

Understanding The Tribulation

In the Book of Daniel

While the words which link the scriptures together have been carefully considered, the important ones are those in blue, as usual, for *they* are God's words and *cannot* be wrong.

One of the keys to open our understanding of the Tribulation is the book of Daniel, and its most important prophecy for this subject, which provides the chronology of Messianic prediction from Daniel's time right up to the establishment of God's Kingdom here on earth, is found in chapter 9. No wonder those who think the Old Testament has no value now that we are under the New Covenant, cannot understand prophecy!

Daniel's famous 70 weeks prophecy is Daniel 9:24-27, '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.'

Verse 25 explains that from the commandment of Artaxerxes (Nehemiah 2:1) to build the city of Jerusalem shall be 69 weeks (7+62 weeks, a day for a year) **until Christ's death**. That is, 7 weeks is 49 years, 62 weeks is 434 years, which makes 483 years.

The final week is mentioned in verse 27, when the 'prince that shall come' (The Beast or AntiChrist) verse 26, will confirm a covenant with Israel, but in the middle of those last 7 years, will cause 'the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,' verse 27, and bring desolation to the temple or sanctuary by fulfilling Jesus Christ's repetition of this prophecy in Matthew 24:15, which proves that the 70th week is yet future – that there is a gap or extended hiatus between Daniel's 69th and 70th week.

This is the conclusion of theologians like E W Bullinger, in his Companion Bible, and M F Unger in his Commentary on the Old Testament, but it should be quite obvious to us when we put Christ's words in Matthew 24:15 together with Daniel 9:27, 'When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:). '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.'

How will we know when the 70th week, the last 7 years, start? We know **from Matthew 24:14**, 'And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and **then the end will come.**' The word 'end' here is the Greek word 'telos', 5056, a termination, the limit, the last in any succession, by which a thing is finished. It is the end of man's

freedom to go his own way without any intervention from his Creator, and then Christ's words will be witnessed to by the most dramatic and miraculous intervention the world has ever seen, fulfilling Matthew 24:14 to the letter, in a way that man's best efforts could never achieve!

Revelation 14:6-7, 'Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had **the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth--to every nation, tribe, language and people.** He said in a loud voice, "**Fear God and give him glory**, because the hour of his judgment has come. **Worship him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water.**" (See our article, 'Dreams and Visions') This unmistakable event is the only way that Jesus Christ's words could possibly be fulfilled, if you think about it! **No one** can escape this miraculous proclamation, which marks the beginning of the Tribulation.

Our God is very merciful and fair. Even then He gives everyone time to repent, and act. This event is very soon followed in the very next verse Rev. 14:8, by the **fall** of Babylon, '**Another angel, a second, followed, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality."** Daniel's 70th week of 7 years has started, and God gives further instructions to His people who live in 'Babylon', who need to take immediate action, before *Babylon* is brought down **by God's own hands**, in Revelation 18:4, '**And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.**' Here God is telling His people, the descendants of Jacob, (Cf. Jeremiah 30:7) **who have acted like Babylon** in its sins, to flee before He acts to punish the United States and Britain, the leading nations descended from Jacob's grandsons Manasseh and Ephraim.

Not only are they to flee, but they are told where to go, and given vital work from God, to do when they get there. (See our articles, 'The Watchmen of Ephraim').

We also learn from Daniel 8:13-14 that they will have only 7 months from the start of the 7 years to travel and begin God's work, before Babylon falls and the Second Seal, world war, makes travel impossible for civilians.

Returning to Daniel, and regarding Daniel 11:21-45, E. W Bullinger writes in the margin of his famous 'Companion Bible' :

"THE FUTURE (Still Future To Us)

Here begins the portion of this prophecy which is **still future to us** (1912), "the latter days" of 10:14.

21 'a vile person'. One of the 12 titles given to the antichrist. See not on 7;8. The prophecy concerning him is *continuous* to the end of the chapter."

