

Is God Through With the Jew?

by Denis Lyle

The sermon argues that God is not finished with Israel and outlines His promises and prophetic timeline for the Jewish people.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:4, Daniel 9:24, Zechariah 12:9, Acts 15:16, Romans 11:1, 1 Thessalonians 4:15, Revelation 19:20

Topics: "Israel Prophecy", "End Times"

Description

Denis Lyle preaches about the prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel, emphasizing that it was written to help us understand God's wonderful plan for the Jews. Despite some believing that God is finished with Israel, the Bible affirms that God has promised Israel a future and planned for their preservation. The sermon delves into the specific periods outlined in the prophecy, highlighting the removal of sin and the restoration of righteousness that will come to pass for Israel. It also discusses the past, present, and future destruction of the nation, including the role of the Antichrist and the church in the prophetic timeline.

Transcript

IS GOD THROUGH WITH THE JEW Daniel 9:20-27 Some things are very hard to understand. Take the handwriting of a doctor for instance. I heard about a patient who went to a doctor for a check-up and was given a prescription. The patient put it in his pocket and never went to the chemist to get the medication. However, every morning for two years he showed it to the conductor a railroad pass. Twice he got him into the City Music Hall, and one time he showed it at the door and was allowed into the symphony.

He got a raise from the cashier by showing it as note from his boss. One day he mislaid it at home, and his daughter picked it up, played it on the piano, and won a scholarship to the conservatory of music. Some may say the prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel is just as outlandish as that story and just as illegible as the handwriting. However, this prophecy was not written to confuse us but to allow us to understand God's wonderful plan for the Jews! Israel remains at the centre stage of world history.

Despite the many issues facing modern society our focus is constantly drawn to the middle east and the nation of Israel, a country similar in size to Wales. Yet despite its importance when a well known Bible teacher was asked about the significance of the modern state of Israel not long ago he replied, "It has utterly no significance at all because God is finished with Israel as of the crucifixion of their Messiah". The Bible, however, clearly affirms that God is not through with Israel. 1.

God has PROMISED Israel a Future: Samuel said, "For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake". (1 Sam 12:22) God will not forsake the Jewish people because His reputation is at stake. He bound Himself to Abraham by an unbreakable covenant (Gen 15) and He will fulfil it. Paul asked the rhetorical question "Hath God cast away His people" His immediate reply was, "God forbid". (Rom 11:1) In the Greek text Pauls answer (me genoito) carries the meaning "may it never be", the strongest negative declaration found in the New Testament. 1. 2.

God has PLANNED Israel's Preservation: We live at an incredible time in history. The Jewish people have survived the melting pot of history and are regathering in their own land. They have a reason to exist: God's purposes concerning them have been fulfilled for only sixty-nine weeks and there is one week left in God's plan. God's plan for history is being fulfilled in our own time. Now you will remember that Ch 9) falls into two sections. From (9:1-19) you have got THE PRAYER and then from (9:20-27) you have got THE PROPHECY.

This prophecy concerns a Special PERIOD: "Seventy weeks are determined". God has cut off a segment of time and assigned it for the deliverance of His people Israel and the city of Jerusalem. The scope of this prophecy covers seventy sevens of years, years which are made up of 360 days each. This prophecy also concerns a Special PEOPLE: " Thy people", God says to Daniel. So this has nothing to do with Gods programme for the Gentile nations nor the church, rather it is Israels Future which is in view.

Now there are several questions which confront this ... What will transpire during these 70 weeks or 490 years When will these "70 weeks", begin (3) How are these "70 weeks", divided up (4) What happens after the 69th week (5) What about the 70th week of this prophecy Now I hope to answer all those questions by directing your attention to three salient points. (1) THE INTENTION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS Or if you prefer the Purpose of the Seventy Weeks! You see (9:24) outlines for us 6 purposes that God will accomplish for Israel during this specific period of 490 years.

