

Lesson 77

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel (continuation)

- We are preparing to study the Book of Revelation. For the most part, the book of Revelation describes the period of the Tribulation. How long does the tribulation last? Seven years. The first prophecy we will study is the prophecy given to Daniel of the seventy weeks, which determines that the tribulation will last seven years.
- When Daniel was exiled to Babylon, God gave two prophecies: one about the future of the nations and one about the future of Israel and Jerusalem. In the last lesson, we learned that the prophecy about the nations was given to a Gentile. Who was he? Nebuchadnezzar. The prophecy spoke of the four world empires that would exist, beginning with Nebuchadnezzar's empire. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the Babylonian Empire, which corresponded to the head of the statue made of gold that he saw in his dream.
- Before the Babylonian Empire, there were two other empires: the Egyptian and Assyrian empires. However, the prophecy God gave to Nebuchadnezzar referred to the future empires. God said there would be four empires representing the parts of the statue Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream: the Babylonian Empire (the head of gold); the Medo-Persian Empire (the chest and arms of silver); the Greek Empire (the belly and hips of bronze); and the Roman Empire (1st phase the legs of iron and 2nd phase the feet partly of iron and partly of clay). Today, these four empires, including the first phase of the Roman Empire, are history and can easily be found in encyclopedias.
- What was the Roman Empire like? Everything belonged to the empire, and the Caesars ruled and governed it all. During the 2nd phase of the Roman Empire, the government was divided into ten independent kingdoms.
Governments will form alliances through marriages and agreements. What are we seeing in Europe today? Countries are uniting through agreements. However, the prophecy says that one kingdom, with one head and one strong man, will arise and rule over the ten. We will study this in more detail at the end of the Book of Revelation. For now, we are just quoting it to help us understand the context of the prophecy we are studying.
- So, the feet and legs of the statue seen by Nebuchadnezzar form the 4th empire and kingdom in 2 phases. The 1st phase is represented by the iron legs, and the 2nd phase is represented by the feet. If the feet represented a 5th empire, the Bible would have to mention a different material, but we only see clay mixed with the iron of the legs. Do you understand?
- When God revealed the prophecy about the nations to Nebuchadnezzar, He only showed the characteristics of each kingdom. For example, He said, *'There will be a kingdom with these characteristics, another with those, another with these, and another like this.'* However, God expanded on this prophecy later with Daniel. In chapters 7, 8, and 11 of the Book of Daniel, God provides additional details about these kingdoms and explicitly states that there will be 4 kingdoms.
 - ⇒ **Daniel 7;** The four symbolic animals
 - ⇒ **Daniel 8;** The vision of the ram and the goat.
 - ⇒ **Daniel 11;** Greek Empire defeating the Medo-Persian Empire.

- Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks, which we will study now, is not related to the seventy years the Jewish people were captive in Babylon. The captivity of the people of Judah in Babylon was God's judgment because they were not observing the Year of Jubilee: *'The land should rest from its Sabbaths.'* Every 49 years, the 50th year was the Year of Jubilee. All slaves were released, and all land given as payment was returned to its original owner. Nothing could be planted in the land that year. Judah had not observed the Year of Jubilee for many years. Then God said: *'You will spend 70 years outside the land so that it may rest.'*
- When the people of Judah were taken captive to Babylon, Daniel went with them. He was young, practically a teenager. It is estimated that he was between 14 and 16 years old at the time. What determination! He decided in his heart not to contaminate himself with Babylon, and God blessed him greatly. He survived two empires and ruled with their leaders because of his wisdom. Daniel survived the Babylonian and Medo-Persian empires. Like us, he believed the Bible literally, (*shall we believe?*).
- Daniel received the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream about the future of the nations from God. God then expanded the prophecy to Daniel, who was astonished by the revelations. ⇒ **Daniel 8:27**
- Then, God revealed to Daniel what would happen to the people of Israel in the future. Remember the prophecy given to Jeremiah about the captivity of Judah in Babylon. ⇒ **Jeremiah 25:11**
Imagine you are Daniel in Babylon reading your Bible. You are reading and meditating on this passage from ⇒ **Jeremiah 25:11**: *'And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years.'* The land of Judah and all of Israel were among the nations under Babylonian rule. ⇒ **Daniel 9:1~2**
- Daniel read Jeremiah and understood what it was about. He did the math and saw that the end of the 70 years of captivity was approaching. Wasn't he a literalist?
 - Jeremiah said: they will serve the king of Babylon for 70 years.
 - Daniel did the math and said: I know we're going to leave.
- Then, the Spirit of supplication and grace fell upon Daniel because prayers on earth are necessary for God to act. Daniel began to pray to God and intercede for the people. Chapter 9 of Daniel contains one of the most beautiful prayers in the Bible. It is an excellent model for how we should pray. ⇒ **Daniel 9:3~19**; Daniel's prayer
Daniel was concerned about the people captive in Babylon and the desolate city of Jerusalem. He confessed the sins of Israel and asked God what the future held for his people and Jerusalem. ⇒ **Daniel 9:20~23**; The visit of the angel Gabriel
- Have you ever imagined an angel appearing to you and saying, *'At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved?'* Have you ever imagined that? Know that we, the true Church of Jesus Christ, are greatly loved by God. Remember that. God loves us as much as He loves Jesus, His Son.