Yes, in chapter 11, starting in verse 21, the 'beast' of Revelation – the antichrist or the biblical 'beast', arrives, in prophetic duality pictured by Antiochus 4. Christ Himself confirms that this prophecy is for the End Time in Matthew 24:15, "**So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand).**"

Reading these verses in Daniel 11, we find a *future* continuum in which we see the development, success, self aggrandisement, defeat and final destruction of the antichrist or beast – an important chapter indeed!

Essentially, the beast starts by making a duplicitous covenant or alliance which gives Israel the protection of Europe in the event of invasion, Daniel 11:23, '**And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully, and he shall become strong with a *small people.***' When this

covenant is activated, at the fall of 'Jacob' here described as 'Babylon', the Arab nations invade Israel, but the rapid response of the beast, with just a *token force*, limits the invasion to the West Bank and East Jerusalem. (Compare Zechariah 14:2).

Having gained his foothold in Israel, he then uses his growing power to corrupt and bribe his way into the use of Israel into a staging post for a move against the King of the South, Verse 25, '**And he shall stir up his power and his heart against the king of the south with a great army. And the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great and mighty army, but he shall not stand, for plots shall be devised against him.**'

Betrayed by his allies, the King of the South is defeated and the rising beast returns to Europe with great riches, where his charismatic reputation grows, along with his power, verse 28, '**And he shall return to his land with great wealth, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will and return to his own land.**' One thing he most hates however, and that is the broadcast of the message God has commanded should go forth from Jerusalem to the nations by then in defeat and captivity, the nations descended from Jacob, including the US, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and including the Jews, (See our Article 'The End-Time Commands of The Lord'). This is because it also warns against the rise and worship of the beast (Revelation 14:9-10) and not to worship his image or take his mark, (Revelation 13:15-18).

Somewhat later, he again turns his attention to the Middle East, but goes beyond his EU mandate and is told to withdraw. In his humiliation at having his growing ambitions checked, he vents his anger against God's people, Daniel 11:29-30, "**At the appointed time he will invade the South again, but this time the outcome will be different from what it was before. Ships of the western coastlands will oppose him, and he will lose heart. Then he will turn back and vent his fury against the holy covenant. He will return and show favour to those who forsake the holy covenant.**' This is the persecution of the 5th Seal, and it impacts the broadcast in Jerusalem and causes some Christians to forsake their calling, but many remain strong and continue God's work at the cost of imprisonment or death. Verses 32-35, '**He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant, but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder. When they stumble, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery, and some of the wise shall stumble, so that they may be refined, purified, and made white, until the time of the end, for it still awaits the appointed time.**'

The "**tribulation of those days**' (Matthew 24:29) is coming to an end as the beast takes full control in Europe, overcoming all opposition there and also in Israel, shutting down the broadcast, killing some of God's servants in Jerusalem and starting to claim that he is divine. Daniel 11:33,36, '**And the wise among the people shall make many understand, though for some days they shall stumble by sword and flame, by captivity and plunder...."And the king shall do as he wills. He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper till the indignation is accomplished;**'

Now, his ambitions will not be denied, and he is empowered by Satan, not only to take away the '**daily sacrifice**' of the broadcast witness to the nations, but to invade the whole land with his armies in furtherance of his ambitions, verses 40-41, "**At the time of the end, the king of the south shall push at him, but the king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships. And he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through. He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites.**

Now at last he will show these hateful Christians that they were wrong, as he fulfils Matthew 24:15, by the prophecy in 2 Thessalonians 2:4, **'He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship. As a result, he seats himself in the sanctuary of God and himself declares that he is God. ISV.**

Many people have been taught that these verses refer to the Jews' possible future temple, and future sacrifices of animals. However the alternative should be considered, that the word 'temple' can be, and often is translated 'sanctuary'; that our sacrifices are spiritual, that the apostle Paul, who wrote **2 Thessalonians 2:4 about the beast in the temple or sanctuary**, refers to *God's people* as the temple of God several times, eg. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, **'Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.'** (cf. 2 Cor. 6:16, Eph. 2:21, Rev. 3:12)

The apostle Peter carries the analogy further in 1 Peter 2:5, **'And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God.'** New Living Translation. Down the ages, many have recognised that Paul did not expect the antichrist to take his seat in a Jewish Temple, but rather that he will usurp divine prerogatives *within* the Christian Church, as did Antiochus *in* the Jewish Temple of his day.

