

# **Daniel and Premillennialism**

## **Special Focus on Chapters 2 and 9**

ETDS 2017

Tuesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-10:15 AM

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In all labor there is profit

### **Three boring but relevant notes:**

First, **all** bolding and underlining is mine.

Second, about italics— I delineate all NASB (and only NASB) quotes by italics (not by quotation marks): I do not do it for emphasis as one might expect; rather, it is just something I have done for a long time. But, complicating matters, sometimes I use italics to emphasize some of my own points.

At the same time, all italics in quotes are the original author's emphasis, not mine.  
I'm sorry for confusion!

Third, I try to consistently refer to so-called Dispensationalists and so-called Dispensationalism with quotation marks. This is because they are not actually dispensationalists; Christians are dispensationalists (compare οἰκονομία: Ephesians 1:10; 3:9; 1 Timothy 1:4). But satan, through "Dispensationalists" and "Dispensationalism"—let the quotation marks begin— has tried to commandeer the word to use it for his own design, as he has tried with so many other words. And this is my little part in not yielding. Maybe this knowledge will temper that annoying feeling you get every time you read "Dispensationalist," etc.

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# PART ONE: A SIMPLE EXPOSITION OF DANIEL 9<sup>1</sup>

## I. THE OUTLINE OF DANIEL 9

- A. 1-3, Daniel's Introduction
- B. 4-19, Daniel's Prayer
  - 1. 4-14, the Confession
    - a) 4-6, the Confession: Part 1 — Their Sin
    - b) 7-14,<sup>2</sup> the Confession: Part 2 — The Results of Their Sin
  - 2. 15-19, the Supplication
- C. 20-27, Gabriel's Answer
  - 1. 20-23, The Initial Answer
  - 2. 24-27, The Addendum

And now an inexhaustive look at the text — a little exegetical and a little homiletic.<sup>3</sup>

## II. SOME NOTES ON VERSES 1-3 — DANIEL'S INTRODUCTION

- A. Verse 1, *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans.*
  - 1. About *In the first year*:
    - a) Considering verse 2, the time is coming up on 70 years from when Israel first went into captivity, making the year sometime between 539-536 B.C. Compare with Daniel 1:1; Jeremiah 25:1-11; and Ezra 1:1-4.
      - (1) According to Daniel 1:1 (and other passages), Judah began to be exiled in the third year of Jehoiakim, which was around 606 B.C.
      - (2) According to Jeremiah 25:1-11, within the first year of Judah's exile, Jeremiah prophesied that Israel would be exiled in Babylon for 70 years, making the end of it around 536 B.C.
      - (3) It is widely accepted (e.g., *Encyclopedia Britannica*) that Cyrus conquered Babylon in October 539 B.C.
      - (4) According to Ezra 1:1-4, Cyrus, in his first year, ordered Israel to go back to the Promised Land, making it sometime within what we refer to as fall of 539 B.C. to fall of 538 B.C.
      - (5) Daniel 9 also occurs within the first year of Cyrus's reign — sometime from fall 539 B.C. to fall 538 B.C.
    - b) Most accept this is shortly after Cyrus overthrew Babylon in 539 B.C.: Some say 539; most, 538; others, 537.
    - c) Before we move on, note well again this puts Judah and Daniel some seventy years away from hearth and home and exiled in Babylon. **That's a long time!** Remember this for later.
  - 2. About *kingdom of the Chaldeans*: We might expect "Babylon," but Chaldea stands for Babylon (synecdoche: part for whole).
    - a) Compare: "America" standing for the USA only; "Ephraim" standing for the whole northern kingdom of Israel.
    - b) Chaldea refers to a "district in S. Babylonia and its inhabitants," and the word "later applied to a dynasty which controlled all of Babylonia" (*Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 1:774), from which came Nabopolassar, Nebuchadnezzar, Evil-merodach, Neriglissar, Labasi-Marduk, Nabonidus, and Belshazzar.
    - c) **I guess sometimes what we actually read is not what we expect to read. Maybe we need to be better "listeners." Maybe we need a little humility. All of this is important: See next.**
  - 3. About *Darius...Median...king*:
    - a) Compare Daniel 5:30-6:2.
    - b) We might expect to read that Cyrus became king (compare Isaiah 44:28; Daniel 1:21; 10:1; Ezra 1:1ff; 5:13; 6:3; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; history).
    - c) Note well, Cyrus was already king of the Medes and the Persians when he took Babylon. And then...
      - (1) Herodotus tells us in his *History* (1.153) that, when Cyrus conquered Sardis, he left a Persian, Tabalus, in charge of it.
      - (2) Herodotus also tells us that when Cyrus conquered Babylon, he left Tritantaechmes over the satrapy of Assyria:

If you want to get right to the "Dispensational" Premillennialists, we really begin interacting with them in verse 24 (page 18).

<sup>1</sup> If it is not clear from the title of this paper, I was asked to concentrate on Daniel 9, especially verses 24-27, including how they relate to Daniel 2 and 7 (Part Two).

<sup>2</sup> Others mark the change at verse 10 (e.g., Thomson, *The Pulpit Commentary*) or 11 (e.g., Kiel).

<sup>3</sup> This certainly is not a critical examination of the text. For example, I will not include any discussions of textual variances, etc. — "The Septuagint (LXX) says this," "The Masoretic says that," "Theodotion omits the squiggly...." Sorry to disappoint. But I wouldn't know what I was talking about anyway. (Isn't Peshitta a type of bread?)


Just a reminder that all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics within quotes are the original author's emphasis.

- (a) "And Babylon, then for the first time, was taken in this way. I shall show how great the power of Babylon is by many other means, but particularly by. All the land that the great King rules is parcelled out to provision him and his army, and pays tribute besides: now the territory of Babylon feeds him for four of the twelve months in the year, the whole of the rest of Asia providing for the other eight. Thus the wealth of Assyria is one third of the entire wealth of Asia. The governorship of this land, which the Persians call "satrapy," is by far the most powerful of all the governorships, since the daily income of Tritantaechmes son of Artabazus, who governed this province by the king's will" (*History*, 1.192).
- (b) Note well Wikipedia's entry on Tritantaechmes refers to him as "king": "Tritantaechmes...was king of Sagartians who ruled in Arbela" ("Tritantaechmes").

- d) **The question is: Could Cyrus have maybe also left Darius the Mede<sup>4</sup> in charge, "king" of Babylon?**
- (1) 2 Kings 24:17 is noteworthy. When Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin to Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar left Jehoiachin's uncle to rule over Judah. Note the terms: *Then the king of Babylon made his uncle Mattaniah king*. For the ancient Near-Easterner, having a "great" king and a "local" king was normal... just like we have presidents and vice ("in place of") presidents in government and business.
- (2) 2 Kings 25:27-30 makes the point very forcefully: *Now it came about in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he became king, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison; and he spoke kindly to him and set his throne above the throne of the kings who were with him in Babylon. Jehoiachin changed his prison clothes and had his meals in the king's presence regularly all the days of his life; and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.* In this account about what eventually happened to Jehoiachin, we see there were several kings under the king in Babylon, and they were even *present* with him in Babylon.
- (3) Back to our man Darius— compare Daniel 9:1, where it says he was made king.
- (a) The NETBible renders this "who had been appointed king."
- (b) I would say the passive construction gives weight to the idea that someone (Cyrus?) was ruling over Darius.
- (c) Kiel has this note: "In the word...the Hophal is to be noticed... It shows that Darius did not become king over the Chaldean kingdom by virtue of a hereditary right to it, nor that he gained the kingdom by means of conquest, but that he received it."
- (d) For what it is worth, "made king" is the same word in both Daniel 9:1 and 2 Kings 24:17 (*mālāk*).
- (4) Now look at Daniel 6:28: *So this Daniel enjoyed success in the reign of Darius and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian.* This, along with everything else we've read so far, certainly allows for Darius to be a local king ruling under Cyrus, the "great king."
- (5) Before we conclude this seeming palaver, it is relevant to note that, when Daniel wrote about the downfall of Babylon (5:30-31), he did not mention Cyrus at all. Why not? Daniel mentioned Cyrus by name in 1:21 and 10:1. Why not here? I don't know for *sure*, but consider the following:
- (a) According to Herodotus (1.190-191), Cyrus himself was actually upstream from Babylon when Babylon was taken.<sup>5</sup>
- (b) *Encyclopedia Britannica* has an interesting and relevant note about this: "Nabonidus...king of Babylonia from 556 until 539 B.C., when Babylon fell to Cyrus, king of Persia...made his son Belshazzar coregent...in 539 B.C., he was captured by Cyrus' general Gobryas and exiled" ("Nabonidus").
- (6) The point of all this is: It seems very reasonable that Great King Cyrus appointed Darius to rule as a local king over Babylon.
- (7) Furthermore, there is nothing in Daniel that excludes this possibility.
- (8) Furthermore, taking into account different passages and the whole picture the Bible paints, we understand that there are yet other kings involved who Daniel himself does not mention by name: **Daniel's is not supposed to be a complete historical record.**
- e) Why did I labor on this point so long? Because I think skeptics say the dumbest things about it. For example...
- (1) Gary Greenberg, President of the Biblical Archaeology Society of New York, writes in his *101 Myths of the Bible: How Ancient Scribes Invented Biblical History*, "Myth #100": "This set of predictions is rather remarkable for a man living in 587 B.C., but there is a major flaw in the story. The Book of Daniel describes the succession of several kings during the lifetime of Daniel and the sequence is substantially inaccurate. Daniel gives the following succession of Babylonian Kings: 1) Nebuchadnezzar, 2) Belshazzar, son of Nebuchadnezzar, 3) Darius the Mede, and 4) Cyrus. Elsewhere it says that Darius the Mede was the son of Ahasuerus (i.e., Xerxes). The historically accurate sequence would be: 1) Nebuchadnezzar, 2) Evil-Merodach, 3) Neriglassar, 4) Nabonidus, 5) Belshazzar, son of Nabonidus, and 6) Cyrus" (page 288).
- (2) Steve Wells, in his *Skeptic's Annotated Bible* writes about Darius: "The author of Daniel incorrectly makes him the successor of Belshazzar instead of Cyrus"<sup>6</sup> (Wells).
- (3) In baseball we call this a swing-and-a-miss; in basketball, an airball. And, apparently, this is the best

<sup>4</sup> Cyrus, though brought up Persian, was actually of Median descent. And it was as a Persian that he conquered the Medes, who were being ruled by his grandfather (and more ancestors before that). (Herodotus records the fascinating story of Cyrus' childhood, beginning in book 1, section 107.) The point is, it is not unreasonable that Cyrus would trust both Medes and Persians as governors. No obstacle here.

<sup>5</sup> Herodotus writes, "He posted his army at the place where the river goes into the city, and another part of it behind the city, where the river comes out of the city, and told his men to enter the city by the channel of the Euphrates when they saw it to be fordable. Having disposed them and given this command, he himself marched away with those of his army who could not fight; and when he came to the lake, Cyrus dealt with it and with the river just as had the Babylonian queen: drawing off the river by a canal into the lake, which was a marsh, he made the stream sink until its former channel could be forded. When this happened, the Persians who were posted with this objective made their way into Babylon by the channel of the Euphrates, which had now sunk to a depth of about the middle of a man's thigh." Herodotus writes "he himself" (ἑαυτοῦ); "himself" is intensive. I'm not sure Herodotus meant the additional pronoun to be as intensive as I do, but Cyrus himself was not there.

<sup>6</sup> Wells also gives to this note his "Science and History" symbol, . The purpose is to indicate that history contradicts Daniel. Well, Mr. Wells is the one who is wrong.

they have... (Greenberg is President of the Biblical Archaeology Society of New York, AND he “selected” these 101 myths [page IX]). This says more about the skeptics than it does Daniel and the Bible; clearly they are straining.

(4) **And the material point of it all is: YOU! CAN! TRUST! YOUR! BIBLE!**

B. Verse 2, *in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD<sup>7</sup> to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

1. I have no real comment on the years other than they were literal, which will be relevant when we get to verses 24-27.
2. Note well the message Daniel read is reflected in Jeremiah 25.<sup>8</sup>
  - a) I suggest you read it now.
  - b) Having gone there and read it, don't miss that we just did what Daniel did over **2500** years ago! And not only Daniel read Jeremiah! Others in exile read it! (Did Ezekiel ever read Jeremiah?) Jesus did (Matthew 6:16)! Matthew did (2:18)! Paul did (1 Corinthians 1:31, et al.)! James did (Acts 15:16)! The author of Hebrews did (8:8ff)! I suspect the Bereans did, too. And countless thousands ever since!
    - (1) President Trump said repeatedly in his recent Inaugural Address that we are “Making history,” and we are “Part of a movement,” and “It's huge,” etc. I mean no disrespect, but in comparison, “Blah blah blah”!
    - (2) **We, CHRISTIANS, are part of something huge, really big, historic, eternal, a movement from God Himself! KNOW this. Let it SATURATE every fiber of your being! Let it RESONATE in your head and in your heart and in your soul and spirit!** (Compare Ephesians 1:18 and 1 Peter 2:4-9.) (I know of a man who has a 1959 Les Paul Sunburst worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. He brings it with him everywhere he goes. At home he keeps it in his bedroom; the same in hotels. He said, “Not a morning goes by that I do not wake up and think, ‘That is beautiful!’” Well that guitar is going to burn. The Kingdom is beautiful!)

C. Verse 3, *So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.*

1. *About gave my attention.* The NASB has the footnote, “Lit *set my face.*” Maybe Daniel set his face toward Jerusalem, as he did three times every day (compare 6:10).
2. Daniel sought Him by *prayer*. Compare “easily the most common word for ‘prayer,’” and “Most often both the verb and the noun refer to intercessory prayer” (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*).
3. Daniel sought Him by *supplication*.
  - a) Compare “to grant a favor,” and “an action from a superior to an inferior who has no real claim for gracious treatment” (ibid.).
  - b) *Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible* translates this as “pleas for mercy.”

So far we have Daniel begging for mercy on someone else's behalf (or some *thing* — compare verse 20).

4. Daniel sought Him with *fasting*. Compare Psalm 69:1-11, especially verse 10 — *When I wept in my soul with fasting. This is an outward sign of an inward commitment!*
5. Daniel sought Him with *sackcloth*.
  - a) Customs are strange: We wear black while mourning (I've read the Romans did, too); Hindus wear white.
  - b) One source says sackcloth was used for tents. (Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, 27)
  - c) Another source says of sackcloth: “It was generally made of the hair of goats or of camels, and was coarse and black. It was used for straining liquids, sacks, and for mourning garments...worn next to the skin...chafed” (*Manners*, 44).
  - d) One way to say “I mean it” is by enduring painful sacrifice. We might want to do this. Seriously.
6. Daniel sought Him with *ashes*. This is associated with worthlessness and humiliation:
  - a) Compare, *And Abraham replied, “Now behold, I have ventured to speak to the Lord, although I am but dust and ashes”* (Genesis 18:27).
  - b) God says of idols and idolaters, *No one recalls, nor is there knowledge or understanding to say, “I have burned half of it in the fire and also have baked bread over its coals. I roast meat and eat it. Then I make the rest of it into an abomination, I fall down before a block of wood!” He feeds on ashes* (Isaiah 44:19-20).

This much is obvious so far: Daniel takes both the word of God and prayer seriously. Very, very seriously.

Another helpful reminder that all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics *within* quotes are the original author's emphasis.

<sup>7</sup> In Daniel, “LORD” (JHWH) is not used outside of this chapter. It is used 8 times in this chapter. Someone make a sermon out of this. (May I then download it?)

<sup>8</sup> Whether Daniel read Jeremiah 25 or 29, Keil argues for 25 while Thomson argues for 29. I haven't lost any sleep over it. And whether Daniel read Jeremiah 25 or 29, per se, or a different, individual letter (compare Jeremiah 29:1), whatever specific document it was, it too was the word of God.

Two observations:

- ➔ **We may not need to pray this way, but we need to pray this *seriously* and with this *attitude*.**
- ➔ And compare Daniel's struggle (the diagnosis) and course of action (the prescription) with—
  - Matthew 5:3-4: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*
  - Philippians 4:6-7: *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
  - **The point is: After Daniel took it to Jehovah-God, no matter the answer to the prayer, Daniel himself was going to be just fine!**
    - When Cyrus conquered Croesus, Croesus sent inquiries back to the Delphic Oracle whether the god enjoyed tricking his followers (Herodotus, 1.90). Croesus should have known, because Solon had already told him, "I know well that the gods are all envious and disruptive" (ibid., 1.32), or as another translation puts it, "the divine is entirely grudging and troublesome to us." At another time in another place, a local god became impatient with his subjects and ordered them to sin; when they inquired about this, he answered, "Yes, I did so bid you, that you may the quicker sin and be destroyed and thus no more consult this oracle" (ibid., 1.159). Imagine the fear approaching, not to consider supplicating, such a god(s)!<sup>9</sup>
    - Contrast the certainty of the peace we are assured when we cast our cares to Jehovah God: "Is," "will," "shall."
    - Again, no matter the answer to the prayer, having prayed this way Daniel *himself* would be fine!
    - **Why don't I try this more often?! Kids, DO try this at home!**

D. A few more observations before we continue in the text:

1. Daniel "made do" where he was with what he had — he could not follow all the law of Moses, but still he read and still he prayed. This says something about his attitude. Was it...
  - a) **Nothing will stop me!**
    - (1) Paralympians have this attitude.
    - (2) There is a video of 17-year-old Nick Santonastasso, born with Hand-Heart Syndrome, with no legs and only one arm and only one finger on that hand, flipping over a huge tractor tire. God's man Daniel would not let any "handicap" stop him.
  - b) **I can still do something!**
    - (1) When a family's (Christians) home burned to the ground, Marcie and I, just married and living on a "moderate" income, gave pencils and paper and C-clamps. The point is not to be boastful; the point is, we've all been here — what can I do with what I have?
    - (2) Remember Mark 12:41-44, *She, out of her poverty, put in all she owned.*
  - c) **BOTH!**<sup>10</sup>
2. We can do what Daniel did.
  - a) Someone might say, "But Daniel was nobility, living among the ruling class even in Babylon. And, AND, he was a prophet. Me, I am just... (a thousand 'justs')." What a bad attitude!
  - b) We just read God's word like Daniel did (namely, Jeremiah 25).
  - c) We can pray to God like Daniel did. It's that simple. **Now, what is stopping me?**
  - d) And about Daniel's prayer, note well:
    - (1) Look at the connection — namely, *Observed* and *so....* (2-3)
      - (a) Other translations have, "Observed...then," or "Observed...and."
      - (b) The power of the Word on a willing heart: Automatic, unquestioned, unhesitant, response!  
Imagine two contractors talking about one's project: He says, "And then we came to page 5 of the blueprints, which indicated framing the interior walls," and the other contractor asks,

<sup>9</sup> No wonder they used *meaningless repetition...for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words* (Matthew 6:7): We know their gods didn't exist, but they thought their gods just didn't care.

And at best, at best, the ancient pagans were in a state of **un**-blissful ignorance — *knowing* they did not know how to please the gods, but *wishing* they did. Herakleitos, a Greek philosopher living in Ephesus under Persian rule, c. 500 B.C., wrote the following about pagan religion: "They purify themselves vainly with blood when they are suffering from blood-pollution, as if someone who had stepped into mud were to try and wash it off with mud. Anyone who noticed him do this would think him mad. And they pray to the images of the gods, which is like trying to have a conversation with a house; for they do not know the true nature of gods and heroes" (from fragment 5, as translated in *The World of Athens*, page 283). Peter Jones, the author of *World of Athens*, simply says: "It was extremely difficult to know whether one was keeping the gods happy" (page 97). We could multiply these quotes.

<sup>10</sup> I find it interesting that Daniel marks the time of Gabriel's visit as *the time of the evening offering* (v. 21). But the evening offering was not happening in Babylon. It was not happening in Jerusalem either. In fact, it hadn't happened anywhere for decades. But it should have been, had Israel been complying with God's will. And Daniel was so entrenched in doing things God's way that it exuded from him even in telling the time! (Compare the one who says it is "1500hrs" instead of "3:00PM.") This is huge. In fact, this is really too big too be relegated to a footnote.



“So what did you do?” “What do you mean, ‘What did I do’? I called the framing carpenter, of course. Strange question. What kind of a contractor are you?” **What kind of servant of God am I?** (Remember James 1:22!)

- (2) Daniel didn’t wait for someone else to pray.
  - (a) The word *observed* is again noteworthy.
    - i) The N/KJV and NIV render it “Understood,” the ESV, “Perceived.”
    - ii) The NAS renders it “Interpreted” in Isaiah 28:9.
    - iii) The point is: It is not the word “Read.”
    - iv) And this seems to tell us what happened: Daniel read, of course. But also... “the light bulb went on”: Daniel did the math, Daniel realized the time, Daniel understood the principle in Isaiah 62:6-7,<sup>11</sup> Daniel realized he himself could and should pray, and then Daniel himself prayed.
  - (b) Compare Isaiah 6:8: *Here I am!*
  - (c) Compare Luke 10:2: *The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.* When Jesus sent out the seventy, He made them aware of the need, and then He instructed them to pray.<sup>12</sup>
- e) Note well that Daniel didn’t read and pray because God had made him a prophet; God made Daniel a prophet because he had read and prayed.
- f) Oh, too busy to read and pray? Compare Daniel 6:1-10, where it is written that Daniel *continued...three times a day...as he had been doing previously.*
  - (1) Remember, Daniel was a “Bigwig” in the nation.
  - (2) I read recently that the president of the United States of America works 14 hours a day, 7 days a week, most weeks of the year. Are you this busy? No matter, God will always be able to point to Daniel....
  - (3) Oh, and Jesus didn’t “have a job” but was busy....
  - (4) **It doesn’t matter what your job is, what matters is whether or not you control your job, your life, your time, your self. God, help us!**

3. Daniel didn’t let luxury, position, education, and attempted indoctrination distract him from remembering Who answers prayer. Quite a feat! Compare Deuteronomy 8:7-20.
  - a) **It can be done!**
  - b) And we —that is, most Christians living anywhere in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but specifically those in the “West”—specifically do well to heed the warning: *It is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven* (Matthew 19:23).
4. Daniel never gave up on God. This is *70 years* after Daniel had been taken from the Promised Land. Seventy long years and Daniel had not given up on His God! This is a perfect illustration of Luke 18:1-8, *...when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?* (verse 8).
5. Daniel respected God and His word. Others doubted (Jeremiah 42-43, et al.). This will always be the situation. **What am I going to choose?**
6. Last one for now...  
Most never read.  
Some who read never observe.  
Some who read and observe never pray.  
**This is Daniel. Daniel did all three. Be like Daniel.**

Now back to the text.

### III. SOME NOTES ON VERSES 4-19 — DANIEL’S PRAYER

#### A. Verses 4-6 — The Confession. Part 1, The Sin

1. Verse 4, *I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments.”*
  - a) From *Alas*:
    - (1) This word (ānnā) is used 13 times in the Old Testament; all but one are addressed to God.

<sup>11</sup> The context of Isaiah 62 is (I paraphrase), “God will make Jerusalem great again.” The instruction in verses 6-7 is (I paraphrase), “In the mean time, **Pray Your Hearts Out!**” Here is exactly what is written: *On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night they will never keep silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest for yourselves; and give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.* (Whether this section actually applies only to Israel’s return in 539 B.C., or both their return in 539 B.C. and the arrival of the Messianic Kingdom, or only the Messianic Kingdom, I tend to lean toward the second option, if not the third.)

<sup>12</sup> Also notice that the ones who prayed were then the ones who were sent, too. Be careful what you pray for? That doesn’t sound right in this context. How about: Be prepared not only to pray but also to take action! (That was free.)

