

Daniel's Seventy Weeks

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Daniel's Seventy Weeks

Introduction

We have thought it well, before turning to the special study of Daniel's seventy weeks, to give a brief outline of the dispensations, illustrated by a diagram.

The line A to B represents the period of about 4000 years from Eden to Calvary. The first circle represents the present dispensation from Pentecost to the coming of the Lord to take the saints to meet Him in the air (1 Thess. 4). The line between the two circles is the short period of not much more than seven years between the removal of the church and the return of Christ to judge the living nations (Matt. 25:31-46). The second circle is the period of the millennial reign of Christ. The short line that follows is

the brief period of the rebellion of the unconverted of the millennial period, those that have been born, but not new-born during the thousand years; then at E commences the eternal state.¹

The lower line in our diagram represents the 70 weeks of Daniel. As the reader will see in the following pages, this period is divided into three portions — 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week. These are weeks of years; that is, each day stands for one year. Hence the 70 weeks are 490 years. The point of departure of the prophecy is the “going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” For this we must go to Nehemiah 2, and not to Ezra 7. Ezra had to do with the building of the *temple*, Nehemiah with the building of the *city*. Hence the 70 weeks start at about B.C. 445.

In Daniel 9:26, the definite article should be placed, “And after *the* three score and two weeks”; that is, after the 69th week Messiah was cut off. This verse, then, takes us to the Cross; then comes a long dreary waste of desolations for the Jewish people, during which time is not counted. This is the period of the first circle — desolation for Jerusalem and the Jew, but salvation for the Gentile. The 70th week is rent off from the 69 weeks, and we find it in the period between the two circles. The first circle has already extended to more than 1900 years. All the events described in the book of Revelation (Rev. 4-19) are crowded into the short space of seven years; that is, the short line between the two circles.

The last half of that period, or 1260 days, is taken up with the great tribulation which will come upon all the

1 For a fuller explanation the reader is referred to a pamphlet by the author entitled *Prophetic Outlines*.

world, but will fall with special severity upon the Jews. *Out of that time* of trial the true church, called out during the present dispensation, will be kept (Rev. 3:10), having been removed at the coming of the Lord.

Daniel's Supplication

(Dan. 9:1-19)

The portion now before us is filled with moral instruction of the most important character. For a right and intelligent understanding of its prophetic teaching, it is no doubt essential that we should study it from a correct dispensational standpoint. But it may safely be asserted that no exposition, however clear, no interpretation, however sound, will suffice unless accompanied by that attitude of soul so beautifully depicted in Daniel himself at the commencement of our chapter.

It should be observed that the chapters in the book of Daniel do not follow one another in strict chronological sequence. Daniel 6 describes what took place in the reign of Darius the Mede, whereas Daniel 7 and 8, record visions of the prophet before the Babylonian dynasty had passed away. But here in Daniel 9 we find ourselves once more in the time of Darius.

Babylon had been judged. But Daniel's heart is still oppressed with a heavy burden. The "desolations of Jerusalem" still continued. Was there to be no end to this?

Could the heart that feared the Lord remain satisfied so long as the people of God were found in misfortune and distress? Neither Media nor Persia was the land that God had promised to Abraham, any more than was Babylon; and yet a multitude of God's people were still in captivity,

and worse than that, the city of Jehovah's choice was still a heap of rubbish and desolation.

Daniel was a man of faith. Years before (Dan. 2), he had uttered his firm and solemn conviction that there was a God in heaven; *that* God was his God, and this captive people belonged to Him. Daniel knew enough of God to be assured that this desolation could not last forever, deliverance must come. This it was that produced in him that attitude of soul depicted in this marvelous outpouring of his heart in confession and prayer.

But further, Daniel finds comfort and relief in turning to the Word of the Lord. As with Jeremiah a short while previously (Jer. 15:16), so now with Daniel, "Thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." He was a diligent student of the Scripture, and not only a prophet. At the close of the chapter, he was inspired of God to give forth one of the most marvelous prophetic utterances of the Old Testament, but here at the commencement he is reading with deep and prayerful attention what had already been communicated through Jeremiah.

