

THE ORACLE OF DESTRUCTION: A GREAT PROPHECY FULFILLED

By Lloyd Dale
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INTRODUCTION:

The following material was first written as a series of letters to a young friend of the author at the same time it was presented in a series of Wednesday night Bible studies. It is presently being offered in booklet form that we might study the secrets of the mystery of the Olive Tree together. There are many reasons for this booklet. Including but not limited to the following:

First, that we might GLORIFY our Living, Triune God in Christ who has Himself set before us this great TRUTH that He might be glorified both in His goodness in giving Christ to die for HIS people, and in His severity in bringing the Jewish kingdom (nation) to the condition of desolation as a result of His wrath because of their rejection and crucifixion of the Lord of Glory.

Second, that we might set before us the central theme--THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST--that God came down to reconcile us (His people) unto Himself by this great, unparalleled SACRIFICE His only begotten Son (Himself) at Calvary. It gives us in detail, that in His being cut off for His people He would make an end of sins by Himself becoming the sin offering for His people: that He would make reconciliation for iniquity so that poor sinners could be reconciled to the Holy God; and that He would bring in everlasting righteousness so that His people for whom He died would have a right standing before God.

The third reason for this series of letters is to show that these Scriptures *DO NOT* provide a prophecy of an anti-christ who is yet to come! Neither does it set before us a seven year tribulation period that is yet to come! These things are based upon a wrong interpretation of these Scriptures which then led to the wrong interpretation of many other Scriptures. As we will discover, these Scriptures (Dan.9:20-27) reveal the coming of the Messiah, the ruler of Judah (Genesis 49:10), His confirmation of the Covenant, His rejection and crucifixion by His people (the Jews, Acts 4:10; Acts 7:52; and others), the sign of Jonas--forty years [AD 30--70] given for them to repent of their abominations--they DID NOT (as a kingdom/nation), and their desolation as a result of the destruction of Jerusalem and the TEMPLE coming through the wrath of God [because of their continuing abominations] as delivered by the Roman Soldiers [the same instrument the Jews had used to crucify the Messiah -- poetic justice], "...the minister of God, a revenger to EXECUTE WRATH upon *them* that doeth evil *abominations*. Romans

13:4 (emphasis added) All this is confirmed by Our Lord Himself in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24ff; Mark 13ff; and Luke 21ff).

My prayer is that as we study together our gracious Saviour by his Spirit will open the eyes of our understanding to give us light and knowledge from His blessed Word. Throughout this series our focus will generally be prophecy as seen from "the top of the olive tree". As the greatest amount of information about the olive tree in one place in Scripture is found in Romans 11, this will be our point of departure and return as we make many forays into the Holy Writ to discover its amazing truths.

One of the amazing things illuminated by our view from the top of the olive tree is the **GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD:**

Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness: otherwise you also shall be cut off. (Romans 11:22)

CHAPTER ONE

This passage (Daniel 9) speaks of goodness because it is a great statement concerning the work of our Lord Jesus Christ in bringing the grace and mercy of God to His people by His substitutionary work on the cross. And it speaks of severity because it sets forth the severity of God against the abominations (sins) of the Jewish nation in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of Glory.

The Scripture that speaks prophetically about this momentous occasion is the Book of Daniel. It (especially chapter 9) is one of the most marvelous and most important in Holy Writ. As indicated above, chapter 9 is of supreme importance, especially verses 20-27:

20 And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; 21 Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. 22 And he informed [me], and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. 23 At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew [thee]; for thou [art] greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. 24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, 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. 25 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 threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof [shall be] with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 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. (Daniel 9:20-27)

Among other things, this Scripture gives a time measure, starting from the return of the Jews out of the Babylonian Captivity down to the culmination of this (Daniel's) prophecy.

PROPHECY ILLUMINATED

During the past 16 months (October 1995-February 1996) this writer has spent more than 1200 hours studying what he has chosen to call Olive Tree Theology (for the lack of a better name) and Bible Prophecy as seen from the "top of the Olive Tree". As this study is being presented and as you read this material it is been my prayer that the Gracious Holy Spirit would open our hearts, eyes and minds that we might see and understand the truth as recorded in the inspired Scriptures.

This Scripture contains one of the most marvelous and most important prophecies recorded in Scripture. It is probably the "water-shed" prophecy of the Old Testament. The proper understanding of much New Testament prophecy (As presented in the Gospels, the Epistles, and Revelation) depends upon a proper understanding of this particular passage of Scripture. ***It also happens to be one of the most misunderstood and misused prophecies in Scripture.***

In the first portion of the 9th chapter of Daniel, Daniel has been praying, fasting, and confessing his sins and the sins of his people. During his study, The Holy Spirit opened his understanding so that he "understood by the books the number of the years" (9:2) that his people would be held in the Babylonian captivity.

In answer to Daniel's prayer God sent the Messenger Gabriel "to give thee skill and understanding." (9:22)

This great prophecy which ***HAS BEEN FULFILLED*** sets before us the things contained here-in which we will study in detail. This prophecy pertaining to Daniel's people, their Temple [sanctuary] and the city of Jerusalem is set forth within the confines of a specifically described time frame of SEVENTY WEEKS. Bible students should recognize that these seventy weeks or 490 days are symbolic of years--each day representing a year, which is seventy weeks in this prophetic language equals 490 years of actual time.

This same year-for-a-day principle is used in Numbers 14:34:

After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, *even* forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, *even* forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.

Because of unbelief, the Israelites wandered for 40 years in the wilderness, a year for each day that the spies were absent searching out the land. This same scale is given in Ezekiel 4:4-6:

Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: *according* to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. 5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. 6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah ***forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.***

Now WE CAN KNOW THAT THIS INTERPRETATION IS TRUE because it has already been fulfilled. From the going forth of the Commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince (v.25) was 69 weeks or 483 years. It was 483 years from the time that the decree permitting the Jews to return from the Babylonian Captivity until the baptism of the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ, by John the Baptist in the river Jordan.

