

NOTES OF A SERIES OF SIX LECTURES ON BIBLE PROPHECY

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I. DEFINITIONS AND TIME MEASUREMENTS

A. Introduction:

1. Perhaps you will think I am rash or presumptuous in bringing to you, in these morning sessions, a series on Bible Prophecy.
2. I do not wish to engage in controversy, yet, because feelings are so strong among believers on prophetic subjects, it is well-nigh impossible to speak on this theme without running afoul of somebody's viewpoint.
3. Some Christian groups make a certain prophetic school of thought the basis of fellowship — they will not tolerate any other view.
4. Now I believe we may be dogmatic on the cardinal or fundamental doctrines of our faith:
 - (1) The literal Second Coming of Christ IS a fundamental of our Christian faith.
 - (2) But there are many views about the details of that Advent that are purely speculative and not fundamental.
5. The current popular view of prophecy is the FUTURISTIC SCHOOL, but it is only about 150 years old. None of the Reformers and no Bible teacher on record, taught the Futurist position before the year 1830 A.D.
6. I do not hold that position. You may ask, "Well, what position do you hold—to what prophetic school do you belong?"
 - (1) May I humbly say, "I don't 'belong' to any 'school of thought' on this subject.
 - (2) I think I have studied most of them, if not all. I was once a Futurist, but found so

many points that were at variance with the Scriptures, that I gave it up.

- (3) I find many Scriptural truths, but also many points inconsistent with the teaching of the Word, in all the main schools of prophecy.
 - (4) I do not claim to have any superior insight into the subject, for I am still searching and have many things to learn.
 - (5) I do, however, wish to keep my mind clear and open to the Holy Spirit, and not be unduly influenced by the teachings of men.
7. Many recent books, and many popular radio and T.V. programs, present the Futurist view and it is difficult to face the wind and buck the prevailing current.
8. So this brings us to a pertinent question: “Why do you bother teaching Prophecy? Why come to us with such a series?”

I have three reasons for doing so:

- (1) Because I believe that time is running out for this world as we know it; that the Coming of the Lord is near at hand, and that God has given us the prophetic Scriptures so that we might be what the Lord says we should be in I Thess. 5:4-8.
- (2) Because Satan has made a two-pronged attack on Christ and His church with respect to these truths, that he might confuse us and render us unprepared for this most momentous event in history.
 - a. He has confused us by dazzling our eyes with a supposed future Antichrist, a supposed great tribulation and a supposed secret rapture, at the end of the age, so that we have not noticed the things he has been doing in the world, right under our very noses!
 - b. He has caused such controversy among believers, by injecting many “views” of prophecy (in many instances making us “hyper”), that the average pastor is afraid to preach on prophetic subjects and seldom attempts an exposition of the Book of Revelation. The result is that we are being robbed of light that we need, and that God intended us to have, in this very hour of darkness.
- (3) Because I have been asked to bring a series on Bible Prophecy. I find, in speaking to people about Prophecy, that they use terms they do not understand. Let me begin, therefore, by giving you:

B. Definition of terms:

What is meant by the term:

1. Premillennial?

- (1) It is not a Scriptural term. It comes from two little Latin words: *millie*, meaning “a thousand” and *annus*, meaning “a year”. Hence, by adding the prefix, ‘pre’ we get the term, “before the thousand years.”

Speaking prophetically, we say the Second Coming of Christ is premillennial, i.e.,

He is coming before the 1,000 years' reign mentioned in Revelation 20.

2. Postmillennial?

- (1) Again it is not a Scriptural term, but comes from: 'post', meaning "after"; *mille*, meaning "1,000"; and *annus*, meaning "a year".

This view was held by many who taught that, by the preaching of the Gospel, the world would become better and sin would disappear like the darkness of night when day dawns, and then Jesus Christ would come and set up His kingdom and reign for ever.

3. Amillennial?

- (1) It comes from the Greek prefix "*a*" meaning "no," so the word means, "no millennium."

- (2) Amillennialists hold several different views about the 1,000 years of Rev. 20:

- a. That it is an indefinite period, figurative rather than literal.

- b. Some make the millennium co-extensive with the present Gospel age. Christ's reign is spiritual, in our hearts. Christ's Kingdom is spiritual, not literal, visible or material. Satan's binding was when Christ nullified his power on the cross.

- c. Amillennialism stands for a spiritual, rather than a literal interpretation of the prophetic Scriptures—although they do believe in a literal (physical) return of Christ.

4. Futurist?

- (1) The futurist's view of prophecy has a lot of "holes" in it, because it holds to a theory of "gaps," viz., between the first and second verses of Genesis 1; between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel 9; between a supposed rapture and the Second Coming of Christ; between Revelation, chapters 3 and 4, making the bulk of that book apply to a short period of seven years at the end of this age.

- (2) There is much variation in this view, also, ranging from extreme literalism to more tolerable attitudes toward other views.

5. Preterist?

- (1) This system teaches that the prophetic part of the book of Revelation was fulfilled in the dispersion of the Jewish nation and the downfall of the pagan Roman Empire.

- (2) It is limited to the first six centuries of the Christian Era.

- (3) It is held that Nero was the Antichrist.

- (4) It was promulgated by a Spanish Jesuit Monk by the name of Alcazar around the close of the 16th century.

6. Historicist (or Presentist)?

- (1) It holds that the Book of Revelation began to be fulfilled in John's day and covers this present dispensation of time.

- (2) It sees in the Papal System the fulfilment of prophecies relating to Babylon and the Antichrist.
- (3) It originated in the 11th century and was held by the Waldenses, the followers of Wycliffe and Hus, and preached by the great reformers of the 16th century.