Away in Jerusalem with broken heart and streaming eyes (Jer. 9:1) had Jeremiah stood forth and faithfully declared the warnings of Jehovah in the midst of the rebellious nation.

"The word of the Lord hath come unto me, and I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye have not hearkened" (Jer. 25:3).

But now the threatened judgment is at the door, and Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, was Jehovah's servant to carry this judgment into execution (Jer. 25:9; 27:6).

And yet amidst the desolations that were to follow, faith is not left without its consolation.

“And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the King of Babylon” (Jer. 25:12).

Seventy years! The time had just come. We can well imagine the eager interest with which the captive in the Persian kingdom perused the letter sent by Jeremiah the prophet “From Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon” (Jer. 29:1).

Did not Daniel see in that awful night of revelry in Babylon, when the finger of God wrote upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace, “God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it” — did he not see in that the fulfillment of this very prediction? The seventy years had come, and the stroke of judgment had fallen upon Babylon.

But Jerusalem was still desolate, and Daniel was still a captive. On he reads — “For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the Lord; and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will

bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive" (Jer. 29:10-14).

The immediate effect of this discovery upon Daniel's spirit is most beautiful. Instead of springing to his feet in an ecstasy of joy, he falls upon his knees in confession and prayer. We may surely learn a deep lesson in all this. We might safely say that not a single captive Israelite was less guilty than was Daniel, and yet in the spirit of Christ he identifies himself with the sin and failure of the nation.

Our blessed Lord and Saviour identified Himself truly with our sin after a manner that no other could. Spotless Himself, He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. In redeeming love He identified Himself with His people's sins in such a way that He bowed His head beneath the judgment of a holy God on their account. This none other could do.

*"For none but He in heaven or earth
Could offer that which justice claimed."*

"We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled," says Daniel, confessing the sin of the nation as his own.

"Neither have *we* hearkened unto Thy servants the prophets, which spake in Thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land" (Dan. 9:6).

When God speaks He speaks to *all*. A principle lies here which in these days of ecclesiastical and sacerdotal pretension it is most important to hold fast. Not only did God send His message to the kings and princes, but to *all* the people of the land. When God speaks, every soul of man is responsible to listen and obey.

"Righteousness belongeth unto Thee, but unto us confusion of face" (Dan. 9:7).

Not only does Daniel condemn himself and confess his own and the nation's sins, but he justifies God.

But with the Lord were found "mercies and forgivenesses," although not one of the people deserved them. "The law of Moses the servant of God" had been transgressed; against God they had sinned, and "yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God." The judgment long since threatened (see Deut. 28; Lev. 26) had now come, and Daniel in the energy of faith avails himself of the gracious provision of the Lord who had declared through His servant Moses, in Leviticus 26:40, "If they shall confess their iniquity...then will I remember My covenant."

Daniel pleads with Jehovah on the ground of redemption, "And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought Thy people forth out of the land of Egypt." He pleads with Him, too, on the ground of righteousness, "O Lord, according to all Thy righteousness, I beseech Thee, let Thine anger and Thy fury be turned away."

If God was righteous in taking vengeance, He was righteous also in fulfilling His promise of blessing.

Yet once more does Daniel plead, and this time on the ground that low as they had sunk, they nevertheless were the people of the Lord, "Thy city Jerusalem...Thy holy mountain...Thy people" (Dan. 9:16). This is a beautiful climax to Daniel's petition. He can claim nothing upon the ground of what the people are in themselves, but he does present an earnest petition on the ground that they are "Thy people" and "called by Thy name."

It is beautiful, too, to see how if Daniel identified himself with the nation in their sin, he likewise links them with himself in confession, though possibly and most probably few were to be found ready to take that ground in actual fact, "We do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousnesses, but for Thy great mercies" (Dan. 9:18).

The Seventy Weeks

(Dan. 9:20-27)

We have been considering the attitude of Daniel's soul as revealed in the opening part of this chapter.

