

End Times Lesson 7 – Daniels 70 weeks

Before we get started on our lesson today I told you about a book last week that if I remembered correctly is addressed to those who are left behind after the rapture and here it is (Left Behind by Peter & Patti Lalonde) – it's a little dated being written in the 90's but they state that in their "letter" which makes up chapter 1 – it's still very relevant though – (Talk about book for a minute) – Anyway – you can get it for as low as \$3 plus tax and shipping online.

So – today we are going to start talking about the tribulation period – but before we get into the details, I want to talk about why this is going to happen and how it fits into God's plan.

Adam & Eve Sin – Gen 3:15 ¹⁵ "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

This idea of offspring / seed

Gen 15 – Covenant with Abraham

Offspring/seed – land

Physical seed – which brings us Jesus (Mt 1) and spiritual seed

In the bible we have this metaphor of the holy Olive tree with the roots (Abraham being the taproot), Isaac and Jacob – then we get the trunk of the tree – the Nation of Israel – and as you read through the old Testament we see, and I talked about this Sunday some, a very patient, loving, merciful and gracious God keeping His promise to a very disobedient Israel who had to constantly be disciplined.

Jesus talks about being the vine – and Israel the branches – John 15:1-6

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned”

And eventually many of them – in particular the religious leaders, rejected the Messiah – the ultimate chosen seed Jesus – and what happens – God allows other branches to be grafted into the Holy Olive tree – those other branches being non-Jews – Gentiles. Israel as a nation ceased to exist in 70AD and only a remnant – a scattering remained. And we entered the church age.

Now does that mean God was done with Israel? Let’s see what Paul had to say in Romans 11 (**Open and read**)

So the big picture – God creates this earth and essentially has heaven on earth in the Garden of Eden – He creates humanity and they’re on probation so to speak – free will – 1 rule – don’t eat the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil – they fail – they fall, creation falls, God has a plan – a chosen seed/people – leads to Jesus – redemption but still evil on this earth – God uses the church to spread the message of the gospel to the “ends of the earth” (Great Commission) – patient – want’s none to perish – but as I said Sunday – God is holy, holy, holy – and at some point – God will judge and put an end to this.

We know from looking at the signs – Jesus used this term birth pangs – we have our seed – and then as we get closer and closer to the birth – these signs occur more frequently and with more intensity – and then just before birth – intense pain and then the baby is born – or in this case – Jesus returns – and so we are now going to talk about the intense pain part.

Now – we are going to talk about the different views on the millennial kingdom after we talk about the tribulation and Christ’s Return but the view I subscribe to is called Pre-Millennialism – in other words – we are living in a time that is pre – or before a literal 1000 year reign on earth by Christ. And when you hear a pre-millennialist talk about the tribulation – a literal tribulation – you hear us say that it’s a 7 year period. Why is that? And the answer is – we have to look at the prophet Daniel. And this is found in Daniel 9.

In verses 20-23 we see the angel Gabriel speaking to Daniel and he’s telling him what’s going to happen. And so vs 24-27 it says ²⁴ **“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. ²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. ²⁷ And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”**

So God has this plan – and after “70 weeks” He is going to put an end to sin, atone for that sin and bring everlasting righteousness – to bring Heaven and Earth together.

And He breaks this all down – there’s a total of 70 “weeks” and I’ll put that in quotes – and then something will happen – then for sixty two “weeks” – then after the sixty two “weeks” –

Why do I put that word weeks into quotes – well in the original language it’s the Hebrew word shav-oo-ah and it can mean a week – but it’s main meaning is 7, a group of 7 or 70. J. Dwight Pentecost, one of the leading scholars on this, tells us that when Daniel hears this – this group of 7’s – he’s thinking of God’s plan in terms of years. In his context – that would be natural for him. When we think of years in our context – we think in terms of 10 – decades – but Daniel and the people of his time thought in terms of sevens (heptads). God created everything in 7 periods of time, Seven days are in a week – the seventh day is a sabbath, every seventh year is a sabbath year, seven “sevens” brought them to the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:8-10) ⁸**“You shall count seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the time of the seven weeks of years shall give you forty-nine years. ⁹ Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land. ¹⁰ And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you, when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his clan.”**

So to Daniel – 70 “sevens” would be 490 years. Had Daniel meant literal days or weeks he would have written it that way like he did in Daniel 10:2-3 ²**“In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. ³ I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks.”** And in the Hebrew that’s literally translated “three sevens of days”.

