

Daniel And The Messiah

Introduction. I have wondered how many pages have been written about Jesus of Nazareth. Probably millions. We are going to explore just six verses in two passages of Daniel. The description of Jesus 7:13-14 is a part of a larger vision. Daniel's vision in 9:24-27 is related to his prayer for Israel's restoration and the future of the nation.

I. Daniel 7:13-14

- A. The epithet "Ancient of days" refers to God as an old and wise judge sitting in His courtroom (vss. 9, 22). Judgment is about to begin. The deeds of men are recorded in books (Exodus 32:32; Psalm 56:8; 69:28; Isaiah 65:6; Malachi 3:16; Luke 10:20; Revelation 20:12), but here the reference is to the deeds of the four kingdoms and the little horn.
- B. The "Son of man" emphasizes the humanity of the person Daniel saw. This person is seen coming with or riding the clouds of heaven, which, in scripture, is the exclusive prerogative of God (Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7). This figure represents Jesus.
 - 1. But this description was not just an indication of His humanity. That the "son of man" of vs. 13 was considered a divine person is affirmed by the high priest's charge of blasphemy (Mark 14:62-64). Jesus' use of this title for Himself is one of the strongest evidences that He claimed to be the Messiah.
 - 2. "Son of man" is especially common in physical and eternal judgment passages (Matthew 16:27-28; 19:28; 25:31), and the phrase "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven" is an allusion to the destruction of Jerusalem (Matthew 24:30).
- C. Vs. 14 emphasizes the universal and everlasting dominion or rule of the Son of man (cf. Matthew 28:18). The word translated "serve" in vs. 14 is used in Aramaic to refer only to the homage due to God. In stating that His kingdom will not be destroyed, it alludes to the focus of our next lesson.

II. Daniel 9:24-27

- A. Vs. 24 states the timeframe of "70 weeks" during which God would accomplish His plan of redemption for Israel. This period of time would elapse before the accomplishment of six great achievements for the holy city and Israel. The first three relate to the removal of sin; the second three to the restoration of righteousness.
 - 1. "Finish the transgression."
 - a) Israel would reject their Messiah (Matthew 16:21; 21:33-44; 27:25).
 - b) In this act they would fill up the cup of their iniquity (Matthew 23:32-39).
 - 2. "Make an end of sins."
 - a) With the coming of Messiah the law would be fulfilled in all its types and shadows (Matthew 5:17). With the death of Jesus on the cross there would no longer be the need to remember sins any more (Hebrews 8:12; 10:12).
 - b) Christ did not put an "end" to sin in the sense that wickedness was removed from the earth. The work of the Savior was to introduce a

“system” that could effectually and permanently provide freedom from sin (Romans 6:7).

3. “Make reconciliation for iniquity.”
 - a) The death of Jesus would change the relationship between man and God (Romans 5:6-10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:11-22; Hebrews 2:17).
 - b) While God had passed over sin in previous ages, He could not do so justifiably without the ensuing death of His Son (Acts 17:30-31; Hebrews 9:11-15).
 4. “Bring in everlasting righteousness.”
 - a) The era of “everlasting righteousness” is a reference to the gospel age and is made known through the gospel (Romans 1:16-17; 5:1-4).
 - b) This is not God’s or the Messiah’s personal righteousness; it is the means or system of making men righteous through faith (Romans 3:21-31; 10:4).
 5. “Seal up vision and prophecy.”
 - a) When Christ came, God’s revelation to man would be completed and men would understand the will of God (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 13:8-13).
 - b) For this reason, prophecy was confirmed, fulfilled, validated, and therefore sealed up (Acts 3:24; 1 Peter 1:10-11; Jude 3).
 6. “Anoint the most Holy.”
 - a) The expression “most Holy” is an allusion to Christ Himself. The “anointed” is a reference to the Lord with the Holy Spirit at the beginning of His ministry (Matthew 3:16; Acts 10:38).
 - b) The anointing of Jesus was prophesied in the Old Testament (Isaiah 61:1). Therefore, this statement refers to Christ. The kingdom of heaven under the Messiah would become a reality for all men (Acts 2:25-36; Hebrews 1:8-9).
- B. The 70 weeks.
1. Various ways of reckoning the “70 weeks.”
 - a) Many consider the “70 weeks” to equal 490 years (cf. Numbers 14:34).
 - (1) The millennial view: Reckons the date from which the weeks are to be counted from the decree to Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem (445 B.C.). However, the theory must be interrupted and proposes a series of fantastic events at the end of time based off the book of Revelation.
 - (2) The chronological view: Reckons a beginning date from the decree of Artaxerxes in Ezra 7:1 (458 B.C.). The addition of 483 years brings us to the final week in A.D. 25.
 - b) The non-chronological view: Reckons the “70 weeks” to be a figurative representation of the time in which God would complete His plan for Israel in bringing the Messiah into the world.
 2. The vision concludes with the destruction of Jerusalem. We need not speculate about this verse because Jesus gave us the interpretation.
 - a) Christ had informed His disciples that the day was coming when the Jew’s “house” would be left desolate (Matthew 23:38). Not one stone would be left upon another (Matthew 24:2).