- (2) It is an interjection, an exclamation; it is used before an entreaty.
  - (3) The point is: What Daniel read and what Daniel recognized about the times, all this **IMPACTED** him.
    - (a) We already knew this from the process he immersed himself in, as seen in verse 3.
    - (b) Again, the **IMPACT** of it all was **STILL RESONATING** within Daniel.
      - i) Like when a loved one dies, it impacts us for a while. September 11, 2001 is similar, because in some ways the effects are not just lingering but are still having profound impact. Also Pearl Harbor.
      - ii) I'm impressed that Daniel was impressed by spiritual things! **What? About? Me?**
- b) From *O Lord, the great and awesome God*:
- (1) First things first! In the case of prayer, God first! God's greatness first!
  - (2) Compare how Jesus began the "Lord's Prayer" in Matthew 6:9-10: *Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done....* Jesus didn't skip: "Our Father, give us our bread and forgive us. Amen."
  - (3) **If I were to die one sentence into a prayer, may I have already said how great God is.** (If not *actually* then at least in *principle*, in *attitude*, in *lifestyle*.)
2. Verse 5, *we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.*

The prayer really begins to take shape here; its intensity is that of a hurricane while its focus has laser precision.

- a) About *sinned*:
- (1) "missed the mark" (Thomson, on verse 15 in *The Pulpit Commentary*).
  - (2) "to make a false step...erring from the right" (Keil).
  - (3) There is **no** harmless or innocent sin; but in this list, this word is closest to implying a simple mistake.

Watch how Daniel crafts this confession, piling on words, each one increasing and emphasizing **GUILT**.

- b) About *committed iniquity*:
- (1) "to be perverse" (Keil).
  - (2) "to bend, to curve, to twist, to distort" (Gesenius).
    - (a) Compare Psalm 38:6: *I am bent over and greatly bowed down.*
    - (b) Compare Esther 1:16: *Queen Vashti has wronged not only the king.* Not submitting. Deviating. Going against expectation.
    - (c) Compare 1 Samuel 20:30: *Saul's anger burned against Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse, rebellious woman."* Does this imply then something more/further than rebellion, or is it simply saying the same thing twice? Either way....
- c) About *acted wickedly*:
- (1) "violently transgressed" (Thomson, on verse 15).
  - (2) "to do wrong, as a passionate rebellion against God" (Kiel).
  - (3) In Jeremiah 3:11, God said "treacherous Judah" was worse than "faithless Israel." It can't get worse than this! But actually, it does.
  - (4) In Ezekiel 5:6, God said Jerusalem acted "more wickedly" (same word) than the nations. Compare Romans 1:21-32 or Genesis 18:16-19:28 (especially with 15:16). It doesn't get worse than this. Feel the impact of this.
- d) About *and rebelled...*: The emphatic culmination: "*inf. absol.* thereby denotes that the action is presented with emphasis" (Keil).

So far Daniel has been heaping it on, one after another, increasing in guilt, climaxing in passionate wickedness, culminating in emphatic rebellion. And Daniel isn't done yet!

3. Verse 6, *Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land.*
- a) Keil's non-technical note is worth repeating: "The guilt becomes greater from the fact that God failed not to warn them."
  - b) About *Moreover*: Not many translations have "Moreover" as the NASB does, but I'm convinced this nuance is here — Daniel seems to be saying, "We did all of those crimes (in verse 5); and not only did we do all of those, but also we did... (in verse 6)!!!"
  - c) And don't miss *kings, princes, fathers, and all the people*: All are included; no one is excluded.

In verses 5 and 6, Daniel confesses Israel's **TOTAL** depravity: Verse 5 covers its *intensiveness*; verse 6 covers its *extensiveness*. They've all got it, and they've all got it bad! They aren't worth a lick.<sup>13</sup>

Just a reminder that all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics within quotes are the original author's emphasis.

<sup>13</sup> Of course I do not mean "Total Depravity" as the term is typically used — the name of that false doctrine; but I am making a play on it. ("Extensive" and "intensive" are also words Calvinists and others use in THD discussions.)

The point of all this so far is: Israel is **NOT** in a position of strength, **NOT** in a position to ask for anything from God! The position Israel **IS** in is Death Row. **AND BEING IN SUCH A POSITION, WHAT COULD THEY POSSIBLY HOPE FOR?**

- Think about this comparison to drive home the point. The accused stands before the judge for sentencing: The State has video evidence, audio evidence, eyewitnesses, DNA, hair, fingerprints, a severed hand still clutching the instrument, and even a confession. **What can the accused but expect!**
- Israel is guiltier than guilty! And, AND, they are guilty of committing offenses against the eternal Creator Himself! **What could they possibly hope for!**
- The surprising and glorious answer: **WITH GOD, THE GUILTY HAVE HOPE!** In fact, they have **ALL** hope! Go for the gold! Shoot for the moon! Hey, jump over the moon!
  - Compare verse 4: *Lovingkindness*.
  - Compare verse 9: *To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness*.
  - Again, with God, despite being in no position to expect anything, **WE CAN HOPE!** And not only can we hope, but we can hope for the **BEST!!! WOW!!!!**

If we were to enter here into a lengthy discussion about hope, it would certainly be valid. In fact, it is necessary to do so often! But such a discussion would focus on us (“We have hope”), and in this moment, let’s make this all about God!

- We can have hope only because of Who God Is!
- What a great and awesome God we have! A God who will *not slay* us despite all we have done to Him! A God who will *forgive* us despite all we have done to Him! A God who will *accept* us despite all we have done to Him! A God who *providentially works* to ensure we have a second and third and fourth **thousandth** opportunity. A God who *sacrifices His own Son* for us. How wonderful our God is!
- “*My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,*” declares the Lord. “*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts*” (Isaiah 55:8-9). Truly.

## B. Verses 7-14<sup>14</sup> — The Confession. Part 2, The Resulting Situation

1. The entire block of this text is on the next page; but first a note from verses 7 and 8 about *open shame belongs to us*:
  - a) The King James Version appears to be closest to a literal translation, “confusion of face.”
  - b) Keil says this: “shame which reflects itself in the countenance, not because of disgraceful circumstances...but in the consciousness of well-deserved suffering.” Note well that there are two interconnected but subtly different ideas prevalent — namely, circumstances and deservedness:
    - (1) Regarding circumstances: The nation’s circumstance is a **MAJOR** component of this prayer! Do not miss Daniel’s oft repeated references in this section to Israel’s present disgraceful circumstances; we cannot truly appreciate the whole of chapter 9 (especially verses 24-27) without understanding the impact of Israel’s present exile in Babylon and the scene back in the Promised Land.
    - (2) **But, regarding deservedness: I believe this specific nuance is really what Daniel is building on in this section. I’ll try to explain this in what follows.**
2. A note from verse 7 about *Righteousness belongs to you*. Again, Keil says something that, if I understand this text correctly,<sup>15</sup> we need to embrace: “Righteousness as a perfection which is manifested in His operations on the earth, or specifically in His dealings toward Israel.” Note well, righteousness has two aspects:
  - a) What someone **IS**:
    - (1) God is *actually* and *inherently* righteous.
    - (2) Man without sin is *actually* and *inherently* righteous: This idea is in Ecclesiastes 7:29; also, Jesus, having never sinned, was *actually* and *inherently* righteous (1 John 2:1).

<sup>14</sup> As I mentioned when I outlined the chapter (on page 5), others mark the change at verse 10 (e.g., Thomson) or 11 (e.g., Kiel). Neither Thomson nor Keil offer much of a technical explanation for why he marks the change where he does. This leads me to believe it is open to some debate. That they disagree with each other further encourages me to debate them on this little point. And I know that, in verses 7-10, Daniel repeats much of what he said in verses 5-6, so you might think he is continuing the same point, but I believe there is a subtle change in verse 7, and there Daniel actually begins leading up to verses 11-14. Having said all this, I think the only practical difference is in emphasis. (But I think this emphasis is huge.)

<sup>15</sup> Please understand that I did not recently consult any commentary before reading the text many times and forming relatively firm conclusions (right or wrong); rather, having recently re-read the text many times and formed relatively firm conclusions (right or wrong), I then happened upon several tidbits within Keil and Thomson, et al., that fit with my understanding. And, this is mostly about subtleties. And, again, I could be wrong in the subtleties. Or, maybe I am overemphasizing them. I am open to hearing others’ opinions. But I believe they have a lot to do with the “feel” of Daniel’s prayer. This “feel” is an element that is *clearly seen* in the beginning of the prayer (in each of verses 3, 4, 5, and 6) and the end of the prayer (note, for example, the crescendo in verse 19). This “feel” Daniel *intends* to convey. This “feel” we *should* get. And, again, I believe this “feel” is *also* in the middle parts of the prayer.

- (3) Forgiven man is *declared* righteous (he is neither *actually* nor *inherently* righteous). Compare 1 Corinthians 1:20 and Romans 4:5 with, for example, Luke 1:6 and Matthew 23:29.
- b) What someone **DOES**:
- (1) When man does what is right, man is *doing* righteousness, e.g., Matthew 6:1; 5:20.
  - (2) The same with God: When God does right, He is *doing* righteousness (Daniel will refer to God's "righteous acts" in verse 16 [NASB, ESV, NIV, YLT]).
- (3) **Now, note this nuance in this context (namely, God always does what is right).**
- (a) Keil marks it, or implies it, with the words "operations" and "dealings."
  - (b) I believe Daniel will **DRIVE HOME** this point in verses 7-14 (and beyond). Watch for it.

Yes, Daniel *refers* to their sin and situation over and over here, **but...** →

...I really think Daniel is *just building up* to talk about God keeping His word, which Daniel gets to here, beginning with "Indeed." →

3. Now the text of verses 7-14: **7 Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You.** 8 *Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.* 9 *To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; 10 nor have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets.* 11 *Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.* 12 **Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken** against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. 13 *As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.* 14 *Therefore the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.*

- a) In verse 7, Daniel begins with a statement of God's *Righteousness*, that is, God does right. This is the theme. (In verses 11-14 we'll see exactly what Daniel has in mind that God does right: God always does what He said He will do.)
- b) With the theme now stated and now in mind, verses 7-10 lead up to the *Indeed* of verse 11. (Other versions have something similar to "Indeed." The *English Standard Version* excludes the conjunction, as they are wont to do; so does the NIV.)
- c) In verse 11, *Indeed* and what immediately follows is connected to *so the curse has been poured out...*

If I may recount what we've seen so far in 7-11:

- Verses 7-10 are "God always does right. And we sinned."
  - Verses 7-11 (adding just one verse) are "God always does right. And we sinned. So God poured out the curse." Again, I believe verses 7-10 are getting to verse 11. But I've said this too much already?
  - Note well, the curse is written in the Law of Moses (Deuteronomy 28:15-58).
  - **The point: "God told us He'd do it. Then God *did* it. God always does what He says He will do."**
  - This theme will continue several times in this section.
- d) In verse 11, the *oath* is added to the curse, thus strengthening Daniel's case:
    - (1) The curse is a list of things that would happen. Of course, God said it so He will do it.
    - (2) So the "oath" is a way of getting them to take it even more seriously, and God does this by saying, "And I really mean it. I really will do this! Because I always do what I say I will do." (Compare Hebrews 6:13-18.)
    - (3) So just in verse 11 alone we have, "This is what will happen (*curse*)! And I mean, I really, really will do it (oath)!!"
  - e) In verse 12, *Thus* is way of saying "In this way."
    - (1) What way? The "God keeps His word" way. The "God *told* us He would bring the curses and He *did* because He always does what He says He will do" way.
    - (2) Whether or not the conjunction should be translated "Thus" or "And" (as some translations do), our understanding is confirmed and emphasized in *He has confirmed His words which He had spoken.*
    - (3) In fact, I suggest this statement is the centerpiece of this section of Daniel's prayer.
  - f) In verse 13, *As it is written...has come* is again making the same point: God did exactly what He said He would do.
  - g) In verse 14, *Therefore the Lord has kept...and brought...for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds* is again making the point that God always does what He says He will do, and He is right for doing so.

Yet another well placed and helpful reminder that all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics *within* quotes are the original author's emphasis.

**This —what Daniel captures in verses 7-14— is the actual and literal epitome of faithfulness and trustworthiness: God ALWAYS does what He says He will do, so He is ALWAYS trustworthy. ALWAYS.**

- **YOU! CAN! BANK! ON! IT!**
- Isaiah 55:10-11 is relevant; God compares the **CERTAIN** effectiveness of His word to rain watering the ground. While here, consider a forecast: “Today there is a 65% chance it will rain.”
  - ➔ I long wondered how forecasters arrive at these predictions. A little research revealed that one way they arrive at these predictions is by comparing each day against all other days with similar conditions recorded, and then making an observation: “Of all the other days with similar conditions as today, 65% received rain. So today we have a 65% chance of receiving rain.”
  - ➔ But the question this prompts is: Why doesn’t it rain on 100% of the days with these same conditions? Why not the other 35% of days? Of course, we don’t know. And this emphasizes some uncertainty. Not to mention it seems forecasters get it wrong more often than they get it right.
  - ➔ **BUT**, of this we can be **CERTAIN** (from the analogy in Isaiah 55:10-11): When it rains, the rain **ALWAYS** waters the ground!
  - ➔ **AND**, of this we can also be **CERTAIN** (which is God’s actual point in Isaiah 55:10-11): God’s word **ALWAYS** works.
  - ➔ **AND**, of this we can also be **CERTAIN**: God **ALWAYS** follows His word. **THIS** is what Daniel is **POUNDRING** home throughout this section: **IF GOD SAID IT, YOU CAN TRUST IT!**

Why is Daniel making this point so THOROUGHLY? Wait for it in verses 16-19.

**C. Verses 15-19 — The Supplication.** Having pounded home God’s faithfulness...

1. Verse 15, *And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked.*

*About have made a name for Yourself:*

- a) This happened by demonstrating His “mighty hand” through sending the plagues on Egypt: God beat up the gods of Egypt, manifesting/proving that He is the strongest, actually the only, God (Exodus 12:12). (For the general principle, consider First Kings 20, especially verses 23-28. Also Matthew 12:22-29.)
- b) But there was another nuance to God’s name that was manifested then — namely, God demonstrated that **HE ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD**. Compare Exodus 3:13-17 with 5:20-6:9.
  - (1) In 3:13-17, God supplies Moses with His name, “YHWH” (or whichever form of the tetragrammaton or articulation you prefer). Notice— connected with God’s Name is the fulfillment of the promises God made to Israel’s forefathers.
  - (2) You know what happens next (5:1-19): Moses goes to Pharaoh, Pharaoh questions who this YHWH is, and Pharaoh makes Israel’s hardship even worse.
  - (3) In 5:20-21, Israel’s foremen blame Moses.
  - (4) Then, in 5:22-23, Moses blames Jehovah-God! Note well Moses says to Him, *You have not delivered Your people at all, **calling into question whether or not God keeps His word!***
  - (5) Now read God’s response to Moses’ accusation, as recorded in Exodus 6: *1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh...” 2 God spoke further to Moses and said to him, “**I am the LORD**; 3 and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty; but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. 4 I also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they sojourned. 5 Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. 6 Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, ‘I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 7 Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. 8 I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.”*
    - (a) Note that God states His name in the beginning, middle, and end of this section.
    - (b) Note that God’s point in this section is that **HE KEEPS HIS WORD!**
    - (c) Note that Israel would come to **KNOW** the meaning of His name: “I am the LORD...”
    - (d) Back in Daniel 9, **THIS** is what Daniel covered in verses 7-14, and **THIS** is what Daniel is **STILL** alluding to in verse 15! Daniel is **STILL POUNDING** on this.
    - (e) In fact, Daniel **BEGAN** his prayer this way: *O Lord...who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness (v. 4).*<sup>16</sup>

Why is Daniel making this point **STILL SO THOROUGHLY?**

<sup>16</sup> Even “lovingkindness” (*hesed*) seems to directly imply God’s reliability — it may be the very root idea of the word: “The Ten Commandments, etc. were stipulations of the covenant, Israel’s victories were rewards of covenant keeping, her apostasy was covenant violation and God’s *hesed* was not basically mercy, but loyalty to his covenant obligations” (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, “hesed”). The *Lexham Hebrew-English Interlinear Bible* renders this word here as, “the loyal love.” The NIV twice renders this word “God on whom I can rely” (Psalm 59:10, 17).

2. Verse 16, *O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts* — before we read any further, note that Daniel **AGAIN** brings up God’s righteousness!
  - a) (I know there is more to God’s righteousness than keeping His word. But keeping His word is included.)
  - b) Why? Why has Daniel been **POUNDING! POUNDING! POUNDING!** this home? “God always keeps His word! God always does what He says!” and “God always does right!” Because...
    - (1) First, remember that Daniel is (a) making a request AND (b) he cannot base the request on anything inherent to Israel themselves (compare verses 5-6 and 18), so Daniel must look for something in God Himself (compare verses 4, 9, 18, and 19).
    - (2) Furthermore, remember that Daniel had just read that God said that at the end of 70 years He’d bring Israel back to Jerusalem. **YES! DANIEL HAS SOMETHING ON WHICH TO BASE HIS APPEAL TO GOD; DANIEL CAN BASE HIS APPEAL IN GOD’S OWN CHARACTER AND GOD’S OWN WORDS!** (Thank God for this combination!)
  
3. Verses 16-19 finally get to Daniel’s request — “Please send us home to rebuild Jerusalem!”: 16 *O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. 17 So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. 18 O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. 19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.*

  - a) Note the intensity — I count some twelve explicit requests, rattled off staccato-like! (Though some of them are components of bigger statements; and of course, overall he is asking one thing — “Send us home!”)
  - b) About Daniel’s repetition of *Lord* (in 19): “the repetition of the word *Adonai*, and the short sentences, give a feeling of intensity to the prayer suitable to the circumstances” (Thomson). And you could feel the intensity as you read along!
  - c) Regarding this intensity, compare how the NASB (and NETBible) renders verse 21, *while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.*<sup>17</sup>

**To summarize and paraphrase Daniel’s request and his basis for making it (verses 4-19): “God, You said that at the end of 70 years You’d bring back Your people to rebuild Your city Jerusalem. You always do what You say. Furthermore if You don’t bring us back, Your name will suffer. Lord, it’s been 70 years. Please bring us back.”**

So ends Daniel’s prayer. What a prayer! But before we get to Gabriel’s answer...


D. Some observations and applications: (There are so many in this section. I’ll try to contain myself.)

1. Of all the “books” Daniel must have read (compare 1:5, et al.), the only two we hear about are God’s (Jeremiah and Moses). We know what Book really mattered to Daniel: This is the Book Daniel was willing to die for (compare chapter 6); because of this Book Daniel wearied himself in prayer. **What? About? Me?**
2. While we’re talking about The Book, do we scour it like Daniel did to see what it says about our time? Not for prophecy, but to see how to live godly, what to improve in our character, how to overcome temptation, how to avoid the future judgment, etc. **Unfortunately, I think I’d see “Needs improvement” next to my name.**
3. Sometimes I wish I had more words to give to my God in my prayer.
  - a) I’m no poet; my vernacular is that of ordinary folk. And there are times when I have grand thoughts but don’t have matching grand words.
  - b) Compare this lyric from a 1970s song: “If I had words to make a day for you, I’d sing you a morning golden and true. I would make this day last for all time, then fill the night deep in moonshine” (“If I Had Words,” Scott Fitzgerald, 1978). This lyric is a testimony to the beauty that can be crafted when words are given to a wordsmith. At the same time, the words betray some tension: As beautifully as the author wrote, as wonderful the picture was that he painted, he still feels a certain inadequacy (“If...”).
  - c) Sometimes when thinking about God and His work, glorious thoughts inside want to explode out. If only I could express them with glorious words! If I had words!
  - d) But, notice from Daniel’s prayer that a “simple” *great and awesome* are good enough for God (verse 4). If

These first two points are not about prayer per se; but my prayer is that God’s people take these two points seriously.

<sup>17</sup> Most other versions render this differently, something like “while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight...” (ESV). If you are interested in why, the NETBible has this informative note: “The Hebrew expression...is very difficult. The issue is whether the verb derives from...‘to fly’...or from...‘to be weary’... Many ancient versions and modern commentators take the first of these possibilities and understand the reference to be to the swift flight of the angel Gabriel in his coming to Daniel. The words more likely refer to the extreme weariness, not of the angel, but of Daniel. Cf. 7:28; 8:27; 10:8–9, 16–17.” As someone I know used to say, “Fifty cents one, half dozen the other.”

it's good enough for God then it's good enough for me! **I need to rest contently, knowing God can overcome my limited vocabulary (and imagination).**

- e) Notice, *compassionate* and *forgiving* (verse 9) are music to God's ears. It's as though He needs to tell me, "I don't need poetic, grand, lofty words. I need you to get who I am!" Exactly.
  - f) Romans 8:26 has direct bearing on this: *the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.*<sup>18</sup>
  - g) The not very grand point is: Don't worry about inadequate prayers. At least, not from an inadequate vocabulary. Our God is bigger than this.<sup>19</sup>
4. Repetition in prayer is allowed.
- a) Jesus said in Matthew 6:7, *when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.* But this is not an absolute prohibition.
  - b) Jesus Himself repeated Himself in prayer in the Garden.
  - c) Daniel repeats himself a lot and God still heard his prayer.
  - d) Purpose matters.
5. What happened, anyway? Daniel prayed... and then what?
- a) While we are considering this, take a look at the Cyrus Cylinder.
    - (1) Discovered in the ruins of Babylon in 1879, this little roll of baked clay is a Babylonian account of Cyrus' capture of Babylon, some of it written in the first person.
    - (2) The part we are interested in says this, "I returned to these sanctuaries on the other side of the Tigris, sanctuaries founded in ancient times, the images that had been in them there and I made their dwellings permanent. I also gathered all their people and returned them to their habitations" ("Cyrus Cylinder"). Sounds familiar!
  - b) Compare Daniel 9:20-23 with Ezra 1:1-4. **WOW! Prayer works!**
  - c) Two notes from all this:
    - (1) First, once again history is found to be trustworthy. I make a little joke in the wording. But the joke makes the point that the Bible is not "proven" by historical data; corroborated maybe, but not proven. Rather, God proves the Bible! But at the same time, because historical data says the same thing as the Bible, it ought to be touted!
    - (2) Second, I don't know how this works, but I know that this works: God can put thoughts into the minds of His creation. **So pray, Pray, PRAY!** (For example, 1 Timothy 2:1-5. And James 5:15-16.)<sup>20</sup>
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6. *The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much* (James 5:16). Daniel was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly....
- a) I've changed the name, and the point still stands. We could do this with a lot of people in the Bible. **The question is: Do I fit the bill? Could we substitute "Lee" and the statement still hold true?**
  - b) I read somewhere, "The men who move the world are men the world cannot move."
    - (1) Compare the Daniel of chapters 1 and 6 with the Daniel of chapter 9.
    - (2) Regardless of which event actually occurred first in chapters 6 and 9, what if Daniel had caved and prayed to King Darius?! **Don't! Ever! Cave!** Not for a moment. And God will be able to use you.
7. The effective prayers (plural) of righteous men (plural).... This point is about tag team praying.
- a) Compare what Solomon prayed when dedicating the temple, found in 1 Kings 8:46-53.
  - b) Daniel was doing exactly what Solomon had prayed about.

<sup>18</sup> The context in Romans 8:26-27 actually continues from back in verses 16, 17, 18. Paul's point is: The future glory is worth the present struggle! Paul will argue its worthiness at least three times in the next few verses: Consider "groans" in 19-22 (συστενάζω), 23-25 (στενάζω), and again in 26-27 (στεναγμός). (Paul has a fourth argument in 28-30, but it does not include this word.) So, I know I've lifted the principle out of its specific context (or have I?!), but our point stands. Or, as Jesus said in Matthew 6:8, *your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.*

<sup>19</sup> While considering this very point this morning, a Facebook friend, a man long ago immersed for forgiveness of his sins, posted this prayer, which I cannot help but share: "It being 2:13 am, I can't sleep. I am overwhelmed by the love of God. I am blessed beyond measure, and do not deserve any of it. This peace I have in Christ surpasses any fear, worry, or regret no matter how heavy they are. I have never experienced freedom like this. I have been a slave to this world for most of my life. To be set free from that is by far the greatest gift I have ever been given, or ever will be. Thank you, God, for the forgiveness that is only made possible through the sacrifice of your son. My sin put your only son to death on a cross, and for that I am so very sorry. Help me to live a life that is constantly aware of who was taken from you for a little while, so that not only myself, but all of mankind could have a chance, a chance that becomes a sure thing once we let go and give into you completely. I love you, Lord. This is my prayer and my psalm. May my heart be bursting with the same joy in the morning, and thereafter, as strongly as I feel it right now. Why post this on FB? It is all too much, that I could not keep it to myself, I just had to share it. May the Lord be with you and bless you who stumble across this post. No "copy & paste" guilt trips to be had here. I love you because Christ Jesus first loved me. Peace." What a prayer! (I'll keep it anonymous.)