Also since Israel and Judah had failed to keep the sabbatical years (every seventh year the land was to lie fallow, Lev. 25:1–7) throughout her history, the Lord enforced on the land 70 “sabbaths” (cf. Lev. 26:34–35).

Thus 490 years would be required to complete 70 sabbatical years with one occurring every seventh year.

This span of time was decreed for Daniel's people (cf. "your people" in Dan. 10:14; 11:14) and the Holy City (cf. 9:16, 24). This prophecy, then, is concerned not with world history or church history, but with the history of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. By the time these 490 years run their course, God will have completed six things for Israel. The first three have to do with sin, and the second three with the kingdom. The basis for the first three was provided in the work of Christ on the cross, but all six will be realized by Israel at the Second Coming of Christ. At the end of the 490 years God will **finish** the **transgression** of Israel. The verb "to finish" (*kālā*) means "to bring something to an end." Israel's sin of disobedience will be brought to an end at Christ's second coming when, as we'll see, she repents and turns to Him as her Messiah and Savior. Then she will be restored to the land and blessed, in answer to Daniel's prayer.

So, Daniel is thinking in terms of years – and then revelation is given to Daniel about the inception of this important time period and its divisions.

The 70 "sevens" would begin, Gabriel said, with **the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem**. This decree was the fourth of four decrees made by Persian rulers in reference to the Jews. The first was Cyrus' decree in 538 b.c. (2 Chron. 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–4; 5:13). The second was the decree of Darius I (522–486) in 520 b.c. (Ezra 6:1, 6–12). This decree actually was a confirmation of the first decree. The third was the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus in 457 b.c. (Ezra 7:11–26). The first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to finances for animal sacrifices at the temple. These three say nothing about the rebuilding of the city itself. Since an unwalled city was no threat to a military power, a religious temple could be rebuilt without jeopardizing the military authority of

those granting permission to rebuild it. No one of these three decrees, then, was the decree that formed the beginning of the 70 sevens.

The fourth decree was also by Artaxerxes Longimanus, issued on March 5, 444 b.c. (Neh. 2:1–8). On that occasion Artaxerxes granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls. This decree is the one referred to in Daniel 9:25. The end or goal of the prophecy is the appearance of **the Anointed One, the Ruler**. Which is who? Jesus. God the Father anointed Christ with the Spirit at the time of His water baptism (Acts 10:38), but the anointing referred to **here** is the anointing of Christ as the Ruler in His kingdom. This prophecy of the 70 sevens, then, ends not with the First coming of Jesus, as some suggest, but rather with the Second Advent and the establishing of the millennial kingdom. And this is where pre-millennialists and Amillennialists differ – the lecture professor for my OT course I just finished was an amillennialist. Again – we’ll talk about that probably in a couple of weeks but when I do talk about it – you’ll have some background with this.

So – this 70 year period is broken up or divided into three segments - (a) 7 “sevens” (49 years), (b) 62 “sevens” (434 years), and (c) 1 “seven” (v. 27; 7 years). The first period of 49 years may refer to the time in which the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem, permitted by Artaxerxes’ decree, was completed (444–395 b.c.). Though Nehemiah’s wall construction project took only 52 days, many years may have been needed to remove the city’s debris (after being desolate for many decades), to build adequate housing, and to rebuild the **streets and a trench**.

9:26a. **The 62 “sevens”**. (434 years) extend up to the introduction of the Messiah to the nation Israel. This second period concluded on the day of the Triumphal Entry just before Christ was **cut off**, that is, crucified. In His Triumphal Entry, Christ, in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9, officially presented Himself to the nation of Israel as the Messiah. He was evidently familiar with Daniel’s prophecy when on that occasion

He said, “**If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes**” (Luke 19:42).

Thus the first two segments of the important time period—the 7 sevens (49 years) and the 62 sevens (434 years)—ran consecutively with no time between them. They totaled 483 years and extended from March 5, 444 b.c. to March 30, a.d. 33. How can 444 b.c. to a.d. 33 equal 483 years?

