

END TIMES: BACK TO THE FUTURE

Lesson 3 w/Answers

Daniel's Prophecies

We continue our study of the End Times by examining some passages in Daniel and considering time, specifically prophetic time, along with what Daniel reveals to us about the time called the Tribulation Period. From our readings in Ezekiel during the last lesson, we saw a picture of God's plans for restoring His chosen people Israel, restoring the land, uniting the kingdom of Israel, rebuilding of all of the cities, rebuilding the Temple, and the restoring of their sacrificial system of worship. We learned that the rebuilt city of Jerusalem will be called "THE LORD DWELLS THERE". Furthermore, we were instructed that Christ will rule over his earthly kingdom from Jerusalem, and David will rule over Israel. God will dwell in the sanctuary of the Temple.

In this lesson, Daniel provides us a glimpse into what the times will be like leading up to the return of the Messiah and Israel's restoration. As we examine this prophecy in this lesson and the next, we will be focusing on time: specific times, periods of time, and times called out as specific events. Through our study, we will be able to construct a "chronology" or order of events in time. God, through Daniel, reveals to us the sequence of key events leading up to the arrival of the Messiah on the Mount of Olives.

Let's begin by establishing a core tenet regarding prophecy: a "prophetic month" is comprised of thirty equal-length days. This fact will help you in your understanding as we study time, times, and a half-time, the time of the Gentiles, a week of weeks, and seventy weeks. Then, let's see what we can divine regarding God's timing as we look forward to the return of Christ, the victorious arrival of the King of King and Lord of Lords.

Let's continue our study by reading the scriptures below and responding to the related questions.

1. Read Daniel Chapter 7 and answer this question and the additional ones that follow below. In Daniel 7:3-4 and verse 17, what are the four beasts described, and what causes each to rise?
 - a. ANSWER: These beasts represent Four Kingdoms:
Lion = Babylonian Empire
Bear = Medo-Persian Empire
Leopard = Greek Empire
4th Beast = Roman Empire
These four Kingdoms arise from the churning "sea", or agitated peoples.
2. In Daniel 7:9-12, there is a reference to "the Ancient of Days". Who is he, and what does he do?
 - a. ANSWER: It is God, who brings judgment.
3. What happens to the fourth beast?
 - a. ANSWER: He is slain and consigned to the "blazing fire".
4. The judgment of the fourth beast ends "the time of the Gentiles". What is that period referring to? (see Luke 21:23-28)
 - a. ANSWER: It is referring to the second half of the Tribulation Period: the Great Tribulation, when the Gentiles will rule over Jerusalem. This period is three and a half years long ("time, times and a half time"), or 1,260 days. More on this later in the lesson.

5. Read Daniel 7:19-28. Who is the "little", or "other" horn, and what does it do?
 - a. ANSWER: In Daniel's dream, it rises up after ten horns are already in existence. It uproots three of them, it is intelligent (eyes of man), is arrogant and boastful, and persecutes the saints of the Most High, referring to its persecution of the nation of Israel. The fourth beast on whose head it is located will take over the nations and rule the people, it will have a worldwide kingdom and will "devour the whole earth". It will comprise one worldwide government headed by a worldwide dictator.
6. Read Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7 and Revelation 12:14 (6?). Exactly how much "time" is referred to in these references?
 - a. ANSWER: "Time, times, and a half time"; a.k.a. 3.5 years; a.k.a. 1,260 days.
7. In Daniel Chapter 8, we read of another end time vision provided by Daniel, this one *appearing* to last 2,300 days. Fortunately for us, someone tells him what the vision is and why it is important. Who is this person, and why is this vision important? (see Daniel 8:15-26)
 - a. ANSWER: The angel Gabriel explains the vision to Daniel and tells him that it is important because it concerns the appointed time of the end, the "distant future".
8. Read Daniel 8:20-22. What does the fact that the two-horned ram had one horn longer than the other tell us about the kings of Media and Persia?
 - a. ANSWER: It tells us that one king (the Persian king) was stronger than the other.
9. See if you can locate a reference source for some information on Greek history. How did the Greek empire come to power under Alexander The Great, and what happened to this empire following Alexander's death?
 - a. ANSWER: Enraged by the defeat at Marathon, Alexander moved his small but fast-moving army quickly from the west and quickly defeated the Persians. At the time of his death, the empire was divided into four sections, one for each of his key generals; but the kingdom never again had the same power that it did under Alexander. The four generals were Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus. The latter, the Seleucid Empire, included Syria, Israel and Mesopotamia.
10. Who were the Maccabeans? Who was Antiochus IV Epiphanes, and why are these entities important with respect to the 2,300 *days* of the vision?
 - a. ANSWER 1: Antiochus IV Epiphanes came from the Seleucid Empire and rose to power after murdering his brother. On December 16, 167 BC, he erects idols, and in the Temple he required the Jews to offer unclean sacrifices and to eat swine's flesh or be killed.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Judas Maccabeus led a revolt, later called the Maccabean Revolt, driving away Antiochus and restoring Jerusalem and the Temple to Jewish control. This victory is the celebration we know today as Hanukkah. Judas cleansed the Temple, and it was re-consecrated early in 163 BC. If one assumes a prophetic year of 360 days, and that each pair of morning and evening sacrifices would count as a single day, the 2,300 sacrifices would equate to three years plus seventy days.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Thus the first part of this prophecy was literally fulfilled during this time.
11. What can we learn about the coming Anti-Christ from Daniel 8:23-25?
 - a. ANSWER 1: He will be a master of intrigue.
 - b. ANSWER 2: He will become very strong but not by his own power.
 - c. ANSWER 3: He will cause astounding devastation and will succeed in whatever he does.
 - d. ANSWER 4: He will destroy Israel.
 - e. ANSWER 5: He will cause deceit to prosper and consider himself superior.
 - f. ANSWER 6: When Israel feels secure, he will destroy many and take his stand against the Prince of princes.
 - g. ANSWER 7: Ultimately, He will be destroyed, but not by human power.