<sup>20</sup> The question involves a discussion of God working *directly* and *indirectly*. I know God can directly put thoughts into people's minds, this is called "inspiration." But, did God work *directly* in Cyrus' mind, *directly* planting this idea into his thoughts? Again, I know God could. But—and of course I don't have the answer for sure—I suspect God worked *indirectly*: Often, when new regimes took over, they would enact certain policies to mark the certain change in governments. Furthermore, some changes were motivated by trying to win over the subjects, and sending people home would be a "winning" idea! Maybe this was all Cyrus was thinking. More could be said, but I will leave it at this. But again, God can do it!

- c) Note well Solomon and Daniel were separated by thousands of miles and hundreds of years, but both were God's people and intent on one purpose.
  - (1) I wonder who through the millennia have prayed for us?
  - (2) Who else are we praying for?

**8. Pray according to His word: Guaranteed results!**

- a) In 2013 I visited a lecture in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, where Dr. "Buddy" Payne presented evidences for the design of the universe, life, etc. To this day I remember Dr. Payne telling us, "You need to go home and get on your knees and thank God for 104.5 degrees." Apparently (I'm no scientist) this unique structure is the bond angle of the hydrogen and oxygen atoms in a water molecule, and it is extremely critical, accounting for many of water's peculiar traits, many of which allow life on the earth, and without this exact structure we'd all never have existed and a lot of other really depressing stuff.<sup>21</sup>
- b) And God is an engineer and mathematician.
  - (1) Math is **NEVER** wrong; math is **ALWAYS** right.
  - (2) And math is **ALWAYS CONSISTENT**; two plus two **ALWAYS** returns four.
  - (3) **So Is God!**
- c) Remember, Daniel knew this when he prayed to God: "God, You **ALWAYS** do according to Your word!"
- d) **And God still does this when prayer is according to His word: God WILL hear our prayer! Be sure to read 1 John 5:14-15.**
- e) So in addition to thanking God for 104.5°, here is some more prayer homework: Open your Bible, read until you find something that God said is His will, then pray about it. You will be heard! **It's that simple.**
- f) Note well: The answer may be "Not now," or "Not this way," or "I've got something better," or "This isn't what you need."
  - (1) Jesus did not get all that He wanted and prayed for in Gethsemane, but He was heard [Hebrews 5:7]... because He prayed *Yet not as I will, but as You will* [Matthew 26:39].
  - (2) In 2008 or 2009, at the lectures in Kamenice nad Lipou, Czech Republic, I heard Kenny Moorer tell the following: A man dropped off his car to have its body repaired. When he returned to pick it up he complained of scratches, dents, etc. The mechanic told him the repairs had been done to the other side. Kenny concluded, "Some people don't know their own problems as well as others do." No one knows what is needed as well as God knows! Trust God to answer right.)

**9. For prayer to be heard, first you have to make Him "My" God.**

- a) Compare what Daniel said in chapter 9 verse 4, *I prayed to the Lord my God: Relationship* is important.
- b) Galatians 3:26-29 talks about how to make God your own (or rather, how God makes us His own).
- c) 1 Corinthians 1:13 does, too.
- d) Romans 6 does, too.
- e) In all three passages (and many more), water immersion is involved in transferring ownership.<sup>22</sup>

- 10. As I said, I found plenty more points from this section; but, lest I put you to sleep, let me share this as the last one:

A grandfather was going by his little granddaughter's room one night when he saw her kneeling beside her bed, with head bowed and hands folded, repeating the alphabet. "What are you doing?" he asked her. She explained, "I'm saying my prayers, but I couldn't think of just what I wanted to say. So I'm just saying all the letters of the alphabet, and God can put them together however he thinks best."

I guess this is not a true story. **But to have such true faith!**

Now back to the text.

**IV. SOME NOTES ON VERSES 20-27 — GABRIEL'S ANSWER**

- A. We'll tackle verses 20-23, the first part of Gabriel's answer, all at one time: *Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision."*

<sup>21</sup> Look it up; it's all over the interweb. The church in Kingston, Canada, has a site where you can find video of Dr. Payne, specifically, speaking about it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NihyeZ3uaL4&feature=youtu.be>. You'll find him discussing this at about the 34 minute mark.

<sup>22</sup> I need to be careful not to misrepresent: God does hear the prayers of those who have not yet put on Christ in baptism. Compare Cornelius in Acts 10, verses 4 and 48. Jesus said God will answer those who ask, seek, and knock (Matthew 7:7-8). Paul says that, if we grope for God, He will allow us to find Him (Acts 17:27). Having said this, it is still accurate to say that ownership is transferred from satan to God at baptism, not before and not after. (Read Romans 6 and the others again.) So I guess this is more me making the most of an opportunity to discuss the plan of salvation. Maybe I should have worded my point differently. I am presumptuous that you will forgive me.



1. About *in my extreme weariness*: As was mentioned before (page 14, footnote 17), many versions render this something like, “while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me **in swift flight** about the time of the evening sacrifice” (NIV). Based on this rendering, someone said that if Gabriel were to catch us in prayer, he’d have to come swiftly. **Sadly, I am guilty.**
2. About *At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you*:
  - a) Keil asserts that this “command” is not a command at all and does not refer to Cyrus’ command or to God somehow “commanding” Cyrus to issue his command; rather, it is a “word” — namely, the word, or revelation, Gabriel brought in answer to Daniel (i.e., verses 24-27).
  - b) Many of our translations have a footnote indicating as much; compare the NASB’s, “Lit. *word went out.*”
  - c) The NIV and ESV actually render this as “word.”
  - d) The NET Bible is noteworthy here: “At the beginning of your requests a message went out, and I have come to convey it to you.” IF this translation is valid, it removes the ambiguity the many others have.
  - e) For what it is worth, the point is: While I have no doubt that Cyrus issued a command, this verse may not be implying that Cyrus issued his decree as soon as Daniel prayed. I think I just spent too much time on this.
3. About *for you are highly esteemed*: **O! That this could be said of me! Imagine having such faith!**

While we are here, Thomson (*Pulpit*) tells us “Gabriel” means “Hero of God.” So what we have here are two of God’s heroes who are two different types of created beings from two different “dimensions” but both fighting the same enemy being allowed to interact together for a moment in time. **I can’t wait to see the other side and be with ALL of God’s heroes!**

That’s about all I have to say on verses 20-23.

**Before we get into the nitty-gritty of verses 24-27, which is the second part of Gabriel’s answer, let me briefly remind us of the context and then state my understanding of what we will read.**

**First, the historical backdrop to Daniel is Jerusalem is destroyed (verses 1-14).**

**Second, the immediate context in Daniel 9 is Daniel is praying for Jerusalem to be rebuilt and Israel to be regathered as a nation in the Promised Land (verses 15-19).**

**Now then, I understand the primary message of verses 24-27 is, simply, God is going to bring Israel back and they will rebuild Jerusalem, BUT THEN, some time down the road, Jerusalem (and national Israel along with it) will again be utterly and completely and this time permanently destroyed — some people refer to all this as the end of the Mosaic commonwealth. That’s the short of it.<sup>23</sup>**

- B. Verse 24 (the second part of Gabriel’s answer begins): *Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*
  1. First, note this is about *your people* and *your holy city*, that is, national Israel and Jerusalem. This is the context. These are the statements. This is the focus. This is what this section is primarily about. No one disputes this.<sup>24</sup>
  2. About *Seventy weeks*:
    - a) First, in these verses, the Hebrew word behind “weeks” is actually “sevens.” While this word commonly denotes weeks (e.g., 10:2-3), it doesn’t always (e.g., Ezekiel 45:21).<sup>25</sup> And the NASB (and others) do take some license when they use the word “weeks,” and this could throw off the Bible student.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> This is to say, certainly there are *references*, or strong allusions, throughout this section to the Messianic Kingdom and its establishment, but the *focus* of the prophecy in Daniel 9 is, simply, on national Israel and its end. (And essentially no one disputes this: There is more to it, as we will see in Part Three and after, but in some ways the difference is not *what* but *when*. I’ll say this again from time to time.)

And note that the prophecy of verses 24-27 would be totally new information for Israel: When reading the prophets that preceded Daniel, and his contemporaries, you get the impression that, *upon* Israel’s return to Jerusalem from exile, the prophesied Kingdom would come *immediately* and Israel would receive the promises and have glory *forever*, etc; but Daniel learned in chapters 2, 7, and 8 that things would not happen so quickly, and now in chapter 9 Daniel learns even more about it — namely, Jerusalem and the nation would again be destroyed, and this time permanently. Quite a shocker.

<sup>24</sup> Including “Dispensational” Premillennialists. There is more to it, as we will see in Part Three and after, but in some ways the difference is not *what* but *when*.

<sup>25</sup> Kiel includes this in his discussion: “What period of time is here denoted...can be determined neither from the word itself and its form.” Also, this may be noteworthy, and everyone acknowledges it, and that is, the word “sevens” is here masculine instead of the *usual* feminine. Is God throwing us a hint here? If so, of course no one agrees about what the significance is; I myself don’t know for sure, but it *could* be God saying, “I’m using the word differently here (let the reader understand).”

<sup>26</sup> It is taking license, somewhat, not exactly, as it would be taking license if a translation used “years” instead of “time” in *times, time, and half a time* in Daniel 7:25; 12:7; and Revelation 12:14. And it could throw people off, like the NASB does when it translates 12,000 stadia as “1,500 miles,” and 144 cubits (πῆχυς) as “72 yards” (Revelation 21:16, 17): If God intended these to be *literal* distances, then maybe the NASB helped us; but if God intended these numbers to be *symbolic* (like in Revelation 7:4-8?), then the NASB does us a disservice by masking over it! “Dear Mr. Translator: Please just tell me what the *original* says, not what *you* think it means; and, let me interpret for myself.” Oh, “Dispensational” Premillennialist John Walvoord agrees: “The English word ‘weeks’ is misleading as the Hebrew is actually the plural word for seven, without specifying whether it is of days, months, or years” (*Daniel*, 219). Of course, Walvoord will say it refers to literal years. More about this in Part Three and after.

- b) I take the seventy sevens to be completely figurative (not chronological). Here is why:
- (1) The sevens “begin” at the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (verse 25), which Cyrus issued about 538-537 B.C.<sup>27</sup>
  - (2) The sevens “end” with both the Messiah being killed and Jerusalem being completely destroyed (verse 26), which happened between approximately the years 30 and 70 in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  - (3) This spans approximately 600 years. I’m no math major (though I know some who are), but 600 years is not 70 seconds, 70 minutes, 70 hours, 70 days, 70 weeks, 70 months, 70 years, 70 decades, 70 centuries, 70 millennia, 70 ly, 70 au, or 70 centigrade, fahrenheit, or kelvin. It is literally not 70 of *anything literal*.
  - (4) Furthermore, that God uses numbers symbolically is self-evident from even a cursory read of the Bible. Especially 7 (at least as early as Genesis 4:15). And 70. And even 70 and 7 together (compare Matthew 18:22<sup>28</sup>).
  - (5) Furthermore, students of the Bible completely understand that God uses the number 7 (and additions and multiplications and accompanying 10 and...) to indicate completeness. Daniel himself does this four times in chapter 4, verses 16-32.<sup>29</sup>
  - (6) Finally, the idea of “completeness” is completely in this complete passage. It explodes out of the context. It IS the context. Here are some evidences (there are more):
    - (a) A time will be completed: Verses 25-26. (Compare Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 9:26.)
    - (b) The city Jerusalem will be completely destroyed: Verses 26-27.
    - (c) Spiritual things will be completed:
      - i) *To finish the transgression* (v. 24).
      - ii) *To make an end of sin* (v. 24).
      - iii) *To seal up vision and prophecy* (v. 24).
    - (d) The law of Moses will be completed: *A stop to sacrifice and grain offering* (v. 27).
    - (e) Listen to this one statement alone: *One who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate* (v. 27).
  - (7) I am pretty much completely convinced the seventy sevens here are completely figurative: It is as though God is saying, “When what is about to begin is finished, My 1500-year-old, headache-causing work with Israel will be **C! O! M! P! L! E! T! E!**” (Note well that this is the message even if the numbers do represent some literal periods of time.)<sup>30</sup>

(Hey, look. I completed that in seven points.)

- c) Keil agrees that these sevens are figurative, but unlike the “Dispensationalist” and in a different way than I understand them to be figurative; namely he believes they do stand for actual periods, “the reckoning of the actual duration named is withdrawn beyond the reach of our human research” (page 400). (I believe the events referred to, the “seventy sevens,” happen *in* certain time periods, of course; Keil believes “seventy sevens” refers to the time periods *themselves*, but we cannot know what these exact time periods are.)
- d) Of course, “Dispensational” Premillennialists Walvoord, Ryrie, Scofield, et al. believe the referent of all this is very specific, that is, 490 literal years: 70 weeks x 7 days-that-equal-years = 490 years. (More about this in Part Three.)

We finally get to the “Dispensational” Premillennialists: We meet them here, and will interact with them more and more along the way, but save most of it for parts Three through Seven. →

### 3. About to finish the transgression:

No one disputes that the following six purposes of God are completed “within” the seventy sevens. The question is: When are the seventy sevens complete?

I will mention here that I believe each and every one of these occurred by or in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. And I will not explain much; rather, I will simply quote New Testament passages that I believe refer to the same things or even are the fulfillment of each point here — I think the connection, and their relevance, will be self-evident.

<sup>27</sup> For the year of the decree, see the discussion on verse one (page five, II, A, 1). For the decree itself, compare Ezra 1:1-4. And though Ezra’s account does not explicitly include Cyrus explicitly ordering Israel to rebuild the city Jerusalem (Ezra’s account mentions the temple only), and while many make a big deal about this (we’ll talk about this when we get to discussing “Dispensational” Premillennialism), compare Isaiah 44:28, where God Himself had prophesied, *It is I who says of Cyrus, “He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire.” And he declares of Jerusalem, “She will be built,” And of the temple, “Your foundation will be laid.”* (See also 45:13.) I’m pretty content that God said what He meant and meant what He said and got it right, too; and while Ezra did not include it in his record, Cyrus included it in his decree. Am I being naive?

<sup>28</sup> Whether this is 70x7 or 77, we still have both 70 and 7 together at least once, if not twice:

- “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven” (NASB).
- “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times” (ESV).

<sup>29</sup> Note well that “literalists” also acknowledge these things. In fact, they even believe “seven” is used symbolically... of literal years. So, really, the question is not whether this number is symbolic here; rather, the question is: *What exactly* does this number symbolize here? The “literalist” asserts one thing, the rest assert something else. More about this in Part Three and after.

<sup>30</sup> I’ll include this here. And it may not be worth very much, but R. C. Sproul has an interesting note on verses 24-27 (*Reformation Study Bible*, Ligonier Ministries, 2005): “*Jubilees*, a Jewish book from the period between the Testaments, also structures the whole of history into periods of 490 years.” Others refer to this also. (I think they are referring especially to something said in Jubilee 50.)

Here  
 “Dispensational”  
 Premillennialists  
 begin looking for  
 things that we are  
 not supposed to look  
 for and seeing things  
 that are not there. →  
 And from this and  
 some other things  
 they will assert  
 “Gap!” More about  
 this in Part Three.

- a) If *to finish the transgression* means to let sin run its course and then stop it, or “restrain” it (Thomson), like what happened in the land of Canaan in Abraham’s day (compare Genesis 15:16), then compare:
- (1) Matthew 23:32: *Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers.* Note Jesus says this to Israelites. Further note He says this to them about killing God’s messengers—including Jesus Himself. Finally, Jesus ends with *Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation* (verse 36). Sounds like Israel’s transgression was finishing—God wasn’t going to put up with it anymore. This is the context of Daniel 9:24-27; these fit together like the pieces of a puzzle.
  - (2) 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16: *The Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out. They are not pleasing to God, but hostile to all men, hindering us from speaking to the Gentiles so that they may be saved; with the result that they always fill up the measure of their sins. But wrath has come upon them to the utmost.*
  - (3) Obviously, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, national Israel fit this description. Furthermore, after God was done with Israel as a nation, they could not longer sin against Him as a nation.
- b) If this is some reference to forgiveness of sin (Keil argues it cannot be), consider Hebrews 8:12 (quoting from Jeremiah 31:34): *I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.*
- c) Walvoord says in his commentary on Daniel, “The most obvious meaning is that Israel’s course of apostasy and sin and wandering over the face of the earth will be brought to completion within the seventy sevens.” Walvoord is a Premillennialist (more from him in Part Three), and he means Israel will stop sinning, become righteous, and be returned to their land, etc. I don’t believe all this, but I do believe Israel as a nation will finish its course of apostasy! I’d even say Walvoord is real close! Ryrie, another “Dispensationalist,” makes a comment similar to Walvoord’s.
4. *About to make an end of sin:*
- a) Romans 5:6-10: *For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*
  - b) Hebrews 2:17: *He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*
  - c) Hebrews 9:26, 28: *now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And, So Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.*
  - d) Compare also Hebrews 10:12; 1 John 2:1; 3:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:17ff.
  - e) Note well that, after Jesus completed His work, sin no longer held its power over man. This is evident from Hebrews 2:14-17: *since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.* Romans 6 makes the same point.<sup>31</sup>
  - f) MacArthur says, “to judge it with finality.”
  - g) Keil has, “they are all together removed out of the sight of God.”
  - h) Thomson has, “to cause transgression to cease.” And, while speaking of both statements together, Thomson writes, “the spirit of lawlessness would be restrained and the past iniquities and their guilt wiped away.” (Note: This seems to have a “national Israel will be forgiven” taint to it, and it probably does; but don’t throw the baby out with the bathwater by overlooking the theme of forgiveness in the statement, which would apply to any individual Israelite who accepted it; compare Romans 9-11.)
  - i) Walvoord has, “may be taken either in the sense of taking away sins or bringing sin to final judgment.” He has more to say that is a little off, but again, he’s close. Real close. And we’re beginning to see a trend.<sup>32</sup>
5. *About to make atonement for iniquity:*
- a) See the verses under *to make an end of sin*, above.
  - b) Thomson says, “The verb used is the technical word, ‘the offering of an atoning sacrifice.’”
  - c) Walvoord has, “a rather clear picture of the cross of Christ.”
6. *About to bring in everlasting righteousness:*
- a) Psalm 119:142 says *Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness.* So in one way God’s

<sup>31</sup> Paul quotes Hosea 13:14 in 1 Corinthians 15:55: *O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?* Then, Paul says in the next verse, *The sting of death is sin.* I know Paul applies this to the return of Christ and those events, but this work was completed on, or made possible at, the cross. You could say sin was *potentially* conquered at His first coming and will be *actually* conquered at His second coming, but I myself think this is too weak: Sin was *actually* conquered at His first coming (this is all over the New Testament), and the effects of this *began* to be manifest at that time, and sin will be *finally* conquered at His second coming; the effects of that work are slowly unraveling, and the culmination has yet to occur. So much for my uninspiring commentary on 1 Corinthians 15:55-56.

<sup>32</sup> The trend is, they usually get it... and then they add. See more about this in Part Seven, I, D; be sure to check the footnote.

righteousness has always been. Therefore, the righteousness referred to here in Daniel 9:24 must refer to some *special* and *specific* manifestation of it. (It is not uncommon for God to do this — speak of something coming that already is.)

- b) Romans 3:21-22: *But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe.*
  - c) 1 Corinthians 1:30: *by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.*
  - d) 2 Corinthians 5:21: *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
  - e) Hebrews 7:2 — written about Melchizedek: *by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace.* If Melchizedek, “king of righteousness,” was a type of Jesus, then how much more is Jesus, the fulfillment of the type, a **King Of Righteousness!**
  - f) 1 John 2:1-2: *My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.*
  - g) 1 John 2:29: *If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him.*
  - h) Ryrie has, “In the millennial kingdom of Messiah.” (See how close he is — just remove one word!)
  - i) Walvoord has, “There is a sense in which this also is accomplished by Christ in His first coming in that he provided a righteous ground for God’s justification of the sinner.” Exactly! But of course, Walvoord also wants a visible Kingdom in which righteousness is visible and throughout. So close. More about this in Part Three.
7. *About to seal up vision and prophecy:*
- a) If this means to fulfill all Old Testament prophecy:
    - (1) Luke 24:44: *These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.*
    - (2) Hardly any dispute that Revelation is about the fulfillment of some specific prophecies in Daniel.
  - b) If this includes delivering some remaining truths, John 16:13: *when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.* Of course, compare this with Acts 2:1-4; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; and the rest.
  - c) It may mean something like hardening unbelievers so they cannot see the truth:
    - (1) The idea is in Revelation 10:4: *Seal up the things which the seven peals of thunder have spoken and do not write them.*
    - (2) This is already said of Israel! Consider Isaiah 29:10-11: *the Lord has poured over you a spirit of deep sleep, He has shut your eyes, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, the seers. The entire vision will be to you like the words of a sealed book, which when they give it to the one who is literate, saying, “Please read this,” he will say, “I cannot, for it is sealed.”*
      - (a) Paul applies this to national Israel in Romans 11:8.
      - (b) In fact, this occurring in Israel is what led to the fulfillment of God’s plan! Compare Acts 13:27 and 1 Corinthians 2:8.
  - d) Walvoord has, “best understood to mean the termination of unusual direct revelation by means of vision and oral prophecy.” Again, exactly! Of course, Walvoord will say this has not happened yet but will happen in the Millennial Kingdom. More about all this later. For now, again, remember it is not so much a question of *what* but of *when*.
  - e) MacArthur has, “no more revelation is needed and God will bring these anticipations to completion by their fulfillment.”
8. *About to anoint the most holy place:*
- a) “Place” is added; there is no word “place” in the original. Thomson says this word is “never applied to the holy of holies.” But if it is the most holy *place*—
    - (1) Consider Hebrews 9:11-12: *when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.*
    - (2) Or, it could apply to the Church: 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 2:20-22.
  - b) If it is a most holy *one*, or *person*, Jesus began His “public ministry” by referring to Himself being anointed; compare Luke 4:18-19, 21: *The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. And, Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”* (of course, this is a quote from Isaiah 61:1-2).
  - c) Walvoord, after stating some options others have asserted—including Zerubbabel’s temple, and the rededication of the altar after Antiochus desecrated it, and Jerusalem the city, and Christ Himself, and the holy of holies in the new Jerusalem, and the holy of holies in the Millennial Kingdom— says, “There is really no ground for dogmatism here as there is a possibility that any of these views might be correct.” Again, he may be close (“Christ Himself”).

Well that was a mouthful!

