

THE CHRIST OF PROPHECY

*“ We have found him, of whom Moses in the law,
and the prophets, did write.” John 1:45*

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Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

I John 5:1

The word “*Christ*” is used in the New Testament over five hundred and fifty times. The words “*the Christ*” are used only nineteen times. It is common knowledge that the Greek word for “*Christ*” is the equivalent of the Hebrew word for “*Messiah*,” and means “*anointed*.” Early believers began referring to Jesus of Nazareth as “*Jesus Christ*,” which is short for “*Jesus, the Christ*.” In calling Him Jesus Christ it was a public confession that they believed “*Jesus is the Messiah*” who was promised to come to Israel. There is no record of anyone publicly calling Him “*Jesus Christ*” during His earthly ministry. For a Jew to do so would have meant immediate death by stoning. Secretly there were those who told their closest friends of Him, as Andrew did his brother Simon Peter, “*We have found the Messiah* (John 1:42),” or as Phillip told Nathaniel, “*We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph* (John 1:45).” In Matthew 16:20, Jesus “*charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ*.”

To most Christians today, believing that Jesus is “*the Christ*” has very little meaning. In fact, most may very well believe “*Christ*” to simply be Jesus’s “*last name*.” Certainly such superficial “*believing*” does not carry the power of God to save

a soul. In order to understand our text, “*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God,*” we must understand a little about the Jews and the promise God gave of a Messiah to come. The religious leaders in the apostle’s day considered it to be “*blasphemous*” for any to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Messiah of Israel. In Luke 22:65-71, when Jesus was on trial for His life before the high priests and the scribes, the first question was “*Art thou **the Christ?***” Matthew and Mark both report the same line of questioning by the priests, and Jesus was condemned for blasphemy when the council perceived that He believed He was, in fact, “*the Christ, the Son of the living God.*”

What was it the Jews believed about Messiah that so stirred them against Jesus? Amazingly, while they seemed to know so much, they actually knew very little. It is surprising to find that the word “*Messiah*” is used only two times in the King James translation of the Old Testament, in two consecutive verses in the ninth chapter of Daniel. There are many prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament, but most were obscure and hidden until after Jesus’ resurrection. We can look in Isaiah alone and find several beautiful prophecies of the Messiah, but there was no way to understand who they were speaking of until after they were fulfilled. We read that “*a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel* (Isaiah 7:14).” The Jews believed this to be a prophecy fulfilled in Isaiah’s own son, born to him by a young wife. It wasn’t until after the resurrection of Jesus that the beautiful truth of “*Immanuel* (God with us)” was revealed to the children of God. We recognize Isaiah 53 as a prophecy of the sufferings of Jesus at Calvary, but the Jews believe to this day that it speaks of either the sufferings of an obscure rabbi of Isaiah’s day, or to be a paradigm of the sufferings of all Jews in the Babylonian captivity. No Jew could accept Psalms 22:1, “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,*” to be a prophecy of their Messiah. Not even the disciples of Jesus could understand the purpose of Jesus’ sufferings until after His resurrection. Luke 24:45-48 says, “*Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,*

and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.”

The Messiah

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

Daniel 9:24-27

In order to understand what it means to “*believe that Jesus is the Christ,*” we must go to this prophecy in Daniel, commonly known as “*The Seventy Weeks Prophecy.*” These four verses are the only place the word “*Messiah*” or the title “*The Messiah*” are found in the Old Testament (KJV). This prophecy, given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel, is perhaps the most important prophecy in the entire Bible, and every child of God should seek God, and not man, for a clear understanding of it. Rightly understood, these verses are a foundation to understanding the mission and ministry of Christ. Wrongly understood, they

become a foundation for a most amazing fabrication of last day events. Rightly understood these verses are a prophecy of Jesus Christ and His great victory at Calvary where He accomplished all He was sent to do. Wrongly understood, this “*victory*” is given to one called “*the antichrist*,” because the “*mission*” of the Messiah failed to achieve what He was sent to do. It will be up to the reader to decide just who the “*victor*” is.