Before passing to an examination of the prophecy at the close, it may be well to remark that the prophet in his prayer and confession dwells upon "the oath that is written in the law of Moses" (Dan. 9:11-14), and does not allude to the promises made to Abraham. Upon the ground of these promises the Jewish people will eventually be brought into their land in blessing; but meanwhile they are put under responsibility to walk in obedience to the law.

In Leviticus 26:3-14, a most beautiful picture is drawn of the earthly blessings that would have been theirs had they walked in Jehovah's statutes and kept Jehovah's commandments. Fruitful seasons, plentiful harvests, peace and prosperity, would have marked their inheritance. Jehovah Himself would have set up His tabernacle amongst them, and would have manifested to all the nations around that He, their God, dwelt and walked amongst them, and that they were His redeemed and chosen people.

Then follows a long, description of the judgments, woes, and desolations that would fall upon them in the event of their disobedience.

"I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths" (Lev. 26:33-35).

It was this very judgment that in Daniel's day was being put into execution. The captivity in Babylon, whither Daniel had been carried, was to this very end, "To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill three score and ten years" (2 Chron. 36:21).

These seventy years were now about to end, and Daniel, deeply conscious of the desolation that had befallen the city and sanctuary of Jehovah, confessed the sin that had brought it all about. He appeals to the Lord for His forgiving mercy, "for Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name." To faith they were still the people of God.

Daniel's lips were still moving in prayer when God sends the answer. This is not always the case. In the next chapter we find Daniel praying for three weeks before the answer came. Sometimes when an immediate answer is not given we are disposed to assume that God has not heard. But this is not so. Faith may need to be tested, and there may be other reasons too, but "This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us" (1 John 5:14-15).

And now a fresh revelation is made to Daniel. **"Seventy weeks are determined upon Thy people"** (Dan. 9:24). To understand the prophecy we must banish from our minds all idea of applying it to the church, or the people of God

in this present time. Daniel's people were not Christians, but Jews. "Thy holy city" was none other than Jerusalem. Indeed the whole atmosphere of the passage was Jewish. It was "about the time of the evening oblation" (Dan. 9:21) that the prophet bent his knees in prayer. Far away from Jerusalem, deprived of the joy of treading the courts of the house of the Lord, nevertheless his thoughts were there, and God answers him according to His promise (Lev. 36:40-46).

The study of Jeremiah's prophecy had brought to Daniel's soul the glad prospect of a speedy deliverance, but the Spirit of God here carries his thoughts forward to a time of blessing which has not yet been reached.

"Seventy weeks." These seventy weeks, all are agreed, represent weeks, not of days, but of years. That is to say, each day of the week stands for a year; therefore seventy weeks represent 7×70 , that is, 490 years.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people [that is, the Jews], and upon thy holy city [that is, Jerusalem], to finish the 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."

It is to be noted how God, in His answer, takes up the very words that had been on the lips of His beloved and heartbroken servant. Daniel had been confessing as his own the sins, iniquities, and transgressions of his people, and God holds out the bright and glorious prospect that all this history of failure and guilt should end, and "everlasting righteousness" take its place. Clearly, this has not yet been fulfilled. Israel lies at this very moment under the consequences of far greater guilt than that which brought

upon them the captivity in Babylon. If for seventy years they were driven from their land because of idolatry and departure from the law, what has been the greater crime which has scattered them for nearly nineteen hundred years? Is it not the rejection and murder of their Messiah, foretold in this very prophecy we are considering? And yet there is forgiveness for even this!

Some may be surprised at the thought that all the blessings enumerated in this verse are yet future. They may ask, *Has not an end been made of our sins at the cross? Has not everlasting righteousness been already brought in?* Quite true, the believer in Christ today may rejoice to know that all his sins have been put away by the blood of Christ, and that he is now made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). The Christian now may thus apply these expressions to himself, while yet the proper fulfillment of it all for Daniel's people awaits a coming day.

"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 three score and two weeks."