The 483 Years in the Jewish and Gregorian Calendars	
Jewish Calendar (360 days per year *)	Gregorian Calendar (365 days a year)
$(7 \times 7) + (62 \times 7)$ years = 483 years	444 B.C. to A.D. 33 = 476 years †
483 years	476 years
× 360 days	× 365 days
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173,880 days	173,740 days
	+ 116 days in leap years ‡
	+ 24 days (March 5–March 30)

	173,880 days

You may remember when we talked about Jesus’ birth – there were major issues with the calendar – well brilliant people like Pentecost have worked them out – But what have here is that according to Daniel 9:26 **the Anointed One** was not “cut off” *in* the 70th “seven”; He was cut off **after** the 7 and 62 “sevens” had run their course. This means that there is an interval between the 69th and 70th “sevens.” Christ’s crucifixion, then, was in that interval, right after His Triumphal Entry, which concluded the 69th “seven.” This interval was anticipated by Christ when He prophesied the establishing of the church (Matt. 16:18). This necessitated the setting aside of the nation Israel for a season in order that His new program for the church might be instituted. Christ

predicted the setting aside of the nation (Matt. 21:42–43). The present Church Age is the interval between the 69th and 70th “sevens.”

When the Anointed One would be cut off, Daniel was told, he would **have nothing**. The word translated “cut off” is used of executing the death penalty on a criminal. Thus the prophecy clearly points to the crucifixion of Christ. At His crucifixion He would “have nothing” in the sense that Israel had rejected Him and the kingdom could not be instituted at that time. Therefore He did not then receive the royal glory as the King on David’s throne over Israel. John referred to this when he wrote, “He came to that which was His own [i.e., the throne to which He had been appointed by the Father] but His own [i.e., His own people] did not receive Him” (John 1:11). Daniel’s prophecy, then, anticipated Christ’s offer of Himself to the nation Israel as her Messiah, the nation’s rejection of Him as Messiah, and His crucifixion.

The prophecy continues with a description of the judgment that would **come** on the generation that rejected the Messiah. Daniel 9:26 **“And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.”**

The city which contains **the sanctuary**, that is, Jerusalem, would be destroyed by **the people of the ruler who will come**. The ruler who will come is that final head of the what we call the revived Roman Empire, the little horn of 7:8. It is significant that the *people* of the ruler, not the ruler himself, will destroy Jerusalem. Since he will be the final Roman ruler, the people of that ruler must be the Romans themselves. This, then, is a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem about which Christ spoke in His ministry.

When the leaders of the nation registered their rejection of Christ by attributing His power to Beelzebub, the prince of the demons (Matt. 12:24), Christ warned that if they persisted in that view they would be guilty of sin for which there would be no forgiveness (Matt. 12:31–32). He also warned the nation that Jerusalem would be destroyed by Gentiles (Luke 21:24), that it would be desolate (Matt. 23:38), and that the destruction would be so complete that not one stone would be left on another (Matt. 24:2). This destruction was accomplished by Titus in AD 70 when he destroyed the city of Jerusalem and killed thousands of Jews. But that invasion, awesome as it was, did not end the nation’s sufferings, for **war**, Gabriel said, would **continue until the end**. Even though Israel was to be set aside, she would continue to suffer until the prophecies of the 70 “sevens” were completely fulfilled. Her sufferings span the entire period from the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 to Jerusalem’s deliverance from Gentile dominion at the Second Advent of Christ.

Then when we get to Daniel 9:27 – Gabriel unveils what will occur in the 70th seven years “²⁷ **And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.**” Who’s the he? The antichrist – the little horn – and so we have a peace treaty for half the 7 years – 3 ½ years – and then the other half comes desolation – the abomination of desolation. We’ve already seen and we’ll see again next week most likely that 3 ½ years represented as 42 months (which is 3 ½ years) in Rev 13:5.

So – that’s how we come up with a 7 year “tribulation period” and other prophets talk about “The day of the Lord” and this period of time as well Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Zephaniah, of course Jesus.

And so next week – we’ll actually look at (or at least start looking at) this terrible time called the Tribulation period in detail.