This prophecy gives a great deal of information about Messiah, all of which Jesus fulfilled in every detail. It begins with the purpose of Messiah’s coming. That “*purpose*” is found in the twenty-fourth verse. We will examine that verse.

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city...” In the Hebrew accounting of time, there were both “*weeks of days*,” and “*weeks of years*.” The prophecy is speaking about seventy “*weeks of years*,” which equals four hundred and ninety years. The prophecy had a specific date for its beginning, and due to the fact that it spans one continuous period of time without interval, it has a specific end. Every promise contained in this prophecy must be fulfilled within four hundred and ninety years from the beginning date. The prophetic “*seventy weeks*” would begin at the “*going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem* (Daniel 9:25). This was a decree given by King Artaxerxes in the year 457 B.C, which would signal the beginning of the seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety year prophecy. The twenty-fourth verse reveals six things that must be accomplished before the four hundred ninety years were ended. They are as follows:

Messiah’s Mission

1. To finish the transgression. 2. To make an end of sins. 3. To make reconciliation for iniquity. 4. To bring in everlasting righteousness. 5. To seal up the vision and prophecy. 6. To anoint the most Holy. These six things must be accomplished before the four hundred and ninety years are finished. If not, the prophecy fails; the “*word spoken by angels*” is not “*steadfast* (Hebrews 2:2),” and the counsel of

God is not sure. Jesus Christ came into this world on a mission to fulfill these six promises during a short three and a half year ministry. Those who do not understand this prophecy seek to extend its time span to almost twenty five hundred years by deferring the seventieth week to the last days in the form of *“The Great Tribulation.”* Unwittingly, they do this because they *do not believe the power of the gospel in “Christ-crucified.”* They do not believe that Jesus, the Messiah, *“finished the transgression,”* or *“made an end of sins”* through His death on the cross. The key to understanding these six promises is found in the third promise, *“to make reconciliation for iniquity.”* No honest student of the word can deny that Jesus’ death at Calvary was for *“reconciliation.”* Note the volume of scriptures concerning this matter:

Romans 5:10: *“...we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son....”*

II Corinthians 5:18: *“...and all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ....”*

II Corinthians 5:19: *“...to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself....”*

Ephesians 2:16: *“...that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross...”*

Colossians 1:21-22: *“...and you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death....”*

Hebrews 2:17: *“Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”*

This promise of reconciliation was fulfilled in the middle of the seventieth week of this prophecy by the death of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel. Jesus suffered and died for our sin during the four hundred and eighty seventh year of this four hundred and ninety year prophecy, and we who believe were *“reconciled to*

God” through His death. Each of the other five promises were also fulfilled in Jesus Christ for all who will believe.

The modern Jew is still waiting for their “*Messiah*” to come. They do not believe Jesus is their Messiah, largely on the basis of this prophecy. They look at the world around them, and into their own hearts as well, and see that sin is still at work. A Jewish friend told me several years ago, “*If Jesus had been my Messiah, he would have brought an end to sin.*” He was especially disturbed by the rampant immorality and prostitution that was in Houston’s news at the time. “*If Jesus had been Messiah, there would be no prostitutes*” were his words. It is understandable that the Jew of this present day might stumble over these things, but sadly, the majority of the Christian church also “*stumbles*” over the truth of “*Christ-crucified.*” They do not believe the truth that Jesus made an end of sins, and they point to their own experience to prove it. “*I’m still a sinner, and I sin every day,*” they say, and of course they are right about their personal experience, because they do not believe “*the truth*” that Jesus said would make them free (John 8:32). The starting point would be to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, and that He, of necessity if the prophecy is true, “*finished the transgression, made an end of sins, and brought in everlasting righteousness,*” when He “*made reconciliation for iniquity.*” It is in the heart and nature of the believer that Jesus accomplished all these things for “*whosoever believeth.*”