What a marvelous answer to Daniel's prayer is here! What an honor conferred upon this faithful servant, to reveal to him and through him to others, the very time of Messiah's advent. For the dates are here precise. The point of time where these seventy weeks commence is given in no vague and uncertain manner. Some have thought that the passage referred to Ezra's journey to Jerusalem about B.C. 536. But the main object before Ezra was the building of the house or temple (Ezra 1:2-3), whereas here it speaks of a commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem — not

the temple, but the city. The allusion is clearly to Nehemiah 1 and 2, and the date is B.C. 445.

From this date, then, the month Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, unto the Messiah, the Prince, were to be reckoned sixty-nine weeks, that is, 7×69 years = 483 years. But these 69 weeks are subdivided into 7 weeks and 62 weeks. It may be asked, *Why is this?* The 7 weeks, no doubt, was the time during which the wall was being built, "the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." These troublous times are described in the book of Nehemiah, when the builders, everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon (Neh. 4:17). Then follow the 62 weeks, making a period of 69 weeks, or 483 years to the time of Christ.

"the Messiah, the Prince"

(Dan. 9:26)

There is nothing more striking than the definiteness of the dates recorded in Scripture, both historically and prophetically. Rationalistic criticism, which is ever hostile, has not hesitated to impugn the correctness of some of these dates, so far as the history of the Bible is concerned, but in result has been forced to bow and acknowledge their accuracy.

We are now considering dates which are by no means vague, and it is well to remember, whatever the "higher critics" may endeavor to prove to the contrary, that Daniel was uttering a prophecy and not recording history. The communication given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel was made in the first year of Darius the Mede (Dan. 9:1), about B.C. 538, whereas the point of departure for the

seventy weeks was, as we have seen, the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2:1), or B.C. 445. The very month even is stated, "And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king."

A most interesting reckoning of dates, showing the accuracy of this prophetic period, will be found in Sir Robert Anderson's work, "Daniel in the Critic's Den." The author tells us: "The edict for the rebuilding of Jerusalem is to be assigned to the 1st Nisan, B.C. 445. From that epoch, 'unto the Messiah, the Prince,' was to be sixty-nine sevens of prophetic years.² But 483 years of 360 days contain 173,880 days; and 173,880 days, computed from the 1st day of Nisan in the 20th year of Artaxerxes, ended on the 10th day of Nisan in the 18th year of Tiberias Caesar — the day when, in the fulfillment of this, and of Zechariah's prophecy, our Lord made His first and only public entry into Jerusalem."

Whether we adopt the exact conclusions of the writer or no, there can be no doubt that the period of the advent of the Messiah is here intentionally most accurately specified. And, moreover, it is certain that godly souls in Israel were led at this very time to expect the coming of Christ. Wise men had come to Jerusalem from the east to worship Him, and all Jerusalem was troubled by their visit.

Simeon, in the same city, was "waiting for the consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25); nor was he alone in this, for Anna, the prophetess, "spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (Luke 2:38). Besides this, the testimony of John the Baptist rang forth in the wilderness

2 The prophetic year has 360 days. This will be evident to anyone who compares the various ways of describing the same prophetic period, namely, "time, times, and a half" (that is, 3 and a half years), "forty-two months," and "1260 days."

of Judea, and in all the country about Jordan, calling upon the nation to repent. His voice was as of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

The land of Judea, and especially the city of Jerusalem, was greatly stirred; minds were in suspense. "The people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not" (Luke 3:15).

Priests and Levites came from Jerusalem, and sought out the Baptist in the wilderness, in their anxiety to know who the man could be that drew such crowds to the river Jordan, and John "confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ" (John 1:20).

The Christ, then, was expected, and about this very time, in fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy that "Unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks."

But not only did Daniel foretell His advent, His rejection was as clearly predicted. "And after the three score and two weeks" — for the definite article should here be inserted — "shall Messiah be cut off." The marginal reading of the next clause is doubtless correct — "**and shall have nothing.**" He was "born King of the Jews," but they "received Him not." Though the clearest prophecies were fulfilled at His birth and all through His life of public service, yet was the Jewish nation blind as to His Messianic glory. The gospel narrative bears ample testimony to this. Scribes and Pharisees, chief priests and rulers, yes, all the religious teachers of the people, were first and foremost in His rejection, and at length fulfilled the very voices of the prophets, read every Sabbath-day in their synagogues, in condemning Him (Acts 13:27).

