



## The Prophecy Stated

The prophecy we are considering is found in Daniel 9:24-27, and reads as follows : "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. 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. And after three-score 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. 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." The entire chapter should be carefully read in connection with this study.

The Basis of the Postponement Theory. It must be quite obvious to any reverent student of the Word of God that no one should postpone or alter a prophecy without Scriptural grounds for doing so. We must remember that only Christ has the authority to institute a doctrine. Did Christ teach that His kingdom was postponed? Did He introduce a parenthesis ? It is not difficult to discover places where He challenged the authority of teaching that ran counter to His eternal purpose. He regulated the Mosaic teaching on divorce when abuses crept in. He interpreted the "eye for an eye" teaching as out of harmony with His doctrine of "love your enemies." He

scorned the Pharasaic interpretation of the Sabbath when it made a mockery out of His eternal purpose. Jesus did not hesitate to correct any misunderstanding that arose in connection with His true mission. But we look in vain for the least hint of a suggestion that He deviated in the slightest degree from the complete fulfillment of prophetic utterances relating to His kingdom.

Dispensationalists recognize the absence of any clear Scripture setting forth the postponement theory so they liken the prophets to men standing on a Western plain gazing at the distant mountains. In the dim distance they could behold the rugged peaks but could not discern the valleys that intervene between the far off ranges. These valleys they maintain illustrate the interposition of the Church age between the two comings of Christ. The Great Parenthesis, p. 12. We would like to correct this plausible illustration regarding the prophets being likened to men on a Western plain. How, for instance, could Moses stand on the sea shore and write, "Let the waters under heaven be gathered into ONE place." Gen. 1:9. Certainly not by gazing over the expanse of that comparatively small body of water with which he was familiar. Nevertheless he enunciated a truth which the most modern discoveries verify, namely that all the oceans of the world are joined together. The answer is inspiration. The prophets penetrated the future in a manner that could be likened to a bird's eye view of the events to come in which nothing could possibly escape their view. They did not describe their own vision but wrote what "Thus saith the Lord." "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved of the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1:21. Any suggestion that the prophets were mistaken is a reflection on the Holy Ghost.

Under a chapter heading entitled, "Further Instances of the Hidden Interval," H. A. Ironside labors to introduce some evidence of the Church Age parenthesis that escaped the view of the prophets. We cite but two quotations to illustrate our point. Dan. 8:22, "Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power. (verse 23) And in the latter time of their kingdom . . ." Mr. Ironside contends that the Church Age intervenes between these two verses. Quoting from Dan. 11:35, "And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end ; because it is yet for a time appointed. (verse 36) And the king shall do according to his will . . ." Again it is contended that the parenthesis intervenes between these two verses which are separated only by the conjunction "and." We readily grant the accuracy of Mr. Ironside's comment, that the prophets could not possibly have realized any intervening event of such stupendous importance as the entire Church Age between the separate clauses of these sentences. We must also confess that we, too, fail to be convinced of the parenthesis on the basis of the vague and obscure evidence submitted.

The Prophecy Explained. The prophecy we are examining un-equivocally declares that "Seventy weeks are determined." Pre-millennialists contend that the seventieth week failed to materialise after the sixty-ninth and that it is still future and that God's clock stopped. For those

who share their interpretation, God's plan must be regarded as indeterminate and capable of various solutions. But for those who just look for God to do exactly what He said He would do, and do it precisely when He declared it would be done, there is no problem at all. It all comes out "according to His determinate counsel and foreknowledge." Even the Scofield R.B. suggests that prophetic time is not supposed to be indeterminate when it says, "That when Christ appeared to the Jewish people, the next thing in the order of revelation as it then stood, should have been the setting up of the Davidic kingdom." p 998. In other words the 70th week of prophecy arrived and should have been fulfilled but since the events did not coincide with their views they contend that the prophecy itself failed, and boldly state that God substituted an alternate plan which was unforeseen by Old Testament prophets. It is our view that anything touching God's eternal purpose should not be changed without authority from Christ Himself, and any suggestion of a change should be subjected to minute scrutiny by God's children.