The last two promises are “*to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*” The last promise listed was actually the first to be fulfilled. It was the “*anointing*” Jesus received when the Holy Ghost came upon Him at the river Jordan. This wonderful event took place in the four hundred and eighty-fourth year of the prophecy, or, at the very beginning of the “*seventieth week.*” This was the “*sign*” John the Baptist had been waiting for. He said, “*I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God*” (John 1:33-34). Immediately

the word that the Holy Ghost had come upon Jesus of Nazareth spread throughout the region. Only seven verses later we read the message Andrew carried to his brother Simon (Peter); “*We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus*” (John 1:41-42). Years later, when Peter was speaking to the household of Cornelius, he referred to the event of Jesus’ “*anointing*” with the Holy Ghost as confirmation that He was indeed the promised Messiah and savior: “*The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; **How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him** (Acts 10:36-38).” Shortly after Jesus was anointed, one that was possessed by an unclean spirit cried out against Him, “*Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the **Holy One of God** (Luke 4:34).*” The “*most Holy*” had been anointed.*

“**...to seal up the vision and prophecy...**” For four thousand years the prophets had spoken of a redeemer who would come. God was the first to give the promise when He spoke of the “*seed of the woman*” who would “*bruise the head*” of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). This was the first promise of a savior to be found in the Bible. Almost every prophet told of the redeemer to come. Abraham, Moses, and Job all testified of Jesus as they saw Him “*afar off.*” Both David (Psalms, chapter 22) and Isaiah (Isaiah, chapters 52-53, 60-61) foresaw His sufferings and death, and His resurrection and glory. In order to “*seal up the vision and prophecy,*” every promise of the redeemer must be kept, and every prophecy of the Messiah must be fulfilled in Jesus as He suffered and died on the cross for our sin.

One amazing example of this is in Luke 22:36-38: “*Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his*

garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, **And he was reckoned among the transgressors:** for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, *It is enough.*” Jesus told his disciples to “take a sword” as they left the upper room to go into Gethsemane. Scarcely four hours later, Peter used one of these swords to cut off the ear of a soldier. Jesus stopped Peter, saying, “*Suffer ye thus far,*” and reached out His hand to heal the soldier’s ear. Jesus “permitted” this incident, only because it was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, “...he was numbered with the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:12). Peter became the number one “transgressor,” hence his great fear when a young lady identified him at the trial of Jesus (Matthew 26:69-75). Another fulfillment of the same prophecy is given in Mark 15:27-28: “*And with him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.*”

John 19:28-30: “*After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*”

Jesus was near the end as He hung on the cross, yet there was one insignificant prophecy that had not been fulfilled. David had said, “...and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” Jesus, knowing that all scriptures must be fulfilled, said, “*I thirst.*” Immediately the soldiers filled a sponge with vinegar and put it to His mouth. Jesus received the vinegar and said, “*It is finished,*” and bowed His head and “*gave up the ghost* (died).” Even after His death the prophecies continued to be fulfilled. When the soldiers broke the legs of the thieves to hasten their death, they saw that Jesus was dead already, and “*they brake not his legs,*” fulfilling the words of David in Psalms 34:20, “*He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.*” The last prophecy concerning Jesus’ death on the