12. Read Daniel 9:20-24. When God punished the nation of Judah and the city of Jerusalem, how long a period of time did He decree would be required in order to "finish transgression", put an end to sin, atone for wickedness, and bring everlasting righteousness?
- a. ANSWER: "Seventy 'weeks' or 'sevens'". (Remember: a prophetic week equals seven years.)
13. How do we know the above prophecy has not yet been fulfilled?
- a. ANSWER: Sin has not ended, and everlasting righteousness is not present on the earth.
14. The seventy "weeks" or "sevens" represents seven seven-year periods, or a total of 490 years (7 x 70). How many of those years would pass between the time of Artaxerxes' decree allowing Nehemiah to return and rebuild the temple (5 March 444 BC), and Christ's death on the cross (30 March 33 AD)? (Daniel 9:25-26)
- a. ANSWER: Seven sevens is 49, and sixty-two sevens is 434 years; together, these total 483 years. This leaves seven more years to be accounted for. We arrive at this by adding the 33 years in AD to the 444 BC years; however, we must subtract one year as there was no zero year. We then get 476 years; if we multiply this by 365 days/yr, we will arrive at 173,740 days. However, we must add 116 days for the leap years in between, remembering not to count the leap year at the century point between BC and AD. Finally, we need to add the days in March between 5 March (the day the original decree went out) and 30 March 30 (when Christ was crucified); thus we will add 24 days to our total above. All together this totals to 173,880 days, or 483 years. We can also arrive at this same number by using a prophetic year of 360 days and multiplying the 483 years by 360 days. This results in the same number of days for the 69 "weeks", or seven-year periods, that comprise 483 years, i.e., 173,880 days.
15. What does the vision tell us will happen at the beginning of the seventieth "week", or "seven"? Who does it say in Daniel 9:26 will make this occur?
- a. ANSWER: The people of the "ruler who will come" will destroy the city.
16. What does Daniel 9:27 tell us about the new ruler's covenant?
- a. ANSWER: He will make a covenant at the beginning of the seven; but in the middle of that seven he will put an end to sacrifice and offering, and at the Temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation.
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What an awesome and terrible set of visions Daniel is given to reveal to the people of Israel God's plan for them and the coming end times when the Messiah will set up his earthly kingdom. God clearly has a plan for them, and for all mankind, and he lays it out here in Daniel. So, we are beginning to see the advantage that God gives us today as we exercise our ability to look back over all of Biblical prophecy and world history, and to see His revelation unfolding before our very eyes.

In our next lesson, we will be examining some of the prophecies of Zechariah, which will provide even more insight into God's plan for Israel at the time of his return.

Thanks for being so faithful in studying with us.

In Christ,

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