C. Verse 25: *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

1. About *the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*:
  - a) Again, I take this to be what is most obvious — the decree Cyrus made about 538-537 B.C. See the early part of the discussion on verse 24, including the footnotes.
  - b) Keil argues pages and pages against this referring to any other decree.
  - c) Others offer the following dates (all B.C.): 605, 598, 539, 536, 519, 483, 462, 457, 454, 445, 423.<sup>33</sup>
    - (1) Walvoord dedicates five pages to all this. We'll see a little more about it in Part Three and after.
    - (2) But about their arguments *for* each date and *against* Cyrus' decree: I do try to contain my bias, but each time, as I read along, it seems to me that they see only what they want to see. (I could be wrong about them. At the same time, I hope I myself am not the same way in something, no matter what it is!)
2. About *Messiah the Prince*: I think this is a no-brainer and refers to Jesus Christ.
  - a) Keil has some interesting technical remarks then translates it, "*an anointed one, who at the same time is a prince*" (remember, all italics are in the original), and he notes, "we must understand a person who first and specially is a priest, and in addition is a prince of the people, a king."
  - b) We immediately think of Zechariah 6:11-13. And the author of Hebrews tells us Jesus is like Melchizedek — the priest-king (compare Hebrews 7:1, 11-15, etc.).
  - c) Most everyone agrees.
3. About *it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress*: Compare the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. (About *with plaza and moat*: I think this is just a way of saying "Inside and out," or, "Completely.")
4. About *seven weeks and sixty-two weeks*: Sixty-nine sevens in total. Why did God separate out two sets of sevens?
  - a) I have no idea. God often does things I don't understand. (Why didn't God have Daniel state Cyrus' name in chapter 5? Why didn't God have Ezra explicitly record "and the word went forth from Cyrus to rebuild the city Jerusalem"? Why did God...?)
  - b) In this case it might be to emphasize: First, the city will (**WILL!!!**) be rebuilt, thus further answering Daniel's prayer and assuaging his grave concern; and second, then there will be a long period (the years it takes for those kingdoms to come and go in chapters 2 and 7) before the rest unfolds.
  - c) Or it could be a way of ramping up to the last seven, similar to *There are six things...even seven* (Proverbs 6:16; compare Job 5:19, et al.): God may be saying, "There are seventy sevens in total. Here are some sevens. Here are some more sevens. But now take a real close look at this last seven!" I think this fits well.
  - d) If or when you have a better explanation, please let me know it!
  - e) Most "Dispensational" Premillennialists apply the first seven sevens to the time when Israel rebuilds Jerusalem (49 years), and the sixty-two sevens (434 years) to the period between then and when the Messiah is cut off. To be clear, most "Dispensationalists" have the Messiah cut off *after* sixty-nine sevens. Some more about this in Part Three.
  - f) Keil has the Messiah coming after the first seven sevens but before the sixty-two sevens: "The words [until Messiah, lmt] show the termination of the seven weeks," and "the first half of verse 25 states that the first seven of the seventy weeks begin with the edict (of Cyrus)...and extend from that time until the appearance of the anointed one who at the same time is prince, *i.e.* till Christ." But his argument, from what I can tell, is not technical or grammatical, but essentially (I paraphrase), "God indicated a break — seven and sixty-two. God did it for a reason. This must be the reason." To actually quote Keil: "If we attribute the expression 'and sixty-two weeks' to the first half of the verse, then the division of the sixty-nine weeks into seven weeks and sixty-two weeks is unaccountable." He's the only one I've read who takes this position.

I don't think it is unfair to say that "Dispensationalists" make a big deal here; and they end up pushing the final seven out to verse 27; furthermore, they insert a "gap." (See more about the gap on page 30.)

In fact, if I have a handle on hermeneutics and understand the prophecy correctly, this is where Premillennialists really start to wander off.

We'll talk about this in some detail in Part Three and following.

D. Verse 26: *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

Here it gets thick again, but I don't think it is terribly difficult.

1. About *after the sixty-two weeks*: Combining it with the first seven sevens, this is "after" a total of sixty-nine sevens, thus into and in the seventieth seven.
2. About *the Messiah will be cut off*: Does this *not* refer to the death of Jesus???
  - a) I'm not sure Thomson settles on anything: Beginning with "the word has no article, and, therefore...ought to be rendered 'an anointed one,'" and then going on and on about all the different historical figures it could have referred to, he finally ends this discussion with "There seems a necessity to maintain that it was some one who was to be anointed prince of the Jewish people, who should thus be cut off"; but, then, on another point in the same verse he says, "The main subject of the verse is the Messiah who shall be cut off" — the capital "M" (also found in some other notes in this verse) being, from what I can tell, the only decisive statement in the verse.

<sup>33</sup> These from *The Amazing Prophecy Second Coming Bible*.

- b) Keil argues it does not refer to Jesus, despite the word certainly allowing for it; he argues this because of the phrase, *will have nothing* — “words which are very differently interpreted.” But I also disagree with him about the referent of these words. See next for both my and Keil’s thoughts.
- c) Walvoord and the others apply this to Jesus.
3. About *have nothing*; this one is interesting:
- a) The King James Version has, “but not for himself.” I suppose this could refer to Jesus laying down His life for others. It fits.
- b) The Septuagint (aka. LXX; Brenton’s translation) has, “and there is no judgment in him.”<sup>34</sup> This also fits.
- c) In chapter 11:45, something very, very close to this is written of a person who will (unsuccessfully) attack God’s people: *He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.*
- (1) In 11:45, one word is added: “Help.” Otherwise, it is the same as 9:26.
- (2) No matter who exactly this antagonist is in 11:45,<sup>35</sup> the point is: When he ends, and he will eventually end, no one will be there who is able to help him. No one will help him. This idea fits right in with what happened to Jesus when He was crucified: *You will all fall away, because it is written, “I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered”* (Mark 14:27, et al.), which itself is a quote from Zechariah 13:7. In other words, this idea is prophesied elsewhere in the Old Testament; it could very easily also be the point here in Daniel 9:26. (How many times in Isaiah do we read something like, *And from the peoples there was no man with me* [63:3].)
- d) Keil goes a lot, lot further and says of both *will be cut off* and *have nothing*, “We are not by this to think merely of dominion, people, sanctuary, but generally of the place which He as *Maschiach* has had, or should have, among His people and in the sanctuary, but, by His being ‘cut off,’ is lost...the annihilation of His place as *Maschiach* among His people and His kingdom.... He has lost His place and function as *Maschiach*.” In other words, Keil thinks this cutting off is the Messiah, after having already been Messiah(1), being removed from being Messiah (which happens after the 69<sup>th</sup> seven, yet in the future). He says more along these lines in his closing comments.
- e) I believe Walvoord goes way off track here: “There is nothing for him...nothing that rightly belonged to Him as Messiah the Prince was given to Him at that time. He had not come into His full reward nor the exercise of His regal authority.” In the same way, Scofield has, “will have none of His regal rights” and “nothing of the *regal* glory which was rightly His.”
4. About *the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined*:
- a) I think all this refers to the destruction of Jerusalem by General Titus in A.D. 70.
- b) Ryrie does, too: “the crucifixion of *Messiah* and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 by the Romans.”
- c) Scofield says something similar: “It is generally agreed that these two events were fulfilled in the death of Christ (A.D. 29) and the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome in A.D. 70.”
- d) Walvoord has, “obviously the Roman people.” Right on! (But then Walvoord says, “‘the prince that shall come’ who is related to the Roman people...Roman in character...fulfilled at the second coming of Christ.” He gets it... then adds. Watch for this pattern!)
- e) In fact, apparently some (most?) Jews think the same thing: Thomson has this interesting note, “If the verse stood by itself, there would seem little possible difficulty in regard to accepting the old Jewish interpretation, which made ‘the prince’ Titus...”; Walvoord says this, “orthodox Jewry...concludes that the period ends with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70” (218; see also 232).
- E. Verse 27: *And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.*

Here is where “Dispensational” Premillennialists begin to get their gap. (They claim that Jesus did not receive a visible kingdom then, and not since then either, so we’re in a gap until He receives a visible kingdom. More about this in Part Three.) →

One. Final. Push. Hang in there.

Let me reiterate that this section is about Daniel’s people Israel and Israel’s holy city (v. 24); that is, this section is about national Israel and Jerusalem.

Furthermore, it is about the destruction of Jerusalem.

Furthermore, we know Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman general Titus in A.D. 70.

Furthermore, we know this visibly brought about the end of the nation of Israel, an end which had already happened actually when Israel rejected God and His Son by killing Jesus Christ on the cross. (And at which time God chose for Himself a new people — Christians, His spiritual nation, 1 Peter 2:9, etc.)

So, whatever we conclude about what follows, if it does not fit in with what’s gone before, we’d better have Very! Good! Reason! to assert it.

<sup>34</sup> LXX: χρίσμα καὶ οὐκ ἔσται. Other English translations of the LXX have “In him was no sin,” and “he did no sin,” and “he knew no sin.”

<sup>35</sup> I actually think it is Rome; namely, leading up to and including the time Titus attacks Jerusalem. But I wasn’t asked to speak on this section. And I am excited to hear what Joe Hamm says about all this!

Here is where “Dispensational” Premillennialists start talking about the rapture and the future Antichrist, saying it is he who will make the covenant with national Israel, which leads up to the tribulation, which itself is followed by Christ’s second coming and the Millennial Kingdom. Again, we’ll come to this in Part Three and after.

Premillennialists apply this to some agreement between the future “Roman” prince and the nation of Israel. More about this in Part Three.

With all that in mind, I still may not get every one of these right!

1. About *he*:
  - a) Many argue that, because the closest noun to *he* (in verse 27) is *prince* (in verse 26), *prince* must be the antecedent: *he* must refer to that prince and not the *Messiah* (who is also in 26).
  - b) I can only say this— borrowing from Thomson, it may, however, without much grammatical strain, refer to the Messiah.<sup>36</sup> In regard to prophecy, especially apocalyptic prophecy, grammar cannot be regarded as affording a final canon for interpretation. And the primary Subject in this entire passage is, as no one disputes, the Messiah; so it is not a stretch to apply *He* to Him, which is what thousands have done for thousands of years, and I do, too.<sup>37</sup>
2. About *will make a firm covenant*:
  - a) This could refer to the New Covenant: Compare Matthew 26:28 and Hebrews 8 (and so many more).
  - b) But there is debate about how this should be rendered — compare “he shall confirm the covenant” (KJV; and many other versions also render it this way), so it could refer to Jesus fulfilling an already existing covenant:
    - (1) It may refer to God’s covenant with Abraham: *In you all the families of the earth will be blessed* (Genesis 12:3; compare with Acts 3:25, *the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed’*). Obviously this fits.
    - (2) Or it may refer to God’s covenant with David: *I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, I will establish your seed forever and build up your throne to all generations* (Psalm 89:3-4). This also fits.
3. About *for one week*: “For” is added; there is no word “for” in the original. In other words, “He made a covenant one seven.”
  - a) Right. In the final seven —the seven in which Messiah accomplishes all He had to accomplish, the seven in which the Messiah is cut off— the Messiah makes (or confirms) a covenant. Any of this sound familiar? Right. If I read my New Testament and then read this, it might seem obvious to me.<sup>38</sup>
  - b) So why bring up “seven” again? I don’t know, but maybe it’s a way to emphasize the events of this seven: Maybe God is saying, “By now you understand this seven is obviously one very important seven. I am going to emphasize it a little again by calling it out again.” (It is a pretty major seven! In fact, this is THE seven of all sevens! Dr. Payne told us to thank God for 104.5°; I’m going to thank God for this seven!)
4. About *but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering*:
  - a) IF time is not necessarily the real point of all these sevens, IF time is not the actual referent of all these sevens (and I don’t think it is), then “in the middle of the seven” is not necessarily referring to time; rather, it is just a device — again, maybe to emphasize, or to call attention: Maybe God is saying, “In the midst of all these very important events in this very important seven, STOP! LOOK AT THIS! THIS HAS DIRECT BEARING ON JERUSALEM AND NATIONAL ISRAEL!” I don’t know. But it fits.
  - b) *Sacrifice and grain offering* stand for the whole of the temple service (synecdoche: part for whole) and the law of Moses with it (Hebrews 7:11ff).
  - c) If *he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering* refers to the very visible events of A.D. 70, well there you go.
  - d) But Jesus had officially and actually put an end to them 40 years before. And I think *he will put a stop to*

<sup>36</sup> Thomson’s note is in verse 26 and is about who or what “its” (NASB) refers to. Here is his full statement: “It is difficult to decide the reference of ‘thereof’ here [the NASB renders this *its*, lml]. The reference grammatically seems to be restricted to ‘the people,’ as that is the nominative of the preceding verb. It may, however, without much grammatical strain, refer to the prince. In regard to prophecy, especially apocalyptic prophecy, grammar cannot be regarded as affording a final canon for interpretation. The main subject of the verse is the Messiah who shall be cut off. There might, therefore, be a reference to him.” Again, Thomson says this in verse 26 and about *its*. And note well that Thomson twice argues for it not to apply to the closest antecedent. And I use it in verse 27 because I am making the very same point from the very same principle. I hope this is relatively clear.

<sup>37</sup> About overlooking the closest noun not being too much of a strain: Young includes in the beginning of his *Analytical Concordance to the Holy Bible*, under “Hints and Helps to Bible Interpretation,” “The relative pronoun frequently refers to a more *remote* antecedent.” (His first example is from the Old Testament: Psalm 99:8.) Wallace writes in his *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, “What might be the nearest antecedent contextually might not be the nearest antecedent in the author’s mind, etc” (Wallace, 326). While preparing this paper I was also studying 1 Thessalonians 2:13, and I happened upon this comment: “The pronoun may refer to God...or better to the Word of God, as the principal subject of the sentence” (Gloag, *The Pulpit Commentary*; referring to *the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe*). This is what I am saying about Daniel 9 — the Messiah is the primary subject of this prophecy. Finally, consider how many approach *who* or *how many* received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 1:26-2:4ff: The nearest antecedent to “they” in Acts 2:1 is “apostles” in the verse before it (1:26); but how many people do you know jump right over that going to the 120 in 1:15-26a?

• Note well, many of the folks who do this are the Premillennialists themselves! For example, John MacArthur (more about him in Part Three) says in his comment on Acts 2:4, “*all*. The apostles and the 120.” So far as I could tell, MacArthur said this without any strain. (His comment on “he” in Daniel 9:27 is, “‘He’ is the last-mentioned prince [v. 26].”) Scofield writes, “On the day of Pentecost the Spirit came upon the whole body of believers (Ac. 2:1-4)” (page 1431). So far as I could tell, Scofield said this without any strain.

• The point is not that the rule is never to be considered; rather, the point is: Even they understand a rule of grammar is more of a... guideline; and, context must be considered. And understanding the *He* in *He will make a firm covenant with them* can easily refer to the Messiah — the Main Subject in this section.

• In fact, in my admittedly limited experience, it’s only because of a certain presupposition that people choose to reject this. Note well, Walvoord’s argument (in verse 26; against “he” referring to the Messiah) is not grammatical; rather, it has to do with him demanding a literal seven years— “Christ does not satisfy the description of verse 27 because there is not seven-year period related to Christ which provides fulfillment for the entire passage” (page 234). Furthermore, Walvoord argues for a future prince because, “the normal antecedent of *he* is *the prince that shall come...*” (ibid.). Notice that Walvoord said “normal,” which allows for some abnormalities.

<sup>38</sup> But a “Dispensational” Premillennialist does not read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament! He does not. They’ll tell us this in Part Five, VIII.

*sacrifice and grain offering* refers to Christ's work on the cross: Compare Colossians 2, and the book of Hebrews, and more. Yes, Israelites still performed them for another 40 years, but they no longer had meaning to God.

- e) Or, maybe the point is: When Jesus dies, all that those sacrifices pointed to will be fulfilled, thus the sacrifices themselves will no longer be necessary; compare Matthew 5:17; Hebrews 10:4-10.
5. About *on the wing of abominations*; this is interesting:
    - a) Some claim Jesus referred to this text in Matthew 24:15 (e.g., MacArthur). But how can they say it with such certainty (certitude!)? He doesn't tell us. Whether Jesus quoted 9:27 and not 11:31 or 12:11, I don't think we'll ever know. Maybe He meant all three somehow. I just don't know.
    - b) The smart people tell us the translation is tricky in this section (e.g., Duguid and Wegner, *The ESV Study Bible*), and some take this to refer to the height of sin, as in God is saying, "When Israel's sin gets SO bad..." and that's what caused the desolator to come. This is true to what happened, whether or not this is what is meant here.
    - c) Others suggest it refers to the Roman symbol of an eagle. Maybe.
  6. About *will come one who makes desolate*: I take this to refer again to General Titus and his handiwork.

These last three statements together (and the whole passage, really) seem to me to be something like God is saying, "Messiah will be killed. This will officially bring an end to the Levitical priesthood and the Law of Moses. Oh, and you killing Him will bring about My wrath on the city and the nation."
  7. About *desolate*: We've come full circle from where we began in verse 2. It is the theme of this chapter—the desolation of Jerusalem (verses 2, 17, 18, 26, 27<sup>39</sup>), past, present, and future. And it's going to be really, really bad. It will be final and irreversible, in fact.
  8. About *decreed*: This is stated several times in the section. The point is: When it happens, it's not by accident! (Again, apparently the Jews understood this, too; compare IV, D, 4, e on page 22.)

**One last summary and recap about the prophecy in verses 24-27: This prophecy is about the destruction of national Israel and the city Jerusalem, including the Messiah being cut off (and some more of His work), all of which occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.**

I would be remiss if I did not mention I believe this prophecy ties in with what Jesus prophesied about Jerusalem and the nation in Matthew 21:43; 23:37-24:34; Mark 13:1-31; Luke 13:34-35; 17:20-37; 19:41-44; 21:5-33; 23:28-31; and perhaps some other statements sprinkled throughout the New Testament (e.g., Romans 9-11). (Do Matthew 16:28 and its parallel passages contain some reference to it? Does Acts 2:17-21 contain some reference to it? How about 1 Thessalonians 2:16? I do not think Revelation is about the destruction of Jerusalem [I'll make one or two comments about this in Part Two].)

And, while God rejected national Israel (because the nation rejected Him), any individual Israelite may receive His promises at any time — all he has to do is repent. See Isaiah 59 and Romans 11.

F. Before we finish, allow me to make four short observations and applications from verses 20-27:

1. **God, help me to recognize answered prayer!** Not every prayer is answered so obviously as Daniel's was. But may I trust that God answers my prayers. And may I develop some ability to perceive when and how God answers my prayers. And may I be content with His answers... even if it includes physical pain and or excessive sorrow in my family.
2. **Giving heed to the message and gaining understanding (verse 23) always go together.** Gaining understanding without first giving heed is impossible. Hebrews 5:11-14 teaches us much the same thing.
3. **Some people just will not change.** Israel knew for some 560 years what was going to happen to them because they would not repent. And still they did not repent. I'm afraid we all know people like this. Am I one of them?
4. **Just because God "chooses" someone does not mean He will not let them reject Him to their own damnation.**
  - a) God "chose" Israel,<sup>40</sup> but then, when they rejected Him, He destroyed them.
  - b) This has application to the certain false doctrine, Perseverance of the Saints (TULIP).
  - c) And there is a warning in this for me! And for you.

I began making observations from Daniel 9 by noting that we CAN trust the Bible. I will end the observations by noting that we had BETTER trust the Bible. Thus completes our simple exposition of Daniel 9.

<sup>39</sup> These *words* are not the same in the original, but the *point* is. (In verses 18-27 it is one word; the word in verse 17 is related; the word in verse 2 is unrelated.)

<sup>40</sup> For example, the Psalmist writes *O seed of Abraham, His servant, O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones!* (105:6) The LXX has ἐκλεκτός, one of the same nouns that is applied to Christians all over the New Testament (e.g., Romans 8:33; Colossians 3:12; 2 Timothy 2:10).



## PART TWO: A VERY SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF HOW DANIEL 9 RELATES TO CHAPTERS 2 AND 7

### I. CHAPTER 2 —A STARTING POINT— CONTAINS A PROPHECY ABOUT THE RISE AND FALL OF FOUR ANCIENT KINGDOMS AND THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

- A. About the focus of these two prophecies.
1. Daniel 2 is about (focuses on) the rise and fall of four Gentile kingdoms and the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom, all of which culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  2. Daniel 9 includes *references* to the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom but is really *about* (is focused on) the destruction of the kingdom of ethnic Israel, all of which culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  3. In 2:35 and 44, the picture makes a transition from four kingdoms ruled by Gentiles on earth to one Kingdom ruled by Jesus from heaven — the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom being the *climax* of this prophecy, all of which culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  4. In 9:24-27, while much of the picture *refers* to the establishing of the Messianic Kingdom,<sup>41</sup> the prophecy in its entirety is *about* the end of the ethnic, national kingdom of Israel on earth — this is the *theme*, the *point*, the *focus*, and the *climax* of this prophecy, all of which culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
- B. Chapter 9 verses 24-27 fit into chapter 2 in verses 34-35,<sup>42</sup> *a stone...struck the statue...crushed them...became a great mountain and filled all the earth*.
1. Namely, *the Messiah will be cut off* (9:26) occurs right then.
  2. Also occurring at that time, *on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction...is poured out...* (9:27). (Actually, understanding that this refers to Titus destroying Jerusalem and the effect all that had on Israel, maybe we could say this happened *after* the stone struck the statue, and *while* the mountain was filling all the earth.)
- C. Because chapter 2 repeats with an explanation, chapter 9 verse 26 also fits into 2:44, specifically, *In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom....* Again, *the Messiah will be cut off* occurs right then.

### II. CHAPTER 7 —A STEPPING POINT (BUILDING ON CHAPTER 2 AND PROVIDING MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FOURTH KINGDOM)— CONTAINS A PROPHECY ABOUT THE END OF THE SAME FOUR ANCIENT KINGDOMS, THE BEGINNING OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM, A PERSECUTION OF GOD’S SAINTS, AND GOD JUDGING THE PERSECUTOR

- A. First, about the focus of Daniel 7.
1. In Daniel 7, Daniel prophesies generally again about the end of those four Gentile kingdoms (as does chapter 2); compare verses 4-14, 17-18, 19-22, and 23-27. All of which culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  2. And Daniel 7 includes the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (as does chapter 2); compare verses 13-14.<sup>43</sup> All of which culminated in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.
  3. But then the focus turns to...
    - a) A specific part of the last kingdom (the 11<sup>th</sup> king/horn in verses 8, 20-21, 24);
    - b) AND this specific part’s treatment of the saints (the persecution is explicitly stated in verse 25 and, thus, implied in 8, 11, and 20);
    - c) AND this specific part’s judgment (in verses 9-11, 13-14, 17-18, 21-22, 24-27).

<sup>41</sup> It is everywhere in verse 24, and also in 25.

<sup>42</sup> Actually, the *whole* of the 70 sevens of Daniel 9:24-27 fits into chapter 2 beginning in verse 32 (namely, in *breast and arms of silver*), because that is the “beginning” of the 70 sevens (namely, *the issuing of the decree*); this is to say, *the issuing of the decree* occurs in *the breast and arms of silver*. But the focus in chapter 9 is on the end of the 70 sevens, so here I refer to the end only.

<sup>43</sup> Or does it? That is, a word about timing: Daniel 7 *seems* to have the little horn both before (in time) and after the Son is presented and receives the Kingdom. Already I think this prophecy is not supposed to be chronological. Furthermore, if this little horn *is* the same that John deals with in Revelation (I think it is; see the next few footnotes), and if the picture in Daniel 7 *is* supposed to be chronological, then we’d have the Messiah receiving the Kingdom some decades after He’d already received it. Again, I think this prophecy is not supposed to be chronological. OR, maybe the “receiving” depicted in Daniel 7 is not the Kingdom being *established*; rather, maybe the “receiving” Daniel 7 depicts is just another *public demonstration* that He reigns. God does this from time to time — He prophetically depicts an already-existing Kingdom as coming (or taking ownership of it), not to say it will be *established* then, but to say it will be *manifest* then. Compare Obadiah, which prophesies about judgment on Edom: In verse 21, God says, *And the kingdom will be the LORD’S*. But it already was the Lord’s... since Genesis 1:1. (Compare Psalm 10:16; Isaiah 37:16; and many other places.) And it is noteworthy that in each explanation in chapter 7, it is the saints who receive the Kingdom (18, 22, 27), though I am unsure what to do with this tidbit. But after saying all this, Jesus did quote from verse 13 (compare Matthew 26:64, et al.) in the context of His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. But even so I am unsure this changes anything I’ve said; maybe this *somehow* fits the “public manifestation” principle. But I wasn’t asked to speak on Daniel 7, so I’ll leave it at that. (I don’t think I could say much more about it anyway.)