cross was fulfilled when one of the soldiers took a spear and pierced His side, for it was written in Zechariah 12:10, *“They shall look on Him whom they pierced”* (see John 19:36-37). It is said that God could not look on His Son hanging on the cross, but there is evidence that the Holy Ghost watched closely all they did to Him to confirm that all the scriptures were fulfilled. John 19:34-35 says, *“But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.”* Many have believed that John spoke these words about himself as the one *“bearing witness,”* but the same John told us in I John 5:6, *“This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.”* The last and most important fulfillment of all was the *“blood and water”* which flowed out of Jesus’ side. This *“cleansing flow”* of blood and water is what the Holy Ghost had watched and waited for. Under the law, the blood of animals was mixed with water and sprinkled on whatever was to be cleansed (Hebrews 9:19). This must also be fulfilled in Christ if His sacrifice is to be perfect. The Holy Ghost saw the blood and water flow from the side of Jesus and bore witness. Again, in I John 5:8-9 the apostle said, *“And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood (water and blood from the side of Jesus): and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.”* The sacrifice was perfect. Everything foreseen by the prophets was fulfilled, and the *“vision and prophecy”* was *“sealed.”* All these things were finished in the seventieth week of Daniel’s prophecy, with only three and a half years remaining of the four hundred and ninety years prophesied.

Messiah's Timeline

Daniel 9:25: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto THE MESSIAH THE PRINCE shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”*

As we said before, the seventy weeks (four hundred and ninety years) began in 457 B.C. with the decree of King Artaxerxes of the Persians to “*restore and build Jerusalem.*” From the time of that decree unto the Messiah would be two time periods that would run consecutively. The first was seven weeks (forty nine years) during which the street and the wall would be rebuilt in the midst of troublesome times. Added to the seven weeks would be sixty-two weeks, or a total of sixty-nine weeks (four hundred, eighty three years) “*unto the Messiah the Prince.*” It is important to remember for future reference that “*the Messiah*” was also called “*the Prince.*” Moving forward 483 years from 457 B.C. would bring us to 26 A.D. ($-457+483=26$). Due to an error in the Gregorian calendar, we now know that Jesus must have been born in about the year 4 B.C. Luke 3:22-23 tells us that Jesus was “*about thirty years of age*” when He was anointed of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost came upon Jesus of Nazareth, and He was “*anointed*” the “*most holy*” in the first part of the four hundred, eighty-fourth year of the prophecy. It was at the end of the sixty-nine weeks and signaled the beginning of the seventieth week.

Daniel 9:26: *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself... Sixty-two weeks, plus the seven weeks in which the street and wall was built, brings us to the seventieth and last week of the prophecy. It is in the middle of the last week that Jesus was crucified, which exactly fulfills the words “...cut off, but not for himself.” He died for us.*

...and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary... This phrase is the most difficult of

the entire prophecy. I have previously called your attention to the fact that “*the Messiah*” was called “*the Prince*” in the previous verse. The entire prophecy is concerning the “*coming of the Messiah*,” so the “*prince that shall come*” must be speaking of “*The Messiah, the Prince.*” How can this be? Obviously it was not Jesus that brought an army and destroyed Jerusalem, so how can the “*prince that shall come*” be Jesus. The key is in the definition of the Hebrew word translated “*destroy*” in this text. The Hebrew word is “*shachath*,” (shaw-khath’); meaning, “*to decay, i.e. ruin.*” This word is often translated as “*corrupt*” or “*corrupted.*” When Israel built and worshipped the golden calf in the wilderness, God used this word to tell Moses that Israel had “*corrupted themselves.*” He said “*Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt **have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image.***” (Deuteronomy 9:12) That generation of Israel destroyed themselves by corrupting themselves. In the same manner through the abomination of rejecting and crucifying their Messiah, they corrupted, and thereby destroyed “*the city and the sanctuary.*” The same Hebrew word is used in Hosea 13:9, “*O Israel, **thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.***”

One thing the word of God makes abundantly clear, as long as a nation pleases God, there is no enemy that can come from without and destroy it. A God fearing nation must first “*destroy itself*” before any enemy can be successful against it. In Lamentations 4:12, Jeremiah said, “*The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.*” This spoke of the first destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians. It could never have happened if Jerusalem had pleased God. The people of Jerusalem had “*destroyed themselves*” before Babylon could come and destroy. We must understand that Jerusalem, even though it has been destroyed two times in the past, has never been destroyed because it was “*holy*” and “*God fearing.*” The

enemy that is attacking America from without is not here because we are a “*Christian nation*” that is moral, decent, and pure. America has already “*destroyed herself*” in rejecting Christ and accepting every immoral and perverted way this present evil world has produced. Our enemy from without has breached our walls because we have “*destroyed*” our walls, for God has told His people, “*Thou shalt call thy walls salvation* (Isaiah 60:18).”

