

## ***The Gospel, 1844, and Judgment*** ***1844 Made Simple***

Lesson #8 for August 19, 2006

Scriptures: Leviticus 7:27; 17:10; Luke 3:1-22; Romans 5:8; Galatians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:9,10; 1 Peter 2:24.

1. While the title “1844 Made Simple” implies that the lesson is about the 2300 day-year prophecy, in fact, this lesson is about the details of the 70-week prophecy. Specifically, this lesson focuses on the 70th week.
2. The only direct link between the 70-week prophecy and the 2300 day-year prophecy is that the 70-week prophecy is cut off from the 2300 day-year prophecy and thus gives us a starting date for the 2300 day-year prophecy.
3. So this lesson will focus on how the life and death of Jesus, and the establishment of the Christian Church soon thereafter, help to fulfill the conditions prophesied at the end of the 70-week prophecy.
4. Seventh-day Adventists are very fortunate in their interpretation of this passage. If our interpretation of this passage is correct then every date can be established precisely and every event fits. By contrast look at some alternative efforts suggested by those who do not want to accept A) God’s ability to predict the future and, B) the idea that the prophecies in Daniel could have anything to do with the pre-advent judgment:  
“One may rightly doubt if the author of Daniel 9 had an accurate knowledge of the chronology of the period. Therefore, his division of the various periods of the early part of his 490-year period cannot be taken too seriously. He is really only concerned with the last “week” of years, the last seven years of the 490-year period. He balances this by making the first section of the 490-year period “seven weeks” or forty-nine years. The long middle section of “sixty-two weeks” of years, or 434 years, is an artificial number, created for the purpose of bringing all three periods to a total of “seventy weeks” of years. In fact, the whole period, which he counts as beginning with “the utterance of the word regarding the rebuilding of Jerusalem,” i.e. as beginning with 594 B.C. (see above), and ending with the death of Epiphanes in 164 B.C., amounts to only 430 (not 490) years. Even if the *terminus a quo* for his reckoning would be taken as 605 B.C. according to Jer 25:11—12 (which really does not speak of the rebuilding of Jerusalem at all), the whole period would be only 441 years. The first section, the first “seven weeks” of years (forty-nine years), is said to last from the utterance of Jeremiah’s prophecy to “the coming of an anointed leader” (9:25). This first part of the 490-year period almost certainly refers to the time that ended with the return of the first exiles [257] from Babylonia to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. If the beginning of this period is taken, as it normally would be, as the year 594 B.C., when Jeremiah uttered the prophecy regarding the restoration of Jerusalem, the interval would be fifty-six years; if reckoned from the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C., the interval would be fifty-one years—either figure sufficiently close to the quasi-artificial figure of “seven weeks” of years (Dan 9:25).” (*Anchor Bible*) Aren’t you glad that your faith doesn’t have to rest on this kind of guesswork?!
5. So when does this 70th week of the prophecy began? Having established 457 B. C. as the starting point we come down 483 years to A.D. 26 using ordinary math. However as we review the chronology of the B.C.-A.D. transition we discover that there was never a year designated 0. Remember that the B.C.-A.D. dating system did not exist in the days of Christ or before. It was developed by Bishop Exiguus hundreds of years later. And Exiguus did not include a year 0. This pushes our closing date for the 69 weeks and the opening date for the 70th week to A.D. 27.
6. What happened in A.D. 27? “God’s chosen leader comes”. Does this refer to the birth of Jesus or to the beginning of his public ministry? It was not until his baptism that he was “anointed” as “the anointed one”—the Messiah or Christ—and thus began his public ministry. Thus, this prophecy points to the time of his anointing or his baptism in the fall of A.D. 27.
7. If we accept the dating of the 70-week prophecy and also that it was cut off from the 2300

day-year prophecy then we have nailed down the date—1844—for the launch year of the greatest second advent movement in ecclesiastical history and also the beginning of the heavenly process that will ultimately climax in the final purification of sin from the universe—God’s final judgment.