“After the three score and two weeks,” that is after sixty-nine of the weeks were ended (for seven weeks had preceded the sixty-two), Messiah was cut off, and, instead of the crown of David, was given the cross; He received nothing of His earthly glory in connection with Israel. God had other purposes in view, purposes not revealed in the prophetic writings of Old Testament times, purposes hidden until the fitting time for their revelation had come, and until that which formed the basis of their development had been accomplished in the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the consequent descent of the Holy Spirit — yes, God's eternal purpose in the calling of the church, out of this world of Jew and Gentile, to share the heavenly glory of Christ.

Daniel was inspired to predict the cutting off and rejection of the Messiah. Thus far the prophecy has been fulfilled; sixty-nine out of the seventy have been accounted for, but the blessings of verse 24 have not yet been realized by Daniel's people. So far from that, another prince is spoken of, a prince yet to come, whose people in the past destroyed the city and the sanctuary. If the cross of Christ has brought to the Christian infinite and eternal spiritual blessings, it has left the nation of Israel in a worse, far worse, condition than that in which they were when Daniel was a captive at Babylon.

The *destruction* of Jerusalem, and not her final blessing, followed the cutting off of Messiah. A people came, the Romans, under Titus, who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple, and ever since the people have been dispersed and trodden down. An evident break occurs here in the prophecy. **The seventieth week is separated from the sixty-ninth.** The time of the cutting off of Messiah is

clearly and accurately reckoned, then follows an undefined and lengthened period during which the city and sanctuary are destroyed, desolations are determined, and unrest, confusion and war are prominent. How truly this has been the history of the Jewish nation since, yea, because of their rejection and crucifixion of Messiah, is manifest to all.

“the Prince That Shall Come”

(Dan. 9:26)

We have followed the course of this remarkable prophecy down to the rejection of the Messiah, the Prince, after the sixty-ninth week. We have noticed the prediction, already fulfilled, of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus, which took place about A.D. 70. We have seen, too, that there is an undefined period of time following upon this.

No hint is given in the passage before us as to the length of this unreckoned stretch of time, nor are we here told what special work of the Spirit of God was to fill up this interval between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. But the intelligent Christian will be in no difficulty. The calling out of the church takes place during this parenthetical period.

Most readers of these pages are familiar with the thought that the history of the church upon earth, reaching from Pentecost to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the air (1 Thess. 4), forms a break in God's dealings with the earth. In the portion of Holy Scripture we are now considering, this parenthesis, though not enlarged upon, is yet most clearly *foreseen*. But it will come to an end, and that in a very solemn manner. The Lord Jesus Christ will

descend from heaven into the air and remove His saints, and then once more will God take up the thread of His earthly dealings, and Israel will again become the special object of His interest.

The “city and sanctuary,” then, we have seen were destroyed by the Romans. They are not mentioned by name, but it is the Romans that we are to understand by the expression, “*The people* of the prince that shall come” (Dan. 9:26), for they it was that history informs us destroyed the city of Jerusalem.

But this expression demands a closer attention. If “the people” are the Romans, who is “the prince”? It must be evident to everybody that this cannot be the same as “the Messiah, the Prince.” In no sense could the Romans have been called the people of the Messiah. Nor are we to understand Titus to be that prince. Titus might have been spoken of as their prince at the time that the Romans destroyed the city, but here we are told, not that *the people* shall come, but that the *prince* shall come. He has not yet come, nor will he come until the time of the end of those desolations determined upon Daniel’s people, the Jews. In other words, the Roman empire is to revive, and will yet be seen under the control of this very prince.

The last phase of the Roman empire, that of the division into ten kingdoms, has not yet been introduced. Some are in the habit of looking upon the present broken condition of what once was an undivided empire as the ten-toed or ten-horned period. But a passage in the Revelation already noticed will show that this is not the case. There we are told that — “The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast” (Rev. 17:12).