Now there are two groups of three here, you have three negatives and then three positives! The first group of three are concerned with: (a) THE REMOVAL OF SIN: Daniel had just been using some of these words in his prayer. 1. "To finish the transgression..." "Do you recall that the central theme in Daniel's prayer was the transgression of his people, a transgression which was to culminate in "the transgression". What is the transgression of Israel Is it not their rejection of the Messiah Israel to this day continues to reject the Lord Jesus but when these 490 years have rolled their course they will recognise and receive Him as their Messiah.

In that day they will say, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows yet we did esteem stricken, smitten of God and afflicted". (Is 53:4) 2. "To make an end of sins..." "the plural denotes that individual sins will be dealt with. My, Israel hath sins. Do you remember when gold became their god oning for it. My, when Israel accepts the sacrificial work of Christ her iniquities will be pardoned and this is exactly what will come to pass when the seventy weeks have transpired. (Zech 12:9... 13:1) So the first three things have to do with the Removal of Sin... they refer to HIS SACRIFICE, the last three things have to do with: (b) THE RESTORATION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: They refer to HIS SOVEREIGNTY.

Notice what the text says: 1. "To bring in everlasting righteousness..." "In the Hebrew text its plural and refers to an everlasting era of righteousness. It will be the kingdom of God on earth. A millennial and Messianic age when Israel will come into the good of the covenant as outlined in (Jer Ch 31 Ps 45:3 Is 11:3-5 Jer 23:3-8) My, when that kingdom is established there will be no need for vision or prophecy, that's

why we read 2. "To seal up the vision and prophecy... "You see, when these seventy weeks have run their course all of God's promises to Israel will be a reality and history will stamp its seal upon the entire prophetic page.

Notice the last of these six accomplishments is 3. "To anoint the Most Holy... "The phrase "the Most Holy", occurs thirty-nine times in the Old Testament and always has some reference to the holy of Holies in the Tabernacle and Temple. It always refers to a place, indicating that when Christ's kingdom is established, there will be a temple, the restored temple of the millennial kingdom. (Ezek 40... 48 Amos 9:11 Acts 15:16) Now it seems to me that the first three purposes here are fulfilled in principle at Christ's first coming, but in full at His return.

The last three complete the plan at His second advent! Now in all of this don't lose sight of old Daniel. He has been praying at "the time of the evening sacrifice", but the Temple in Jerusalem is in ruins, but now the angel says that at the end of these seventy sevens, the Most Holy is going to be consecrated. Its all going to be built again, Daniel. Daniel has been mourning about the sins of Israel, and the angel says to Daniel that there will be a day at the end of this specific period, when for Israel there will be no more rebellion, sin, transgression... sin will be gone righteousness will be in, Christ will be reigning!

Now do you not reckon that Daniel felt much better at the end of this chapter, than at the beginning But My, Gabriel knows this old man and he has already learned that Daniel would not be satisfied with summaries and sketches (8:15-19) It seems that Gabriel anticipates that Daniel would ask some searching questions like, "When will the seventy weeks begin How are they divided up What are the events that will transpire in each period" So now we are moving into the real heart of this prophecy.

I've called this: (2) THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SEVENTY WEEKS For here Gabriel is giving to Daniel vital information about these seventy weeks. Now its important for us to see the structure of the seventy weeks. You see, this period of time is divided into a number of parts. Look at (9:25) Notice: (1) The first division is referred to as "seven weeks and threescore and two weeks", and that makes "sixty nine weeks."

(2) In (9:26) we have another part of the prophecy which refers to "threescore and two weeks", a period equal in length to, if not exactly equivalent to the period of time already introduced as "threescore and two weeks." (3) There is a reference to "one week", in (9:27) So I think we can sketch out the structure of the weeks in the following way. (7 weeks) (62 weeks) (Gap) (1 week) We'll worry about the gap later! Now here's our first question. When does the 70 weeks begin Well, look carefully at the three distinct periods that we have mapped out! (a) THE FIRST PERIOD: So Daniel was told that the entire city would be rebuilt.

