

THE CORNERSTONE

September 2017



Alex Garcia

Introducing Our SLBC Pastoral Intern Alex Garcia

One of the things that is necessary to graduate from seminary is the successful completion of a pastoral internship, which gives seminary students practical experience in ministry in a local church context. For the next 12 months, Dallas Theological Seminary student Alex Garcia Will be completing his pastoral internship at Sugar Land Bible Church under the supervision of Pastors Andy Woods and Jim McGowan. Alex Garcia was born and raised in Houston, Texas. He came to Christ as a young boy. He graduated from University of Houston with a Bachelor of Arts in History in 1993 and South Texas College of Law with a Doctorate of Jurisprudence in 1996. He is currently a student at Dallas Theological Seminary and expects to complete his Master of Theology by May, 2019. He has been married to his wife, Stephanie, since 1997. They have two daughters, Katelyn and Ashley. Alex will be involved with many facets of the SLBC ministry over the course of the next year. Please welcome him and his family into our SLBC church family during this important phase of his ministry preparation.

Mission: The English Summer Camp

For the last eleven years, the English Summer Camp has gone to China in July to teach English and to take in the Gospel. They have taught in public schools and in private setting in several cities in China, but they have always gone to Pinghu, near Shanghai. The ministry started with one high school, Pinghu High School. Then gradually invitations came to teach in two other high schools in Pinghu. In 2016 Quzhou invited the camp to Baiyun Junior High School, and they also invited the camp this summer as well. Additionally, this year we had five other opportunities to teach. A church in Amarillo sent seven people, and they covered four different locations. Some of the "Houston" team went to a new location: Jinan.

While not everything that happened can be written here, please know that God is at work. The teachers go in obedience to Him, and He provides the increase. The most exciting part of the trip is seeing God's hand at work and seeing His love for the Chinese people. Truly, this is His trip. All of the glory goes to Him!



Next year the opportunities will possibly double from this year. Each school or camp has invited us back. In addition, this year teachers or administrators came to observe the classes. From this, three new schools in three new provinces have invited the team to use the Pinghu model of teaching in their schools. Two places have asked the team to teach teachers who would come from surrounding areas. Along with this, one administrator asked the team to teach fourth and fifth graders in Quzhou. If that wasn't enough, Myanmar has extended an invitation to teach there in the March to May timeframe to the Kachin Baptist, and a place in Thailand possibly wants the team to come before going to China.

Of course, everyone wants to expand the ministry, and we want to plant as many seeds as possible; however, this is a huge increase of teaching areas. Along with the increase comes the challenge of finding enough godly teachers and preparing them to go into some unknown situations. Also, the challenge of the administration of the projects looms on the horizon. Working with the people in China who live so far away also is a challenge.

Nothing is too difficult for the Lord. Yet, He has called His people to pray. Thank you for praying for the trip in July! Please pray for the trips in 2018.

Prayer Requests:

Please pray for Betty Cooke and Joshua Tao to have wisdom to know what new opportunities to take or not take.

Please pray for the teaching positions to be filled by January 1 with godly Christians who have good character and who are team players.

Please pray for the materials to be improved and edited before January 1.

Please pray for materials to be developed for teaching Chinese English teachers.

Please pray for help in the various areas of need.

Please see Betty Cooke if you have any ideas, if you want to help, or if you would like to go to teach.

Scripture for the Month: 2 Corinthians 1: 3-5

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ.

The Cornerstone Newsletter deadline for News articles is the 19th of each month.

You can e-mail Patricia Chandler at: earl-budc@att.net or send information to Carol Henry at Carol@SLBC.org



Andy Woods—Pastor

DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS, PART 11

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.

In our second installment, we 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. In our third installment, we noted a *second* feature, which is the notion that the prophecy consists of a 490-year stop watch. In our fourth installment, we noted our *third* feature, which is the idea that each year of Daniel's 490-year stopwatch consists of 360 days. In our fifth installment, we noted our *fourth* feature, which is the idea that at the end of Daniel's 490-year period Israel will be politically and spiritually restored. In our sixth installment, we noted our *fifth* fact, which pertains to the notion that Daniel's 490-year stop watch began to run on March 5, 444 B.C. In our seventh and eighth installments, we presented our *sixth* fact. 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. We are now prepared to offer our *seventh* fact. We began this discussion in our prior two installments.