You will notice that the sixty-nine weeks are divided into two periods of events signified as seven weeks and threescore and two weeks. This sixty-nine week period, (literally 69 times 7, or 483 years) ended at the baptism of Jesus. This event marked the anointing and manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah. It was then the heavens opened and the Spirit descended upon Him as God spoke saying, "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." Matt. 3 :17. It was at this time that Jesus officially entered upon His duties and was publicly anointed as Messiah. Henceforth He was Messiah the Prince.

The first seven weeks include the time from Daniel to Malachi. During this difficult time the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt. Next we read, "And AFTER the threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." The Messiah was, therefore, cut off in the seventieth week, because that week is "after" the 69th. The seventieth week included the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a matter of record that He was crucified (cut off) three and a half years after He began His ministry, i.e. "in the midst of the week." This fact demands the detailed fulfillment of Dan. 9:24. It is quite obvious that if the 70th week is future then the things prophesied therein must also be future. Conversely, if the events have come to pass we must concede that the week did come as and when God determined it should.

The Prophecy Fulfilled in Every Detail. As we take up the various clauses of verse 24, we discover six things are predicted. We shall examine each of them separately.

1. "To finish the transgression." To what transgression did this prophecy refer? In order to understand it we should read Luke 11:47-51. Therein Jesus told of the long list of crimes committed by the fathers against the prophets and ended by saying "That their blood would be required of this generation." A parallel passage is found in Matt. 23 :29-32 of which vs. 32 says, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." The fathers killed the prophets but the Jews whom

Jesus spoke to killed the Messiah. In so doing they finished their transgression, or filled up the measure of their fathers because no future transgression can equal the crucifixion. This terrible deed was committed in the seventieth week as prophesied by Daniel.

2. "To make an end of sins." The very purpose for which Christ came into the world was to make an end of sins. In Matt. 1:21 we read the familiar announcement of the angels, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins." The death of Christ which occurred in the 70th week is what saves people from their sins and thus, for each believer, it makes an end of sins.

3. "To make reconciliation for iniquity." This is the central theme of the prophecy. The Chaldean lexicon simply renders it, "To atone for sins." And the Septuagint Version says, "To make atonement for sins." That Christ came to make atonement for sins we all admit. It is imperative that the atonement should be made in the time determined by God, that is, in the 70th week. If the 70th week is still future then the atonement is also, for the atonement was the main event to take place in the 70th week. The death of Christ in the midst of the 70th week made atonement for our sins in accordance with the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

4. "To bring in everlasting righteousness." The redemption of Christ does bring everlasting righteousness. Of course, it only applies to the believer, but that is all He intended. His own words are, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 3:36.

5. "To seal up the vision and prophecy." This part of the prophecy can best be answered by quoting Heb. 1:1, 2, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." Christ is God's last message to man. For over nineteen hundred years this seal has remained on vision and prophecy and we need expect no further addition until Jesus comes again on the judgment scene. God's first message was through the prophets ; His last is through His Son.

6. "To anoint the most holy." This anointing took place on the day of Pentecost. In the Old Testament God met with His people in the "holy of holies" in the temple made with hands. The High Priest went in once each year to make atonement for the people. But after the Holy Spirit came upon the believers at Pentecost He took up His habitation in the hearts of men, that is to say, in His Church, which is the body of Christ. In 1 Cor. 6:19 we read, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." This infilling of the Holy Ghost also took place in the 70th week in accordance with God's plan.

You will notice that each one of the six predicted things came to pass exactly as prophesied. There is absolutely no reference to the "Davidic Kingdom" nor to any "national re-establishment of Israel as a nation in everlasting righteousness" mentioned in the passage whatsoever. These elements are introduced from the Talmud rather than the Scriptures. If we accept the interpretation of the Rabbis and premillennialists then we must place the 70th week in the mysterious future. But if we just take the events predicted in their natural sense they all come to pass exactly in the predicted time, namely the 70th week.