...and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. John 1:11 says, “*He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.*” These were the “*people of the prince*” that destroyed the city. When Titus and the roman armies laid siege against Jerusalem in seventy A.D, it was the “*end*” of that which began with Israel killing the prophets and rejecting their Messiah. It came upon them as a “*flood.*” Throughout the centuries the Jews have suffered many “*desolations,*” all because they have not received their Messiah.

The Seventieth Week of Daniel

Daniel 9:27: “*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*”

This single verse of scripture is the most important word of prophecy in the entirety of the Bible. It is of such importance to the correct understand of end time events that for over a century, the adversary has sought to twist it, distort it, and destroy it beyond understanding. Of all the bible versions that were introduced in the twentieth century, not a single one of them is faithful to this text. Only the Authorized King James Version continues to reveal the truth of this prophecy to those who will receive it. The idea that the “*Seventieth Week of Daniel*” was deferred to the end time was not even a thought worth

considering by the church until the twentieth century. None of the great bible scholars of previous centuries ever considered such a thing. Read “*Matthew Henry*,” “*Adam Clark*,” “*Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown*” and “*Barnes Notes*” on this verse, and while there may be some discrepancies in their understanding, they all knew that this twenty-seventh verse, which defines the seventieth week of the prophecy, was fulfilled in the ministry, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Not one of them believed the seventieth week of the prophecy was deferred to the end time and given to one called “*the antichrist*.” These were men of past centuries who spent their entire lives studying the ancient manuscripts. Some of them, if not all, were fluent in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and other of the ancient languages. Adam Clark possessed many of the ancient manuscripts and studied them continuously. All these men came to the same conclusion on Daniel 9:27; it is the last week of the seventy weeks prophecy, and it was fulfilled in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

“And He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week...” Paul tells us in Romans 15:8, “*Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.*” Our text says, He shall “*confirm the covenant;*” it does not say, he shall “*make a covenant!*” Jesus Christ did not “*make*” a covenant with the Jews; instead He “*confirmed*” those covenant promises that were made unto the fathers. He not only confirmed the covenant in his life, but in death He *was* the covenant. God had promised in Isaiah 42:6-7, “*I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*” This is only one of many wonderful prophecies of our redeemer.

The “*covenant*” which He “*confirmed*” was not the “*Law of Moses*,” but the “*covenant of promise*” which God gave to Abraham in Genesis 22:16-18. The apostle Paul speaks of this in Galatians 3:16-17: “*Now to Abraham and his seed were the*

promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God IN CHRIST, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” Jesus Christ “*confirmed the covenant*” with His own blood, and the “*blessings of Abraham*” came upon the Gentiles who believe the gospel (Galatians 3:14), as well as upon those Jews who receive Jesus “*the Christ.*”

“...and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease...” Beginning when Jesus was anointed of the Holy Ghost at the river Jordan, His ministry continued for only three and a half years before He was, as the previous verse says, “*cut off, but not for himself.*” It was in the exact middle of the seventieth and last week of the prophecy that Jesus was crucified. John the Baptist introduced us to Jesus; “*Behold, the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” The “*lamb of God*” was offered, a perfect sacrifice for sin. He was the fulfillment of the “*lamb slain from the foundation of the world* (Revelation 13:8).” Never again would God accept the blood of an animal for atonement. Any animal sacrifice that has been offered since the day Jesus died on the cross was an abomination, and so it will be if they are offered in the future. Hebrews 10:4 says, “*For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.*” This is the reason given that God gave His own Son, a “*lamb*” whose blood would “*take away the sin of the world,*” thus fulfilling the prophecy, “*...He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.*” Never again must blood be shed for sin. His blood was sufficient for all who come to Him.

