

THE CORNERSTONE

December 2017

Ladies' Christmas Soup & Salad

December 10, 2017

5:00 - 7:00 pm



Join us for a Soup and Salad Potluck Dinner as we celebrate the Christmas season with warm fellowship, delicious food and great fun!



Sign-up in the foyer.

Dessert and beverages provided.

December 13,
2017

Gingerbread House Contest

7:00 pm

Come for Dinner at
6:00 pm

You will need to bring your own disposable bases and any items you wish to use.





Missions for the Month



Jim and
Phyllis
Myers
Ministries

Jim, a missionary of Jesus Christ, and Phyllis, a faithful sister and beloved wife. To all the saints at Sugar Land Bible Church. Grace to you, and peace be multiplied.

We thank God upon every remembrance of you for your faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ, knowing that you hold fast the Word of God and the gospel of grace. Know that we are so grateful for your support, encouragement and prayers. Know also that our Father in heaven has been pleased to answer your prayers, for we have been so blessed in every aspect. Thank you.

This is the 25th year that we have been privileged to serve the Lord in the former Soviet Union. The ministry has been rewarding and fruitful. Our primary focus is the Word of God Bible College in Kiev, Ukraine. We have a two-year intensive program of training people for ministry. The curriculum consists of teaching Greek and Hebrew, systematic theology and studies through all 66 books of the Bible, plus numerous other courses. Most of the courses are taught by American pastors who come to teach two-week modules. But about a third of the courses are now being taught by our college graduates. Our goal is to one day have enough nationals sufficiently trained so that all of the courses can be taught by nationals.

One of the greatest joys of the work here is to see the fruit of our labors as our graduates go out and do ministries. A high percentage of them are involved in ministries. Several have started ministries of their own and a few have planted churches. One family is doing evangelism and church planting as missionaries in a Muslim country.

We also continue to have ministry in Word of God Bible Church, which we planted about 20 years ago. This is now a Ukrainian church, with all of the leadership in the hands of the nationals who were trained under our ministry. The church is self-sustaining and functions without need of support from outsiders. This is the indigenous church concept, and we are so glad to see this working here.

In addition to these things, there is also the teaching of seminary courses in several other cities throughout Ukraine, and we also put on pastors conferences annually in Zambia and Brazil.

We count it a privilege to be the representatives of Sugar Land Bible Church in all these endeavors.



Andy Woods—

DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS, PART 14

In this series of articles, we are exploring a very important Bible prophecy, which is generally referred to as Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks, found in Daniel 9:24-27. In the first installment, we explained the background of the giving of this prophecy. With this background information in mind, we then turned our attention to a textual analysis of Daniel 9:24-27. We began to break the prophecy down into ten manageable facts.

As the reader tracks with me through the presentation of these ten facts, concepts, or ideas, he will develop a very clear understanding of the Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. In turn, he will be rewarded by the Holy Spirit with greater confidence that the Bible is indeed God's Word, and he will also obtain a blueprint or timeline through which he can understand how all end time events predicted in the Bible will ultimately come to pass.

We then noted our *first* fact, which is the idea that the Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks concerns the nation of Israel in general and the City of Jerusalem in particular. As previously noted, this prophecy has nothing to do with the present age of the Church. We then noted a *second* feature, which is the notion that the prophecy consists of a 490-year stop watch. We then noted our *third* feature, which is the idea that each year of Daniel's 490-year stopwatch consists of 360 days. We then introduced our *fourth* feature, which is the idea that at the end of Daniel's 490-year period Israel will be politically and spiritually restored. Our *fifth* fact pertains to the notion that Daniel's 490-year stop watch began to run on March 5, 444 B.C. Our *sixth* fact indicated that exactly 483 years elapsed between the beginning of the prophecy (March 5, 444 B.C.) and when the Messiah formally presented His messianic credentials to the nation of Israel on Palm Sunday (March 30, A.D. 33). In other words, the first 69 weeks of the prophecy were fulfilled to the exact day. *Seventh*, in between the conclusion of the first 69 weeks of the prophecy but before the elapsing of the prophecy's 70th week, there exists a gap of an unspecified duration of time. *Eighth*, the unelapsed portion of the Seventy Weeks prophecy comprises the future Tribulation period. We are now prepared to offer our *ninth* fact.

Fact # 9: The Final Seven Years of the Prophecy (as Depicted in Daniel 9:27) Provides a General Overview of the Future Tribulation Period

We are now ready to move on to fact number 9, which is the idea that Daniel 9:27 provides a general overview or thumb-nail sketch of the future Tribulation period. The overview is given in Daniel 9:27, which represents the part of the prophecy that is yet to come and that has not yet transpired. Daniel 9:27 says, "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations *will come* one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." In other words, when you look at Daniel 9:27 what you're seeing is in blueprint form the coming seven-year Tribulation period.