Fact # 7: A Gap of an Unspecified Interlude Exists Between the 69th and the 70th

Weeks of the Prophecy (Dan 9:26)

According to fact number 7, although the prophecy ran consecutively for 490 years, a gap of an unspecified duration of time exists in between the end of year 483 and the beginning of the year 484 of Daniel's 490-year prophecy. Thus, there is an undisclosed gap of time between the first sixty-nine weeks and the seventieth week of the prophecy. Another way of saying this is that there exists a gap of time in between the first 483 years of the prophecy and the final seven years of the prophecy. In other words, once Palm Sunday happened God placed His finger on the prophetic pause button. God's finger has remained on that pause button ever since. The prophecy is simply waiting for God to place His finger back on the restart button. We also noted that Christ during this gap Christ is building His church (Matt. 16:18).

Many people question the idea that there could be a gap of time in Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. For example, Steve Wohlberg contends:

Much of the Christian world is now locked in a fierce debate about whether Jesus will return for His church before the seven years (the pre-tribulation view), in the midst of the seven years (the mid-tribulation view), or at the end of the seven years (the post-tribulation view). Yet by far the most explosive question, which few seem to be asking, should be "is an in time 'seven-year period of great tribulation' really the correct interpretation of Daniel 9:27 in the first place?" Historically, protestant scholars have not applied Daniel 9:27 to a future period of tribulation at all! Neither have they applied the "he" to the antichrist! Rather, they applied it to Jesus Christ.

Thus, we need to ask the question, "is it exegetically defensible to contend that in between the end of verse 26 and the beginning of verse 27 there exists a gap spanning at least two-thousand years in duration with this period continuing right up until the rapture of the church?" There are at least *six* valid, text-based reasons for contending that such a gap exists.

The first *four* of which we covered in our prior two installments. *First*, according to Daniel 9:26, two events must transpire before the Seventieth Week can occur. These are the crucifixion and the events of A.D. 70. If the events of A.D. 70 had to take place before the final seven years of the prophecy could be fulfilled and if A.D. 70 took place almost forty years after Palm Sunday, then there must be an interlude in the prophecy. *Second*, we also noted that if the prophecy had run consecutively with no interruption then the kingdom promises (Dan. 9:24) would have been set up upon the earth through national Israel seven years after Palm Sunday (March 30, A.D. 33). Yet, this never happened. *Third*, Jesus and various New Testament writers indicated a gap when interpreting Daniel 9:27. *Fourth*, the specific details of Daniel 9:27 were never fulfilled in the first-century, which they would have been had the prophecy run consecutively with no interlude.

Prophetic Gaps Are Common in Scripture

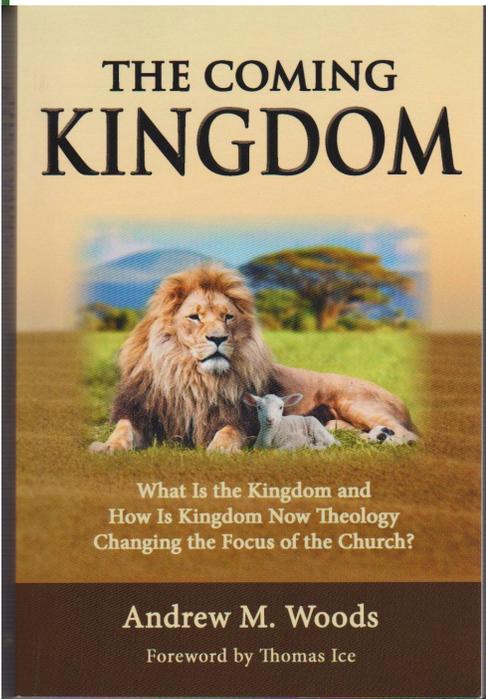
A *fifth* reason for believing in a gap in Daniel's prophecy is that prophetic gaps are used elsewhere in Scripture, and in fact are quite common. If they are commonly found elsewhere in Holy Writ, it should come as no surprise that such a gap is found here in Daniel's prophecy as well. It's common for the Holy Spirit to reveal two events to a prophet in a back to back fashion without mentioning the vast period between the two events. Notice the famous prophecy of Isaiah 9:6-7, which says:

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us, and the government will rest on His shoulders, and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Isaiah 9:6a, says, "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us." We all understand this as a reference to Christ's First Coming. However, then the prophecy goes on and it says, "and the government will rest on His shoulders" (Isa. 9:6b). This is a reference to His Second Coming. Thus, what the Holy Spirit has done here is "sandwich" together two prophetic events in a back to back fashion without mentioning the valley, or the vast expanse of time, in between those two events. It is like looking at two mountain peaks in a distance. The mountain peak that's furthest away is usually raised slightly behind the first mountain peak. Although you can see those two mountain peaks in the distance, what you typically cannot see is the valley between the two.