“...and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate...” In Matthew 21:23, Jesus entered the Temple at Jerusalem to teach the people. This was the last time He would enter the Temple before His crucifixion. He spent the day teaching the multitudes, and at times answering the accusations of the scribes and Pharisees. He ended His day in the Temple with a scorching indictment of the scribes and Pharisees, openly

calling them hypocrites and a “*generation of vipers.*” He concludes His message in Matthew 23:37-39 with these words, “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*” It seems that what must have began with great anger against the scribes and Pharisees now ended in great sorrow that they had not received Him. He had listed their “*overspreading abominations*” beginning in Matthew 23:1; now, they had rejected their Messiah, and there was nothing left for them but “*desolation.*” Notice the tenderness of Jesus as He told them, “*I would have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wing, but you would not. Behold (look around you), your house is left desolate. You will not see me again until you shall say, ‘Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.’*” Notice, it was not the “*antichrist*” that left them desolate, it was Jesus, the Christ, their Messiah that left Jerusalem in utter desolation. It was forty years later that Titus and the armies of Rome physically destroyed the city and the Temple, but they were “*desolate*” and “*destroyed*” from the moment they rejected their Messiah.

“...even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” The word “*consummation*” in this text means “*final destruction.*” Some have believed it spoke of the destruction of Jerusalem in seventy A.D. Jesus had, in fact, foretold of that destruction in Luke 19:43-44 as a result of their rejection of Him, saying, “*For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*” This destruction in seventy A.D. was not the final destruction, however, because they did not call upon Jesus. In the midst of

the “*consummation* (final destruction)” spoken of in this verse, the prophet Zechariah tells us “*they shall look upon him whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his own son....*” The final destruction will end when Israel calls upon Jesus, and He will come to destroy their enemies. Until that time, desolations are determined, and will continue until the end.

We are living in the generation of that final conflict. We are facing a three and a half year “*consummation*,” which Jesus called “*great tribulation*,” and it could begin any day. The difference between “*knowing the truth*” of this prophecy and “*believing the lie*” of tradition, is that it is Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel that is in control. It is He who has confirmed the covenant, and not antichrist. It is He who left Jerusalem desolate, and it will remain so until they call upon Him in the time of their greatest trouble. The locusts of Revelation chapter nine are breeding and beginning to swarm even now, but they have power to hurt “*only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads* (Revelation 9:4).” The things that are coming upon the earth immediately are not the wrath of God, but they are the beginning of the righteous judgments of God against a Christ rejecting world. It is God who “*commands the locusts*.” Read II Chronicles 7:13-14 where God begins with “*If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people...*” Again, read Psalms 105:35, “*He spake, and the locusts came...*” We who know and love the truth are not the target of the locusts, because it is God who sends them.

“...poured upon the desolate.” Notice it is the “*desolate*” this final destruction is poured upon. To be “*desolate*” is to be “*without Christ*.” It is not only the Jew that is counted to be the desolate, but all those of every nation that have rejected Jesus Christ. The final conflict will be focused on Jerusalem, just as it is today, but it will spread worldwide, just as it has today. We are in the months leading up to that final conflict. The only safe place is “*in Christ*.” During that time the gospel of Jesus Christ will be preached around the world under the protection of

almighty God Himself, even though the laws of every nation will be framed against Christ and His church. Israel will call upon Jesus and be saved. I believe that in the midst of the horrors of the consummation, millions of souls around the world will also call upon Jesus and be saved. This will be the last harvest before the return of Jesus, a harvest where souls are “*saved by fear, pulling them out of the fire* (Jude 1:23).”