In fact, we can discern *four* basic facts about this time. The first two of these facts we covered in the last installment. *First*, we know, for example, that it will last seven years. *Second*, we can also know exactly what will start the Tribulation period, which is the covenant that the Antichrist will make with unbelieving Israel. In this installment we will look at the third and fourth facts.

Third, we also know what will happen right in the middle of this Tribulation period. Daniel 9:27 says, "in the middle of the week." In other words, in the middle of the seven-year period, "he," that is the Antichrist or the man of sin, "will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate...." Right in the middle of this seven-year period the Antichrist will go into the rebuilt Jewish temple. Up to that point in time the Jews will have been trusting him wrongly as their Messiah. He will betray them by going into the temple and desecrating it. What does the notion of temple desecration entail?



Daniel 11:31 uses the nearly identical expression, "abomination of desolation" in reference to a man in Jewish history who already did this very thing. His name was Antiochus Epiphanes. About 167 B.C. he did virtually the same thing to the Jewish people. He entered into their temple. He told them that they could not offer sacrifices in the temple any longer. He set up a pagan image in the temple. That pagan image was Zeus. We know about these events because of the books of 1–2 Maccabees. Now, as Protestants, we do not accept those books as part of the inspired canon. However, much like the writings of the first-century historian Josephus, we still believe that they contain valuable historical information. These books essentially tell us what this man, Antiochus Epiphanes, did and consequently how Daniel's prophecies were fulfilled. In other words, by comparing Daniel 11:31 with the fulfillment of this prophecy as recorded in the historical Maccabees account, we learn that Daniel's prediction in Daniel 11:31 was fulfilled 400-years later through the temple desecration activities of Antiochus Epiphanes.

Now, Daniel 9:27 takes the nearly identical phrase that is used in Daniel 11:31 to prophesy what Antiochus would do about 400-years later (167 B.C.) during the intertestamental period, and applies it to the work of the future Antichrist or the future man of sin during the coming Tribulation period. In the process, Daniel depicts exactly what the Antichrist will do in the middle of the coming future seven-year Tribulation period. Like Antiochus of the past, the future Antichrist will betray the Jewish people. He will enter into the Jewish temple. He will tell the Jews that they cannot offer sacrifices up in their temple any longer. He will also take a pagan image and he will set it up in the temple. Thus, the atrocities of what Antiochus of the past accomplished will be repeated or recapitulated in a larger scale by the future Antichrist at the midpoint of the future Tribulation period. When the Antichrist betrays Israel in this manner by replicating what one of her villains of the past, Antiochus Epiphanes, already did, the Lord will strategically use this event to awaken the nation to the fact that their Messiah is not the Antichrist but rather is Jesus Christ (Zech. 12:10), who came two-thousand years earlier.

As indicated previously, the pagan image, the one Antiochus set up, was an image of Zeus. However, the pagan image that the Antichrist will set up in the future Tribulation period will be an image of himself. This image is described in Revelation 13:15, which says, "And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed."

Now, what we learn then is that the Holy Spirit is using two individuals in history as forerunners of the coming Antichrist. Because the coming Antichrist will replicate through his desecration of the Jewish temple (Dan. 9:27) what Antiochus did about 167 B.C. or so (Dan. 11:31), we see that the historical figure Antiochus Epiphanes is a forerunner of the future Antichrist. We also note that in Daniel 9:27 we see the pronoun "he" and we can follow what is called the law of the nearest antecedent. In other words, to discern what a pronoun means or refers to merely requires backing up to the immediately preceding noun or individual spoken of. As we back up back into verse 26, you will remember that this verse is making a prediction of Titus of Rome who sacked Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Daniel 9:26 predicts, "Then after sixty-two weeks...the people of *the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary*. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined" (italics added).