4. Again, in the picture in chapter 7, the Kingdom Jesus reigns over in heaven is spoken of, but the *focus* becomes the application of the Kingdom — going after the one persecuting the saints of the Kingdom.<sup>44</sup>
- B. Chapter 9 verses 26 and 27 fit into 7:7, *ten horns*.
1. Namely, *the Messiah will be cut off* (9:26) occurs in the time of the ten kings. (To be specific, I *think* this occurs during the time of the 3<sup>rd</sup> king/horn — that is, IF the 3<sup>rd</sup> king/horn refers to Emperor Tiberius, which I think it does.<sup>45</sup>)
  2. Also occurring during the time of the ten kings: *On the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction...is poured out...* (9:27). (To be specific, I *think* this occurs during the time of the 10<sup>th</sup> king/horn — that is, IF the 10<sup>th</sup> king/horn refers to Emperor Titus, which I think it does.)
- C. Chapter 7 is quite repetitive in nature; everyone can see for themselves where else Daniel 9 fits in. Just one note: While in timing chapter 9 fits in at about verse 7 (in chapter 7), the focus of chapter 9 is on something else:
1. Chapter 7 focuses on a king persecuting Christians;
  2. Chapter 9 focuses on a prince destroying ethnic, national Israel.
  3. Two totally different things.
  4. Both of which, in the Big Picture, happen essentially concurrently.<sup>46, 47</sup>

### III. AGAIN, CHAPTER 9 VERSES 24-27 CONTAIN A PROPHECY ABOUT THE END OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL<sup>48, 49</sup>

#### IV. AGAIN, ALL THESE ARE FULFILLED IN THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY I already indicated this some thirty times in Part One, IV (not including the footnotes) and a few more times in Part Two, I and II.

- A. Note well, many times these assertions were based on indisputable, self-evident, generally accepted historical evidence: The first three kingdoms came and went before the 1<sup>st</sup> century, then came Rome and it still existed in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, then Jesus was crucified in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, then Rome destroyed Jerusalem in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. (As the “Dispensational” Premillennialists say, the literal fulfillment of prophecy comes to our rescue.<sup>50</sup>)
- B. Furthermore, regarding the specifics that are not empirically verifiable, everyone agrees that even some of these happened in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, namely: *To make atonement for iniquity; To bring in everlasting righteousness*<sup>51</sup>; *To anoint the most holy place*<sup>52</sup>; *Have nothing*<sup>53</sup> (all these statements except the last are in verse 24; the last is in verse 26).
- C. Furthermore, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jesus Christ Himself said (quoting Daniel 7:13!), “*You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven*” (Matthew 26:64).
- D. Furthermore, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jesus said many things many times that implied the Kingdom was coming in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Here is just one, “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand*” (Mark 1:15).
- E. Furthermore, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jesus said “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore*<sup>54</sup> *and make disciples of all the nations*” (Matthew 28:18-19).

<sup>44</sup> I look forward to hearing what Alan says about all this. Myself, I believe this refers to persecution of *Christians*. I also believe this prophecy refers to the same events depicted in Revelation. For example, Daniel 7 refers to a lion (the period, or ruling nation, Daniel lives in — Babylon), then a bear (Medo-Persia), then a leopard (Greece), and then a beast with ten horns (Rome), in that order, depicting nations that would rise as time continued. Revelation 13:1-2 depicts the same animals but in reverse order — a beast with ten horns (the period, or ruling nation, John lives in — Rome), then a leopard (Greece), then a bear (Medo-Persia), and then a lion (Babylon). Again, the same animals, but reverse order. Again, I believe Revelation is depicting the same nations, not from the perspective that they *would* come (which was Daniel’s perspective in the 6<sup>th</sup> century), but from the perspective that they *already had* come (which was John’s perspective in 1<sup>st</sup> century).

<sup>45</sup> I tend to agree with Jim McGuiggan’s understanding of these prophecies in Daniel 7 and 10-12, and also in Revelation 13 and 17. See his commentaries if you would like to understand it in detail.

<sup>46</sup> In fact, I think that the events prophesied in 9:26-27 actually happened just prior to (or, at the very beginning of) the events that chapter 7 focuses on.

<sup>47</sup> Putting a name to a horn: Chapter 7 appears to focus on Domitian (the 11<sup>th</sup> king/horn) as he persecutes Christians, while chapter 9 appears to deal with Titus (the 10<sup>th</sup> king/horn of Daniel 7) as he destroys Jerusalem. See footnote 45.

<sup>48</sup> Daniel 8 provides more information about the second and third kingdoms, but primarily the third. Daniel 10-12 provides more information about the latter part of the third kingdom and some of the fourth. But I was not asked to speak on these chapters.

<sup>49</sup> For what it is worth, Walvoord agrees with this general assessment: Speaking on chapter 9, he says “Unlike the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, and 8, which primarily related to the Gentiles, this chapter is specifically God’s program for the people of Israel.”

<sup>50</sup> Or, as Walvoord writes about these events: “The prophesied events of verse 26, like those of 25, already have been fulfilled and constitute the clear evidence of the accuracy of the prophetic word” (231; of course, Walvoord uses the “literal” fulfillment of those details as evidence that we should expect the “literal” fulfillment of other details. He’s wrong about this). Again, “History has certainly corroborated this prophecy, for not only was Jerusalem destroyed but the entire civilization of the Jews in Palestine ceased to exist soon after the end of the sixty-ninth seven, and that desolation continued until recent time” (ibid.; and in the last part, Walvoord refers to the newly established nation of Israel, which occurred in 1948. Of course, other than in name, this nation has nothing to do with God’s chosen nation from long ago. But don’t miss that Walvoord sees that God destroyed and desolated not only the city but also the nation in the 1<sup>st</sup> century!).

<sup>51</sup> Walvoord admitted, “There is a *sense* in which this also is accomplished by Christ in His first coming.”

<sup>52</sup> Again, Walvoord admitted this could refer to Jesus Christ.

<sup>53</sup> While many dispute *what* “have nothing” means, almost no one disputes *when* “have nothing” happened — most everyone (Keil is an exception) agrees it was in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>54</sup> About “therefore”: R. L. Whiteside wrote that, if Matthew 28:18-19 had been written according to the “Dispensational” Premillennialist’s idea, it would have read something like, “All authority has been given to me, but I am not exercising it; and because I am not exercising it, go into all the world and make disciples of all nations” (*The Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy*. Published by Miss Inys Whiteside; Denton, TX; 1956. Page 47).

- F. Furthermore, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century the inspired authors of the New Testament quoted many, many Messianic prophecies from the Old Testament, explicitly stating or implying that these events occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Get a concordance and look up “was fulfilled,” and “it is written,” and others.
- G. Furthermore, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century the inspired apostles themselves authored many statements that implied the Kingdom had come in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Here is just one: *He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son* (Colossians 1:13; both verbs are aorist indicative: It happened [past tense]; it certainly happened [it didn’t maybe happen]<sup>55</sup>).
- H. Furthermore, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the **command** given on that Pentecost to be immersed for the forgiveness of sin (Acts 2:38) implied the Kingdom had come (otherwise, Peter would have instructed those **Jews** to head over to the temple with a sacrifice...). And the statement *be baptized in the name of Jesus* closes the case: Since then everyone, everywhere, and for always must submit to **Jesus Christ’s authority and rule**. Consider again Matthew 28:18-19.
- I. Last, a few words about the fact that the Kingdom **has been and still is** “visibly” in the world: Consider as a comparison how Greece conquered Rome (culturally) despite Rome conquering Greece (politically), an anomaly which no one disputes — as Horace wrote, “Captive Greece captured her rude conqueror.” Along this same line, Peter Jones, a giant among classicists, says about Greece, “Greece was to be found wherever Greek was spoken” (*World of Athens*, 62). In the same way, Christ’s Kingdom is to be found **now** wherever Christ’s **name** is spoken **now**. Furthermore, consider the visible change in **culture(s)** that happened as the gospel spread. In his chapter on “Human obligations, values, and concerns,” in the midst of discussing a very loveless (my description) culture, Jones writes, “A Greek would find bewildering our value-system... To us, with our predominantly Christian values, Greek values may seem strange,” and, “Christian values were still six hundred years away” (ibid., 133,152). Historians of all stripes recognize world-wide change occurred as Christianity spread. Sounds like the Kingdom exercised a hostile takeover! Sounds like the Kingdom won! Sounds like the Kingdom is here! Furthermore, Jones writes about pagan gods, “they do not love humans, nor do they impose codes of belief or morality” (ibid., 89-90). But the God of the Bible does, doesn’t He! What a change from “B.C.!” In fact, Jesus commanded His apostles to teach and impose on all the world **all that I commanded you** (Matthew 28:20). Again, visible evidence that the Kingdom arrived, and that Jesus was, and is, reigning. Last one— the very existence of God’s Word in so many languages *other* than Hebrew is itself a visible testimony that the Kingdom has already imposed itself on the world: Once again we refer to Jones, who writes about pagan religion, “the Greeks had no divine law-books (such as the Jews had...)” (ibid., 105). But now they do — the **Bible!** Ever since the 1<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>56</sup>

**Well I enjoyed this simple study of Daniel 9, including how it relates to chapters 2 and 7! I hope you did, too. Most of all, I hope that God was glorified.**

**And now, with all of what we discussed in parts One and Two in mind, and considering we are about to take a look at “Dispensational” Premillennialism, note well the following two crucial observations:**

**Observation One: Concluding a 1<sup>st</sup> century fulfillment of all these prophecies is very reasonable, being very well-supported — both scripturally and historically.<sup>57</sup>**

**Observation Two: Asserting —as the “Dispensational” Premillennialist does— that the Messiah did not receive His Kingdom in the 1<sup>st</sup> century —and that God did not finalize His dealings with ethnic, national Israel in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and that *to finish the transgression* did not happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and that *to make an end of sin* did not happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and that *to bring in everlasting righteousness* did not happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and that *to seal up vision and prophecy* did not happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and that all the other events of the seventy sevens did not happen in the 1<sup>st</sup> century— will take a very, very substantial argument.**

**The question is: Does “Dispensational” Premillennialism have what it takes?**

**Next, in Part Three, we’ll take a quick look at their whole *scheme* of prophecy and future things as it relates to Daniel 2, 7, and 9 only.**

**Then, in parts Four through Seven, we’ll examine their *arguments* and *system of hermeneutics* generally.**

<sup>55</sup> ἐρρύσατο; μετέστησεν

<sup>56</sup> With all this (and more) in mind, I could be wrong(!), but it seems to me that the person who asserts the Kingdom did not come in the 1<sup>st</sup> century is either ignorant or not thinking clearly. Or he is deceived. (I pray that I am not deceived in something.)

<sup>57</sup> Even some “Dispensational” Premillennialists will admit Christ began reigning over a spiritual Kingdom in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, e.g., Norman Geisler (more about him in Part Three): “The spiritual kingdom is what He established while He was on the earth the *first* time” (*Systematic Theology*, vol. 4, page 491; see also page 556, “*Christ Instituted A Present Spiritual Kingdom Until He Returns*”). (To be clear, Geisler actually believes and means Jesus began this Kingdom while He was still alive, not after His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension; Geisler does not believe Jesus is now reigning on the throne of David in His Messianic Kingdom.)

# PART THREE: OBSERVING THE MILLENNIALIST'S POSITION IN DANIEL 2, 7, AND 9

## I. MILLENNIALISTS (“DISPENSATIONAL” OR OTHER) AND DANIEL CHAPTERS 2, 7, AND 9

- A. Millennialists agree the prophecies of Daniel chapters 2, 7, and 9 are all directly related and interrelated. For example:
1. John Walvoord<sup>58</sup> on 2:39: “this revelation is coupled with that of chapters 7-8.”
  2. Charles Ryrie on 7:3: “Representing the rulers of the four world empires previously described in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in chap. 2.”
  3. Cyrus Scofield on 2:31: “See Dan. 7:26”, et al.
  4. Charles Ryrie on 9:27: “The prince of verse 26, the Antichrist previously introduced in 7:8, 24-26.”
  5. Note well John Walvoord on 9:24 —writing about how the prophecies of these chapters **differ**: “Unlike the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, and 8, which primarily related to the Gentiles, this chapter is specifically God’s program for the people of Israel.”
- This interconnectedness is asserted throughout their writings.
- B. We’ll save Daniel 9 for II (on the next page), but regarding chapters 2 and 7, Millennialists agree with us... to a point.
1. First, they believe that the prophecies are about four ancient world kingdoms that rise and fall.
    - a) John MacArthur on 2:36-45: “In Dan. 7, the same empires are represented by 4 great beasts. These empires are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome...”
    - b) Ryrie on 7:3: “Representing the rulers of the four world empires previously described in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream in chap. 2.”
    - c) In short, as Iain M. Duguid and Paul D. Wegner say in the *English Standard Version Study Bible* (which does not lean “Dispensational” but “Covenant Theology”<sup>59</sup>) on 2:43-44: “Traditional commentators through the history of the church have almost universally<sup>60</sup> identified the four kingdoms as Babylon, Medo-Persia (established by Cyrus in 539 B.C.; specifically named in 8:20), Greece (under Alexander the Great, about 331; specifically named in 8:21), and Rome (the Roman Empire began its rule over Palestine in 63 B.C.)”
  2. Second, they believe the prophecies are about the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. No need to pester everyone with quotes. (The debate is about *when*, not *what*.)

So far we agree. But here our paths go their very separate ways. (And I hope to refute all this in parts Four through Seven.)

“The Messianic Kingdom not established in the 1<sup>st</sup> century” →

“The Roman Empire’s future revival” →

- C. Millennialists **also** believe about chapters 2 and 7:
1. First, they believe the Messianic Kingdom was **not** established during the days of that ancient Roman Kingdom. No need to pester everyone with quotes. (Why do they believe this? Coming right up in 3.)
  2. Second, and directly related, they believe these prophecies **also** prophesy about...
    - a) The ancient Roman Kingdom’s future revival at the second coming of Christ.
      - (1) MacArthur on 2:36-45: “In Dan. 7, the same empires are represented by 4 great beasts. These empires are Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the late revived Rome.”
      - (2) Walvoord on 7:13-14: “Daniel takes human history up to the first coming of Christ when the Roman Empire was in sway, and then leaps to the end of the age when, in fulfillment of prophecy, the fourth empire will be revived and suffer its fatal judgment at the hands of Christ at His second coming to the earth.”
    - b) Namely, a form of the Roman Kingdom in the territory of Europe (i.e., former Roman territory) with a confederation of 10 kings (or kingdoms) ruling simultaneously.
      - (1) Scofield on 7:26: “The ‘ten horns’ on the fourth beast (Roman Empire), v. 7, are declared to be ‘ten kings who will come from this kingdom’ (v. 24), answering to the ten toes of the image vision of ch. 2. The ten kingdoms, including the regions formerly ruled by Rome, will constitute, therefore, the form in which the fourth or Roman Empire will exist when the whole fabric of Gentile world dominion is struck by the ‘rock cut out of the mountain.’”
      - (2) Walvoord...
        - (a) On 2:39: “the third empire ends with the upper part of the legs, or the thighs, indicating that the third empire would

<sup>58</sup> If there were a “Dispensational” Premillennialist Hall of Fame, Scofield (d. 1921), Walvoord (d. 2002), and Ryrie (d. 2016), would be of the first to be in it, along with J. Dwight Pentecost, Harry A. Ironside, Lewis Sperry Chaffer, and some others. Ryrie studied under Chaffer and Ironside. I read somewhere that Walvoord was the most knowledgeable Premillennialist of his generation. So I will refer to these three time and again. (All of them are intimately associated with Dallas Theological Seminary. Hal Lindsey also studied there, under Walvoord. Maybe DTS is the Hall of Fame?)

**Regarding Walvoord, unless otherwise noted (and this will happen a bit), all quotes are from his *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*. Regarding Ryrie, unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from his *Dispensationalism: Revised and Expanded*. The other primary source for him is his *Ryrie Study Bible*. Regarding Scofield, almost all quotes are from *The Scofield Study Bible*.**

I will also quote John MacArthur a few times (from the *MacArthur Study Bible*), and Norman Geisler a lot (mostly from volume 4 of his *Systematic Theology which is about the Church and Last Things*). While neither MacArthur or Geisler has the same status as the others among “Dispensational” Premillennialists, certainly each of them is very well known, and they are of the next generation.

Last, Ryrie pigeon-holes Scofield as a Classical, Normative, or Traditional “Dispensational” Premillennialist, and Walvoord and himself as Essentialist, or Revised (*Disp.*, 190). Geisler fits himself into the “Modified” class (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:593). MacArthur considers himself to be a Traditional “Dispensational” Premillennialist, but he disagrees with other “Traditionalists” a lot; in fact, other “Dispensationalists” even consider him to be in the Covenant camp. (A very related and very interesting note: MacArthur preached a sermon “Why Every Self-Respecting Calvinist is Premillennial.” Many Calvinists would disagree. Many would agree.)

<sup>59</sup> The *ESV Study Bible* seems to lean away from Premillennialism and toward “Modified Covenant Theology.” (MCT holds that the promises in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the Church, but they also anticipate a future, literal fulfillment of the Old Testament covenants to ethnic Israel [compare *Sys.Theo.*, 4:500].) I base this conclusion on myriad notes throughout the *ESV Study Bible* and on the presence of Vern Poythress and Ian Provan. I could be wrong.

<sup>60</sup> Note well: These are universally accepted among those who are “Traditional commentators,” that is, among those who believe in an early date for Daniel (and, thus, believe that it is inspired). However unimportant, it should be noted that late, “Liberal” scholars believe the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom refers to Greece during the Hellenistic era. (The authors of the *ESV Study Bible* understand this, as is evident from other notes.)

Another reminder that all bolding and underlining is mine (and some of the italics are, too). And it gets a bit excessive in here, but I am trying to call attention to relevant and important points.

territorially embrace both East and West. This will be quite significant in analysis of the next world empire, unnamed in Daniel, but obviously Rome.”

- (b) On 2:40-45:
- i) “The upper part of the legs represented the twofold stage of the last period of the Alexandrian Empire, which especially concerned the Jews, namely, Syria and Egypt. This was two-legged because it embraced two continents, or two major geographic areas, the East and the West. The Roman Empire continued this twofold division and extended its sway over the entire Mediterranean area as well as western Asia.”
  - ii) “The image portrays the divine viewpoint, which anticipated the rise of the Roman Empire and its geographic inclusion of the East and the West. This was recognized ultimately in the political division of the East and West by Emperor Valentinian I in A.D. 364.”
  - iii) “Although Daniel does not deal with the interadvent age as such, it still is true that at the time of the first advent of Christ Rome already was geographically spread over the East and the West.”
  - iv) “Prophetically it indicates that at the time of the end Rome again will involve both the East and the West.”
  - v) “The feet portion of the image representing the final stage will also include on an equal basis the Eastern and Western areas once possessed by ancient Rome.”
  - vi) “According to Daniel’s prophecy, the ten-toe stage is simultaneous, that is, the kingdoms existed side by side and were destroyed by one sudden catastrophic blow.”

3. **Millennialists believe this because:**

- a) In summary, they...
- (1) Seek a literal fulfillment.
  - (2) Do not see it literally fulfilled in history.
  - (3) Say that it will be literally fulfilled in the future.

Why they believe this →

This is the pattern.  
Watch for it!  
(More about this below, under Part Seven, II, C.)

- b) From Daniel 2 and 7:
- (1) Walvoord on 2:40-45:
    - (a) “According to Daniel’s prophecy, the ten-toe stage is simultaneous, that is, the kingdoms existed side by side and were destroyed by one sudden catastrophic blow,” and “The effect is that the fifth kingdom, the kingdom of God, replaces completely all vestiges of the preceding kingdoms, which prophecy can only be fulfilled in any literal sense by a reign of Christ over the earth.”
    - (b) “Nothing is more evident after nineteen hundred years of Christianity than that the stone, if it reflects the church or the spiritual kingdom which Christ formed at His first coming, is not in any sense of the term occupying the center of the stage in which Gentile power has been destroyed.”
    - (c) “Gentiles are still in a dominant position in world politics” (“The Times of the Gentiles”).
  - (2) Scofield on 2:31: “The smiting Stone (2:34-35) destroys the Gentile world-system (in its final form) by a sudden and irremediable blow.... Such a destruction of the Gentile monarchy system did not occur at the first advent of Christ.”
  - (3) Ryrrie on 2:44: “This does not refer to the first coming of Christ (which would make the kingdom = the church), since Christ did not destroy the Roman Empire at His first coming, nor were there 10 kings ruling at the same time then.”
  - (4) Duguid and Wenger (not “Dispensational” Premillennialists, but futurists) on 9:24-27: “the purposes for the 70 weeks do not appear to be fulfilled in A.D. 70 (‘to finish transgression,’ ‘to put an end to sin,’ and ‘to bring in everlasting righteousness’).”
  - (5) MacArthur on 9:27: “This is clearly the end of the age, the Second Advent judgment, because the bringing in of righteousness did not occur 7 years after the death of the Messiah.”
  - (6) Walvoord on 7:7-8: “The interpretation identifying this as Rome immediately has a major problem in that there is no real correspondence to the Roman Empire historically in the phrase, ‘and it had ten horns.’ This and the succeeding matter has no correspondence either to the history of Greece or to the history of Rome,” and “Pre-millennialists offer a third view, providing literal fulfillment: ten actual kingdoms will exist simultaneously in the future consummation.”
  - (7) Walvoord on 7:11-12: “The destruction of the beast, however, does not fit the historic Roman Empire which took centuries to lose all its strength. This is a sudden act of divine judgment in which the major ruler is killed and his government destroyed” and “The point is that the destruction of the fourth beast here described refers to a time yet future in connection with the second advent of Christ.”

- c) On Daniel 9:27, Walvoord:
- (1) To get a feel for how they think (“Literal interpretation!”) and what they are looking for (“Literal, historical fulfillment!”); and, “Because it was not seen in history then must be in the future!”): “According to the prophecy, in the middle of the seven-year period the one who confirms the covenant ‘shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,’ that is, all the bloody and non-bloody sacrifices. This could not refer to Jesus Christ at His death on the cross...because, as a matter of fact, the sacrifices did not cease until A.D. 70, some forty years later. The sacrifices were not stopped by Christ but by the Roman soldiers who destroyed the temple.”
  - (2) “Ultimately, the question facing every expositor is what interpretation gives the most natural and intelligent exposition of the text. If it is not necessary to consider this literal prophecy, and the time units are not literal, a variety of interpretation immediately becomes possible. If the expositor desires to follow the text meticulously, however, there is really no alternative but to declare the entire seventieth seven future, for there has been no seven-year period fulfilling the events of prophecy, however labored the interpretation.” Note well, here the *referent* is different (Walvoord refers to the 7<sup>th</sup> seven) but the *approach* is the same. How do they get where they get (“Future!”)? They claim “It didn’t happen back then!”

Where they get the 7 years of Tribulation

→ II. AND NOW TO DANIEL 9 SPECIFICALLY: A LOOK AT ONE MILLENNIALIST’S UNDERSTANDING

(Because Millenarians vary so much —e.g., Pre-Mid-Post Tribulation rapture, Pre-Post Millennial second coming of Christ — in this section I will look at **Walvoord** only, mostly from his commentary on Daniel, unless otherwise stated. And in the end it will not matter, because they all use the same faulty approach to interpreting prophecy.)

- A. “Daniel alone was given the comprehensive program for both the Gentiles, as revealed to Daniel in preceding chapters, and for Israel, as recorded in Daniel 9:24-27” (page 201). Not a huge point, but we agree.

There is a real nice chart on page 34. Meanwhile, I intend the beautiful “timeline” at the side to be sort of a place holder, a reference marker, as we go along looking at the Premillennialist’s view. ➡

C. 538 B.C.  
Daniel prays and the prophecy is given

Waiting for the start.....