Now can you imagine the thrill in his heart to hear that the city of his boyhood, the place of his birth, which had been turned to rubble by the Babylonian invasion, would be rebuilt. So this first period has to do with the Construction of the city and this period lasts for seven weeks or 49 years! Now the question is when did this period begin Well, look at (9:25) This period was to begin with the command to rebuild Jerusalem. Now history tells us that there were four different decrees relating to Jerusalem.

Cyrus (Ezra Ch 1) Darius (Ezra Ch 6) Artaxerxes (Ezra Ch 7) all made decrees concerning the rebuilding of the Temple, but in the book of Nehemiah, Artaxerxes decreed that Nehemiah could return to rebuild the city! (Neh 2:1-5) Now I want you to see that this command was issued during the 20th year of Artaxerxes reign. The Encyclopaedia Britannica sets this date as the 14th March 445 BC. Now this is the decree that

(9:25) is talking about. And during this first period of 49 years (7 weeks) the city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt "even in troublous times".

Now if you take time to read the book of Nehemiah you'll see how difficult a task it was to restore the city! So now we have got the first period in our minds. The first seven weeks commenced in 445 BC and concluded in 396 BC (b) THE FURTHER PERIOD: Look at (9:25) Now this further or second period has to do with the Introduction of the Prince. Can you see clearly that the total number of weeks between the decree "to restore and and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince", is 69 weeks Or if you like 483 years, each of those years consisting of 360 days.

Thus, the total number of days is 173,880 days. Sir Robert Anderson who founded Scotland Yard and was a brilliant Bible scholar points out that if you take 14 March 445, BC when the decree to rebuild Jerusalem went forth, and add to it 173,880 days, you come to 6 April AD 32 and it was on this very day that the Lord Jesus made His triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem and presented Himself to the nation as their Messiah Prince! (Lk 19:29-40) Do you see what was happening Some of the people were saying, "You should rebuke the disciples, because they're calling you the Messiah".

What did Christ say "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out". (Lk 19:40) No keeping quiet about the Messiah that day! (Zech 9:9) Of course it was on this day that the Pharisees plotted to murder Christ (Lk 19:47) and within a few short days, He was cut off, but not for Himself. For when He died on the cross He received nothing that was due Him... no honour: no respect: no love: no acceptance. John says, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not". (Jn 1:12) Instead Christ received what He did not deserve, the sins of the world.

Now in this second period two important things happened. 1. There was Israel's Rejection of Christ: For it was the Jewish authorities who cried, "Let Him be crucified". (Matt 27:22) "His blood be on us and on our children". (Matt 27:25) The Messiah was cut off, and what followed His death Did Israel accept His message No! They lied about Him (Matt 28:13) persecuted His messengers, stoned Stephen, and refused to acknowledge His Lordship. 1. 2. There was Christ's rejection of Israel: The very day the Lord Jesus rode into Jerusalem marked a turning point in the fortunes of the Jewish people.

Do you know what Christ said on that day " Thou knewest not the time of thy visitation", (Lk 19:44) No wonder Jesus wept. The Lord had dispatched His holy messenger 483 years earlier to His beloved prophet, Daniel and told him the exact moment when Messiah the Prince would be proclaimed. But there wasn't a single person who understood enough of the Old Testament to recognise that this was His day. They "cut", Christ off, so He "cut", them off from being a nation. My, until the 14th May 1948 Israel was not a free nation.

Now isn't the book we hold in our hands precious 173,880 days from the going forth of the command to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince... and on that very day (Palm Sunday) Christ rode into Jerusalem. Does this not demonstrate the accuracy of Scripture Why did the Jews not know Messiah was coming for if they had read the prophecy of Daniel they would have identified Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah! When you go to Jerusalem your guide will take you to the Holy Land Hotel and show you a wonderful model of first century Jerusalem.