This is also what we have in Old Testament prophecy. Therefore, the Old Testament prophets themselves were oftentimes confused about the contents of their own prophecies (Dan. 7:28; 8:27; 12:8-9). First Peter 1:10-11 says, "As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow." Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel and all the prophets that we have in our Old Testament were oftentimes confused about their own prophecies because they did not have the hindsight that we have. Hindsight is 20/20. We can look back on these prophecies and see which ones relate to Christ's First Coming and which ones relate to Christ's Second Coming. However, Isaiah and all the rest had no similar historical luxury. They merely received two prophecies in a back to back fashion without necessarily understanding the time distance, or the gap of time, between the two prophecies.

Yet another example of a common prophetic gap, notice how Jesus Christ, in Luke 4:16-21 quoted Isaiah 61:1-2. Isaiah 61:1-2 says this, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God' to comfort all who mourn." Christ quotes this passage in the synagogue in Nazareth and explains to his listeners, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:16-21). Interestingly, He only quotes Isaiah 61:1-2a. He leaves out of His citation the second part of the passage (Isaiah 61:2b), which says "the day of vengeance of our God." Why does Jesus selectively quote Isaiah's prophecy here? Some of Isaiah's prophecy pertained to His First Advent (Isa. 61:1-2a) while other parts of it pertained to His Second Advent (Isa. 61:2b). Consequently, Christ only cited the section of Isaiah's prophecy which was immediately



Beginning on August 30, 2017
Pastor Andy Woods will continue
teaching
Wednesday night Bible Study..."

The focus of this class will be on
"The Kingdom", which is the theme of the en-
tire Bible. The material for this teaching
will be the Bible but also biblical material as
organized in Pastor Andy's recently published
book
entitled

"The Coming Kingdom"

This book was given out as a free resource a few months ago to all
SLBC members and regular attendees. More copies will be supplied
to all who desire to attend this class.

This class will ask and answer three basic questions:

1. What does the Bible say about the subject of the kingdom?
2. What are the key passages that many utilize to argue that we are in the kingdom now?
3. Why does it matter what one believes about the kingdom?

We will be holding this study in the sanctuary with prayer from 6:45 to 7:00 pm, teaching from 7 to 8 pm, and questions and answers from 8 to 8:15 pm. These sessions will be videotaped and archived for the benefit of our missionaries and our growing online church.

We hope and pray that you will take advantage of this opportunity. We are looking forward to what God will do through these sessions of study in "His Word."

on the precipice of being fulfilled at His First Advent. He left off the part of the prophecy that was destined to be fulfilled in the distant future at His Second Advent (Isa. 61:2b). Apparently, Jesus Himself understood that there existed an undisclosed valley of time in between Isaiah 61:1-2a and Isaiah 61:2b.

In fact, in the Book of Daniel there exists numerous similar prophetic gaps. For example, in Daniel 2:40-41, a gap exists between the two verses as they prophetically transfer the reader from the prophecies related to ancient Rome to the Antichrist's revived Roman Empire of the future Tribulation period. Similarly, in Daniel 7:7, there is yet another gap in the middle of the verse where the identical transition takes place. Also, in Daniel 11:35-36 there is an undisclosed gap of time in between verses 35 and 36, which transitions the reader from the predictions related to Antiochus Epiphanies of the past to the future Antichrist. In Zechariah 9:9-10, there exists a similar time gap between these verses, which transition the reader from Christ's First Coming to His Second Advent.

All of this to say that to see a prophetic gap in Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy is not at all abnormal when it comes to other biblical prophecies, particularly Messianic prophecies. The Spirit of God will typically "sandwich" two events together with some events related to Christ's First Coming and some events related to Christ's Second Coming without simultaneously revealing the vast expanse of time between the events. To account for the plan and program of God within the time gap we must factor in New Testament data depicting the work of God in the present time called the Church Age. As we look back with a completed canon and hindsight we can not only see that there is a gap of time between two prophetic events, but we can also see what God is doing within this time gap.