7. The Great Tribulation?

- (1) A special time of unprecedented suffering for Christian believers—a time of persecution. Some call it “The Time of Jacob’s Trouble” as it relates to Israel.
- (2) Views of this period vary according to one’s school of prophetic interpretation.
 - a. Some people believe this whole age is one of tribulation for the saints, e.g. John 16:33.
 - b. Others limit it to the last 3½ years of this age.
 - c. Some believe the church will be raptured before it comes, and others, that it will pass through the tribulation.

8. The Rapture?

It is the time of the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the catching up of both dead and living saints when the Lord returns, according to I Cor. 15:51-54 and I Thess. 4:13-18. Some think it will be secret.

9. The Revelation?

- (1) The time when the Lord shall be revealed from Heaven with His saints, 2 Thess. 1:7-10.
- (2) Some believe that the Rapture and the Revelation are to be separated by seven years.
- (3) Others believe that they take place at the same time.

C. Some Misconceptions:

- A. That a Pre-millennialist and a Futurist are one and the same. This may, or may not, be true.
- B. That a Futurist and an Evangelical are one and the same. A great many hold that if one does not believe the Futuristic interpretation of prophecy, one is a Liberal or a Modernist. This, of course, is preposterous!

D. Time Measurements

- 1. It has been suggested by some theologians that the history of the human race on this earth would cover 7,000 years or 7 millennia.
 - (1) We are nearing the end of the sixth thousandth. The next will be the seventh or the Millennium.
 - (2) I know of no Scripture to corroborate this view, but it is at least suggestive.

2. You have read in the Scriptures of certain time periods, and have possibly been baffled, not knowing what they mean:
 - (1) The 70 weeks of Daniel 9.
 - (2) Forty and two months.
 - (3) Three and a half years.
 - (4) Time, times and a half-time.
 - (5) 1260 days, etc.
3. You will find a clue to the interpretation of these time measurements in the following Scriptures: Numbers 14: 28-34 Ezekiel 4:4-6
To my knowledge there is no other system of time measurement given in the Bible. Apply it to the prophetic time periods and it is amazing how accurate It turns out to be.

E. Conclusion

1. For the next study, please read the last two references given above.
2. Read, also, Leviticus 26 and note, particularly, the “seven times” pronounced by God upon Israel.

II. NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM

Daniel 2

A. Introduction:

What is prophecy? It is history pre-written—by Him Who knows the end from the beginning.

1. I take it for granted you are familiar with the contents of this chapter.
2. Daniel opens with a record of the conquest of Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar, about 600 B.C.
3. Among the captives were four Jewish young men - Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah (changed to Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego by the Chaldeans) who became great men in the kingdom of Babylon.
4. Daniel became the ruler of Babylon (under the king) and Governor of all the wise men. He served under four successive kings—Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius and Cyrus.

A. Nebuchadnezzar's Forgotten Dream

1. Dan. 2:1-3.
2. Dan. 2:4. (From here to the end of chapter 7, the book is written in Aramaic.)
3. Dan. 2:5, 6 - The king threatens.
4. Dan. 2:10, 11 - The wise men admit defeat.
5. Dan. 2:12, 13 - The execution ordered.
6. Daniel was evidently overlooked, being a slave and a foreigner. He asked for time, and it was granted, vs. 14-16.
7. Now notice what Daniel did (with his back to the wall, so to speak), vs. 17-23:
 - (1)He shared his burden, v. 17.
 - (2)Daniel and his friends prayed, v. 18.
 - (3)The unknown dream was revealed to Daniel in a vision, that same night, v. 19.
 - (4) Daniel acknowledges God's answer, and praises Him, vs. 20-23.

B. The Dream Recalled:

1. vs. 24. Through a godly man's intercession, he saves himself and others less deserving Arioach brings Daniel to the king.
2. The king's question and Daniel's testimony in reply, vs. 25-28.

- (1) God is in Heaven and God knows the future that is hidden from all men.
- (2) Daniel denies all claim to be able to reveal or interpret the dream, vs. 29, 30.
- 3 The amazing dream as revealed to Daniel, vs. 31-35.

C. The Dream Interpreted:

- 1. Please note that this statue represents world dominion (human government) from that very point in history until the end of human government as we know it.
- 2. vs. 36-38. Dominion, or the right to rule, is given to man by God alone, cf. Rom. 13:1. Nebuchadnezzar (Babylon) is the head of GOLD.
- 3. vs. 39a. Next is a kingdom inferior to Babylon. It is represented by the chest and arms of SILVER.

Scripture does not give it's name here, but history reveals that it was the Medo-Persian Empire.

- 4. vs. 39b. The third kingdom, exercising rule over the then-known world, was Greece represented, by the belly of BRASS (bronze).
- 5. vs. 40-43. The fourth dominion is represented as the IRON kingdom and has reference to the Roman Empire.

Notice, God gave to Daniel more detail about the fourth kingdom:

- (1) It is strong and smashes everything by sheer force, vs. 40.
- (2) As time progresses it becomes weakened and divided, and its final end is in the form of 10 kingdoms, loosely adhering to one another.
- 6. In vs. 44, 45a, we see how the action of God brings an end to world government, especially these four kingdoms of prophecy:
 - (1) It is while the 10 kingdoms of the fourth world power are still in existence, that God Himself sets up the Kingdom that shall never be destroyed or succeeded, vs. 44a.
 - (2) It will crush the four kingdoms and bring them to an end, and endure forever, v. 44b.
 - (3) This is what the "STONE" means - it operates without human hands, vs. 45a.
- 7. This is a prophecy concerning the future which God Himself has revealed and interpreted, vs. 45b.

D. Conclusion

In closing, notice the following deductions:

- 1. From Nebuchadnezzar's time until the introduction of the kingdom of God, there were to be 4, and only 4, world empires.
 - (1) The present talk about a one world government is doomed to failure.