Christian scholarship is generally united in thinking that the seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks (that is 69 weeks or 483 years) does describes the time elapsed from the degree until the Baptism of the Messiah. However, concerning the final 70th week of the prophecy there are two entirely different interpretations that are held today – 1) the futurist interpretation and 2) the fulfilled interpretation.

The futurist interpretation claims a gap of 2000 +/- years separates the 70th week from the other 69 weeks. It claims that the 70th week refers to the antichrist that will make a covenant with the Jews. This covenant, they claim, is a seven year peace treaty between the anti-christ and the Jews which will allow the Jews to offer sacrifices in a "rebuilt" temple at Jerusalem. But, the anti-christ will break this peace treaty in the middle [after 3 1/2 years] of the 7 years and turn on the Jews, cause the sacrifices to stop, and then will persecute them horribly (no reason given) for the next 3 1/2 years. *All of this, in spite of the fact, that there is no other Scripture that supports this view.*

This futurist interpretation causes its adherents to see and discuss much about antichrist thus glorifying antichrist. It also causes its adherents to hold out a false hope to the Jews after the flesh; thinking them to be (even in apostasy and unbelief) God's chosen people, and that in spite of their continued unbelief they will be brought back into the land, build the temple, and be accepted of God and protected by Him in a tribulation period. No matter that this whole idea is totally **contrary** to I John 2:21c-23:

...no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denies the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son, the same hath not the Father...

It is quite clear from this verse and many others that those who do not have the Son cannot possibly be the chosen of the father.

The futurist interpretation above is foolishness and Christ denying, i.e. antichrist, as will be clearly demonstrated by our study. As we continue with our study, we will see that the fulfilled interpretation is Christ honoring and thoroughly Biblical. We will demonstrate that there is no gap between the end of the 69 week and the beginning of the 70th week, i.e. that the 70th week followed right on the heels of the 69th week in normal sequence.

Our study will clearly demonstrate that the 70th week refers to the time when Christ came on the scene of history [His-story] to conform the promise of the Abrahamic Covenant [Gal. 3:16-17a], to inaugurate a New Covenant with the house of Judah and the house of Israel

[Jer.31:31-40; Heb.8:8-13], make an end to sins by becoming the sin-offering and covering the sins of the called out with His blood, shed for remission for sins committed under the old covenant [Mt 26:28; Ro 3:25; Heb 9:22; Heb 10:18], make reconciliation for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, and cause the sacrifices of the Law to cease by offering up the "once for all", final, and perfect sacrifice, Himself and last but not least sending the wrath of God upon the continuing abominations of the unbelieving, unrepentant Jewish nation leaders, the city of Jerusalem and the Temple to be consummated in utter desolation.

It will become clear from our study that the fulfillment of this prophecy and its being understood in this manner is Christ honoring in that it will cause us to see clearly the prophesied and completed work of our Matchless Saviour; given, rejected, crucified, risen, exalted, who accomplished the Father's will in bringing everlasting salvation and to Him belongs all the honor and glory. This study will clearly show that the only hope for the Jews as well as the Gentiles today and in every other day is in Jesus Christ, one by one unto and into Him.

The only hope held out to anyone is in the laying down of rebellion against God in repentance, and turning away from sin to a holy God by faith in Jesus Christ who gave Himself as the sacrifice for the sinner at Calvary. (Eph. 2:8-9,10)

For many years now the adversaries have deceived many by beclouding this prophecy under a smoke screen of false doctrine. When properly understood, this prophecy teaches that God prophesied to and through Daniel that the Jewish kingdom/nation would crown its transgression against God by "cutting off" His Son, the Messiah during the 70 weeks (490 years) and that they would be "cut off" from the kingdom [Matt. 21:43] because of their unbelief. Our Lord also confirmed this in Matthew 23:32-38:

Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. 33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of gehenna? 34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify; and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city: 35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. 36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation [the generation that lived in Jerusalem from 30 AD to 70 AD]. 37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killed the prophets, and stoned them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, and ye would not *be gathered!* 38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.(the house of Judah, Jerusalem and the Temple, emphasis added)

This is the reason for Jesus Christ's warning in the Olivet discourse (Matt. 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21) to His disciple's; to enable them to flee from the city of Jerusalem before His judgments fell in 68 - 70 AD. It is recorded in Luke 21:20-22 that He said:

20. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is near. 21 Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto [Jerusalem]. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written (this is a direct reference to Daniel's prophecy) may be fulfilled. (emphasis and comment added)

Yes, surely those "things that are written" were the prophecies given to Daniel about the destruction of his people, the house of Judah - the Jews - their City and their Temple; which took place in 68 - 70 AD. To this end, Matthew 24 also states:

15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso reads, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:

Jesus Christ foresaw this judgment coming for He knew the true word of prophecy, "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Rev.19:10)

This is what made Him weep over the city of Jerusalem as He went into it the last time before His crucifixion, as Luke 19 records:

41. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 Saying, If thou had known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things [which belong] unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. 43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

And thus Matthew 23 records the statement of Jesus Christ shortly before He left the Temple for the last time:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killed the prophets, and stoned them which are sent unto thee, how often I would have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, and ye would not *be gathered!* 38 Behold, your house (of Judah) is left unto you desolate.

In our next chapters we will be examining the details of the fulfillment of this prophecy; the coming and cutting off of Messiah, and the destruction and desolation of the Jewish Kingdom, her City and Temple: **THE GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD.**

"And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again."(Romans 11:22)

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