

## 13.06.2020 THE BIBLE AND PROPHECY

***And he said unto me, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" Daniel 8:14***

The Bible is a book of prophecy; nearly 30% of the Bible is prophetic literature. There are books written by major prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel) and minor prophets. Apart from these prophets, other authors also prophesied of the Messiah who was to come.

The fact that the Messianic prophecies were fulfilled with such accuracy gives us utmost confidence that the prophecies of the time of the end will also be fulfilled.

This week we look at some of the principles of interpretation of prophetic passages in the bible.

### **Historicism**

There are four schools of prophetic interpretation. They are: Preterism, Futurism, Idealism and Historicism. Interpretation of prophecies by each of these schools will result in different conclusions.

The Preterist believed that the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were all fulfilled within the near proximity of the prophet. Futurism teaches that some of the prophecies were fulfilled during Daniel's period and others will be fulfilled at the end of time. Idealism says that prophecies are not predictions but simply symbolic forms of instruction.

The **Historicist** position has been the Adventist position. This position believes that prophecies of Daniel and Revelation are a continual record or prophecies of historical events or periods until the consummation i.e. a record of events that will take place from Daniel until the time of the end, or from John in the book of Revelation until the time of the end. So we have an overall panoramic view of the history of the world from these prophets' time till the end of time.

**This position was not invented by Adventists. This was the main school of the Reformers. Historicism is often known as the "Reformation school of interpretation." So we belong, as a church, to the reformation camp. The Reformers using the historicist approach of Daniel and Revelation (mainly Daniel), came to the conclusion that the "little horn" of Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 was the papacy. That was the conclusion the reformer Luther came to. It was not something that we invented. The Reformers used this principle of interpretation too..**

'Historicism is still the obvious interpretation for the book of Daniel. The successive kingdoms in Daniel 2 and 7 move toward climax and the establishment of divine rule; the sanctuary in Daniel 8 and 9 moves toward restoration; and history flows toward the resurrection in Daniel 10-12. These are all examples of "historicism" at work...

We don't need to be ashamed of our historicist heritage. Scholars of the nineteenth century openly state that "historicism" was standard fare among premillennial Protestants at the time Adventism was born.' *Alden Thompson*

*"And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe." John 14:29*

### **The Year Day Principle**

The Year-Day principle is used in the interpretation of time prophecies.

In Numbers 14:34, the "days" used to measure off "years" are derived from events of the immediate historical past: the 40 days that the Israelite spies spent in their exploration of Canaan. The people in the camp accepted the bad report given by the majority of the spies. As a consequence, God sentenced them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years, a direct parallel to the 40 days. "According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for every day a year, you shall bear your iniquity, forty years, and you shall know my displeasure."

In Ezekiel 4:6, the year-day principle is seen explicitly in a prophetic scenario. The application of the principle is clearly expressed by the Lord. "The number of the days you lie on your side, and you shall bear their evil I have given you the years of their evil according to a number of days, three hundred and ninety days, and you shall bear the evil of the house of Israel. . . . and you shall bear the evil of the house of Judah forty days, day for the year, day for the year I have given you."

A clear example of using the year-day principle is found in Daniel 9:24, 25. Seventy literal weeks from the command to restore and build Jerusalem would not have extended to the time of the Messiah. But when we use the year-day principle it extends to the coming of Christ.

*"Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench (wall), but in times of trouble."*

The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, as completed by the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus, went into effect in the autumn of 457 B.C. See Ezra 6:14; 7:1, 9. From this time four hundred and eighty-three years extend to the autumn of A.D. 27. According to the prophecy, this period was to reach to the Messiah, the Anointed One. In A.D. 27, Jesus at His baptism received the anointing of the Holy Spirit and soon afterward began His ministry. Then the message was proclaimed, "The time is fulfilled." Mark 1:15.'