(2) We must not look for a “revival of the Roman Empire”—the ten kingdoms into, which the fourth empire disintegrated at the fall of the pagan Roman Empire under Romulus Augustulus (A.D. 476) are still intact and have never varied more than one (less or more) in all this time, and these have been ruled or influenced by Papal Rome.

2. Note v. 35. When the stone smites the image on the toes, the four kingdoms fall together.

Does this mean that they will all be in existence when Christ comes? Yes, See Dan. 7:12:

- Babylon is now Iraq.
- Medo-Persia is now Iran.
- Greece is still Greece.
- Rome is now the 10 states occupying the territory—once dominated by the Roman Empire. They are:

Italy	England
Austria	Holland
Switzerland	Belgium
France	Spain
Germany	Portugal

3. We are now living at the extreme end of the time covered by the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.
4. Daniel 7 gives the corresponding history to chapter 2—it was given to Daniel himself under the figure of four beasts.
5. The times of the Gentiles began with Nebuchadnezzar, Luke 21:24. Never, in all this time, has Jerusalem been the capital of a free Israeli state, until 1948. Are “the times of the Gentiles” coming to a close? We indeed believe they are.

III. THE SEVEN TIMES AND THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Leviticus 26

A. Introduction

1. In our last study we considered, in broad outline, the governing powers of this world from the time of the captivity of Judah until the Kingdom of God should succeed them.
 - (1) We found them to be four in number.
 - (2) They were ordered and directed by the God of Heaven.
 - (3) They were all Gentile.
 - (4) They were to be obliterated by God Himself when their purpose was completed and fulfilled.
 - (5) Most of this prophecy is now history.
2. Today we want to do two things:
 - (1) Place a time measurement upon them.
 - (2) Show their significance in relation to God's people, Israel.

B. God's Propositioning Of Israel

Leviticus 26

(We asked you to read this chapter)

1. God's relationship to Israel, Lev. 25:55.
2. God's promises to Israel, Lev. 26:1-13.
3. God, in faithfulness, warned Israel against disobedience, Lev. 26:14-18, 21, 24, 28. That was the proposition.

C. When Were These "SEVEN TIMES" To Begin And How Long Were They To Last?

1. We all know the record of Israel's failure to obey God's order:
 - (1) The long record of sin is revealed in Israel's history—her disobedience to God's precepts—her terrible idolatry—her rejection of God and her adoption of the pagan religions of her enemies.
 - (2) The full weight of God's judgment did not fall upon her at once, however:
 - a. God patiently tried to woo her to Himself,
 - b. Finally, in about 740 B.C., the Northern Kingdom was crushed by Assyria.
 - c. Around 600 B.C. Judah was carried into Babylon, d. God brought them back after 70 years' captivity, and the descendants of these people were in the land when Jesus Christ was born.
 - (3) But note the significant words of the Lord Jesus in Matt. 23:37-39. They rejected

their Messiah and “did despite unto the Spirit of grace.”

(4) How long was Israel’s house to be desolated (or “left unto them desolate”)? The answer is in Luke 21:24.

2. Here, again, we are confronted with the word “times.” We have the “seven times” of Israel’s punishment, and the “times of the Gentiles,” and both are tied in together.
 - (1) It seems clear that a “time,” as a unit of prophetic measurement, is the equivalent of one year in history thus the phrase “time, times and half a time” equals 3[^] years (lunar or Jewish years).
 - (2) Now, if we place on that unit, the prophetic scale (that a day represents a year) we come to the following:
 - 1 time (or 1 year) = 360 days (lunar).
 - 360 days would represent 360 years.
 - 7 times (or 7 years), 7 x 360 = 2,520 years.

D. The Times Of The Gentiles

1. In our last study we considered the four great Gentile world-empires, represented by the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream.
 - (1) The first of these was Babylon (head of gold). Its history began in 747 B.C. (Feb. 26, 747 B.C.).
 - (2) The last was the Roman (legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay) which disintegrated in the 5th century A.D. when its seat of power was transferred from Rome to Constantinople. (Byzantine Empire)
 - (3) Thus from the beginning of “the times of the Gentiles” to the demise of the Roman Empire as such, covers a period of some 1,260 years—“time, times and a half-time” (3½ times) or one half of the “seven times”.
2. In our consideration of the 4th world-empire (iron), we noticed a long, protracted extension of Its power, represented by the feet and ten toes, composed of iron and clay mixed, and representing ten kingdoms in its final form.
 - (1) Upon the demise of the pagan Roman Empire, there arose in Rome the Papal Power.
 - (2) It was in 610 A.D. that the Emperor, Phocas, ruling in the East at Constantinople, issued a decree “conceding to the Pope, headship over all Christendom, even over Constantinople where his throne was.”
 - (3) The popes of Rome exercised both religious and political power over all the ten kingdoms of Europe until 1670 A.D. when the Pope’s temporal power was taken from him—and this, again is 1260 years or 3½ times.

The full scope of 2520 years from the beginning of Babylon to the end of the Pope’s temporal power is “seven times”.

It is interesting that the same year that the temporal power of the Pope ended, the

Vatican Council ruled in favour of Papal Infallibility in all matters religious—July 18, 1870.

E. The “Seven Times” Of Israel

1. May I suggest that they began in 587 B.C., when the last contingent of Jewish captives was taken to Babylon, and Jerusalem fell.
It was when the last king of Judah (Zedekiah) ruled, in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.
2. Measuring the “seven times”, or 2520 years (lunar), from 587 B.C., brings us to 1860 A.D. when the Universal Israelite Alliance was formed and the Moslem power over Palestine began to relax.
(This was the first stage of Israel’s liberation from Turkish rule.)
3. As a matter of interest, if we bisect the “seven times” at 637 A.D. when Omar captured Jerusalem (the Mosque of Omar was erected on the temple site and is still there) we notice the following interesting facts:
 - (1) Moving backwards 1260 years (time, times and one half) brings us to the fall of Jerusalem under Nebuchadnezzar.
 - (2) Moving forward 1260 years, we come to 1897 A.D., the breaking of the Turkish power and the beginning of the liberation of Palestine.