- B. On verses 1-2: “Several principles emerge from Daniel’s reference to Jeremiah’s prophecy. First, Daniel took the seventy years literally and believed there would be a literal fulfillment.” (Compare this with what he says on 24: “the fact that there were seventy years of captivity, discussed earlier in the chapter, would seem to imply that years were also in view here”; “The only system of interpretation, however, that gives any literal meaning to this prophecy is to regard the time units as prophetic years.”)
- C. On verse 24 — setting the stage<sup>61</sup>:
1. “The prophecy as a whole is presented in verse 24. The sixty-nine sevens is described in verse 25. The events between the sixty-ninth seventh and the seventieth seventh are detailed in verse 26. The final period of the seventieth seventh is described in verse 27.” Note the gap.<sup>62</sup>
  2. “The [Millennial, lmt] point of view regards the seventieth seven as separated from the earlier sequence of years and scheduled for fulfillment in the future in the seven years preceding the second advent of Christ.” Note the gap.<sup>63</sup>
- D. On verse 25: “Sir Robert Anderson has made a detailed study of a possible chronology for this period beginning with the well-established date of 445 B.C. when Nehemiah’s decree was issued and culminating in A.D. 32 on the very day of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem shortly before His crucifixion. Sir Robert Anderson specifies that the seventy sevens began on the first Nisan, March 14, 445 B.C. and ended on April 6, A.D. 32, the tenth Nisan. The complicated computation is based upon prophetic years of 360 days totaling 173,880 days. This would be exactly 483 years according to biblical chronology.”
- E. On verse 26:
1. “The natural interpretation of verse 26 is that it refers to the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.”
  2. Note well (from 25): “the best explanation of the time when the sixty-nine sevens ended is that it occurred shortly before the death of Christ anticipated in Daniel 9:26 as following the sixty-ninth seven.” Why do I emphasize this here? To see how they get to a gap to begin with: It begins here with them asserting that the events of verse occur after verse 25. The question is: Are these events in the 70<sup>th</sup> seven? One would think so. “Dispensationalists” say no. Read on.
  3. “Although evangelical expositors have been agreed that the reference is to Jesus Christ, a division has occurred as to whether the event here described comes in the seventieth seventh described in the next verse, or whether it occurs in an interim or parenthetical period between the sixty-ninth seven and seventieth. Two theories have emerged, namely, the continuous fulfillment theory...and the gap or parenthesis theory.” The Millennialist takes the second view. Why? See next.
  4. “In the interpretation of this passage and the decision on the question of the continuous fulfillment versus the gap theory, the [“literal.” lmt] fulfillment of the prophecy again comes to our rescue. The center part of verse 26 states ‘the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.’ Historically the destruction of Jerusalem occurred in A.D. 70 almost forty years after the death of Christ [thus, not within 7 literal years. lmt]... The intervention of two events after the sixty-ninth seven which in their historic fulfillment occupied almost forty years makes necessary a gap between the sixty-ninth seven and the beginning of the seventieth seven of at-least this length of time.” and “Because of the reference to ‘the end’ twice in verse 26, it would be contextually possible to refer this to the end of the age and to a future destruction of Jerusalem.” Note well that Walvoord believes verse 26 applies to Titus and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, **BUT** he notes that this did not occur within 7 literal years of Jesus’ crucifixion. And **BECAUSE** it did not occur within seven literal years, there actually is a gap between verses 25 and 27, between the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> seven, a gap of at least 40 years. (And by 2017 we see the “gap” is even greater — much, much greater.)
  5. “The prophecy of verse 25 dealing as it does with the restoration of Jerusalem at the beginning of the seventy sevens, the sixty-two sevens which follow the first seven sevens culminate in the Messiah, and the prediction that the Messiah shall be cut off and Jerusalem destroyed gives the high points in Israel’s history and provides the key to understanding this difficult prophecy. In contrast to the rather clear fulfillment of verses 25-26, verse 27 is an enigma as far as history is concerned; and only futuristic interpretation allows any literal fulfillment,” and “The prophesied events of verse 26, like those of verse 25, already have been fulfilled and constitute clear evidence of the accuracy of the prophetic word [read: “that it will be literally fulfilled,” lmt].” Again, he sees a gap in verses 25 and 26. Furthermore, he sees verses 25-26 had a literal fulfillment. And now he looks for a literal fulfillment in verse 27. And it did not have one, so he pushes out the gap to a future time when verse 27 will be literally fulfilled. (And we are still in this gap!)

Where/how they get a gap →

Where/how they get a gap →

Where/how they get a gap →

445 B.C.  
Nehemiah issues a decree to rebuild Jerusalem, and the 70 weeks/490 years begins

396 B.C.  
The city is rebuilt, the first 7 weeks/49 years are complete

The 7 weeks + 62 weeks, or 69 weeks, or 483 years, are complete - A.D. 32 -  
The gap begins; after the 69<sup>th</sup> week (but before the 70<sup>th</sup>) Jesus is crucified and, 40 years later, Rome destroys Jerusalem

.....waiting

7 Weeks

62 Weeks

69 Weeks (7+62)

P R E S E N T · G A P : A D . 33 - 2017 and counting

<sup>61</sup> For Walvoord’s explanations of “to finish the transgression,” etc., see his notes included in my exposition on verses 24-27 (pages 16-24). (I realize I scattered Walvoord’s quotes here and there between parts One and Two. The idea is: When I could generally agree with what he said, I included it in my exposition of verses 24-27 [in Part One]; but when his note more directly concerned “Dispensational” Premillennialism, I saved it for parts Three through Seven.)

<sup>62</sup> To be clear, by “between...,” Walvoord refers to *after* the 69<sup>th</sup> and *before* the 70<sup>th</sup>, which is a gap, or parenthesis, or interadvent period, or postponement, etc.

<sup>63</sup> Why the gap? See what follows, but for now, remember what we quoted above (but actually from verse 27): “there is really no alternative but to declare the entire seventieth seven future, for there has been no seven-year period fulfilling the events of prophecy, however labored the interpretation”; they look for events to be literally fulfilled in 7 literal years, and when this does not happen, they (a) assume a gap is implied and (b) then look for a future 7 year period.

- F. A quick word about the present age, the “gap”:
1. We are still in the times of the Gentiles: “the prophecies of the book of Daniel...trace the course of Gentile power from Nebuchadnezzar, 600 B.C., to the coming of the Son of Man from heaven which, according to the premillennial interpretation, is fulfilled by the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth to reign” (“The Times of the Gentiles”). By this they mean that Gentiles rule over Israel.
  2. The Church-age is a “parenthetical,” “interadvent,” “gap,” a time of “postponement”:
    - a) On 2:40-45: “Daniel’s prophecy actually passes over the present age, the period between the first and second coming of Christ or, more specifically, the period between Pentecost and the rapture of the church.” Compare with 2:40-45: “Daniel does not deal with the interadvent age as such.”
    - b) Note well on 9:24: “The church as such has no relation to the city nor to the promises given specifically to Israel relating to their restoration and repossession of the land.”

G. And still in the future (though ever nearer since 1948, when Israel returned to their land), leading up to the Tribulation...

1. On 2:39:
  - a) “The descending scale of value of the four metals suggests the degeneration of the human race through the ages, as implied in Genesis 4.”
  - b) “The descending value of the metals, however, permits their ascending strength, which suggests increased military might during the times of the Gentiles, leading to the final world conflict of Revelation 16 and 19 to which Daniel refers (11:36-45).”
2. On 7:13-14: “the fourth empire will be revived,” and compare “a future ruler in the Mediterranean area” (“The Times of the Gentiles”). This is the 10-nation confederacy.

The gap ends.  
- Yet Future -  
The 70th week/  
final 7 years of  
Daniel’s prophecy  
begins: The  
Tribulation

The 70<sup>th</sup> seven,  
or the Tribulation

→ H. **Now on verse 27: The end of the present gap, and the 70<sup>th</sup> seven (the Tribulation):**

1. “The divergence of interpretation comes to a head, however, in verse 27. Here the choice is clearly between literal fulfillment, which requires a futuristic interpretation with a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week, or several other options which admittedly do not provide any clear fulfillment of verse 27.”
2. “Ultimately, the question facing every expositor is what interpretation gives the most natural and intelligent exposition of the text. If it is not necessary to consider this literal prophecy, and the time units are not literal, a variety of interpretation immediately becomes possible. If the expositor desires to follow the text meticulously, however, there is really no alternative but to declare the entire seventieth seven future, for there has been no seven-year period fulfilling the events of prophecy, however labored the interpretation.”
3. And here begins the detailed discussion of the resurrections and rapture and antichrist and tribulation and second coming of Jesus and the millennial reign and judgments. See next.

### III. AND NOW A SEMI-DETAILED LOOK AT ONE MILLENNIALIST’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE SEVENTIETH SEVEN... AND BEYOND

(Again, in this section I will look at **Walvoord** only, mostly from his commentary on Daniel, unless otherwise stated. And in the end it will not matter, because they all use the same faulty approach to interpreting prophecy.)

- A. The Tribulation: (Unless otherwise stated, these are from his notes on 9:27)
1. First, a summary: “The final period of seven years begins with the introduction of a covenant relationship between the future ‘prince that shall come’ and ‘the many,’ the people of Israel. This covenant is observed for the first half of the future seven-year period; then the special liberties and protections granted Israel are taken away; and Israel becomes persecuted in their time of great tribulation. The beginning of the last three and one-half years of the seventy sevens of Daniel is marked by the desecration of the future temple, the stopping of the sacrifices, and the desolation of the Jewish religion.”
  2. Regarding to *finish the transgression* (this note is actually from verse 24, but it is relevant here): “The most obvious meaning is that Israel’s course of apostasy and sin and wandering over the face of the earth will be brought to completion within the seventy years. The restoration of Israel which Daniel sought in his prayer will ultimately have its fulfillment in this concept.”
  3. The rapture of the faithful Church:
    - a) “Phase one of Israel’s development is already complete [referring to Israel being made a nation in 1948, lmt], but phase two, the treaty (and they have been working for fifty years trying to get a treaty), cannot come until this man emerges and the church has been raptured” (“How Soon the Rapture?”).
    - b) “the church which is raptured before chapter 4 is properly complete in heaven and eligible for reward at the judgment seat of Christ” (“The Church in Heaven”).
  4. An immediate testimony to Christ: “Though the children of God living on earth at the time will be translated when Christ comes for His church, immediately a testimony will be raised up to the name of Christ through new converts among Jews and Gentiles. Though these are never described by the term ‘church,’ they are constantly called saints, that is, those set apart as holy to God and saved through the sacrifice of Christ” (“The Saints of the Great Tribulation”).
  5. Antichrist appears: “The determination of the antecedent of *he* in verse 27 is the key to the interpretation of the passage. If the normal rule be followed that the antecedent is the nearest preceding possibility, it would go back to the prince that shall come of verse 26. This is the normal premillennial interpretation which postulates that the reference is to a future prince who may be identified with the Antichrist who will appear at the end of the interadvent age just before the second coming of Christ.”
  6. A covenant and peace and prosperity for Israel for three and a half years: “The precise prophecy of verse 27 indicates that the personage in view enters into a covenant relationship *with many*; literally, ‘with the many,’ (cf. *many*, literally, ‘the many,’ Dan 11:39; 12:2). This is a clear reference to unbelieving Jews who will enter into alliance with *the prince that shall come*. That they are Jews is indicated by *thy people* in verse 24. If

3 ½ Years of Peace and Prosperity for Israel Restored in the Land

70th and Final Weeks: Tribulation

Mid-Tribulation

3 ½ Years of Persecution for Israel

the preceding chronology is understood to involve literal years, this should also be a seven-year period. In a word, the prophecy is that there will be a future compact or covenant between a political ruler designated as *the prince that shall come* in verse 26 with the representatives of the Jewish people.”

7. Tribulation, beginning at the three and a half year mark:
  - a) (A comment about how the book of Revelation applies to Daniel 9: “From the fourth chapter through the nineteenth, speaking generally, there seems to be an account of this time of trouble” [“The Church in Heaven”].)
  - b) “in the middle of the seven-year period the one who confirms the covenant ‘shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,’ that is, all the bloody and non-bloody sacrifices.”
  - c) “According to the prophecy of Christ, there will be a clear-cut event referred to as the abomination of desolation similar to the language of 9:27, which will occur in the period just preceding the second advent. Christ said, ‘When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand) then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains.... For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.’”
    - (1) Note well: “The fulfillment of this prophecy necessarily involves the reactivation of the Mosaic sacrificial system in a temple in Judea.”
    - (2) And from 7:7: “Christ, in His reference to the “abomination of desolation” (Mt 24:15) clearly pictures the desecration of the temple, here prophesied as a future event.”
  - d) The Battle of Armageddon: “Russia and her allies attack this whole ten-nation group plus Israel, because the man who made the covenant with Israel is also their protector (Ezek. 38-39)” (“How Soon the Rapture?”).
8. Civil war. On 2:40-45: “the world empire at the end of the age breaks up into a gigantic civil war.”
9. Summarized again: “According to the premillennial interpretation of the end of the age, there is a period still ahead, anticipated in Daniel 9:27, in which a future ruler in the Mediterranean area will make a covenant with the people of Israel for seven years. If this futuristic interpretation is correct, Israel, in the nature of this covenant, will still be under Gentile supervision in the broad sense of the term. As commonly interpreted, the period of peace introduced by the covenant will terminate after it has run half its course and the period of great tribulation will follow. According to the predictions of Christ Himself, Israel will then be forced to flee to the mountains (Matt 24:16) and Jerusalem will again come under the tramp of Gentile feet. It is also clear from Zechariah 14 that Jerusalem will become the bone of contention and the source of a great battle just before the second coming of Christ” (“The Times of the Gentiles”).

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> coming → B. The end of the seventieth seven: The second coming of Christ**

1. On 9:27: “The culmination of the entire prophecy of the seventy weeks is the second advent of Jesus Christ which closes the seventieth seventh of Israel as well as the times of the Gentiles pictured in Daniel’s prophecies of the four great world empires.”
2. To save Israel: “Two out of three Israelites in the land will perish (Zech. 13:8). The others will be rescued when Christ returns. According to Romans 11:26, ‘The deliverer will come from Zion and Israel will be delivered from her enemies. ‘All Israel will be saved’ (Rom. 11:26), that is, delivered from their enemies” (“How Soon the Rapture?”).
3. The destruction of Rome revived. On 9:27, “According to Revelation 13, the future world ruler of the time of the great tribulation will not only take to himself absolute political power but will demand the worship of the entire world, will blaspheme the true God, and persecute the saints (Rev 13:4-7). His period of great power will terminate at the second advent of Christ. Like the desolation of Daniel 9:27, which is going to continue until the consummation, the desolation according to this passage will continue until the consummation pictured dramatically in Revelation 19 when the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire. This will be the terminus ad quem of the seventy sevens of Daniel and coincides with the second advent of Jesus Christ to the earth.”
4. To judge the nations: “The judgment of the nations, however, is important as bringing to a close one of the major phases of divine dealings, namely, the times of the Gentiles..It follows the second coming of Christ to the earth, and precedes and is a preparation for His reign on earth for a thousand years” (“The Judgment of the Nations”).
5. To judge Israel<sup>64</sup>: “Israel’s judgment also seems to come at the end of the tribulation” (“The Church in Heaven”).
6. To usher in the Millennial Kingdom — a reign of righteousness:
  - a) “Two out of three Israelites in the land will perish (Zech. 13:8). The others will be rescued when Christ returns. According to Romans 11:26, ‘The deliverer will come from Zion’ and Israel will be delivered from her enemies. ‘All Israel will be saved’ (Rom. 11:26), that is, delivered from their enemies. This introduces the fourth and final stage for Israel, the millennial kingdom” (“How Soon the Rapture?”).
  - b) On 9:24: “The many Messianic passages, however, which view the righteousness as being applied to the earth at the time of the second coming of Christ may be the ultimate explanation.”
  - c) “At the rapture the saints go to heaven; at the second coming the saints come to the earth” (“The Future Work of Christ—Part I: The Coming of Christ for His Church”).<sup>65</sup>

**The Millennial Kingdom →**

<sup>64</sup> “Dispensational” Premillennialists, including Walvoord, have some other judgments sprinkled here and there (and not just the “general” judgments on the earth as recorded in Revelation). For example, see points B, 4 and 5, and F. And here is something Scofield says (*Scofield Study Bible*; on Matthew 25:32): “This judgment of individual Gentiles is to be distinguished from other judgments in Scripture, such as the judgment of the Church..., the judgment of Israel..., and the judgement of the wicked after the millennium (Rv. 20:11-15). The time of this judgment is...at the second coming of Christ after the tribulation.” Ryrie discusses five judgments in his *Ryrie Study Bible* in the back matter (page 2077): Believers works; Gentiles/Nations; Israel; Fallen Angels; Unsaved dead. But I am not discussing them in this paper. Maybe next time.

<sup>65</sup> Note well that “Dispensational” Premillennialists have the saints returning and living in the Millennium in their glorified, imperishable bodies. So they have immortals and mortals, un-glorified and glorified living together.



1000-Year Reign  
of Christ on the  
Earth ends.  
Judgment.  
New Heavens and  
New Earth begin

C. Then, at the end of the 1000-year reign...

1. "Satan must be loosed after a thousand years" ("The Reign of Christ").
2. "The number of those who rebel against God and follow Satan is described as innumerable 'as the sand of the sea.' Thus the last gigantic rebellion of man develops against God's sovereign rule in which the wicked meet their Waterloo. As the battle is joined in verse 9, the great host led by Satan and coming from all directions compasses the camp of the saints... Christ permits the army to assemble and encircle the capital city. No sooner has the army of Satan been assembled, however, than fire comes down from God out of heaven, and the besiegers are destroyed" (ibid.).

D. "Following the destruction of the armies of Satan, the devil is cast into the lake of fire" (ibid.).

E. "The Establishment of the Great White Throne (20:11)" (ibid.).

Final  
judgments  
→

F. "The Resurrection of the Wicked Dead (20:12-13)" (ibid.). Compare with "the judgment of all unsaved men which will occur a thousand years later [after the judgment of the nations, lmt]" ("The Judgment of the Nations").

G. "The Lake of Fire (20:14-15)" ("The Reign of Christ").

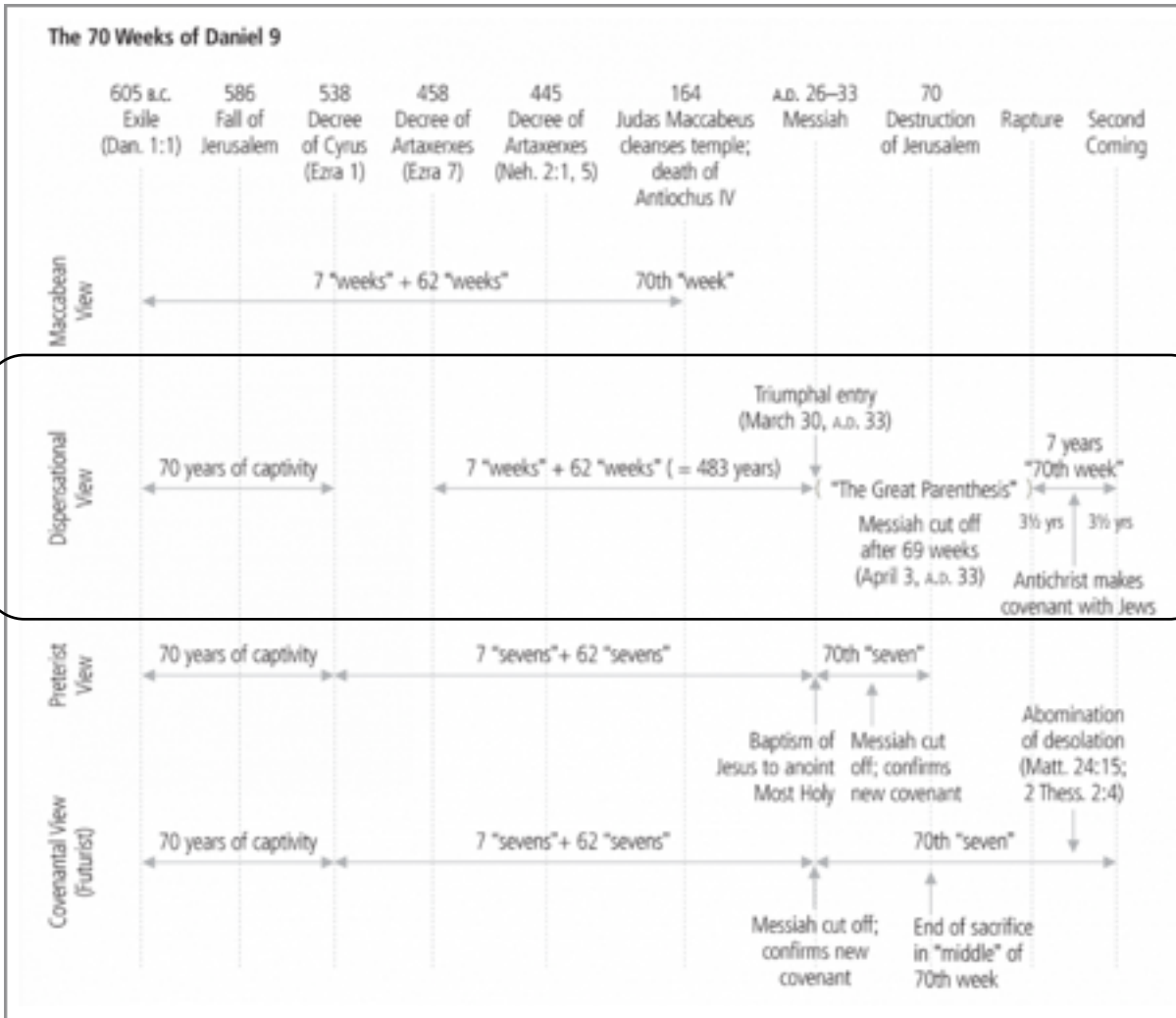
H. "Following the judgment of the great white throne depicted in the closing verses of chapter 20, John's attention is next directed to the new heaven and the new earth which replace the old heaven and the old earth which fled away (20:11)" ("The New Heaven And The New Earth").

Oh, Walvoord ends his comments on Daniel 9:27: "With Israel today back in the land, the fulfillment of these prophecies may not be too long distant." We live in a time in which the "Dispensational" Premillennialists think all this is being fulfilled — the last seven us nearing!

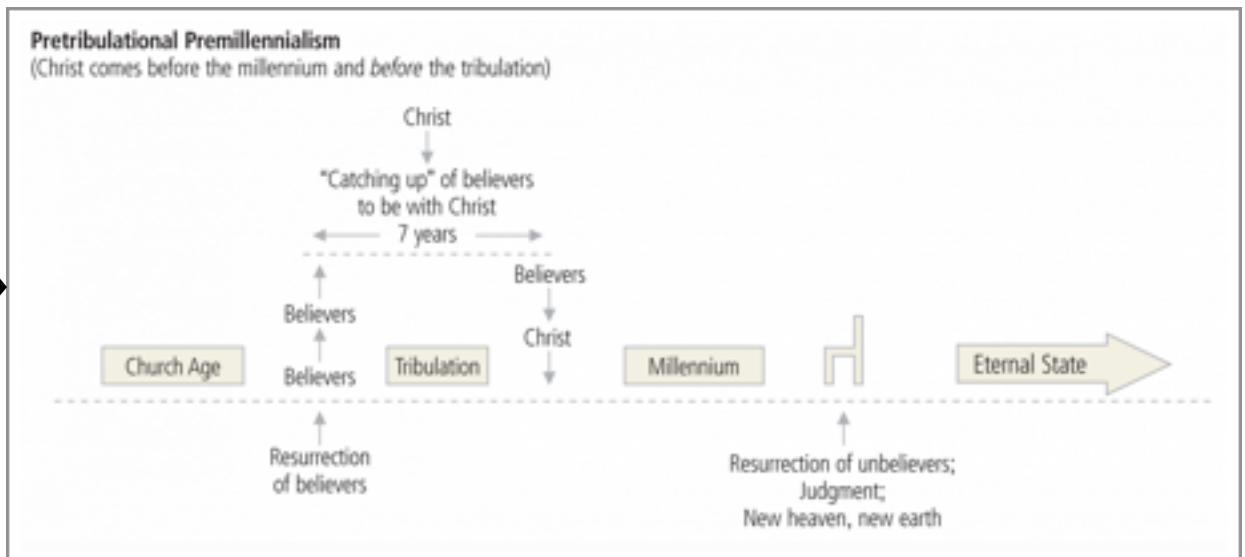
**With the exception of the two charts on the next page, this concludes our brief look the "Dispensational" Premillennialist's *scheme* of prophecy and future things as it relates to Daniel 2, 7, and 9 only.**

**Next, in Part Four, we'll see if their *arguments* and *system of hermeneutics*, as they apply to Daniel 2, 7, and 9, hold water.**

Here are two nice charts about all we have talked about, taken from the *ESV Study Bible*.



