

Who Confirmed The Covenant?

In the prevailing view of Bible prophecy, the well known passage in Daniel chapter 9 concerning the 70 weeks of Daniel is commonly interpreted to put forth the proposition that the Antichrist will make a 7 year treaty with the Jewish people. But is this proposition actually accurate, and if it is not, what are the implications for the rather large cluster of prophetic interpretations that rest upon this idea of a treaty that will be broken “in the midst of the week?” (Daniel 9:27)

Daniel’s 70th week is one of the premier prophetic passages in the entire Bible — but it has been distorted to the point where the interpretation that is popularly offered is so far off from what the text actually says that most believers simply take the interpretation for granted. This traditional interpretation has become so deeply ingrained that study Bibles routinely offer it in their margin notes. Indeed, few people are aware that it is this very text that is the primary passage used to teach the faulty idea of a 7-year tribulation, and the fictional 7-year treaty. The truth is, there is not one verse in the entire Bible that teaches either concept.

The key to Daniel’s 70 Week passage is found in the summary of what is to occur during a period described as “70 weeks.” That summary occurs in Daniel 9:24:

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to

[a] finish the transgression

[b] and to make an end of sins,

[c] and to make reconciliation for iniquity,

[d] and to bring in everlasting righteousness,

[e] and to seal up the vision and prophecy,

[f] and to anoint the most holy.”

Various sequential aspects of the prophecy are then detailed, including how long it will be until the coming of “Messiah the prince,” and how long His ministry will last. These details are found in verses 25 and 26. Then the prophecy bluntly informs us that after the Messiah has come and gone, an unnamed “people” will come and destroy “the city and the sanctuary.” (verse 26)

The last aspect of the prophecy elaborates on the destruction of the sanctuary and the abominations that are to occur. It even describes the reason for the devastation as the text tells us it is “...for the overspreading of abominations [that] he shall make it desolate.” (Dan. 9:27)

Once again, it’s crucial that we see that Jesus the Messiah is the fulfillment of these prophecies — and the totality of what He accomplishes is in verse 24. One may simply read through the points of verse 24 and ask WHO fulfills each and every aspect of the prophecy? The answer is JESUS CHRIST.

Another way to approach this is to reverse the perspective. Does the Antichrist “finish the transgression?” Of course not. Can it be said that the Beast is the one who will “make an end of sins?” Obviously not. Does the Son of Perdition “make reconciliation for iniquity?” The answer is self-evident. Does the wicked one “seal up the vision and prophecy?” He does not. And does the Antichrist “anoint the most holy?” Of course not.

The focal point of the entire prophecy is JESUS CHRIST. It may also be instructive to recognize that because we are reading this prophecy so many years after its fulfillment we don't fully appreciate the incredible accuracy in it. We need to point out that Daniel's incredible work was written about 550 years before JESUS was born!

It's worth noting that the coming of the Messiah was always the central hope implied in virtually every prophecy. The belief that God would send a Messiah is the great historic longing that existed in almost every historic time period of Israel and Judah. One of the great wonders of this prophecy is that it not only provided precious details about the arrival of the Messiah, it even included a countdown to the events that would lead to His arrival!

Conversely, the Antichrist is never mentioned. There is no mention of a 7-year treaty, nor a 7-year tribulation. All of those understandings have been artificially attached to the prophecy. The central message in this entire prophecy is the arrival of the Messiah, and what will happen once He arrives. Having said that, let's take it chronologically.

The first part of the prophecy, after the summary in verse 24, breaks down the period into separate components. Verse 25 says 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.” Most prophecy teachers have recognized the ‘year for a day’ principle in this prophetic language. Under this perspective, each “week” is seen as a seven year period. Thus, the first period of “seven weeks” may accurately be depicted as seven seven-year periods — or 49 years. The second period of “threescore and two weeks” (which is 62 weeks) may be seen as 62 seven-year periods, or 434 years. That totals 69 “weeks” or 483 years — leaving only the third period of one “week” (7 years) for the total of 70 weeks.

What the text is saying is that the commandment to build Jerusalem will trigger three time periods. To offer a rough paraphrase, it's telling us the commandment will be given, then 49 years later something related to the prophecy will happen. Then a period of 434 years will elapse, and then the Messiah will arrive. The last period of 7 years will then elapse. A characterization of the first portion of the prophecy is added when the text tells us the time when the sanctuary is to be rebuilt will be “troublous.”

Textual evidence in the historical books of Nehemiah and Ezra suggest that it took about 49 years to rebuild the wall and the temple after the command to construct them was given by the Persian king Cyrus: “Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.” (Ezra 1:2).

After the initial building period of 49 years elapsed, the second period of 434 years went by with almost nothing occurring that was related to the messianic expectation. This second period is the period between the last book of the Old Testament (Malachi) and the coming of Jesus Christ — and it turns out to be 434 years!

