

In God's Time

In my small library here at home I only keep a few books and commentaries I often refer to. Among those books are about twenty books and commentaries on the book of Revelation, and specifically end times prophecy. I have taught Revelation to home groups twice in recent years and over the past month I have been going through my teaching notes, seeking new insight to God's end time plan as it relates to our world today.

In recent months our Sunday church has been on TV watching David Jeremiah's Sunday service from the San Diego area. He's teaching through the book of Daniel, which has many ties to Revelation.

It's interesting to note that 13 of Revelation's 22 chapters are focused on a single seven-year "week" of time — the end of this age, the Tribulation period. But where does that fit in Daniel's prophecy made in the 6th century BC?

Ray Stedman — the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation, although written some five hundred years apart, are so closely interwoven in their themes and prophetic accounts that they could have been produced by the same hand. Unquestionably they were produced by the same Mind, for they both describe the same eternal plan of history.

Before we look at the key passage in Daniel, we must first consider the setting and background of what Daniel was to become a part of.

David Jeremiah (DJ) — Daniel spent most of his life in Babylon. He had been there nearly 70 years. One day he was reading in Jeremiah and he read...

Jeremiah 29:10 — This is what the Lord says: "You will be in Babylon for seventy years. But then I will come and do for you all the good things I have promised, and I will bring you home again."

Daniel saw that God had promised that when the Israelite's 70 years of captivity were over, God's people could go back and have a nation again in the land God had given them. He also realized that according to history those 70 years were about to be completed.

As Daniel sought the Lord, to his surprise God told him what he was going to do over the next 490 years. And God then sent the angel Gabriel to give him his plan.

Daniel 9:24-27 Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the Prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the

middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.

It must be noted that Israel had in its calendar not only a week of seven days (Exod 23:12), but also a “week” of seven years (Lev 25:3, 4, 8-10; Gen. 29:27-28). In other words God is telling Daniel that he would continue to deal with Israel for another 490 years before bringing in everlasting righteousness.

(DJ) — In the Old Testament a year is always 360 days. The Jeremiah passage tells us that there is coming a time when sin will end and transgressions will stop. We know that is when Jesus, the Messiah, will take the reigns of authority and his kingdom will flourish on this earth — “...a time of everlasting righteousness” and, “Jews will worship again in their temple.

When was the seventy-week period to begin? It was to begin with the command to rebuild Jerusalem’s walls. The first two chapters of Nehemiah inform us that this command was issued during the twentieth year of Artaxerxes’ reign. The date was Nisan 1, 445 BC. That date is easily converted to March 14, 445 BC. Even the *Encyclopedia Britannica* sets this date as March 14, 445 B.C. So we have the exact date for the start of the prophecy.

It is further noted in the Jeremiah passage that the declaration of Messiah the Prince will mark the end of 69 years of the 70 year prophecy.

(DJ) — When did Messiah the Prince appear as the anointed of God? It was the day Jesus rode on a donkey into the city of Jerusalem, with branches strewn in his pathway. And to find when the end of the prophecy is, we have to reduce the years to days. 69 weeks of 7 years each, with each year having 360 days gives us a total of 483 years times 360 days, which totals 173,880 days. So we begin with March 14, 445 BC, and we end on April 6, 32 AD. That is the exact day the Lord rode into Jerusalem declaring himself “the Messiah.” Not the approximate day — but the exact day.

For even greater detail on the breakdown of the full 490 year advance prophecy given to Jeremiah, the ex-Dean of Wilmington School of the Bible at Liberty University — **H.L. Wilmington (HLW)** (1932-2018) — offers the following:

(HLW) — There were four distinct time periods mentioned within the full seventy-weeks.

- First period - 7 weeks (49 years), from 445 B.C. to 396 B.C. The building of the streets and walls of Jerusalem “even in perilous times” took place. See Nehemiah 2-6.

- Second period - 62 weeks (434 years), from 396 B.C. to A.D. 30. Ending with the Messiah.

The brilliant British scholar and Bible student, Sir Robert Anderson (1841-1918), reduced the first two periods into their exact number of days. This he has done by multiplying the 483 years of the first two periods by 360 days in a biblical year, as pointed out in Genesis 7:11, 24; 8:3,4. The total number of days in the first sixty-nine weeks is 173,880. Anderson then points out that if one begins counting on March 14, 445 B.C. and

goes forward in history, these days would run out on April 6, A.D. 32. *It was on this very day that Jesus made his triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem.* Of course, it was also on this same day that the Pharisees plotted to murder Christ, Luke 19:47. Thus Daniel, writing some five-and-one-half centuries earlier, correctly predicted the very day of Christ's presentation and rejection.

Of the original prophecy of 490 years, we have seen that 483 of those years have been recorded in history. However, God then placed a pause in the fulfillment of the prophecy on the day of Christ's entrance and declaration. And what of the remaining seven years?

(HLW) — • Third period - One-half week (3-1/2 years), the first half of the Tribulation. At the beginning of this period the antichrist will make a seven-year pact with Israel.

• Fourth period - One-half-week (3-1/2 years), the last half of the Tribulation. The antichrist will break his pact with Israel and will begin his terrible bloodbath. At the end of the last week - and of the entire seventy-week period - the true Messiah will come and establish his perfect millennium.

One more sign of the absolute perfection of our God and Lord — the one and only timeless God who is always on time.... to the year, the day, and the hour. Every day is the next step toward the fulfillment of all things in the plan of our God and Savior.

The prophets of old, along with the Apostle John, have given us great insight into what is to come as given to us in the Scriptures. One cannot study the Old Testament along with the New Testament book of Revelation without realizing that we must never lose sight of our connection to the nation of Israel and our need to keep both Israel and the Church fully prayer-covered for God's protective hedge until the end of days comes upon planet earth.

....blessed is everyone who blesses you, O Israel, and cursed is everyone who curses you. —Numbers 24:9

....for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye. —Zechariah 2:8