There are a variety of views of the 70 sevens; this one represents the perspective we've been looking at.



The *ESV Study Bible* has a bunch of these helpful charts in their Introduction to Revelation; this one represents the Premillennialists we've been discussing.

## PART FOUR: REFUTING ONE MILLENNIALIST'S INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 2, 7, AND 9

### I. WALVOORD'S HERMENEUTICS UNDERMINE WALVOORD'S INTERPRETATION OF THE 70 SEVENS

As a reminder, all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics within quotes are the original author's emphasis.

- A. Note well the **ultimate importance** “Dispensational” Premillennialists attach to this prophecy. From Walvoord himself—
1. Consider the name of his commentary on Daniel, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation*.
  2. Consider his introductory comments on Daniel 9: “Because of the comprehensive and structural nature of Daniel’s prophecies...the study of Daniel, and especially this chapter, is the key to understanding the prophetic Scriptures...one of the most important keys to understanding the Scriptures as a whole” (*Daniel*, 201).
  3. Consider his comment on Daniel 9:25: “The key to the interpretation of the entire passage is found in the phrase, ‘from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.’ The question of the *terminus a quo*, the date on which the seventy sevens begins, is obviously most important both in interpreting the prophecy and in finding suitable fulfillment.”
  4. (Scofield, in his notes on 24-27, also calls this section the “key” to interpreting the establishment of the kingdom.)
  5. **So if something were to happen to his interpretation of Daniel...**
- B. And remember the **ultimate importance** “Dispensationalists” attach to the literal interpretation. Walvoord again says—
1. The maxim stated: “In attempting such a fresh study it is important that the basic hermeneutics of this theological position be borne in mind, namely, that prophecy should be interpreted **literally** unless there is good evidence to the contrary and that the Scripture passages should be allowed to speak for themselves contextually” (“Contemporary Interpretive Problems: The Resurrection of Israel”).
  2. The maxim as a sieve:
    - a) He **rejects** all explanations which do not allow for literal fulfillment, e.g., on 9:25: “beginning it with the decree of Cyrus in 538 B.C. does not permit any reasonably **literal** interpretation of this prophecy.”
    - b) He **accepts** only explanations which do allow for “literal” fulfillment, e.g., on 9:27: “The only system of interpretation, however, that gives any **literal** meaning to this prophecy is to regard the time units as prophetic years.”
- C. **With this in mind, Walvoord begins with a non-literal, “spiritualized” interpretation of “sevens”!** On 9:24:
1. “Actually, the passage does not say ‘years.’”<sup>66</sup>
  2. “Most commentators agree that the time unit is not days.” Why do some? Why the argument at all?
  3. “Furthermore, the fact that there were seventy years of captivity, discussed earlier in the chapter, would seem to imply that years were also in view here.”
  4. “The interpretation of years at least is preferable to days.” This is not a rock solid case. And this is what the key of the Key of the KEY is based on! It’s a house of cards. And note well, **Walvoord has rejected the first *sine qua non*<sup>67</sup> of “Dispensational” Premillennialism — “literal” interpretation.**
  5. Furthermore, he **admits** the assumption. On 9:27: “In the Christological interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27, it is generally assumed that the time units indicated are years. The English word ‘weeks’ is misleading as the Hebrew is actually the plural word for *seven*, without specifying whether it is of days, months, or years.”
- D. **And then Walvoord ends with... whatever!** (I don’t even know what to call this; all that comes to mind is a wax nose — bend it into any position wanted. You take a look.) On 9:25:
- “Sir Robert Anderson [d. 1918; Scotland Yard official; friend of Scofield, lmt] has made a detailed study of a possible chronology for this period beginning with the well-established date of 445 B.C. when Nehemiah’s decree was issued and culminating in A.D. 32 on the very day of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem shortly before His crucifixion. Sir Robert Anderson specifies that the seventy sevens began on the first Nisan, March 14, 445 B.C. and ended on April 6, A.D. 32, the tenth Nisan. The complicated computation is based upon prophetic years of 360 days totaling 173,880 days. This would be exactly 483 years according to biblical chronology. Alva McClain concurs with Anderson.
- “That Sir Robert Anderson is right in building upon a 360-day year seems to be attested by the Scriptures. It is customary for the Jews to have twelve months of 360 days each and then to insert a thirteenth month occasionally when necessary to correct the calendar. The use of the 360-day year is confirmed by the forty-two months of the great tribulation (Rev 11:2; 13:5) being equated with 1,260 days (Rev 12:6; 11:3). The conclusions reached by Anderson, however, are quite complicated in their argument and impossible to restate simply. While the details of Anderson’s arguments may be debated, the plausibility of a literal interpretation, which begins the period in 445 B.C. and culminates just before the death of Christ, makes this view very attractive.
- “The principal difficulty is Anderson’s conclusion that the death of Christ occurred A.D. 32. Generally speaking, while there has been uncertainty as to the precise year of the death of Christ based upon present evidence, most New Testament chronologers move it one or two years earlier, and plausible attempts have been made to adjust Anderson’s chronology to A.D. 30. There has been a tendency, however, in recent New Testament chronology to consider the possibility of a later date for the death of Christ, and no one today is able dogmatically to declare that Sir Robert Anderson’s computations are impossible. Accordingly, the best explanation of the time when the sixty-nine sevens ended is that it occurred shortly before the death of Christ anticipated in Daniel 9:26 as following the sixty-ninth seven. Practically all expositors agree that the death of Christ occurred after the sixty-ninth seven” Note well:
1. Dying in A.D. 32 would have Jesus dying in the 69<sup>th</sup> seven. The “Dispensationalist” cannot have this.
  2. And now most move it back! Making it further back in the 69<sup>th</sup> seven. Again, this really does not fit in the “Dispensationalist’s” literal interpretation of the 70 sevens.

<sup>66</sup> Ryrie’s note in his *Study Bible* on verse 24: “Lit., 70 sevens. Obviously years are meant.” Don’t miss this! By “Lit.” he (and everyone) means “literally.” So, it is “literally” 70 sevens, but then the sevens are not sevens. They are not even weeks. Rather, they are years. I may be really clueless, but sometimes it is hard to take this system seriously.

<sup>67</sup> I refer to Ryrie’s three *sine qua nons* of a true “Dispensationalist”; I’ve included parts of Ryrie’s discussion about this in the Addendum (page 64).

3. But there is a “recent” “tendency” to move it later. Hardly a sound case. But it fits his preconceived idea of the prophecy, so he clings to this one. This is not exegesis. (This is eisegesis.)
  - a) **And this is the key of the Key of the KEY!**
  - b) **And, on the very next page of his book, Walvoord chides someone regarding their date:** “It is obvious that Montgomery is straining to prove a non-Christological interpretation” (*Daniel*, 229)! (It seems to me that Walvoord has a log in his own eye.)

- E. Remember the 7 literal years of literal tribulation rests on this, e.g., on 9:24: “the principle question in the Christological interpretation of this text concerns the nature of fulfillment of the last seven years.” Well, regarding the belief that the 70<sup>th</sup> seven is 7 literal years separated by a big gap from the first 69 seven-year periods— because this belief is based on a bunch of assumptions, the “principle” question is not about the 7 years (as Walvoord says it is); rather, the principle question is about the “Dispensationalist”’s assumptions! (House of cards.)
- F. And all the while, Walvoord dismisses Isaiah 44:28, which says, *It is I who says of Cyrus, ‘He is My shepherd! And he will perform all My desire. And he declares of Jerusalem, ‘She will be built.’ and of the temple, ‘Your foundation will be laid.’”* Was God wrong? If not, this happened about 538 B.C., not 445 B.C. And those seventy sevens are symbolic. (Like, *I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven* [Matthew 18:22].<sup>68, 69</sup>)

## II. SINCE WALVOORD (RIGHTLY) CONNECTS DANIEL 9 WITH CHAPTERS 2 AND 7, LET’S LOOK AT THESE CHAPTERS FOR JUST A MINUTE

If we establish or refute something in chapters 2 and 7, most likely it will impact what we’re saying in chapter 9.

- A. Walvoord (and the rest) **assumes** —it is **never** stated in the text— that the 10 kings of chapter 7 are the 10 toes of chapter 2, thus the 10 kings reign simultaneously.
  1. Note well, Walvoord himself admits this assumption. On 2:40-45: “the interpretation is much preferred that the expression ‘in the days of these kings’ refers to the kings who rule during the last generation of Gentile power. While it is true that this is not specifically related to the toes of the image.... Inasmuch as other passages speak specifically of ten kings in the end times (Dan 7:24; Rev 17:12), it is not unreasonable to hold that this is a reference to the final state of the kingdom and the final rulers.”
  2. But, how many toes did the image have anyway? 11? Because chapter 7 has 10 ±1 kings!
  3. And if the 10 toes are smashed all at once, how can we get an 11<sup>th</sup> toe? From whence comes this 11<sup>th</sup> toe? We demand to know! What of this toe?!
  4. If the 11<sup>th</sup> toe arose before the 10 toes were smashed, then...
    - a) We have an 11-toed image.
    - b) Or, if the 11<sup>th</sup> toe uprooted 3 toes, then we have an 8-toed picture, not 10 (or 11).
  5. And if the 11<sup>th</sup> toe arises after the 10 toes are destroyed, as is the case with the 11<sup>th</sup> king in Daniel 7, then we don’t have 10 toes but 1 toe... and nothing else — no body, no legs, no feet, but an image of just 1 toe!
  6. We need to investigate these toes!
- B. Walvoord (and the rest) **assumes** the destruction of the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom will be sudden. **Where does the text say this??**
  1. The blow may be sudden —one afternoon in Jerusalem God-man died on a cross and three days later He was resurrected; that’s a pretty sudden blow— but nowhere does it say the effect on political kingdoms would suddenly be manifest.
  2. And note well that the Kingdom of Christ did fill the world suddenly: From Acts 2 on, everyone everywhere has been subject to baptism in the name of Jesus (no matter how many toes they have); that is, everyone has been subject to His rule. Compare Acts 2:32-36 with Ephesians 1:20-23. **This is the dispensation of Christ: Ephesians 1:10; 3:9.**
  3. And it doesn’t have to look like the Ruler is ruling in order for the Ruler to be ruling: God rules always — from eternity to eternity. But, in fact, usually it doesn’t look like He is ruling. (You read the Old Testament and see what things usually look like: Does it usually look like God is ruling, or not? But He always rules.)
- C. We must take a quick look at Daniel 2 in connection with Isaiah 2, Joel 2, and Acts 2. Follow me—
  1. Daniel 2 is a Messianic prophecy that speaks of a **mountain** being established in the **latter days**, or “the end of days” (verse 28).<sup>70</sup>
  2. Isaiah 2:2-4 is a Messianic prophecy that speaks of a **mountain** being established in the **last days**. (In his note on the mountain, Scofield includes “Da. 2:35, 44-45”<sup>71</sup>)
  3. Joel 2:28-32 is also a Messianic prophecy that speaks of a **mountain** being established in the **last days**.
  4. Clearly, these three passages refer to the same thing.
  5. Now, Joel himself did not write “Last days,” or “Latter days.” Instead, Joel wrote, *It will come about after this* (verse 28; for what it is worth, the LXX renders it the same: ἔσται μετὰ ταῦτα). But watch what the inspired

<sup>68</sup> It’s not exactly the same, but there is some similarity between ἐβδομηκοντάκις ἑπτὰ of Matthew 18:22 with ἐβδομήκοντα ἑβδομάδες of the Septuagint in Daniel 9:24.

<sup>69</sup> There is a cartoon of Jesus telling His apostles that they have to forgive 70x7 times, and one of the apostles is putting his palm to his forehead and saying, “Great. Not only do I have to forgive, but now I have to do math!” I don’t know who published this cartoon, but why do “Dispensationalists” (and everyone) get it in Matthew 18 but not in Daniel 9?

<sup>70</sup> The LXX renders this ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν. Ἐσχάτων, an adjective, also in Isaiah 2:2, also sprinkled throughout the New Testament (Acts 2:17; Hebrews 1:2; 1 Corinthians 15:26, 52; 2 Peter 3:3; and more), is where we get our word “eschatology” from (the study of last things).

- apostle Peter does with this when he quotes Joel 2:28-32 on the day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2:16-17: *this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: "And it shall be in the last days."*
6. The point is simple and clear: Isaiah 2, Daniel 2, Joel 2, and Acts 2 all refer to the same event, and Peter says that event occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

**To be clear about the position we are in, about our choice: We can either go with God's inspired apostle Peter's inspired interpretation of Joel 2 (and thus Isaiah 2 and Daniel 2), or we can go with the uninspired "Dispensational" Premillennialist's uninspired assumptions and uninspired "literal"-but-actually-not-literal system and interpretations. The choice is obvious.**

### III. JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF, GOD INCARNATE, SAID THE KINGDOM WAS COMING IN THE 1<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

- A. Consider Matthew 26:54 (when Jesus quotes from Daniel 7:13): *Jesus said to him, "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."* The ESV and NETBible both render this "from now on." The NASB has a footnote saying the same thing. (The NIV seems to have sorted out their confusion.<sup>71</sup>)
- B. Consider Mark 1:14-15: *Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."*
- C. But according to the "Dispensational" Premillennialist, the Kingdom comes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century or later.
- D. If Daniel (and the rest of the Old Testament prophets) actually meant a 20<sup>th</sup>-century or later fulfillment...  
 1. Jesus was mistaken, and by at least 20 centuries!  
 2. There was no "postponement": What was not due then could not be *postponed* then; Jesus just got it wrong. In fact, "Postponement" (and other such words/explanations) requires that the Premillennialist himself believes the Kingdom was actually supposed to be set up in the 1<sup>st</sup> century! But then Premillennialists say the Old Testament teaches an after-1<sup>st</sup> century establishment. Compare Ryrrie, "The question is not whether the crucifixion would have been avoided but whether the Davidic kingdom was postponed," and "it was not the death of Christ and His resurrection which demanded postponement, but rather an unforeseen age" (*Disp.*, 175, 176). Which is it? Was it "postponed" (assuming the OT taught 1<sup>st</sup> century establishment) or after-1<sup>st</sup> century? It cannot be both. Yet the Premillennialist asserts both.
- E. Again, for more evidences the Kingdom was established in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, see Part Two, IV.
- F. A hypothetical conversation between a Jew and a "Dispensational" Premillennialist:  
 Jew: How could Jesus Christ be God and Messiah if he failed to establish the Kingdom of the prophets?  
 Mill. (sic; et al.) He didn't fail, the Kingdom wasn't due at that time.  
 Jew: He said, "The time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand."  
 Mill. Yes, but he postponed its establishment.  
 Jew: I see, you mean it was scheduled to be set up in the 1<sup>st</sup> century but he postponed it?  
 Mill. Well...not exactly. The prophets in reality prophesied of a 20<sup>th</sup> century establishment, so although it was offered in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, it was scheduled for the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
 Jew: You mean the prophets said: "The time will be fulfilled in the 20<sup>th</sup> century!" and Jesus said: "The time is fulfilled in the 1<sup>st</sup> century"? So Jesus denied what the prophets taught. Now I **know** something is really wrong — you've got to choose between Jesus and the prophets. If you go with Christ you indict the prophets with being in error and therefore they are not of God. If you go with the Old Testament prophets you indict Jesus as a teacher of error therefore he is neither God nor the Messiah. Besides, he is not only disagreed with the prophets, he failed to set up the Kingdom.  
 Mill. Well, I can't work all that out but I do know the Old Testament does teach a 1<sup>st</sup> century fulfillment.  
 Jew: Then Jesus was right in saying the time was fulfilled in the first century. If that's the case, he failed to establish the Kingdom and therefore was not the Messiah. Or else his postponing of the Kingdom indicts your exegesis of the Old Testament as false. You say the prophets scheduled the Kingdom for the 20<sup>th</sup> century but no one can postpone something which wasn't due for 1900 years. You say he postponed, in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, what wasn't due for 1900 more years. Did he ever say he postponed it?  
 Mill. Well, not really — but he must have since it wasn't set up in the first.  
 Jew: So the postponement notion is really your idea to save Jesus the embarrassment of looking like a failure. "Postponement" requires that he believed it was to be set up in the first century. And still you say the Old Testament scheduled it for the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At least I don't profess to believe in Jesus—you make him look like a fool.... You may be his friends, but you get him in more trouble than we his opponents do.... And you expect me to accept Christ as God?!  
 (McGuiggan, *Kingdom*, pages 93-94; this bolding is in the original)

**FROM WHAT WE DID IN THIS LITTLE EXERCISE —EXAMINING THE "DISPENSATIONAL" PREMILLENNIALIST'S SYSTEM OF HERMENEUTICS AND ARGUMENTS CONCERNING DANIEL 2, 7, AND 9, I REMAIN CONFIDENT IN MY KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROPHECIES IN DANIEL!**

<sup>71</sup> Previous translations of the NIV rendered ἀπ' ἄρτι, "In the future." In the 2011 translation they changed it to, "From now on." Rick Duggin wrote Dr. Douglas J. Moo, Chair of the Committee on Bible Translation for the NIV. Rick also forwarded Dr. Moo's reply to me. It is telling: "'from now on' is arguably a more straightforward rendering of the Greek. I suspect that we also reflecting (sic) the trend of recent scholarship to view this promise not as related to the second coming but to the installation of Jesus as Son of Man in glory at his ascension." Interestingly enough, they always rendered it "from now on" in the same chapter in verse 29. So too in John 14:7 and Revelation 14:13. In John 13:7 they rendered it "now." In Mathew 23:39, "Again."

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 comes to mind:

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ, and we are ready to punish all disobedience, whenever your obedience is complete.*

(If only I could take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ as easily as we can destroy speculations! God help me!)

#### IV. AND ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FOURTH KINGDOM HAVING TO BE AN INSTANTANEOUS, “CATASTROPHIC SUDDENNESS” (MACARTHUR), ETC.

- A. The “Dispensationalists” say over and over again, for example, “According to Daniel’s prophecy, the ten-toe stage is simultaneous, that is, the kingdoms existed side by side and were destroyed by one sudden catastrophic blow” (Walvoord, *Daniel*, on 2:40-45).
- B. But, with this in mind, compare what the inspired prophet Jeremiah says **about Babylon’s destruction** in Jeremiah 25 verse 12 (what Daniel may have been reading in Daniel 9): *‘Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,’ declares the Lord, ‘for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.’*
  1. It’s going to happen “then” and “when” the “70 years are completed” — that is, in 539 B.C. when Cyrus conquered Babylon and sent Israel home.
  2. But when we observe history, we see that Babylon did not become “desolate” for another 300-400 years after Cyrus captured it. And it’s not like this is hidden information: For example, Wikipedia says this about Babylon, “Under Alexander, Babylon again flourished as a center of learning and commerce. However, following Alexander’s death in 323 B.C. in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, his empire was divided amongst his generals, the Diadochi, and decades of fighting soon began. The constant turmoil virtually emptied the city of Babylon. A tablet dated 275 B.C. states that the inhabitants of Babylon were transported to Seleucia, where a palace and a temple (Esagila) were built. With this deportation, Babylon became insignificant as a city, although more than a century later, sacrifices were still performed in its old sanctuary” (“Babylon”).
  3. Was God wrong? (Do we have to answer this question?)
  4. And note well: Regarding Jeremiah’s prophecy about Babylon, what Jeremiah prophesied did happen **in principle**: While the *picture* did not happen, the *point* of the picture happened in 539 B.C. — after 539 B.C., Babylon would never again be a world power. And no one denies this.
  5. And note well: Regarding Jeremiah’s prophecy about Babylon, despite the text **seemingly** implying/indicating it would be an immediate and sudden desolation, happening instantaneously and with catastrophic suddenness that is verifiably observable in history, **actually**, God never intended it to **happen** this way OR to **be interpreted** this way.<sup>72,73</sup>
  6. Now apply all this to Daniel’s prophecies and to those who say such things as the 4<sup>th</sup> kingdom was not crushed in the 1<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>74</sup>
- C. Also, remember what Jesus says about the gradual growth of the Kingdom in the parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven (Matthew 13:31-33).<sup>75</sup>

AGAIN, FROM OUR STUDY OF THE “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALIST’S SYSTEM OF HERMENEUTICS AND ARGUMENTS AS THEY APPLY TO DANIEL 2, 7, AND 9, I REMAIN VERY CONFIDENT IN MY UNDERSTANDING OF DANIEL’S PROPHECIES!

Now, the rest of this nice little paper briefly deals with “Dispensational” Premillennialism in general.  
(Of course, all of it bears on our discussion of Daniel 2, 7, and 9.)

<sup>72</sup> Ryrie essentially admits this about Babylon in his comments on Jeremiah 25:12 and 50:13. His note on 25:12 points to his note on 50:13, which is: “*desolate*. The Persians captured Babylon in 539 B.C. (Dan. 5:30-31). In 514 Darius Hystaspes put down a revolt and partially destroyed the walls. Xerxes demolished the walls and temples of Babylon in 478.” But, at the same time, Ryrie doesn’t include another 300 years of Babylon’s history. Why didn’t Ryrie include the rest of Babylon’s lingering, prolonged downfall?

<sup>73</sup> For what it is worth, the word “desolation” in Jeremiah 25:12 is the same word —or a derivative of it— as the word “desolation” in Daniel 9:25-27 (šāmēm). Of course, as applied to Jerusalem in A.D. 70, destruction did happen suddenly. I guess the point is, the concept of destruction can include both immediate AND prolonged (even over hundreds of years), and only context, and history, help us understand which God had in mind, not the word itself.

<sup>74</sup> Interestingly, Walvoord notes that Rome stopped growing in A.D. 117: “The Roman Empire continued to grow gradually for four centuries or more (reaching its height in A.D. 117)” (note on Daniel 7:7-8). Walvoord is looking for a literal fulfillment of the end of Rome; how does this *not* fit? (Rome didn’t increase any more; Christ’s Kingdom did, and still is. It fits.)

<sup>75</sup> Ryrie’s note in his *Study Bible* on the Mustard Seed is, “The kingdom will grow quickly.” Scofield says, “Rapid.” I may be way off, but I have never gotten that out of this parable; in fact, among other points I get out of these parables, I get the opposite of “rapid.” Am I wrong?

Scofield’s note on the Leaven is, “The parable is, therefore, a warning that true doctrine, represented by the flour, would be corrupted by false doctrine....” Fellow “Dispensational” Premillennialist John MacArthur says this about the parable of the Leaven, “Some interpreters suggest that since leaven is nearly always a symbol of evil in Scripture...it must carry that connotation here as well. They make the leaven some evil influence inside the kingdom. But that twists Jesus’ actual words and violates the context....” Note well these are two “Dispensational” Premillennialists arguing against each other. Let them argue among themselves (Acts 23:6)!

## PART FIVE: A QUICK LOOK AT THE MILLENNIALIST'S "LITERAL" HERMENEUTIC IN GENERAL

Jeff asked me to speak on Daniel 9 — including how it relates to chapters 2 and 7, and what Premillennialists say about it. I've given it my best shot. But there is a lot more to Premillennialism. So in case no other speaker addresses it in detail (mine was the only title with Premillennialism in it) the rest of this paper is a quick look at the broader system. Also, this (and more) form sort of a polemical backdrop to dealing with "Dispensationalism" in any passage, including Daniel 9, and I use some of it in my presentation. I hope it is helpful.