8. We note that the first section of the 490 years is a period of seven “sevens”, or 49 years. What does this refer to? Remember that the temple was rebuilt between 520 and 516 B.C. Ezra and his associates began rebuilding Jerusalem in 457 B.C. However they faced stiff opposition, burnings etc. and before too long the work stopped. In 444 B.C. Nehemiah came and Nehemiah and Ezra together under the direction of the Holy Spirit roused the people to complete the wall around Jerusalem. The completion of the wall took a very short period of time—52 days. (Neh. 6:15) After the wall was completed and secure, then the city inside was completed between 444 B.C. and 408 B.C. Thus we see that the rebuilding of Jerusalem as a city was completed in the first 49 years of this 490 year prophecy.
9. Let us then look at the individual phrases in Daniel 9:24-27 in detail: the first phrase says that “Seventy weeks it is decreed for your people and for the city of your holiness <sup>1</sup>to put an end to the transgression and <sup>2</sup>to stop sin and <sup>3</sup>to atone iniquity and <sup>4</sup>to bring everlasting righteousness and <sup>5</sup>to seal prophet vision and <sup>6</sup>to anoint the holy of holies.” (*Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*)
10. There are six actions in three pairs described here in Daniel 9:24. The first pair is addressed especially to the people of Judah and talks about what they are to accomplish in this time period. The second pair describes actions that God would take upon himself as his own responsibility. The final pair points to the results that would flow from the combination of the previous four actions.
11. The first pair of actions are “to finish transgression, (and) to put an end to sin.” The word “transgression” in the first phrase means sin “as rebellion against God”. The second word for “sin” is the most common word for sin in the Bible and means “missing the mark, goal or standard” which God has set up. Thus the Jewish people were given this period of time to carry out their responsibilities of putting away sin and developing a righteous society. This was to prepare for the coming of the anointed one—the Messiah.
12. God’s responsibilities are reflected in the second pair of actions: “to atone for iniquity, (and) to bring in everlasting righteousness.” God is not speaking here of the round of sacrifices that had been going on for hundreds of years in the Jewish sacrificial system. He is sending the great final atonement—Jesus Christ himself. By giving the answers to the issues in the great controversy and refuting Satan’s arguments, God convinces us that he can be trusted and Jesus thus serves as the great at-one-ment or reconciliation that brings man back to God. It should be clear then how the old system of temporary cleansing through individual sacrifices is now come to an end and God brings in everlasting righteousness.
13. The final pair of events in Daniel 9:24 are to come about as a result of God’s action and Judah’s response. They are to “seal prophet vision.” Through deacon Stephen and his speech before the Sanhedrin, (Acts 7) God made his final appeal to the Jewish people as a nation. No further prophetic voice was to be given to the Jewish people as a nation. Future prophecies and future messengers from God would be addressed to the entire world through the Christian Church.
14. The final phrase of Daniel 9:24 has been translated as “to anoint the holy of holies.” What could this possibly refer to? Some have tried to suggest that this is a reference to Jesus himself beginning his work as our high priest in heaven. But this phrase is never used to refer to a person. If we look back to the typical sanctuary we note that after it was built it was very carefully anointed before services began. Could this phrase refer to God’s anointing the beginning of a new ministry in heaven as described in Hebrews?

