

Born of God

In the Bible, the Apostle John made a very simple and direct statement concerning salvation, saying, *“Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God”* I John 5:1. Yet, to understand this statement, it is necessary to visit an Old Testament prophecy which was given to the prophet Daniel by the angel Gabriel. *“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.”* Daniel 9:24

The seventy weeks in this prophecy speak of seventy weeks of years, or four hundred ninety years, during which time the Jewish people would be subject to the Medes and Persians, the Greek empire, and finally the Roman Empire. During this time period there were six things which must be accomplished. Chief among these were *“to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.”* If this verse was not qualified by the next verse, it would seem to say that Israel must stop sinning and live righteously “or else.” The next verse, however, reveals more of Gabriel's message.

“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.” Daniel 9:25

According to Gabriel, this prophecy would begin when a decree would be given to restore and build Jerusalem. This decree was given by King Artaxerxes of the Medes and Persians in 457 BC. Gabriel said from the time this decree was given until the Messiah, the Prince, would be “seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks,” or a total of 483 years. This was a mathematical formula which pinpointed 26 AD as year the Messiah would appear. Luke wrote of that year in his gospel writings, saying, *“And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not.”* Luke 3:15.

This was the same year Jesus of Nazareth came to be baptized by John the Baptist. The gospel of Matthew tells the events of that day.

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And

lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16-17

All this was accomplished in the same year in which Gabriel had said *“the Messiah, the Prince”* would come. Gabriel also told of the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus.

“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.” Daniel 9:26

Jesus was crucified in the year 30 AD and Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus of Rome in 70 AD as a result of its inhabitants' rejection of Jesus, who was their Messiah. Jesus foretold the destruction which would come.

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. 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.” Luke 19:41-44.

The Pharisees of that time, believed the prophecy of the Messiah, but rejected that Jesus was the Christ. Jesus told them plainly, *“Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 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”* John 8:23-24.

What the Pharisees did not understand was that the “end of sins” Messiah was prophesied to make, was in the heart of those who believed upon him. Their refusal to believe that Jesus was “He,” the Christ, guaranteed they would never be free from sin, but would in fact die in their sins.

Those who truly believe Jesus is the Christ will not “die in sin” because Christ has fulfilled his work in them and they now no longer “live in sin.” As the Apostle John reminds us:

“Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God”

I John 5:1

“We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not...”

I John 5:18

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