Returning to the Lord

Hosea 6:1: “*Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.*”

The prophet Hosea called Israel to “*return unto the LORD.*” He paints a picture the modern church rejects, saying, “*He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up.*” America is “*smitten*” and “*torn,*” and few would say that God has done it. I tell you, God is in control of everything that happens to our nation, or to you and I as individuals. Sadly, bad things happen, and people will not return to Him. Many believe that God is the cause of all their problems, but do not know that He is the one who “*binds up*” the wounds and “*heals*” those who are torn. Jesus told Jerusalem, “*How oft I would have gathered thee...but ye would not.*” Oh, He would gather America under His wing if she would return. America will not return, but you, friend, you can return to Jesus with all your heart. He would gather you under His wing in this day of trouble. You can experience what He promises in Psalms 91:4-8, “*He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy*

habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.”

Believing that Jesus is “*The Christ*”

I John 5:1: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

Now we will return to the original thought of this message. What does it mean to “*believe that Jesus is the Christ?*” We know that “*Christ*” in the New Testament is the same as “*Messiah*” in the Old Testament. This prophecy of the “*Messiah*” was so well known in Israel that thirty years before He was anointed at the river Jordan, they were expecting His birth (Matthew 2:1-2). Thirty years later they were expecting His appearance in Judea, because the prophecy told them the exact year He would come in ministry. “*...the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not*” (Luke 3:15). They knew that this was the year the prophecy said He would come, and excitement and expectancy ran high in all of Judea over the possibility that John the Baptist was “*the Christ.*” The scripture says, “*Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins*” (Matthew 3:5-6). So many Jews believed that John was “*the Christ*” that the priests and Levites came to ask him “*Who are you?*” He answered them “*I am not the Christ* (John 1:19-20).” They went so far as to argue the point with him, “*Why baptizest thou then if thou be not that Christ?*” (John 1:25).

The Jews were looking for their Messiah to come. They knew that He would “*finish the transgression, and make an end of sins.*” He would also “*make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness.*” They were expecting an eternal reign of righteousness with their Messiah sitting on the throne in Jerusalem just as we expect Jesus to return and reign with righteousness for a thousand years. They were not prepared for the “*meek and lowly*” Jesus. Any claim by Him to be the

Messiah must be blasphemy worthy of death. Their rejection of Jesus, and His subsequent death on the cross, proved to the Jew that Jesus could not possibly have been their Messiah. The “*death of the cross*” was a cursed death, cursed by the Law of Moses. Perhaps if Jesus had called for the angels to deliver Him from the cross they would have believed, but we would have been lost, for it was on that cross that Jesus made reconciliation for iniquity. It was in His cursed death on the cross that He made an end of sins. The Jew, even in this present day, does not believe that Jesus could have been their Messiah because they cannot see with their eyes that He made an end of sin at Calvary. This is what it means to “*believe that Jesus is the Christ.*” It means that you believe He did everything Gabriel told Daniel that He would do when He came. *He made reconciliation... He finished the transgression...He made an end of sins...He brought in everlasting righteousness*; He did it all in the hearts and natures of men and women who believe and trust in Him. If Jesus did not do everything the Messiah was prophesied to do, then He is not the Christ, and we are yet in our sins. Jesus told the Jews in John 8:24, “*I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.*” They did not believe that Jesus was their Messiah. They would continue seeking the Messiah, but they would not come to Jesus, and they would die in their sins. Are you still in your sins? Have you been taught that you will always be a sinner as long as you are in this body? If that is what you believe, you will die in your sins just as those Jews did. Break loose from the pack! Believe that Jesus is “*The Christ!*” Know that he died on the cross to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29, I John 3:5), and to “*make an end of sins*” (Daniel 9:24). Knowing the truth, Jesus said that we would be made free from sin (Romans 6:6-7). Believing, we “*rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory*” (I Peter 1:8-9). We can rejoice with Andrew, Peter, Phillip, and Nathaniel, who first “*found Him,*” and with multitudes of others without number, for “**We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write... (John 1:40-45).**”

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