15. Daniel 9:25 “and you must know and you must understand from the time of the going out of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem until anointed leader seven weeks and two and sixty weeks it will be restored and it will be built with streets and moat but in the oppression of the time.” (*Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*) The first portion of Daniel 9:25 talks about the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the attempts to preserve that city over the next sixty-two years. This was clearly a time of great trouble as noted in the final phrase of the verse.
16. Look now at Daniel 9:26: “and after the weeks two and sixty and he shall be cut off an anointed one and there is not for him and the city and the sanctuary they will destroy the people of the leader who is coming and end it with the flood and to the end there shall be war, desolations are determined”. (*Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*)
17. “And after the weeks two and sixty and he shall be cut off an anointed one.” This should be easy for us to understand. This clearly refers to the crucifixion of Jesus. The expression here means to be cut off—a Hebrew idiom meaning to be killed. It is used for sacrifices in the sanctuary.
18. The next phrase is short and difficult. It says literally “there is not [X] to/for him.” What is this referring to? Is this talking about material possessions of some kind? If so, this would be a reference to the poverty of Jesus. If we look at the next expression “the people of the leader who is coming,” it seems to hint that he’s talking not about things but about people. Thus the passage could more correctly be translated “there shall not be people for him” or more freely translated “no one shall be for him”. This is a picture of rejection and not poverty. We should have no trouble in recognizing that this was the experience of Jesus in the final hours of his life.
19. The next phrase of Daniel 9:26 could be translated “the city and the sanctuary they will destroy, the people of the leader who is coming.” Or in another translation “the soldiers of a prince will ruin the sanctuary.” While some of our Christian friends would like to apply this expression to Antiochus Epiphanes and his desecrating of the temple, it does not fit. This verse says they will **destroy** the city and the sanctuary. This is a very clear reference to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. But who is the prince being referred to here? It’s interesting that this is the same word for “prince” used referring to the Messiah in Daniel 9:25. Furthermore it suggests that the destruction is going to be done by a group of “people” and not by a military host or army. What people were responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem? It is clear that the rebellion of the Jewish people is what led to the destruction of their temple and their city.
20. The final three phases of Daniel 9:26 refer to the way in which the Roman army swept into Jerusalem and literally demolished everything: “And end it with the flood; and to the end there shall be war; desolations are determined”. It was like being overrun by a flood.
21. Read Daniel 9:27. “And he will establish a covenant with the many one week and half the week he will let cease offering sacrifice and on a wing of the desolating abomination and until the end, and it is determined, it is poured out upon the desolator.” (*Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible*) This is not talking about establishing a new covenant but about strengthening an already existing covenant. It must, therefore, refer to God’s final appeals through his son to the people of Israel.
22. One clear example of this is the way in which Jesus expanded the law in the sermon on the Mount. (Matthew 5:17-48) Thus verse 27 begins by saying “the Messiah will come and offer once again to confirm the covenant he had decreed hundreds of years before to the Jewish people.” Although “in the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering”—referring to his death and the tearing of the curtain in the temple from top to bottom—God graciously extends his invitation to the Jewish people another 3 1/2 years and many of them became Christians. At the time of the death of Jesus, not only was the curtain

in the temple torn from top to bottom, but by his death Jesus made all future typical sacrifices unnecessary. That whole system was brought to an end.

23. Now look at the last phrase in verse 27. “Upon the wing of abomination (shall come) the desolator, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.” The expression “upon the wing” is a Hebrew idiom meaning “following closely on”. In other words the abominations are to come first (the terrible atrocities that took place in the city before its downfall), followed quickly by the desolation (the Roman conquest). When the Roman armies finally broke through the outer wall of Jerusalem the Roman soldiers looked for a place from which to fight. They moved fairly quickly into the sanctuary and establish themselves in the holy and most holy places (the ultimate in abominations). It served as a good fortress. But before long it was set on fire and destroyed (the desolation).
24. So what is the final event in this 490 year prophecy? Mathematically we have worked it out to A.D. 34. What happened in that year? Deacon Stephen gave his famous speech recorded in Acts 7. He was then stoned to death and almost immediately, “That very day the church in Jerusalem began to suffer cruel persecution. All the believers, except the apostles, were scattered throughout the provinces of Judea and Samaria.” (Acts 8:1) Jesus had told the disciples to preach the gospel, first in Jerusalem, and they had done so.
25. Now the time had come for the gospel messengers to spread the word to other parts of the world. But something else happened that year: Paul was there as a young man, observing the stoning of Stephen, and he watched the coats of the stoners and he approved of Stephen’s murder. A few months later after fighting against his conscience (Acts 9:5) Saul left on that fateful trip to Damascus. Then the great apostle to the Gentiles began his work of spreading Christianity far and wide.
26. Having looked carefully at the 490 year prophecy we’re left with one more challenge. Is it clear that this prophecy is to be “cut off” from the first portion of the 2300 days? If it is taken from the middle of the 2300 days we have no idea when the 2300 day-year prophecy began or when it will end. If it is taken from the end of the 2300 years then the beginning of that prophecy would extend back to the days of Abraham or before. Thus the only logical explanation is that the prophecy is supposed to be cut off from the beginning of the 2300 day-year prophecy. As we noted from Daniel 7 and 8, the 3 1/2 year—or 1260 day-year—prophecy was supposed to be completed before the pre-advent judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary was to take place. If this 1260 day-year prophecy has been correctly dated as ending in 1798 at the time of the capture of the Pope, then to have the 2300 day-year prophecy end in 1844 fits perfectly. Once again we see that God’s math adds up!
27. But why is the year 1844 important for Seventh-day Adventists? Our church was not established until 1863! But we have now seen that these two linked prophecies point to the two most important events in salvation history: the life and death of Jesus—and specifically to the final seven years of his ministry—and to the pre-advent judgment which began in 1844 and is still going on. The end of the prophecies in Daniel awaits our finishing of the gospel under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the power of God.

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