Early Church Interpreters Acknowledged the Reality of a Prophetic Gap

Sixth, the prophetic gap concept in Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy appears to find support among some of the early church fathers. Recall the contention of Steve Wohlberg who boldly stated, "Historically, protestant scholars have not applied Daniel 9:27 to a future period of tribulation at all! Neither have they applied the 'he' to the antichrist! Rather, they applied it to Jesus Christ." Despite the contention of Wohlberg who argues that the prophetic gap in Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks is an innovation, there were many early church fathers who interpreted Daniel's prophecy in harmony with the afore-described time gap. While numerous patristic interpreters could be cited, spatial limitations cause us to focus on just one. Notice the following quote from early church father Hippolytus (A.D. 170–235). Hippolytus obviously interpreted Daniel 9:26-27 in a manner consistent with a prophetic gap. Notice what Hippolytus stated:

For when the three score and two weeks are fulfilled, and Christ is come, and the Gospel is preached in every place, the times being then accomplished, there will remain only one week, the last, in which Elijah will appear, and Enoch, and in the midst of it the abomination of desolation will be manifest, viz., Antichrist, announcing desolation to the world.

Now I could quibble some with Hippolytus' statement. He is arguing that the two witnesses of Revelation 11 are Enoch and Elijah. I would probably argue that the two witnesses are Elijah and Moses. However, this minor issue notwithstanding, the only point I am trying to make is that when Hippolytus interpreted Daniel 9:27 he understood it in the context of the distant future rather than the remote past. Hippolytus clearly placed the eventual fulfillment of the final week of Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27) in the same time as the arrival of the two witnesses of Revelation 11 and the manifestation of the future Antichrist. In other words, Hippolytus interpreted the final week of Daniel's prophecy not in a historical sense but rather in a futuristic sense. Thus, Hippolytus himself seemed to believe in an undisclosed gap of time in this prophecy.

In sum, for the following *six* reasons, a valid justification exists for interpreting the Seventy Weeks prophecy as containing an undisclosed gap of time in between first 69 weeks and the final seventieth week of the prophecy. The chronology of the intervening events mentioned in verse 26, especially as they relate to A.D. 70, mandate a gap of some kind. Without a gap, all the prophecies mentioned in verse 24 would have been fulfilled seven years after Palm Sunday. In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus interpreted Daniel 9:27

Join Us...

SLBC

Ladies' Retreat

Oct 13-15, 2017

@ Camp Tejas



"Set Your Mind on the Things Above" Col 3:2

--Speaker Betty Cooke

Registration Open!



See foyer table for details.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

Begin on August 30, 2017

6:00 pm—Dinner for all



6:45 pm—Prayer in Sanctuary

6:45 pm—Children's Bible Activities begin in Children's Wing



7:00 pm—Adult Bible Study in Sanctuary (The Coming Kingdom)

7:00 pm—Youth Bible Study with Gabe Morris upstairs in Youth Room



consistent with the concept of a prophetic gap. The same is true of other New Testament writers. The specific details of Daniel 9:27 were not fulfilled in the first century. Such prophetic gaps are common place in Scripture. Interpreting Daniel's prophecy in harmony with a prophetic gap is not a modern innovation but rather even finds ample support among some of Christianity's earliest church fathers. So, according to fact number 7, there exists a gap of unspecified duration in between the end of the 483rd and the beginning of the 484th year of the prophecy.

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. *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.

(To Be Continued...)

Steve Wohlberg, *Exploding the Israel Deception: A Jewish Believer Exposes False Prophecies About Israel, the Temple, and Armageddon* (Roseville, CA: Amazing Facts, 1998), 43.

Ibid.

Louis E. Knowles, "The Interpretation of the Seventy Weeks Prophecy in the Early Church Fathers," *The Westminster Theological Journal* 7, (May 1945): 136-60.

Hippolytus, *Fragments From Commentaries*, Daniel, paragraph 22.



Men's Breakfast

September 9, 2017

8:00-9:30 am.

All Men and Youth boys are invited to attend!. Brother Ron Smith will be speaking on the "Triumphal Entry".

Bring your Bible and you appetite.