F. Conclusion

Now to sum up in broad outline:

1. We have been dealing mostly with lunar years, but if we calculate with solar years, this is the result:
 - (1) “Seven times” or 2520 years from 747 B.C. (the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles) brings us to 1774 A.D.
 - (2) “Seven times” or 2520 years from 587 B.C. (the year of the fall of Jerusalem) brings us to 1934 A.D.
2. 1774 brings us to the era of the French Revolution which culminated in the loss of temporal power of the papacy.
3. 1934 sees the complete liberation of Palestine from Turkish rule, and Israel enjoying freedom under a British Mandate.
In 1948 (14 years later) she became a free, independent state.
4. Thus we see that “the times of the Gentiles” have run their course.
And, as for Israel, “the set time” for God to favour her has come (Psa. 102:13), Rom. 11:25-27.
5. God’s Word to us - Luke 21:24-28, 29-33.

IV. DANIEL'S VISION OF THE FOUR BEASTS

Daniel 7: 1-28

A. Introduction

1. In a previous lesson we dealt with God's revelation to Nebuchadnezzar, by means of the dream Interpreted by Daniel, of the extent of Gentile world dominion until Its replacement by the Kingdom of God which is to be eternal.
2. It is Interesting, and very Important, that the Lord should confirm this revelation to His people through a vision given to one of His own servants.
3. Our text Is Daniel 7:
 - (1) It covers the same time period and subject matter as Daniel 2.
 - (2) The symbols are different - beasts Instead of sections of a human body—but they Identify the same four kingdoms, Dan. 7:15-17.
 - (3) Daniel's dream Involves more detail concerning the four kingdoms of the times of the Gentiles.

B. Daniel's Dream 7:1-3, 15-17

1. The vision was given to Daniel while his people were still captives in Babylon.
2. It was during the reign of Belshazzar, v. 1.
3. vs. 2. The four winds of heaven symbolize the controlling power of the Spirit of God over the world, cf. Gen. 1:2; John 3:8.
The "sea", represents the "sea of humanity" or the earth's populace, cf. vs. 17.
4. Nebuchadnezzar's dream troubled him, and Daniel's dream troubled Daniel, v. 15.
 - (1) He was in communion with the Lord, and took the matter to Him, v. 16.
 - (2) The Lord made known the interpretation, v. 17.

C. The Dream In Particular 7:4-18

1. The first beast—like a lion with eagle's wings, vs. 4:
 - (1) This beast was the unquestioned symbol of Babylon, the first Gentile kingdom to rule with beast-like cruelty the kingdoms of the world.
 - (2) Archeological discoveries of the ruins of Babylon have turned up coins and pottery bearing this symbol.
 - (3) As the lion is considered the king of beasts, so Babylon was the first Gentile power to hold world dominion.
 - (4) But its wings were torn off and Us great king, Nebuchadnezzar, was humiliated by God until he acknowledged that GOD Is the One who rules "in the kingdom of men, and giveth It to whomsoever He will," Dan. 4:25.

2. In God's time, Babylon fell, and the next beast-like kingdom to rule was Medo-Persia, symbolized by a bear, vs. 5:
 - (1) The bear is less noble than the lion, but is also fierce, cruel and powerful.
 - (2) So Medo-Persia was Inferior to Babylon.
 - (3) It had three ribs In Us mouth. This is how a bear crushes its victims.
The three ribs may indicate the three provinces of Babylon—Babylon, Egypt and Lydia—that made up the Babylonian Empire crushed by Medo-Persia.
3. The third kingdom was Greece, symbolized by the leopard, with four heads and four wings on its back, vs. 6:
 - (1) The wings symbolize the swiftness and agility of its conquests.
 - (2) The four heads represent the divisions of the Grecian Empire under the four generals of Alexander the Great, when he died.
4. The fourth beast was not like any other animal, so its likeness is described but not named, vs. 7:
 - (1) It was dreadful and strong and had great Iron teeth.
 - (2) You will remember that in our study of Daniel 2, the Iron represented the Roman Empire.
 - (3) "Remember, the feet of the Image were part of Iron and part of clay, and had ten toes—division of the Empire after the demise of the Caesars into 10 kingdoms.
 - (4) Notice, this beast was more dreadful and cruel than all the rest, and so was the Roman Empire more despotic.
 - (5) Notice a further peculiarity about this kingdom, which we will deal with later, v. 8.

D. The Supernal Council Convened vs. 9-12

1. This is the same Council that is referred to In Acts 2:23 as "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.":
 - (1) It sat when the great plan of Redemption was determined and Jesus was designated as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."
 - (2) It will convene again when God Almighty will bring an end to Man's Day of dominion on the earth.
2. Read vs. 9, 10. Daniel tells what he saw in vision. He is given a preview:
 - (1) "The thrones were cast down," i.e., the kingdoms of earth.
 - (2) "The Ancient of Days did sit" (preside), vs. 9, 10:
 - a. Note His appearance, vs. 9 cf. Rev. 1:13-15.
 - b. The "fire" depicts His absolute holiness.
 - c. The scene of judgment is in preview, vs. 10.
3. Note Daniel's concern about the "horn," for the horn speaks for the beast that bears it,

i.e., the fourth beast-kingdom, vs. 11.