Here by the expression “the beast” we are to understand not so much the empire in itself as its *head*. The Roman empire of the future will be dominated by one man, sometimes called “the beast” (Rev. 13:4; 17:12), also spoken of as the “little horn,”³ and here in our chapter **“the prince that shall come”** (Dan. 9:26). At the time of the end the ten kings will give their power and strength to this terrible prince, and they shall make war with the Lamb. Clearly this has not yet taken place. In the early days of the empire it was undivided, now it is broken up into incoherent fragments, each seeking its own interests at the expense of the others; alliances, too, being formed to maintain “the balance of power.” But in the coming day God will put it “in their hearts to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast” (Rev. 17:17). Little does the world now guess that all is moving on to the accomplishment of God’s will clearly foretold in the prophetic word!

It is this coming prince, the head of the Roman empire, that is spoken of in the last verse of our chapter. “And he shall confirm *a* covenant with *the* many for one week.”

For thus should the verse be read. Here, then, is the last of the seventy weeks. It has not yet commenced. No clear or intelligent interpretation of this prophecy can be given unless this point be seized. Moreover, it is not until this last week begins that prophetic time will be counted again. Ever since the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ “times and seasons” have remained unreckoned; these have to do with the earth and God’s dealings with His earthly people, Israel. The church period is outside these times and seasons, and

3 That is, the little horn of Daniel 7. The little horn of Daniel 8 is a different personage altogether.

hence all attempts to calculate the date of Christ's return by reference to the 1260 days must end in failure.

Another line of things followed upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in answer to the question of the disciples, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" the risen Lord says "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power [or authority]. But ye shall receive power,⁴ after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:6-8).

This is the period, not of the kingdom for Israel, but of the Holy Spirit's testimony to an earth-rejected but glorified Christ; this is the time for the calling out of the church, composed of all, whether Jew or Gentile, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.

But the Jews will be restored to Palestine — they have of late been going back in large numbers — yet sad to say, their return will be in unbelief, and then for political reasons they will enter into a covenant with the chief of the Roman empire. Whether this will take place immediately upon the removal of the church at the coming of the Lord we do not undertake to say, but at any rate, it would seem to us the time will not be long.

This covenant will be made with "the many," that is, the majority; the remnant will not join in it, they will suffer at the hands of the ungodly nation, and the Psalms are filled with the expressions, prophetically given, that will be suitable to them in those days of oppression and persecution.

4 This is a different word from the one in the previous verse; it signifies might or force — dynamis.

When the Roman prince confirms this covenant for one week, the Jews will imagine that he is their friend, but “in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” Through his means their whole national system will have been restored, and even, it appears, their religious ceremonial. But in the midst of the week all this will cease, and a period of most awful tribulation will follow. “**The great tribulation**” will take place during the *last* half of this week, it will last for three and a half years, or as elsewhere said, 1260 days.

Some may ask, *Is this prince not the Antichrist?* We do not think he is. The Antichrist will be reigning *in Jerusalem* as the false king of the Jews; he will no doubt be in league with this Roman prince, and it will be through his means that the covenant will be made. But it is of importance to distinguish between the three great instruments of wickedness and opposition to God and His people at the time of the end. They are all alluded to in this last verse. They are the Roman prince, the Antichrist, and the Assyrian.

No doubt all our readers are aware that since the time of the Babylonish captivity the Jewish nation has never fallen into idolatry. They are suffering now for a greater crime, even the murder of their Messiah; but since Nebuchadnezzar carried them away they have never fallen into the sin of idolatry. According to the parable of our Lord, the unclean spirit of idolatry departed from them as a nation, and has never found a place amongst them since, though their condition be but “empty, swept, and garnished,” in other words outwardly orthodox, though it be but a form without reality or power. But at the end this spirit of idolatry will return to them in sevenfold degree and their last state will be worse than their first (Matt.

12:43-46). This will be when the Antichrist or man of sin will be worshipped as God in the temple once more rebuilt (2 Thess. 2).