Two believers were there one day discussing the future rebuilding of the Temple. A stranger who had heard their conversation introduced himself as New York rabbi. He asked in amazement, " Do Christians really believe in the rebuilding of a Temple in Jerusalem" One of the Christians replied", Have you not read

your prophets... Ezekiel and Daniel". The Rabbi said, "No, because when I was studying to be a rabbi I was told not to compute the prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel (Ch 9) " Do you know why he was forbidden Because Daniel (Ch 9) shows that Messiah has already come. (c) THE FINAL PERIOD: Notice (9:27) Now this final period has to do with the Destruction of the nation.

So far we got 69 weeks accounted for. But there is 1 week to... 7 years to go and that would make it 490 years and Gods prophetic programme for Israel would be fulfilled. Now what about this last week, this 70th week of Daniel's prophecy Well, if we follow the principle of literal interpretation we must conclude that this week of years is still future for this simple reason. The phenomena described in (9:27) has simply not yet occurred. Look at (9:27) Now who is this who makes a treaty with Israel for seven years Well, in (9:26) he is described as "the prince that shall come".

Did you notice that this prince stands in sharp contrast to "Messiah the Prince", in (9:25) My, this is the Antichrist, who is also called "the little horn", (7:8) "the man of sin... the son of perdition". (2 Thes 2:3) The person who is judged at Christ's second advent. (Rev 19:20 So this final week of 7 years is yet future and it has to do with the Destruction of the nation. Now when we think about the destruction of Israel there are several things we need to keep in mind. In relation: 1.

To the Past this Destruction is HISTORICAL: Now we have noted before that prophecy has sometimes a dual fulfilment. (Is 9:6-7) We have another instance of this in (9:26) Now this was: * Partially Fulfilled with the Coming of Titus: History records that Titus Vespasian led 4 Roman legions to besiege and destroy Jerusalem in AD 70. So we can say "that the people of the prince that shall come", are Romans. Its interesting to learn from history that general Titus led his soldiers to leave the Temple intact.

But then the Lord Jesus had said to His disciples", there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down". (Matt 24:2) It is recorded that when a Roman soldier on impulse threw a flaming torch through an archway of the temple... the tapestries caught fire. The building soon became a raging inferno... the decorative gold melted and ran down into the cracks to the stone floors. When the remains cooled the soldiers in their greed for wealth literally overturned the stones in their search for gold.

Thus, the prophecy of Christ was grimly fulfilled. Josephus the Jewish historian tells us that the misery of the city was incredible. A mother killed, roasted and ate in her own child because of her hunger. Often five hundred Jews were nailed to crosses on a given day. The death toll came to over a million. Do you see what Daniel says "And the end thereof shall be like a flood". (9:27) Now if was * It will be: * Completely Fulfilled with the Coming of Antichrist: " The people of the prince that shall come", indicates that the Anti-christ will be identified with a particular people... the Romans and a revived Roman Empire!

My, the Antichrist will reign over a revived Roman Empire that will trouble Israel in a way similar to the first Roman Empire! 1. In relation 2. To the Present this Destruction is Continual: " And unto the end of the war desolations are determined". (9:26) My, is this not the continuing experience of the people of Israel The history of the Jews since the Roman holocaust has been one of continual devastation. When you go to Jerusalem they will take to Yad Vasham, a memorial of the Holocaust inflicted upon the Jews by Hitler.

He thought they were undesirables so he gassed six million of them. 1. 2. In relation: 3. To the Future this Destruction is Prophectical: The history of the Jewish people is a chronicle of suffering and yet it has not ended. With the end of the 483 years, it was time for the church to move in, based on (Acts Ch 2) and the coming of the Holy Spirit. Daniel doesn't say anything about that, because he didn't know anything about it. The church is a mystery in the Old Testament. But My, when the church has been caught away to

heaven God will resume his prophetic programme for Israel and this will be signalled by the signing of a 7 year covenant with the restored Jewish nation by a certain person.