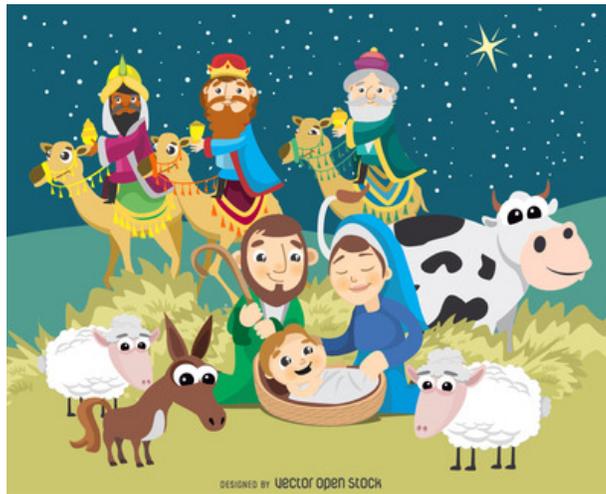
Thus, through Daniel 9:26 and Daniel 11:31, the Holy Spirit has put His finger on two people. He has said these are the two people that you need to understand and study to fully comprehend the work of the coming Antichrist. These individuals are the forerunners, or harbingers, of the coming Antichrist. In other words, the coming Antichrist will largely replicate what Titus of Rome did in A.D. 70 and what Antiochus Epiphanes did all the way back in A.D. 167. First John 2:18 says, "Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that *antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared*, from this we know that it is the last hour" (italics added). This verse indicates that there have been many "baby" antichrists, or precursors of the coming Antichrist. Two of them are revealed in Daniel's prophecies. They are Titus of Rome (Dan. 9:26) and Antiochus Epiphanes (Dan. 11:31). These historical types are important to consider since some contend that the coming Antichrist will be Jewish. Among the many reasons given, such a belief is held because since Israel could only conceivably enter into a national covenant with another Jew. However, it is interesting to note that both forerunners of the Antichrist, Antiochus and Titus, were Gentiles. Therefore, I believe that the coming Antichrist will also most likely be a Gentile. As the final leader of the last form of Gentile dominion



Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 17, 6:00 PM

Please join us for this 1- hour Children's program.



December 24—Candlelight Service—6 PM



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that will trample down Israel during the Times of the Gentiles (Dan. 2:41-43; 7:7-8, 23-25), consistency of interpretation also argues for his Gentile identification.

Fourth, we not only know what is going to happen in the middle of the Tribulation period but we also know what's going to happen at the very end. Daniel 9:27 says after this desecration of the temple, "even until a complete destruction," of the "one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." The very man who desecrated the temple will also experience the direct cataclysmic judgment and intervention of God at the end of this seven-year Tribulation period. A cross reference to this event would be Second Thessalonians 2:8, which says, "Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming." Revelation 19:20 similarly says, "And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone." Both verses indicate that the event that will terminate the seven-year Tribulation will be Christ's Second Advent. Only Christ's direct intervention in human history will overthrow the diabolical reign of the Antichrist and bring forth the glorious kingdom promises spoken of in Daniel 9:24, which we discussed under fact number four.

Yes, the Antichrist will come to power. He will have his day in the sun. Yes, he will enter into a seven-year treaty with the nation of Israel starting this seven-year countdown. He will betray the Jewish people by desecrating their temple. He will persecute the Jewish people heavily during the second half of the Tribulation period. But also, yes, the Lord Jesus Christ is going to overthrow him. You see, evil will have its day in the sun, but its very existence is time bound and finite as far as God is concerned. Just as fast as evil arises, evil ultimately will be vanquished. Only this prophetic perspective allows the child of God to retain hope in a hopeless age.

So, Daniel 9:27 gives us a wonderful glimpse of the coming seven-year Tribulation period. Based on these observations from Daniel 9:27, we know how long the Tribulation period will last—seven years. We also know what will start the Tribulation—the peace treaty between the future Antichrist and unbelieving Israel. We even know exactly what will happen right in the middle of the Tribulation period. The Antichrist will replicate what Antiochus Epiphanies of the past did in 167 B.C. by desecrating the Jewish temple. Finally, we know how the seven-year Tribulation period will end—with the Second Advent of Jesus Christ.

Based on our study of the Seventy Weeks prophecy, what have we learned thus far? *First*, the prophecy specifically concerns the nation of Israel. *Second*, the prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27 covers a 490-year time period. *Third*, each year of this prophecy consists of 360 days. *Fourth*, by the time the prophetic clock reaches its 490-year completion, Israel will be both politically and spiritually restored. *Fifth*, the 490-year prophetic clock began to run on March 5, 444 B.C. *Sixth*, exactly 483 years elapsed between the beginning of the prophecy (March 5, 444 B.C.) and when the Messiah formally presented His messianic credentials to the nation of Israel on Palm Sunday (March 30, A.D. 33). *Seventh, in between the conclusion of the first 69 weeks of the prophecy but before the elapsing of the prophecy's 70th week, there exists a gap of an unspecified duration of time.* *Eighth*, the unelapsed portion of the Seventy Weeks prophecy comprises the future Tribulation period. *Ninth*, Daniel 9:27 provides a general overview of the future Tribulation period.

(To Be Continued...)

Men's Breakfast

Saturday December 2

8:00 AM

Alex Garcia will be our special speaker this month. All men and teenage boys are invited to attend! Bring your Bibles and your appetites!