4. The fourth beast-kingdom is destroyed, just as the other three had lost their dominion.
 - (1) “Yet their lives were prolonged for a season,” vs. 12.
 - (2) The time of their complete destruction will be when the “Son of Man” comes—they will all be destroyed together, just as the whole image was destroyed when struck by “the stone cut out of the mountain without hands,” Dan. 2:35.

E. The Coming Of The King vs. 13, 14

1. This, also, is a vision of what shall be, v. 13 - a vision describing the coming of the Lord to establish His kingdom.
2. Note how the Scriptures of both Testaments agree, v. 13 cf. Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11; Jude 14, 15.
3. The Son receives power from the Father, vs. 13, 14 cf. John 5:22, 23; 10:17, 18; Matt. 28:18.
4. The Son receives the Kingdom from the Father, vs. 14 cf. Psa. 2:6-9; Rev. 11:15.
5. Thus, as revealed in Dan. 2:44, the four Gentile world powers are to be succeeded by the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, Dan. 7:14.
6. Daniel is troubled about the vision, and so it is explained to him—here is the divine Interpretation, vs. 15-18. Note the prominence given “to the saints of the most High,” vs. 18, 27.

F. Daniel Asks Specific Questions vs. 19, 20

1. They concern the fourth beast-kingdom, the ten horns and the other “horn” that had eyes and a mouth speaking great things, v. 20.
2. I think we have established, in our study of Daniel, that the fourth world kingdom is the Roman Empire:
 - (1) Just as the 10 toes came out of the feet of the image, so the 10 horns come out of the head of the fourth beast, i.e., they are integral parts of the Roman kingdom.
 - (2) The Roman historian, Macchiavelli, names the 10 tribes among whom the Roman Empire was divided after the fall of Romulus Augustulus, the last Roman Emperor: Heruli; Suevi; Burgundians; Huns; Ostrogoths; Visigoths; Vandals; Lombards; Franks; Anglo-Saxons.
3. Now concerning the little horn, vs. 20-25:
 - (1) There is no question but that it is a Roman power. If the fourth beast is Roman, so also are the ten horns and the “little horn” likewise—the little horn with great pretensions.

(2) What diverse power (v. 24) arose out of the ten kingdoms after Pagan Rome ceased? And what power has dominated the ten Roman kingdoms ever since, down to the present time? None other than Papal Rome:

The Papacy is Roman.

Its seat is in Rome.

Its very name, even today, is Roman Catholic (catholic, meaning “universal”).

(3) Did the Pope subdue three kings (of the ten), vs. 24?

Yes:

The Heruli, in 493 A.D.

The Vandals, in 534 A.D.

The Ostrogoths, in 553 A.D.

(4) Has the Pope fulfilled what is predicted in v. 25? Yes, indeed:

- a. In his claims to princedom, greater than any other human. Read “*Romanism and the Reformation*” by H. Gratton Guinness, D.D., F.R.A.S., p. 28m.
- b. In his claim to speak in the name of God, vs. 25a. & 20b. He speaks with “audacious pride and bold blasphemy.” Read “*Romanism and the Reformation*” pp. 29, 30.
- c. In his persecution of the saints, v. 25 cf. “*Great Prophecies of the Bible*,” (Ralph Woodrow), pp. 161 (#7), 162 (t).

(5) How long would he have power? vs. 25 (end). “Time, times and half a time” = 1260 years.

- a. The secular power of Rome ended in 476 A.D.
- b. The Roman rulers were transferred to Constantinople and were known as Byzantine Emperors.
- c. From 476 A.D. the religious power began to dominate, until the emperor, Phocas, from Constantinople, decreed to Pope Boniface III, in 607 A.D., “headship over all the churches of Christendom, and even over that of Constantinople.” For this he was rewarded by “the Pillar of Phocas” being erected in Rome to his honour, which still stands in Rome until this day.
- d. Phocas died in 610 A.D., and from this date the temporal power of the Papacy dominated the 10 kingdoms for 1260 years (time, times & a half) until 1870.
- e. This is confirmed by no less an authority than Cardinal Manning. Remember, this is the Roman Catholic view:
“To the least discerning mind it must be manifest that God had some purpose of His Divine wisdom in the migration of the empire from Rome to Byzantium. What would be more improbable than that an emperor should forsake an imperial city of a thousand years?... The Byzantine Emperors ceased to be

proprietors of Italy and Rome. Now the abandonment of Rome was the liberation of the pontiffs. Whatsoever claims to obedience the emperors may have made, and whatsoever compliance the pontiffs may have yielded, the whole previous relation, anomalous and annulled again and again, was finally dissolved... The providence of God permitted a succession of irruptions, to efface from it every remnant of the Empire. The pontiffs found themselves alone, the sole fountains of order, peace, law and safety; and from the hour of this providential liberation...the chains fell from the hands of the successor of St. Peter, as once before from his own. No sovereign has ever reigned in Rome since, except the Vicar of Jesus Christ...(This was written before 1870.) The throne of sovereignty was vacant by visitation of God.... A power had grown up in Rome, far more imperial over the reason and will of man than the iron despotism of the Roman Empire.... This interior and supernatural power of direction and government over the actions and hearts of men flowed from one centre, and was embodied in one person, the Bishop of Rome.... The floods which swept all the other authorities a-way threw out into bolder relief and more conspicuous prominence the supreme pastoral authority of the Vicars of Jesus Christ. To whom else should the people go? They alone had, not only the words of eternal life, but the sole and supreme moral power to support and to recognize the shattered society of Rome.... The possession of the pontiffs commences with the abandonment of Rome by the emperors.... The rebellion against the Vicar of Jesus Christ is in the Same order as the rejection of his Master... God has Instituted His kingdom upon earth and fixed the head and centre of it In Rome, as of old in Jerusalem.... I showed you now, how, by an indirect but Divine providence our Lord liberated His Vicar on earth, in the plenitude of his spiritual sovereignty, from all civil subjection; first, by the translation of the seat of empire to the East, and then by the eventual extinction of the Roman Empire in Italy... The world has been waiting at least for twelve hundred years for the fall of the civil sovereignty of Rome, to see if the test of Gamaliel would have effect—‘If this counsel be of man it will come to nought’ (Acts 5:38).”