This alternative makes sense, because Jesus Christ Himself removed the special relationship of the Jews to God at their rejection of Himself as their Messiah, Matthew 8:12 and 21:43, **"I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth,"** and **"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."** NIV.

The children of God now, are not the Jewish nation, but those of the **New Covenant**, so it is not logical to regard a Jewish temple as the sanctuary of God, though individual Jews may repent and participate in that covenant.

The Beast's blasphemy among those in God's Church at Jerusalem who had been deceived to believe his flattery, meant nothing to him when he found that the faithful Christians had escaped. He immediately sends out an army in pursuit, but you must read of that in Revelation 12:15-17, or in our article 'From Jerusalem to the Sea of Glass'.

This article is examining the Tribulation, and so far we have seen fulfilled the first 5 Seals of Revelation 6, which include the collapse, invasion and captivity of Jacob's two leading tribes, in the nations of America and Britain. We also see a mention of the 6th and 7th Seals in chapter 12. The arrival of Christ for his Bride, at the 6th seal, and the following Great Tribulation, and even a reference to the **Lake of Fire**, is mentioned in Daniel 12:1-3, **"At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.'** God's faithful people are delivered, and so do not experience the Great Tribulation.

Daniel heard, but could not fully understand, because the book with all the details of the Great tribulation, the book of Revelation, had not yet been written. 12:8, **'I heard, but I did not**

understand. Then I said, “O my lord, what shall be the outcome of these things?” He said, “Go your way, Daniel, for the words are shut up and sealed **until the time of the end.**”

However, Daniel does provide a brief summary of the 7th Seal, the time of the Great Tribulation, in chapter 11:40-45. In verse 40 we see the beast’s invasion of the Middle East, ‘**And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.**’ We are told in verse 41 that certain nearby nations escape : ‘**He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites,**’ the nation of Jordan today.

The reason for this is found in Revelation 12:14-16, ‘**And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.**’ The woman pictures God’s people who flee from Jerusalem before the Beast arrives. The wings are God’s protection, the serpent is Satan, who directs the Beast, and the water is the army which the Beast then loses. Never again will he risk sending his armies after God’s people, some of whom find sanctuary in Jordan (Edom, Ammon, Moab). This occurs at the 6th Seal.

He goes on to extend his power over many nations in the following 3½ years, and just a few of them are listed here, verse 40-43, ‘**He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt, and the Libyans and the Cushites shall follow in his train.**’

The King of the South’s Islamic combine, led, it seems by Iran, is comprehensively defeated and the rich oilfields of the Middle East fall into the hands of the beast. This is a great loss to the nations of the Far East, including Russia and the Orient, for they have relied upon that oil. It does not take long before they react and the beast hears news of gathering armies beginning to move West along the Chinese built infrastructure serving the gas pipelines to Europe. Dan 11:44, ‘**But reports from the east and the north will alarm him, and he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many.**’

Soon, the staggering numbers come in, and the beast rushes to counter those armies of 200 million! Revelation 9:16, ‘**And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.**’ Realising that Jerusalem is now central to his empire, the beast transfers his capital to that city, Daniel 11:45, ‘**And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain.....**’ And there Daniel winds up his account of that final 70th week with these few words, ‘**yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.**’

Though we must look elsewhere for the concluding details of the Tribulation, without Daniel’s contribution we would not know that there are two parts, the ‘tribulation of those days’, and the ‘Great Tribulation’, both of 3½ years, which together make up the 70th week, both mentioned in Matthew 24.

Daniel’s book then concludes with a comment that God’s faithful people will be delivered from the Tribulation at the First Resurrection, ‘**And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.**’ This will take place at the 3½ year point, when the power of God’s people to send forth their message of hope will

be shattered by the arrival of the beast's invading armies, Daniel 12:7, 'And I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the stream; he raised his right hand and his left hand toward heaven and swore by him who lives forever that it would be for a time, times, and half a time, and that when the shattering of the power of the holy people comes to an end all these things would be finished.'

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