Hollywood, Calif., believing that the Rapture of the saints into heaven may be very soon, have changed the church's by-laws to provide continued leadership if its officers are suddenly taken to

heaven. This was reported by the Rev. D. Leroy Sanders, the congregation's pastor.

Mr. Sanders noted: "The blessed hope . . . clearly speaks of an instantaneous and general translation of the Assembly members. All pastors, deacons, elders, and other . . . church leaders and officers are expected to be caught up alive in a moment of time, thus depriving the church of duly constituted legal representation. In such an event the remaining members.. .shall meet in an emergency church council the following Sunday morning at eleven o'clock and elect . . . a temporary chairman." Mr. Sanders said the chairman was empowered to call for a new church council to oversee operations of the \$1.5 million property.

This post-rapture church, run by infidels who remain on earth, can only do the bidding of the forces of evil. The Hollywood church must fervently work today to get its own members converted to Christ and prepare them for the Rapture.