It is to this that the somewhat obscure expression refers, "the overspreading of abominations." Let us here give this verse in a slightly altered form, which will help to an understanding of the passage; it is a translation which all scholars will appreciate: "And he shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and on account of the overspreading [or protection] of abominations there shall be a desolator, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Dan. 9:27).

The "overspreading of abominations" evidently refers to the idolatry under Antichrist, and "the desolator" appears to be an allusion to the Assyrian; Jerusalem herself is "the desolate."

In order to ensure themselves against this "king of the north," or Assyrian, the apostate nation will seek protection at the hands of the Roman prince and Antichrist, who will then be working hand in hand — a protection which they should have sought from God alone. They will say, "We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement; when the overflowing scourge [i.e. the king of the north] shall pass through, it shall not come unto us" (Isa. 28:15).

But this their covenant will not avail them in the day of their calamity; nay, on this very account will the desolator be sent upon them — as the rod of Jehovah's anger (Isa. 10:5).

How blessed it will be for the tried and persecuted remnant in that day to prove that Jehovah Himself has

laid for them in Zion, the city of their tribulation, “for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation” (Isa. 28:16)! Who this precious corner stone is, we, Christians, well know, even Jesus Christ, who is to us who believe, meanwhile, God’s preciousness (1 Pet. 2).

After Two Days

(Hos. 5-6)

Everything points to the near return of the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot and we would not fix any date, but we feel sure “the time is near.”

We have noticed the parenthesis between the 69th and 70th weeks; so far as Israel is concerned, it is the Loammi period of their history. It is the time of Israel’s fall, but “through their fall *salvation is come unto the Gentiles*” (Rom. 11:11).

Their present condition is the result of their rejection of Messiah.

“For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain” (Acts 13:27-28).

It may indeed be said of Israel today, in a far more real sense than even in their historic past (2 Chron. 15:3), “Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.”

When Jesus of Nazareth — Emmanuel — God with us — came unto His own they would not receive Him;

they would “not frame their doings to turn unto their God” (Hos. 5:4), therefore “He hath withdrawn Himself from them.”

But the parenthesis of God's present dealing in grace towards the Gentiles is rapidly drawing to a close. God has not withdrawn Himself from Israel forever. They rejected their Messiah when He came as the Son of God ready to bless and to save. He has in consequence become to them “as a lion, and as a young lion”; He has, so to speak, *torn and gone away* (Hos. 5:14).

“I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek My face: in their affliction they will seek Me early” (Hos. 5:15).

Here, then, we learn the conditions laid down by Jehovah — repentance and confession, “till they acknowledge their offense,” or “till they declare themselves guilty.”

The next verse shows us where He has gone. He has gone to His place — the place from whence He came. He came from God, and has gone back to God. It tells us also how long He will leave them to themselves, reaping the fruit of their own folly, without interfering on their behalf — “I will go.”

How hard it is for them as a nation to own their guilt! Waves of trouble have swept over them since that fatal day when they cried, “Crucify Him,” and “His blood be on us and on our children.” But presently their affliction will become so severe that, like Joseph's brethren, they will say — “We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this tribulation come upon us” (Gen. 42:21-22).

Then they will in deep contrition seek Jehovah's face. They will take them words, and turn to the Lord and say unto Him — "Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously" (Hos. 14:2).

And oh! how speedily will they find Jehovah's forgiveness. "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us: He hath smitten, and He will bind us up" (Hos. 6:1).

But now follows a most remarkable and suggestive prophetic utterance. "After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight" (Hos. 6:2).

These words cannot be taken in a literal sense. These days cannot be days of twenty-four hours; they must be understood in a figurative manner. And when we remember that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and also that the day of Israel's future restoration and blessing will be the millennial day of Christ's glorious reign (the second circle in our diagram), is it not a striking and thrilling thought that just about two thousand years have passed since Calvary, when Israel cried, "Crucify Him"?

The parenthesis of grace to the Gentiles is nearing its close. The 70th week is nearing its accomplishment. In the last half of that week the time of great tribulation will take place. Then will be Israel's cry of repentance and confession. Then will be "the third day" of their national resurrection, when they "shall live in His sight."

A. H. Burton

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