When you pray and your heart is in the throne room and your voice reaches there, the answer comes immediately because you are so loved by God. Glory to Jesus for that! Amen!

⇒ **Daniel 9:24~27**; The angel's revelation to Daniel.

- Did you understand everything? It may seem complicated, but you will understand it clearly and be able to explain it to others in the name of Jesus. Let's go slowly. Don't be distressed. Pay attention to each explanation. Let's go step by step. If you worry about the end, you'll miss what comes before. Going step by step adds up, and understanding becomes clear, like a movie.
- This is one of the most beautiful prophecies due to its clarity and detailed nature. When was it written? Daniel lived around 500 BCE, so at least 2,500 years have passed since this prophecy was written. This is an impressive feat of precision. This is the word of our God. Pay attention to each step.

⇒ **Daniel 9:24**

- The Hebrew word translated as 'weeks' in our Bibles is '**shabuwa**,' which simply means 'sevens.' As we have already studied, the Jews had both weeks of days and weeks of years. In other contexts, we have seen the word 'week' represent seven years. Therefore, we should read ⇒ **Daniel 9:24** as follows: '*Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city,*' meaning 70 times 7 years, or 490 years. Another piece of evidence that it is 'weeks of years' is that it would not be possible for everything to happen in 490 days in the case of 'seventy weeks of days.' Could Jerusalem be completely destroyed and rebuilt in 490 days?
- Therefore, God reveals to Daniel that seventy sevens, that is, seventy weeks of years, 490 years, would be the total time remaining in God's plan for Israel.. Most of this prophecy has already been fulfilled and is now history. This is another argument for knowing that it is 490 years and not 490 days. Do you know how many years have already passed? 483. Only seven years remain for God to complete His program for Israel before Jesus returns to establish His kingdom on Earth.
- '*Seventy sevens of years have been decreed for your people, Israel, and for your holy city, Jerusalem.*' According to the prophecy, what will have been accomplished when these 490 years are fulfilled? The prophecy outlines six objectives that will be accomplished when the seventy weeks are fulfilled.
 1. Finish, or cease, the transgression.
 2. Put an end to sin.
 3. Atone for iniquity.
 4. Bring in everlasting righteousness.
 5. Seal up the vision and prophecy.
 6. Anoint the Most Holy, the Holy of Holies (*the Lord Jesus Christ*).

Has all this really happened? Are there no more transgressions? Are there no more sins? Has iniquity been fully atoned for on Earth? (*Jesus atoned for it, but it has not been manifested in everyone*). Is everlasting righteousness already on Earth? Have the vision and prophecy been sealed? Has Jesus been anointed king?

All of this is for Israel. However, if it happens there, it will spread to the rest of the world. Has any of this already happened in Israel? **No**.

- Judah was a captive in Babylon, and Daniel was worried about what would happen to his people and the city of Jerusalem. He went to pray, and God said: *'Daniel, I still have a program for Israel as a nation for 490 years, and they will be my channel on Earth. When the 490 years are over, there will be no more transgressors, sin, or iniquity. Everlasting righteousness will be established in your land. The vision and prophecy will have passed away, and the Holy of Holies will be anointed on its eternal throne.'* When will this be? Only in the Millennium. All of this will happen when the Kingdom of Christ is established on Earth.
 - ⇒ **Daniel 7:13-14;** Describes the 2nd coming of Jesus.
 - ⇒ **Daniel 2:34~35;** The stone cut out without hands.
 - ⇒ **Daniel 2:44~45;** The Kingdom that will never be destroyed.
 - ⇒ **Isaiah 2:2~4;** The stone that will become a great mountain and fill the entire Earth.
- With the return of Jesus, *'the Most Holy One will be anointed.'* Jesus is the Messiah. When he is physically present on Earth and accepted by the Jews as the Messiah, the 490 years will be fulfilled. This will happen at the end of God's plan for Israel. This is what God is telling Daniel. What will happen when God finishes his program with the Church? The rapture. When God finishes his program with Israel, what will happen? Jesus will return and establish his eternal kingdom. Do you understand?
- God said: *'Daniel has 490 years left'*. Two thousand five hundred years have already passed. What will happen if the prophecy has not been fulfilled by then? In the next lesson, we will explore the greatness of God's plan in impressive detail.