(Quoted from “*It Is Here: the Time of the End,*” by Harold Barton, pp. 44, 45)

f. In the year 1870 A.D., the dogma of Papal Infallibility was decreed.

Cardinal Henry Edward Manning, who began his ministerial career as an Anglican minister and later joined the Roman Catholic Church, vigorously defended the dogma of papal infallibility. He died in 1892 at the age of 84. In support of that blasphemous doctrine, he further wrote:

“The conversion of the Empire to Christianity, and then its removal into the far east, freed the Vicar of Christ from temporal subjection and then, by the

action of the same providence, he was clothed with the prerogatives of a true and proper legal sovereignty, for that state and territory and people were committed to his charge.... From that hour which I might say was fifteen hundred years ago, or, to speak within limits, I will say was twelve hundred, the supreme pontiff has been a true and proper sovereign, .exercising the prerogatives of royalty committed to him by the will of God over the people to whom he is father In all things both spiritual and temporal.... In the person of Pius IX, Jesus reigns on earth, and “He must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet.’”

- g. But in the same year that this dogma was decreed, July 18, 1870, the temporal power of the Pope ended. We quote from “*It’s Here: the Time of the End*” by Harold Barton: “On the same day a declaration of war was sent from Paris to Berlin. The war that followed sealed the fate of the Papacy. Protestant Prussia defeated Papal France in a few months. The French troops that upheld the Papal government were withdrawn from Rome, and thereupon the king of Italy forewarned the Pope of his intention to occupy Rome on September 8, and did so. In October, Rome decided by overwhelming vote for union with Italy, and its surrounding territory was incorporated by royal decree with the Italian kingdom in October, 1870, This was the full and final fall of the temporal power of the Papacy.” (p. 74)

We further quote from Rev. Harold Barton’s book, p. 75: “Compare the last four years of the Papacy, 1866-70, with the last four years of the Emperor Phocas, whose decree appointed the Pope to the headship of all the Christian churches; there is exactly “time, times and a half time: or 1,260 years solar, between these two dates, exactly as prophesied, Phocas died in 610 and the Papacy died (as a temporal power) in 1870. This is the Sovereignty of God in action. What a combination is here! At the beginning of the Dark Ages a wicked usurper and murderer, Phocas, presumes to bestow a prerogative that pertains to Christ alone—the headship of all the Christian Churches—upon the bishop of Rome. That ambitious and worldly-minded man dares to accept the gift and seat himself in the temple (church) of God, as if he were God. Prophecy foretold the revealing of this wicked one more than 1,000 years before, and that it should endure in the Roman world 1,260 years.”

- h. The Pope, nevertheless, still exerts great religious power and influence among the nations as is evidenced by the reception the present Pope, John Paul II, has been given in the countries he has visited since coming to power.

G. Conclusion

1. His power, and that of all Gentile dominion, will soon come to an end ^ perhaps sooner than we think, Dan. 7:26, 27.
2. Daniel was still troubled, but we have further Scriptural light in the New Testament.

V. THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL

Daniel 9:24-27

A. Introduction

1. The passage we are to study in this lesson is one over which there has been a great deal of controversy between the various “schools” of prophetic interpretation.
2. My calling, however, is not to tear other men’s views apart, but to teach what I believe to be the true scriptural interpretation of this most interesting portion of God’s Word.

B. Consider The Context

1. Daniel gives the time of this revelation, Dan. 9:1. So it was in the second of the four world empires, and Darius the Mede was reigning.
2. Judah had been consigned to captivity in Babylon for 70 years.
Notice that Daniel himself became alerted to the importance of the days in which he lived, by a study of prophecy, v. 2 cf. Jeremiah 25:8-11; 29:10.
3. On the basis of this prediction, Daniel besought the face of God:
 - (1) His prayer of confession, vs. 3-15.
 - (2) His request, vs. 16-19.
 - (3) Gabriel becomes the messenger of God to His servant, Daniel, vs. 20-23.

C. The Seventy Weeks And Their Divisions

1. vs. 24a. It is interesting that the word translated is the Hebrew word “shabua,” meaning “a seven,” literally, “seventy sevens.”
2. In the interpretation of these “weeks” almost all schools of prophecy agree on the “year-day” measurement of time (see V.im. 14:34 and Ezek. 4:4-6):

1 week = 7 days

70 weeks = 490 days.

On the day for a year scale, the period of time represented by the 70 weeks equal 490 years.

3. Where does this period begin?
 - (1) V. 25 tells us. Who gave this command?
 - (2) 2 Chron. 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-4 cf. Isa. 44:24-28; 45: 1-4.
Isaiah was given this revelation 150 years before Cyrus was born!
 - (3) An alternative, Ezra 4:24; 5:1-15 (14).
4. Now notice the threefold division of this period:
 - (1) Seven weeks = 49 years cf. v. 25b with Neh. 6:15, 16. (457 to 408 B.C.)

(2) Plus sixty-two weeks. (408 B.C. to 27 A.D.)

Thus from the decree until the anointing of the Messiah (Matt. 3:16, 17) was a total period of 69 weeks or 483 years. (Notice the “from” and the “unto” of v. 25).

(3) Plus one week, or 7 years.

Now notice the word “after” In v. 26. Jesus was not crucified until AFTER the 69 weeks, therefore He was “cut off” in the 70th week.