Now that person is identified for us in (9:26) as "the prince that shall come". This is none other than the Antichrist, "the little horn", of (Ch 7) Daniel gives us some details about him here: * The PICTURE of the Antichrist: " And he... "Who Well, in (9:26) its the People of the Prince, but in (9:27) its the Prince of the people". And he... "Who "the prince that shall come."(9:26) Now as I have intimated there are two princes mentioned here, the True Prince... Christ (9:25) and the False Prince...

Antichrist. (1 Jn 2:18 22 4:3 2 John 1:7) So this prince who is to come will reign over a revived Roman Empire! * The PACT of the Antichrist: " And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week". (9:27) More than anything else in the world, the Jews long for the restoration of their Temple and the beginning of temple sacrifice. One day there is going to be this great leader who will sit down at a conference table and say, "My dear friends, its my desire to help you restore your religious heritage.

I have the resources and manpower to rebuild your glorious temple". Orthodox Jewish Rabbis teach that the Temple cannot be rebuilt till Messiah comes and that He will then initiate that project. My, because Antichrist makes possible the rebuilding of the Temple many Jews will be deceived into thinking He is Messiah and will worship him. * * * The PERIOD of the Antichrist: " And he... for one week". (9:27) This covenant will guarantee to Israel political, territorial, and religious protection for 7 years and this final 7 years is the completion of Daniels 490 year period. * * * * The PERSECUTION of the Antichrist: " And in the midst of the week...

"(9:27) This is the half-way point of the 70th week of years. After three and a half years he will stop the sacrifices at the Temple, desecrate the Temple by erecting an image of himself in the Holy Place and demand that he be worshipped as God. (2 Thes 2:4 Rev 13:14) My, what Antiochus Epiphanes did in the Intertestamental Period, the Antichrist will do in the Great Tribulation. But how will it all end With the: * The PUNISHMENT of the Antichrist: For then will come "the consummation", with the coming of one more powerful than the Antichrist who will cast this vile ruler into the lake of fire and destroy his army. (Zech 14:1-4 Rev 19:11) At last the nation of Israel will be delivered from her oppressors!

Maybe you're saying, "Well, thats fine, but where do we the church fit into this prophetic picture" Well, notice: (3) THE INTERRUPTION IN THE SEVENTY WEEKS Dr. Louis Talbot, the founder of Talbot Seminary said that one day he was on a train and all of a sudden they came to a stop. He asked the conductor what had happened and was told, "We're on a side-track. The express is coming and we had to get off so it could come through". Dr. Talbot said that's exactly what happened to the people of Israel.

They were on the main line, but they rejected their Messiah. So God placed them on the sideline as a nation. He calls out individuals but the Gospel Express, which we know as the church, is going through. We are now living on that express, in the parentheses of time before Israel gets back on the track. So there is a gap or parentheses between the 69th week and the 70th week! And that's were we the church come in! Now this gap: (a) IS UNSPECIFIED IN RELATION TO TIME: But the fact that its length is undermined ought not to trouble us, for many prophecies contain such gaps.

Do you recall (Is 9:6) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given and the government shall be upon His shoulder". While that prophecy speaks both of Christ's birth and future reign on earth, a gap exists between the two. (1 Pet 1:10-11 Lk 4:18-19) So here between the 69th week and 70th week of Daniel is a gap, an indefinite period of time, and we are presently living in that time period. For if the gap (a) it: (b) IS

IDENTIFIED IN RELATION TO PEOPLE: For this gap is identified as the church age "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men ... that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs and of the same body". (Eph 4:5) My, at this time God is visiting the Gentiles taking out of them a people for His name but after this He will return and build again the Tabernacle of David. (Acts 15:16) Is God through with the Jew No!

This... Israel is regathering in her own land in preparation for this final week. My, if that is true and it is, then how near we are to the Rapture! One of these... "the Lord Himself... descend". (1 Thes 4:15) We are not looking for Christ to come the first time, we are looking for His return! Tell me: are you so living that when He appears you will be unashamed before Him at His coming again.

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