- b) In Matthew 24:15 Jesus identifies the “abomination of desolation” as Emperor Titus and the invading Roman armies (cf. Mark 13:14; Luke 19:41-44; 21:20). It was an abomination because it destroyed everything holy to the Jews.
- (1) In A.D. 66, the Jews revolted against Rome and sparked a bloody conflict. The city was overthrown after a five month siege in A.D. 70 (Matthew 22:7).
 - (2) Even the Jews recognized that this was a fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy. Josephus said, “Daniel also wrote concerning the Roman government, and that our country should be made desolate by them” (Antiquities, X.XI.7).
- c) A question arises about the “he” of 9:27, is it “Messiah, the Prince” (9:25) or “the prince that shall come” (9:26)?
- (1) Premillennialists believe that the “prince” is the Antichrist, who will be the leader of the restored Roman Empire.
 - (a) The destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was only an illustration of a future invasion and destruction to be led by Antichrist. This prince supposedly will make an agreement with the Jews to protect them from the other nations, and this agreement will be set for seven years.
 - (b) This final seven years is the completion of Daniel’s 490-year period. Between the death of Christ and the signing of this covenant there is the “Age of the Church.” The 490 years are in operation only when Israel is in God’s will as God’s people. When Israel crucified Christ, she was set aside and the “prophetic clock” stopped ticking. But when the Antichrist signs his pact with Israel, then the last seven years of Daniel’s “70 weeks” will begin. This seven-year period is known as the Tribulation.
 - (c) After three and a half years, Antichrist will invade the land, break his covenant, and set himself up as world dictator. He will stop all worship at the Jewish temple and force the world to worship him and his image. This allegedly is the abomination of desolation. Jesus will then return to earth, meet the armies at Armageddon, and defeat them.
 - (2) Two problems exist. The first is that the places where the term “antichrist” is used does not teach what Premillennialists teach (1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7). The second problem is that the Premillennialist must pick and chose what to interpret figuratively and literally (cf. Revelation 1:1).
- d) Two events -- the crucifixion of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem -- are dealt with in vss. 26-27.
- (1) Vs. 27 echoes the content of vs. 26. Jesus’ crucifixion fulfilled the Old Testament sacrificial system and rendered the temple and altar obsolete.
 - (2) The covenant is confirmed for “one week” (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 8:6) which corresponds to the ministry of Christ to the Jews and the

preaching of the gospel by the apostles to the Jews (Matthew 15:24; Acts 2:1-47).

- (3) The “people of the prince” are the Romans who destroyed the temple which Jesus’ death had rendered obsolete.

Conclusion. The Messiah died on the cross so we could have the remission of our sins. However, God had more in store. He had planned His church from the beginning of the world (Ephesians 3:10-11), and we will discover the connection between the church and the kingdom in our final lesson tomorrow night.