This is important, because our Futurist friends put a gap of 2,000 years between the 69th and 70th weeks, and say this one week is still future.

5. There is a great difference of opinion about the Interpretation of v. 27.

Some believe that the “he” refers to the “prince” mentioned in v. 26—that the Antichrist will make a covenant with the Jews, sometime in the future, for one week, and then “break” it in the midst of the week.

6. I do not believe this is the correct understanding:

(1) I do not believe there is a “gap” between the 69th and the 70th weeks.

70 weeks were determined (v. 24) and to break the continuity of that period destroys the whole meaning of the passage.

(2) I believe the “he” of v. 27 refers still to the Messiah.

a. What covenant did He confirm to the Jews? The Covenant of Law made at Sinai, Matt. 5:18.

b. Why for “one week”?

Because that was all the time there was left before the Law would be completely fulfilled.

c. In the midst of the week Messiah was cut off.

By laying down His life, Christ fulfilled the Law of Sinai and brought it to an end, Rom. 10:4.

The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the way was opened Into the Holiest (God’s presence) for all people, by the blood of Christ.

d. The Lord Jesus Christ “caused the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,” for after ‘He’ had made the perfect sacrifice of Himself, the old animal sacrifices had no meaning, no significance, no value, Heb. 10: 9, 10, 12, 4.

D. The Work To Be Accomplished In The Seventy Weeks

1. vs. 24. Six things were to be accomplished by the coming of Messiah the Prince:

(1) “To finish the transgression,” Isa. 53:5; Heb. 9:15; John 19:30; Matt. 27:50, 51.

(2) “To make an end of sin,” Matt. 1:21; John 1:29; Heb. 9: 26; 10:4-17.

(3) “To make reconciliation for iniquity,” Heb. 2:17; Col. 1:20-22; Eph. 2:14-16; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19.

- (4) “To bring in everlasting righteousness,” Rom. 3:21-26; 5:17-21; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:30.
- (5) “To seal up the vision and prophecy.”
- a. “To seal” was an ancient custom, giving genuineness to a document, 1 Kings 21:8; Jer. 32:10, 11.
 - b. When is prophecy “sealed” or completed? When it is fulfilled.
Many predictions, types and shadows of the Messiah and His work are given in the Old Testament, and Christ fulfilled them all. Thus He sealed them. John 6:27; 5:39; Acts 3:18.
 - c. John 1:14; 14:9—there is no vision beyond Christ.
- (6) “To anoint the most Holy,” Luke 1:35; John 1:32-34; Luke 4:18-22.

E. Conclusion

1. After the Lord Jesus Christ was “cut off” or crucified, in the last or 70th week, the other things predicted took place.
2. vs. 26b (margin), 27b. This is what Jesus told the Jews of His day would happen, Matt. 23:37-39; Luke 21:20-24.

VI. IS ANTICHRIST COMING OR IS HE HERE?

II Thess. 2:1-12 (Read also in the NIV)

A. Introduction

1. For the last lesson in this series I would like to turn-your thoughts to the message of 2nd Thessalonians.
2. Two passages in 2nd Thessalonians deal specifically with the Return of Christ:
2 Thess. 1:3-10
2 Thess. 2:1-12
3. Let us just rezd the first passage, which is quite straightforward, that we might use the time on the second passage which is more difficult.
4. Much speculation and much controversy have raged around 2 Thess. 2:1-12, depending upon the person's viewpoint, bias or school of interpretation.
5. So much prophetic teaching today is focussed on the Antichrist, who is considered to be some monstrous religious-political power or person who will appear on this earth after the Church is gone (raptured), who will lead the nations into the final battle of Armageddon, etc., etc.
6. I believe such teaching to be a master-stroke of deception, foisted on us by Satan, to keep our eyes off the real Antichrist who is already here.

B. A False Report vs. 1, 2

1. This second letter to the Thessalonians was written by Paul not long after the first letter had been delivered.
2. A rumour had been circulating, as if coming from the apostles (v. 2), that the Day of the Lord Oesus Christ was "at hand" (imminent) or had come, vs. 1, 2.
3. He writes to put their minds at rest—that they be not soon shaken, upset or troubled about this rumour.
The day of Christ the Lord had not come, so "let no man deceive you by any means," vs. 3a.

C. Something Predede The Day Of Christ's Coming vs. 3, 4

1. Paul says, "that day shall not come unless the falling away comes first."
2. Now to what do the words, "the falling away," refer?
 - (1) The Greek word is "apostasia" which means, "defection from the truth" (Strong) or the apostasy.
 - (2) This "falling away" does not refer to a falling away from religion into irreligion or atheism.

- (3) It rather refers to a departure from, and a corruption of, the truth of God's Word—a going into error—a corruption of Christian doctrine.
 - (4) This does not take place in the pagan world - it is not Mohammedanism or a revolution in the secular world—it would develop right in the professing Christian church.
3. When was this apostasy to occur? Was it something that would come 1,5000 years or more in the future, or was it something that had already begun to develop? Look at vs. 7a. I John 2:18, 19.
 4. The man of sin was to be revealed, vs. 3b.
 5. Notice the description of the “man of sin”:
 - (1) He is called, “the son of perdition,” cf. John 17:12.
 - (2) He opposes God and exalts himself above all that is called God, vs. 4a.
 - (3) He sits in the temple of God, vs. 4.
 - (4) He shows himself as God, vs. 4.

Now the Scripture says that these two things (the apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin) must take place BEFORE the Lord Jesus Christ will come, and before we can be gathered unto Him, vs. 1 & 3.

