

Bible Study, April 1, 2020

There are a host of things that I enjoy about the Easter narrative; one being the prophetic aspect of it. As we approach Palm Sunday, let's consider the day from the paradigm of prophecy.

We all know of the direct prophetic connection found in Zechariah 9:9, as referenced in Mathew's account of what we call Palm Sunday. Yet there is another, maybe indirect prophecy that we will consider today. Our text is **Daniel 9:24-26**.

Daniel had been reading from the writings of Jeremiah, specifically what we would refer to as Jer. 25:11 and 29:10. From his reading, he understood that the 70 years of exile were near the end and wondered at how Israel fit in to the prophecies he'd been given about the gentile nations. So he prayed. And our text for today is part of the answer given to him by the angel Gabriel. We cannot now discuss the answer in its entirety but only that which has to do with Palm Sunday.

Vs. 24: Seventy weeks are determined upon Daniel's people, Israel. The word weeks is **shabua** in Hebrew. It's a nonspecific unit of measure that is determined by the context in which it's used. For instance, a dozen can refer to eggs or bananas.

In the context of our text it refers to 70 "weeks" or seventy sevens. It could be days or months or years. Now Daniel had been reading about the 70 years of captivity, that were a result of ignoring the sabbatical year, which occurred every seven years. So, we know that he's speaking of 70 weeks of 7 years or a period of 490 years. Almost all legitimate Bible scholars agree on this point. So, if my explanation is not totally clear, just remember that we're dealing with 70 shabuas of 7 years, or 490 years. That is a measurement of time God has ordained for the nation Israel to accomplish the things mentioned herein...which are not yet fulfilled in their entirety.

Vs. 25: We know from scripture and antiquities that the command to rebuild Jerusalem was issued on the first of the month of Nissan 445bc. The following 69 weeks, or 483 years are divided. In the first seven "weeks" of years, which is 49 years, Jerusalem was rebuilt and we are brought to the close of the Old Testament.

Vs. 26: This tells us that after the first 7 "weeks", there will be an additional 62 "weeks", or 434 years, from the time Jerusalem was rebuilt; bringing us to a total of 483 years from the decree. We are then told that after that time "**Messiah will be cut off**", we know that refers to His crucifixion, "**but not for Himself,**" for us. And the "**the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary**". Who is the prince that shall come? Antichrist! Who destroyed the temple? The Romans!

So let's end our reading there and allow me to maybe explain this if I can.

Using the numbers based on the text and the context, God declares 490 years are determined for Israel. In other words, He will deal with them according to this time frame.

483 of those years have passed. And at the end of those 483 years, Jesus was crucified... Messiah was cut off. There is a week that remains, or seven years, for God to deal with Israel, which will be what we know as the tribulation period.

But for our study let's stay with the 483 years. Sir Robert Anderson devoted himself to the study of these numbers based on scripture and writings from antiquities. His discovery and calculations are interesting. He added the days and years starting from the first of Nissan, when the decree to rebuild was proclaimed, and he arrived at the date in which Jesus publicly presented Himself to Israel. The day that we know as **Palm Sunday!!**

Just a few days later, after the 69th week of years and before the 70th commenced, our Lord was "cut off", He was crucified.

You may be tempted to quibble about the numbers... feel free. But I remind you that a great number of scholars have sought to discredit them only to find them to be accurate.

I also remind you that God has a clock that is ticking. And that clock is based on two things; the nation of Israel and the first and second coming of Jesus!

I hope that this study in some way enhances your thoughts about Palm Sunday.

May God keep and bless you all!