### Identifying the Little Horn/ The Investigative Judgment

Daniel 2	Daniel 7	Daniel 8
Babylon	Babylon	-----
Media-Persia	Media-Persia	Media-Persia
Greece	Greece	Greece
Pagan Rome	Pagan Rome	Pagan Rome
Papal Rome	Papal Rome	Papal Rome
-----	Judgment in heaven	Cleansing of Sanctuary
Second Coming	Second Coming	Second Coming
[Stone cut out without hand]	[Saints get the kingdom]	[Destroyed without hand]

The little horn is described in Daniel 7 and 8 as a blasphemous power that would persecute God's people and attempt to destroy the truth, and prosper in so doing. In Daniel 7, the little horn's attack targets the Most High God, his saints, and the times regulated by the law. In chapter 8, the same power wages war against the Prince of the host, God's faithful servants, truth, the foundation of the sanctuary and the services in the sanctuary.

Pagan Rome was responsible for crucifying Christ, the Son of God. But Papal Rome (the Magisterium) undermined the work of Christ for our salvation.

The little horn rose up out of the Roman Empire. It persecuted the people of God and trampled the message of the sanctuary (the gospel of Jesus Christ) until 1798 AD. But after 2300 years (prophetic days) i.e. 1844, the sanctuary was to be cleansed, justified, vindicated and restored to its rightful place.

We have seen in previous studies that the sanctuary reveals to man the saving work of Christ (the gospel). The little horn trampled the true gospel. The restoration of the sanctuary primarily means that the pure gospel of Jesus Christ was to be restored to the world at the end of the 2300 day prophecy.

Daniel 2, 7 and 8 are parallel chapters. In these chapters, the same progression of kingdoms is seen (Daniel 2: 31-45; 7:1-8, 15-17). The little horn was an extension of pagan Rome but was different. While the first three kingdoms demonstrated pride which led to their ultimate downfall, the little horn opposes God both politically and spiritually.

Following pagan and papal Rome and before the setting up of God's eternal kingdom, Daniel 7 describes a judgment scene where the little horn is judged and cast down.

God's everlasting kingdom is preceded IN HEAVEN by the pre-Advent Judgment (Daniel 7:10, 26), and ON EARTH by the restoration of the gospel (Daniel 8:14), the finishing of the mystery of God (Rev 10:7, Eph 3:3, 5, Col 1:26-29),

## **Typology**

Typology refers to the study and interpretation of types in the Bible. It focuses on actual persons, events, or institutions of the Old Testament that are founded in a historical reality but that point forward to greater reality in the future.

Some examples are:

David is one the great Old Testament types of Christ. He is born in Bethlehem, was a shepherd, was declared the Lord's anointed and King of Israel. He is the 'man after God's own heart' despite his sins, because he never fails in his personal relationship to God.

In the New Testament, Christ is the 'seed of David according to the flesh' Rom 1:3 and 'the Root and Offspring of David' Revelation 22:16.

Solomon, as the wisest king, is a type of Christ 'who became for us wisdom from God'. 1 Corinthians 1:30. His fame, wealth, wisdom, glory and honour are a foreshadowing of the glory of Christ's kingdom.

Paul describes the Old Testament Israel as being a type and example for spiritual Israel today. 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

*As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Matthew 12:40*

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:14, 15*

*Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. Romans 5:14*

*"The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 1 Corinthians 15:45*

*And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." Genesis 22:6*

*John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29*

## **Conclusion:**

The fulfilment of Bible prophecy is evidence of the Divine origin of the Bible. The prophecies of Daniel span centuries from approximately 605 BC to the time of the end. There are more than 65 prophecies about Christ Jesus the Messiah. Daniel said that Messiah the Prince would 'Seal up vision and prophecy...' Daniel 9:24; i.e. that all vision and prophecy is fulfilled in Christ. God's solution to the sin problem is fulfilled in Christ – His blood cleanses from sin, His righteousness is offered to us as a free gift and He is our surety in the Judgement.

'Christ, as manifested to the patriarchs, as symbolized in the sacrificial service, as portrayed in the law, and as revealed by the prophets, is the riches of the Old Testament. Christ in His life, His death, and His resurrection; Christ, as He is manifested by the Holy Spirit, is the treasure of the New Testament. Our Saviour, the outshining of the Father's glory, is both in the Old and the New.' *EG White: Signs of the Times. June 20, 1906.*

*And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 1 Peter 2:19-21*

*"Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He." John 13:19*

*"I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning,  
And from ancient times things that are not yet done." Isaiah 46:10*

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