It is at this point that the gigantic error is made in the prophetic interpretation — and it changes the meaning of almost everything. Because the prophecy is broken up into 3 period (49 years, 434 years, and 7 years), prophecy interpreters claim that the prophecy was "suspended" after the Messiah arrived, and the last 7 year period, which they identify as the tribulation, was pushed far into the future. They then say the Antichrist will emerge and inaugurate that last 7-year period. The problem is, the text never actually says any of that, nor does it even infer a gap between the 69th and 70th week.

The Messiah arrives after the 2nd period of 434 years (62 weeks in the text). There is no reason to believe the unfolding of the timeline stops at that point. Thus, the Messiah arrives at the beginning of the 70th week and it commenced when He arrived. Remember, the focus of the prophecy is on the Messiah who must accomplish everything specified within the 70-week period.

After the Messiah arrives, the text simply continues with the chronological description: "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off..." (Daniel 9:26) This verse is simply saying that after the second period of 434 years (the 62 weeks) has gone by, the Messiah is to be "cut off." It then continues the chronological statement from the point of the 'cutting off' and says that at some unspecified time after the Messiah is cut off, "the city and the sanctuary" will be destroyed.

In the next verse, the prophecy provides us with the details of the cutting off of the Saviour. Again, the focal point of the entire prophecy is the Messiah, so after He arrives, "he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week..." (Daniel 9:27) This is precisely what would be expected as when He arrived, there would be "one week" left to the 70 weeks. The obvious question should be how can the Antichrist suddenly get inserted into this prophecy and "confirm" a covenant that has never been mentioned? Indeed, the Antichrist himself has never been mentioned in the entire text!

Furthermore, it's useful to recognize that the term covenant is not the same term as the word treaty. We separate the Bible into the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the word "testament" is interchangeable with the term covenant (see Hebrews 9:15). On the other hand, a treaty is a political instrument that is used between nations — not a sacred agreement between God and man.

In the Old Testament, God made an agreement with man that if the people will adhere to His "covenant," He will protect and keep them and be their God. This is articulated in Exodus with the children of Israel where God says "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people..." (Exodus 19:5). In the very passage in question in Daniel, which is prophetic on its face, God further promises that He will bring the Messiah who will confirm the covenant that He has already made.

Although it is a new covenant in that it brings out certain characteristics that were somewhat veiled in the Old Testament, because it is a covenant with Israel, it is actually a renewal of the covenant that God made through Moses. Thus in Jeremiah, God says "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel..." (Jeremiah 31:31)

Therefore, about 50 years after God promised to Jeremiah that He would remember Israel with another covenant that will build upon the existing covenant, He tells Daniel that “the Messiah the Prince...shall confirm the covenant with many....” (Daniel 9:25, 27).

The New Testament writers recognized this as the Apostle Paul explicitly wrote on the subject when he stated “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after....” (Galatians 3:17) Through this confirmation, we learn that Christ is the heir of all the promises. He is the Seed of Abraham upon whom the blessings are bestowed, and He is the only one who “brings in everlasting righteousness.” (Daniel 9:2).

The twist on the truth that has come to dominate the prophetic expectations of so many millions will reap a bitter harvest. As vast numbers of Christians are deceived on this subject, their lives and actions are predicated on a false understanding of the immediate future — and the fruit of it will be dreadful. Very few understand the enormous spiritual ramifications of embracing significant error in our prophetic perspective. Indeed, it was the fact that Israel did not recognize the time of their visitation from God that brought the nation of Israel to “*the overspreading of abominations*” that were the natural outgrowth of their refusal to recognize Jesus as their promised Messiah.

Literally millions upon millions of believers are now similarly deceived in that the person explicitly described in the scriptures as the MESSIAH is actually seen as the Antichrist. Our Saviour told the Pharisees that attributing the works of God to the Devil was the unpardonable sin (Matthew 12:31). The blind religious leaders of yesteryear claimed the person doing the miracles in their presence was actually a vessel of the Devil. The truth was, that person was Jesus Christ and the Jewish leaders committed blasphemy of the Holy Spirit in their refusal to recognize Jesus was the individual prophesied of in Daniel 9:27.

And now the modern day Pharisees, the denominational Christians of our time, are claiming these magnificent prophecies apply to the Antichrist, when the exact opposite is true as these words testify of the awesome truth of “the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ?” (Titus 2:13) As the import of this great truth sinks in, it affects practically everything — including the actual identity of the chosen people, our individual standing in Christ, and the immediate future of America in a prophetic context.

The very fact that most “believers” will simply discard this pointed exegesis testifies that it is the organized churches that have perpetrated the great fraud that Christendom finds herself entangled in. And because of their lazy refusal to study the truth of the scriptures on a personal level — instead relying upon the false doctrines of their hireling shepherds — we will shortly see the big surprise in which so many that thought they were on safe ground will be turned away. The scriptures will not be broken, and they tell us it is “for which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience.” (Colossians 3:6)

James Lloyd – April 21, 2003

Note: This article was discovered after ***DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND*** was completed and edited slightly by myself. It gives further proof that Daniel 9:27 is a prophecy about Jesus Christ and not the Anti-christ.