D. Notice Carefully What Paul, By Inspiration, Says Concerning The “Man Of Sin”

1. vs. 5. “Do you not remember that when I was still with you, I told you these things?”
Read in the NIV: “Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?”
Conybeare points out that the verb, “told,” is in the Imperfect Tense = “I often told you this.”
2. vs. 6. Paul says, “and now you know what is restraining him.”
 - (1) People today say they do not know, but the Thessalonians did.
 - (2) Our Futurist friends assume it is the Holy Spirit (e.g. Scofield note on vs. 3), but He is nowhere mentioned in the context.
 - (3) According to vs. 7 & 8a, the power of evil (“the mystery of iniquity”) which would produce the Antichrist at the proper time, was already working, and that he would be revealed when the restraining influence was removed.
3. Furthermore, it says:
 - (1) The man of sin will be consumed by the breath of the Lord's mouth, vs. 8.
This refers to Christ's Word, which is both spirit (breath) and life (John 6:63).
This is the only weapon by which we may combat or resist him.
 - (2) He will be destroyed by the brightness of the Lord's coming, v. 8
 - (3) The coming of the Antichrist is “after the working of Satan,” with supernatural

signs and deception, vs. 9,10. Now there are:

E. Questions That Need To Be Answered

1. When did the “falling away” (the apostasy) begin in the church?
 - (1) From the earliest times, as both Scripture and history show, 2 Pet. 2:1; Acts 20:28-30; early Church Councils.
 - (2) It became official when Emperor Constantine made Christianity the religion of the State in the 4th century A.D.
2. What restrained the revealing of the man of sin in Paul’s day?
 - (1) The power was Pagan Rome, (the “what” of 2 Thess. 2:6)
 - (2) The person was the reigning Caesar, (the “he who letteth” of 2 Thess. 2:7)
 - (3) Undoubtedly this was what Paul was referring to in vs. 5 & 6.
 - (4) The Pagan Roman Empire ended in 476 A.D. in the West (i.e., in Rome) under Romulus Augustulus.
 - a. Why did Paul not come right out and name the restrainer?

For him to write, in a public letter, that “Rome eternal” would fall from power, would have brought the early Christians into immediate conflict with the State and persecution.
 - b. But this was believed by the early church fathers, e.g., Jerome, Chrysostom, Justin Martyr, Ambrose. See, also, the Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 2, p. 60 (1961 edition).
3. Was the man of sin revealed after the fall of Pagan Rome? If so, who was he, and who is he?
 - (1) He is not some political dictator like Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin or their modern counterparts.
 - (2) He was to develop out of the apostasy of Christendom.
 - (3) He was to be both religious and political—both a king and a priest—a Roman power.
4. I believe the power to be the Papal System and the person to be the reigning Pope (in the dynasty of Papal rulers). Let us see how this fulfils the scriptural description in 2 Thess. 2:3, 4:
 - (1) He “...opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped.”

Now let the man of sin identify himself:

 - a. On April 30, 1922, Pope Pius XI spoke from his throne in the Vatican, to a large group of Cardinals, Bishops, Priests and Nuns, who fell on their knees before him, and he said:

“You know that I am the Holy Father, the representative of God on earth, the Vicar of Christ, which means that I am God on earth.”

- b. Pope Pius X, when he was the Archbishop of Venice, said: “The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus Christ himself hidden under the veil of the flesh. Does the Pope speak? It is Jesus Christ who speaks.”

—Quoted from “*Great Prophecies of the Bible*,” by Ralph Woodrow, p. 169.

Similar utterances could be multiplied by the score.

- (2) “So that he sits In the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

- a. Quoting the words of the Popes: “The Roman Pontiff judges all men, but is judged by no one...” “We declare...to be subject to the Roman Pontiff is to every creature altogether necessary for salvation.”

—From Foxe’s “*Arts and Monuments*” The Pope claims to have the keep of the Kingdom of Heaven.

- b. We must understand what is meant by the word “temple” in vs. 4.

Our Futurist friends claim that a temple must be built in Jerusalem so that the Antichrist can sit in it as God, and make and break his covenant with the Jews. (See “*Israel and Tomorrow’s Temple*,” by Thomas McCall and Zola Levitt).

My friends, it is not in a material temple that the Antichrist sits. Such a temple is indicated by the Greek word “*hieron*”—used 71 times in the Bible of the temple in Jerusalem, destroyed by Titus. The word Paul uses here is “*naos*,” meaning “the holy place”—the dwelling of God, and is used 9 times in the New Testament.

Where does God dwell on earth? Acts 17:24; 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:19-22.

- c. So the “temple of God” Paul refers to is the church—the living body of believers. Is not this the very place where the Pope of Rome claims to reign supreme? This is where he has made his seat (*kathedra*).

When he speaks, *ex cathedra*, meaning “from his seat,” he claims to speak In the place of God.

- (3) vs. 9, 10. Does the Roman System claim to perform miracles? Is it deceptive?

Let this quotation from Ralph Woodrow’s book, “*Great Prophecies of the Bible*,” p. 170, suffice:

“A full account of all the miracles which have supposedly happened within the Romish system would fill volumes. The crucifixes have spoken; images have come down and lit their own candles; idols have sweat, turned their eyes, raised the dead, mended broken bones; souls from purgatory have appeared on lonely roads and begged that masses be said in their behalf; many have claimed that the Virgin Mary visited them, etc. All of these miracles—whether supposed, real or faked—greatly increased the fallen church.”

F. Conclusion

1. Thus the Pope has identified himself as “the man of sin.”
2. This is the “little horn” that Daniel speaks about, that “wears out the saints of the most High.”
3. It is estimated that during the 1260 (days)—years (time, times and half a time), known as the Dark Ages, over 50, 000,000 Christians were tortured and killed by the Papal power.
4. And this is the Roman System—the Babylon of Rev. 17 and 18—represented today by Pope John Paul II, who is going all over the world courting the favour of all people.
5. My friends, the Antichrist is here, but his destruction is assured, vs. 8.