### I. FIRST, HOW THEY DEFINE "LITERAL" AND "HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL"

- A. Note well these are not two systems of hermeneutics but two different names for one system. And as Ryrie says, this "system of hermeneutics...is usually called literal interpretation" (*Disp.*, 47).
- B. Geisler gives a very complete explanation in his *Systematic Theology* (4:415-417). We'll keep this brief.
1. Regarding "Literal":
    - a) "The word *literal* as used in hermeneutics comes from the Latin *sensus literalis*, meaning the literal sense of the text, as opposed to a nonliteral or spiritualized sense...the understanding which any person of normal intelligence would get, without any special spiritual gifts and without any 'code' or 'key.'"
    - b) "Another way to describe the Scripture's literal meaning is as the normal, everyday, common understanding of its terms. There is nothing irregular or unusual about the way the words are being used; they are given the meaning that they normally have in common communication. As stated by Charles Ryrie (b. 1925), the correct means of interpretation is 'the basic hermeneutical principle of literal, normal, or plain interpretation.'"
    - c) **And from page 448:** "If understood in the sense that all the Bible is literally true but not all is true literally, then *literal* seems to be the best term available."
  2. Regarding "Historical-grammatical":
    - a) "The word *historical* in this term means the sentences should be understood in their historical setting; they should not be taken out of the space-time, cultural context in which they were uttered."
    - b) "The term *grammatical* indicates the true meaning of a sentence is rooted in its grammar, emerging from structure wherein all parts of speech—including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, prepositions, etc.— are placed in a form from which a specific meaning can be derived. Alleged textual meaning that ignores and/or is opposed to grammatical structure is not the correct meaning. The historical-grammatical method involves giving each word 'the same exact basic meaning it would have in normal, ordinary, customary usage, whether employed in writing, speaking, or thinking.'"
- C. The following may be helpful when trying to figure out what they mean: "Dispensational" Premillennialists recognize genre **but do not take it into consideration** (so they claim) when applying the literal system to it:
1. Ryrie, a traditional "Dispensationalist": "one of the pitfalls is to claim that 'each genre represents truth in its own way and makes unique demands for how it should be read'" (*Disp.*, 90). The "Dispensationalist" would assert there is no genre that makes "unique" demands; rather, apply the literal hermeneutic to all genres.
  2. Geisler, fitting in the "Modified" "Dispensationalist" class, is a little softer but still ends up in the same place: Compare "the progressive genre-driven hermeneutic has a retroactive move of its own, reading the Old Testament in light of New Testament events," with "Different literary genres must be distinguished — taking them all literally will obscure the textual meaning" (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:440, 420). In the second quote Geisler acknowledges that genre must be taken into consideration; in the first quote genre must never be a primary consideration.
- D. In summary, as Ryrie says simply, "Prophecies are to be *normally* interpreted" (*Disp.*, 91).

### II. SECOND, THE IMPORTANCE THEY GIVE THE LITERAL SYSTEM OF HERMENEUTICS

- A. Geisler: "A text's correct interpretation is the historical-grammatical interpretation" (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:418).
- B. Ryrie:
1. "**consistent** literalism is the logical and obvious principle of interpretation" (*Disp.*, 103). Remember, consistency is the key, so they say.
  2. On "Dispensationalism" itself (that is, not Premillennialism), which "Dispensationalists" claim necessarily follows from the literal hermeneutic: "Only dispensationalism can maintain unity and diversity at the same time and offer a consistent system of interpretation," and "the most helpful tool of consistent, noncontradictory interpretation of Scripture" (*ibid.*, 39, 14).

### III. RELATED: NOTE WELL THEIR EXPRESSED MOTIVE FOR ADHERING TO THIS LITERAL HERMENEUTIC

- A. Walvoord: "If a person does not interpret the plain statements of prophecy literally, there is no rule by which any consensus of meaning can be established" (as quoted by Geisler, *Sys.Theo.*, 4:415).
- B. Geisler: "Literal interpretation is the only 'sane and safe check on the imagination of man'" (*ibid.*, 4:421).

Another helpful reminder that all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics *within* quotes are the original author's emphasis.

- C. Ryrie: “If one does not use the plain, normal, or literal method of interpretation, all objectivity is lost. What check would there be on the variety of interpretations that man’s imagination could produce if there were not an objective standard, which the literal principle provides?”<sup>76</sup> (*Disp.*, 92).
- D. Of course, this suggests an approach: Teach them “SCENI” (or, “CENI”), “Silence,” “Presumption,” et al.

#### IV. THIRD, THE **FORCED CONCLUSION(S) THEY CLAIM FOLLOW FROM USING THE LITERAL SYSTEM: “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM**

- A. Geisler: “Because dispensationalists non-negotiably maintain literal interpretation of Scripture, they are forced to acknowledge a literal national future for Israel” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:448).
- B. Ryrie: “If plain or normal interpretation is the only valid hermeneutical principle and if it is consistently applied, it will cause one to be a dispensationalist. As basic as one believes normal interpretation to be, and as consistently as he uses it interpreting Scripture, to that extent he will of necessity become a dispensationalist” (*Disp.*, 24; note well that this book is really a “contemporary apologetic for dispensationalism” (page 7), not Premillennialism — but they stand and fall together, because they both use the same hermeneutic).

#### V. **WRONG! A BRIEF INTERRUPTION TO CONSIDER SEVERAL EXAMPLE PASSAGES THAT PROVE GOD DID NOT INTEND ALL PROPHETIC SPEECH TO BE TAKEN LITERALLY**

- A. Malachi 4:5 (also see 3:1) says, *I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.*
1. A literal, historical-grammatical interpretation would have Elijah resurrected.<sup>77</sup>
  2. But Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:7-14 and 17:10, 13: *John himself is Elijah and Elijah already came.... He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.*
- B. Genesis 3:15 says, *I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel:* A literal, historical-grammatical understanding of this passage would have an epic battle between men and snakes culminating in Jesus killing one by striking it on the head, but only after the snake gets Jesus on the heel.
- C. **Note well even “Dispensational” Premillennialists know this point is true.**
1. For example, every “Dispensational” Premillennialist acknowledges that the prophecy in Genesis 3:15 refers to Christ’s work on the cross and not a literal, man-snake battle.
  2. For example, every “Dispensational” Premillennialist acknowledges Nebuchadnezzar’s statue was a symbol only.
  3. For example, every “Dispensational” Premillennialist acknowledges the beasts of Daniel 7 were not literal beasts.
  4. For example, Ezekiel 34:23-24 (and 37:24-25) says, *I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken.*
    - a) A literal, historical-grammatical interpretation would have David literally resurrected.
    - b) But compare Ryrie’s note here: “Not King David resurrected, but David’s greatest descendant, the Messiah” (*Ryrie Study Bible*).
  5. Consider their approach to the seventy sevens of Daniel 9:24-27: Not one of them leaves the sevens as just sevens but claims they symbolize years.
- D. As the author of Hebrews wrote, *God spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways* (Hebrews 1:1; compare Numbers 12:6-8).
- E. And from III, A (above), about “If a person does not interpret the plain statements of prophecy literally, there is no rule by which any consensus of meaning can be established” (Walvoord, as quoted by Geisler, *Sys.Theo.*, 4:415):
1. First, if non-consensus implies a system of interpretation is invalid, then the literal hermeneutic of “Dispensational” Premillennialism is the wrongest of them all: Premillennialists disagree on too much to write about here; pick up any two authors and start reading. In fact, pick up any one author.
  2. If this were true, then we’d be UNable to either understand or come to consensus on any one usage of non-literal language in the Bible. Not one. But we —including Premillennialists— do! For example, though Genesis 3:15 is never quoted by another author in the Bible, Geisler, MacArthur, Ryrie, and Scofield (the four “Dispensational” Premillennialists’s commentaries I happen to have on my desk while writing this note) all tell us that this refers to Christ. In short, while they all abandoned the literal hermeneutic they did not abandon “objectivity” (Ryrie); in fact, to play on what Geisler wrote somewhere, This text’s iucorrect interpretation is the historical-grammatical interpretation.

<sup>76</sup> Note well: In great part, these folks are railing against the flawed “allegorical” hermeneutic of the Middle Ages and earlier — even as far back as Origen, and Justin Martyr before him. It was (is) a system which, to be sure, was (is) full of error. For example, Justin Martyr sees in the twelve bells on the robe of the high priest a type of the twelve apostles, whose sound goes forth into all the world (compare: “Dialogue with Trypho,” chapter 42). Wilder examples could be multiplied.

<sup>77</sup> In my opinion, Scofield strains to get a literal Elijah literally coming in the literal future. Regardless of my opinion, Scofield says, “John the Baptist had already come with a ministry so completely in the spirit and power of Elijah’s future ministry...that in a typical sense it could be said: ‘Elijah has already come.’” So Scofield gets it, but then he adds. See how often they do this! And every time they do, I am reassured in my understanding. More about this to follow.



## VI. BACK TO OBSERVING THEM DISCUSS THIS “LITERAL” SYSTEM OF THEIRS — WHAT IT IS NOT

- A. By way of a fuller explanation about the literal system, Charles Ryrie has this to say in his *Dispensationalism*:
1. “This does not preclude or exclude correct understanding of types, illustrations, apocalypses, and other genres” (page 47).
  2. “The literalist (so called) is not one who denies that *figurative* language, that *symbols*, are used in prophecy, nor does he deny that great *spiritual* truths are set forth therein; his position is, simply, that prophecies are to be *normally* interpreted (i.e. according to the received laws of language) as any other utterances are interpreted — that which is manifestly figurative being so regarded” (page 91).
  3. I’m confused, because elsewhere Ryrie pounds on “**consistent**” “literalism.” Maybe Geisler will help; he’s usually very thorough.
- B. Geisler on “What the Literal Method *Is Not*” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:417)
1. “It does not eliminate Spiritual application” (page 417):
    - a) “the literal meaning, once determined, can be applied in legitimate spiritual ways. Sometimes the New Testament does this in its use of the Old Testament” (ibid.).
    - b) “While there is only *one interpretation* of a text—the one literally meant by the author—there are *many implications*. This is why the New Testament use of the Old Testament sometimes seems removed from a proper interpretation; the New Testament is often not giving an interpretation, but an implication or application of that text. *A text’s correct interpretation is the historical-grammatical interpretation*” (page 418).
    - c) “There is only one *meaning* in a text — the one meant by the author. Simultaneously, there are many implications and applications of that text; God is aware of these, and subsequent readers can be aided by later revelation to see them” (page 441).
  2. “It does not eliminate figures of speech” (page 418):
    - a) “It can be difficult to determine when a passage should not be taken literally” (ibid.).
    - b) “It recognizes figures of speech within the literal meaning” (page 451).
    - c) “Jesus told many parables...but even though the literary genre was parabolic, nevertheless there was a literal truth conveyed. While the parable is symbolic, it is symbolic of an actual reality” (ibid.).
  3. “It does not eliminate the use of types,” and “This fulfillment is in no sense a spiritualization or allegorization of any literal thing or event; it is a literal fulfillment of the literal type by a literal antitype” (page 419).
  4. “It does not eliminate the use of symbols”; compare, “The Bible is *filled* with symbols; even so, each symbol is emblematic of something literal. Take, for example, Revelation, which contains symbols from beginning to end, yet every one of them represents something literal and is so interpreted by the book itself” (ibid.).
  5. “It does not eliminate the use of parables and allegories”:
    - a) “Though the many parables of Jesus are not to be taken literally, they convey a literal point nonetheless” (page 420).
    - b) “Different literary genres must be distinguished — taking them all literally will obscure the textual meaning” (ibid.).
    - c) “every parable or allegory conveys a literal truth” (page 421).
  6. Geisler has a few more nuggets for us.<sup>78</sup>
    - a) Compare “thoughts logically implied in other thoughts, whether or not the one is expressing the thoughts is aware they are implied” (page 414), and “while both God and the human author affirmed the same meaning/interpretation, the human author may or may not have had all the implications/applications in mind” (page 450).
    - b) “The meaning cannot change, even though the application can; this is an instance of the ‘one meaning, many applications’ dictum of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic” (page 444).
  7. Again, all this seems to fly in the face of “**consistent**” literal interpretation, the cardinal point of their hermeneutic. Unfortunately, my confusion will increase as we go along.

## VII. HERE IS THEIR INSTRUCTION ON HOW NOT! TO THINK. DON’T! MISS! THIS!!!

- A. When considering “Dispensational” Premillennialism’s system, do not think!
- B. At least, this is what “Dispensational” giant Charles Ryrie tells us.
1. “How can the church be distinct from the kingdom purpose and yet be related to it? We must not try to understand such a seeming paradox by obliterating the distinction between the two purposes (as the antidispenationalist does) any more than such a procedure would satisfactorily harmonize sovereignty and responsibility. The truth must stand even though it may seem, to the human mind, to involve a paradox” (*Disp.*, 158).<sup>79</sup>
  2. “If the dispensational emphasis on the distinctiveness of the church seems to result in a ‘dichotomy,’ let it stand as long as it is a result of literal, historical-grammatical interpretation” (ibid., 166).
  3. Note well what Frank E. Gaebelien —vice-chairman for Oxford University Press’s preparation of the *New Scofield*

<sup>78</sup> By the way, if you appreciate these quotes, you’ll want to see the accompanying list of quotes from Geisler and Ryrie; see the Addendum.

<sup>79</sup> Note well that this approach seems to be standard operating procedure for these guys. Remember what MacArthur said about Calvinists being “Dispensationalists,” “Why Every Self-Respecting Calvinist is Premillennial.” With this in mind, consider Ryrie’s statement very carefully, “any more than such a procedure would satisfactorily harmonize sovereignty and responsibility”: This is a reference to predestination, etc.; and compare it with what Philip Schaff (German Reformed) wrote about Calvinism. In one example, Schaff, acknowledging the tension between reason and Calvinist teaching on Predestination, writes this about John Calvin: “But while his inexorable logic pointed to this abyss, his moral and religious sense shrunk from the last logical inference of making God the author of sin; for this would be blasphemous, and involve the absurdity that God abhors and justly punishes what he himself decreed. He attributes to Adam the freedom of choice, by which he might have obtained eternal life, but he willfully disobeyed. Hence his significant phrase: ‘Man falls, God’s providence so ordaining it; yet he falls by his own guilt.’ Here we have supralapsarian logic combined with ethical logic. He adds, however, that we do not know the reason why Providence so ordained it, and that it is better for us to contemplate the guilt of man than to search after the hidden predestination of God. ‘There is,’ he says, ‘a learned ignorance of things which it is neither permitted nor lawful to know, and avidity of knowledge is a species of madness.’ Here is, notwithstanding this wholesome caution, the crucial point where the rigorous logic of Calvin and Augustin breaks down, or where the moral logic triumphs over intellectual logic. To admit that God is the author of sin would destroy his holiness, and overthrow the foundation of morality and religion. This would not be Calvinism, but fatalism and pantheism. The most rigorous predestinarian is driven to the alternative of choosing between logic and morality. Augustin and Calvin could not hesitate for a moment” (*History of the Christian Church*, 8:554-555). Just don’t think! Sad.

(Note well, the statement “a learned ignorance of things which it is neither permitted nor lawful to know, and avidity of knowledge is a species of madness” is true, at least to a degree; compare Deuteronomy 29:29. But the valid application of this principle is not to things that are *against* reason, but to things that are *beyond* reason and revelation [and observation]. But as it is, it seems both Calvinism and “Dispensational” Premillennialism are contrary to reason. How am I wrong?)

*Reference Bible* and Style Editor for the translation committee of the New International Version of the Bible— says about Ryrie’s book: “this book is mandatory reading for those who have attacked dispensationalism” (ibid., 8). If this is the best they have....

**VIII. HERE IS THEIR INSTRUCTION ABOUT HOW NOT! TO USE THE NEW TESTAMENT. DON’T! MISS!! THIS!!!**

- A. When interpreting Old Testament prophecy, do **not** read the Old Testament in light of the New Testament!
- B. At least, this is what the “Dispensational” Premillennialist giants will tell you.
  - 1. Norman Geisler (from his *Systematic Theology*, vol. 4):
    - a) “the Old Testament should *not* be interpreted in light of the New, because later writings, inspired or not, do not change the meaning of earlier writings” (page 587).
    - b) “A common thread in these points [of the Traditional Covenantal view — a type of progressive “Dispensationalist,” lmt] is a retroactive method of interpretation: Rather than the Old Testament being interpreted within its own context, the New Testament is read back into the Old Testament” (page 430).
    - c) “the amillennial hermeneutic is both retroactive and unbiblical” (page 587).
    - d) “the retroactive hermeneutic is seriously misdirected as to Old Testament promises and prophecies about Israel — it is not exegetical but eisegetical” (ibid.).
    - e) **And Geisler thinks it is not good to assert that** “These texts have a message that extends beyond the original setting in which they were given” (page 440; speaking against “Progressive” “Dispensationalists” and the Covenantal hermeneutic, and referring to OT texts and interpreting them retroactively).
  - 2. Charles Ryrie (from his *Dispensationalism*):
    - a) “Some nondispensationalists argue against dispensationalism and a literal hermeneutic on the basis of their understanding of how the New Testament authors use the Old” (page 99; Ryrie won’t actually address this for another 125 pages, and then does a pretty poor job of it).
    - b) Regarding Old Testament AND New Testament prophecy: “Actually, we are in a better position to understand than the writers of the New Testament themselves” (page 235). **The arrogance!**

**As we have seen in this little study of some of the “Dispensational” Premillennialist’s general, “literal” system of hermeneutics, the thing is riddled with holes.**

**And, the summary of these last two major points is: “Do not look at the NT. Rather, look only at the OT and US! And if what we say is illogical, stop thinking about it!”**

**Some “hermeneutic”!**

**And I remain confident in my knowledge and faith and hermeneutic and understanding of prophecy in general!**

**IX. WHILE THEY ARE SAYING SOME QUESTIONABLE THINGS, HERE ARE SOME MORE** To me, these would be funny if they were not so sad. (Geisler wrote them in volume 4 of his *Systematic Theology*.)

- A. “Unless Premillennialism Is True, God Loses The War of History... If the Paradise lost is not a Paradise regained, then God will have lost the war; if physical death is not reversed by physical resurrection, then satan obtains ultimate victory; if literal perfection is not restored, then God will have lost what He created” (page 565).
- B. “Unless Premillennialism Is True, History Has No Consummation.... Without a literal historical millennium, there is no real end to history” (ibid.).
- C. “a denial of Christ’s literal reign is, in effect, a denial of His literal resurrection body” (page 535).
- D. “If there were to be no future literal kingdom, this was His last opportunity to correct them” (ibid.; regarding Acts 1:1-6).
- E. “If Christ is coming before the Millennium at a time we know not, we must live with a constant sense of expectation (Luke 19:13; John 9:4). Believing that time is limited, that Christ may come at any moment, and that the eternal status of human souls is on the balance heightens the realization that any hour might be our last to reach someone for Jesus” (page 567).

## PART SIX: THE HARM! OF MILLENNIALISM —“DISPENSATIONAL” OR OTHER<sup>80</sup>— IN GENERAL

Note well, while we must never attribute to anyone any doctrine they themselves do not recognize, we must point out the logical conclusion(s) of their position.<sup>81</sup> Having said that, some of what follows they do teach, and some of what follows are implications of what they teach.

### I. FIRST, CONSIDER WHAT GOD HIMSELF SAYS THROUGH HIS INSPIRED APOSTLE PETER IN 2 PETER 3:16 ABOUT DISTORTING SCRIPTURE

- A. Namely, *The untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*
- B. And note this is in the context of the coming day of the Lord (compare verses 3-15).
- C. So this is nothing to play with. Yes, this is “a matter of salvation”! In this section, we’ll see more about why.

### II. PREMILLENNIALISM NULLIFIES THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST OR PROVIDES TWO WAYS OF SALVATION

- A. Either, Jesus did not come to earth to die for the atonement of sin (but He did die for another reason);
- B. Or, there are two paths of salvation; namely, one path in the Church and another path in the Kingdom:
  1. The Kingdom is a path to salvation: “The crucifixion would have been necessary as foundational to the establishment of the kingdom even if the Church age had never been conceived in the purposes of God. The question is not whether the crucifixion would have been avoided but whether the Davidic kingdom was postponed,” and “There is no kingdom for Israel apart from the suffering Savior, as well as the reigning King,” and “The Crucifixion was as necessary to the establishing of the kingdom as it was to the building of the church. The kingdom has redemptive as well as legal and political aspects” (all by Ryrie, *Disp.*, 175).
  2. But at the same time, the Church, though raptured before the Tribulation, returns to reign on the earth with Christ: “dispensationalists have always taught that the church will share in the rule of that kingdom... At the same time, dispensationalists maintain the separated place and distinct blessings of national Israel restored and regenerated in the millennial kingdom” (ibid., 157-158).
  3. Again, according to this, during the Millennium one can be saved either in the Kingdom or in the Church (which is in the Kingdom).
- C. I’ll put this here: Scofield makes a note (on Matthew 16:20) that seems to imply the crucifixion et al. would not have been necessary for the Kingdom, “The disciples had been proclaiming Jesus as the Christ, that is, the covenanted King of a kingdom promised to the Jews and very near. The Church, on the other hand, must be built upon the testimony to Him as crucified, risen from the dead, ascended, and made ‘head over everything for the church’ (Eph. 1:20-30). The former testimony was ended; the new testimony was not yet ready because the blood of the new covenant had not yet been shed, but our Lord began to speak of His death and resurrection. It is a turning point of significance.” Again, let them argue amongst themselves (Acts 23:6).

Have I mentioned that all bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics within quotes are the original author’s emphasis?

### III. PREMILLENNIALISM CHANGES THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH — WHAT IT IS NOT

- A. Ryrie says in his *Dispensationalism*, “promoting kingdom righteousness in the present time is not the mandate of the church” (page 207). Rather, this mandate is for the Kingdom (as he says again and again).
- B. In fact, Ryrie says (about the Millennial Kingdom) that the “third aspect of the *sine qua non* of dispensationalism...concerns the *underlying purpose of God in the world...namely the glory of God*” (ibid., 48).
  1. Note that Ryrie means displaying God’s glory and righteousness in a literal, political kingdom in which its citizens are righteous.
  2. A quick comparison of “Light” in Romans 2:19 (the purpose of national Israel) and John 1:9-18 and 8:12 (a purpose of Jesus, God incarnate) and Matthew 5:14-16 and Philippians 2:15 (the purpose of the Church<sup>82</sup>) shows that the role of the Church is to manifest God’s glory.

<sup>80</sup> We often (usually?) hear about “Dispensational” Premillennialists. Ryrie speaks of Millennialists who are not “Dispensationalists”: “The premillennialist who is nondispensational also compromises the literal principle” (*Disp.*, 95). Geisler speaks of “Modified Covenantalism” (see, for example, page 500 of his *Systematic Theology*, volume 4); these folks hold to the “literal” hermeneutic (so they would claim) but they do not hold to the millennium; that is, they believe the promises in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the Church, but they also anticipate a future, literal fulfillment of the Old Testament covenants to ethnic Israel, but not in a literal 1000-year reign of Christ, but in the new heaven and new earth. It gets pretty confusing. (Or, as someone pointed out to me, “ERROR gets pretty confusing!”)

<sup>81</sup> For example, many (if not most) “Dispensationalists” do not teach that Christ’s rejection by the Jews was unforeseen by God. Nor do they teach that the Church is an afterthought; rather, they believe God *preplanned* it all but did not *reveal* it until the New Testament.

• Ryrie speaks of the the Kingdom’s “preplanned rejection,” and “The crucifixion would have been necessary as foundational to the establishment of the kingdom even if the Church age had never been conceived in the purposes of God” (*Disp.*, 177, 175).

• Geisler, under “The Old Testament Groundwork for the Church,” writes, “Though the church began on the earth after the time of Christ, the Old Testament made preparation for it. The church, ordained by God from all eternity, also began as prescheduled,” and “The church involves a mystery that was not understood in the Old Testament (Eph. 3:1-5; cf. Col. 1:26), but God was then making preparation for the church regardless. All the plans to choose a nation through which God would bless the world (Gen. 12:1-3) were also plans for the church to be built on Christ” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:19). But Geisler also believes “Prophecy skips over the church age” (ibid., 592), and he objects to the statement, “contrary to traditional dispensationalism, the church is predicted in the Old Testament” (ibid.).

<sup>82</sup> Technically, the word in Philippians 2:15 is different, but the root and the concept are present.

**A quick question: If God *the Father* can rule the world without being seen, why can't God *the Son* also rule the world without being seen?! "Must I be in heaven with Him just to know the Lord is reigning?"<sup>83</sup>**

- C. Also, Scofield, in his note on 1 Corinthians 15:24, which is entitled "Kingdom In The New Testament, Summary," says the Kingdom "has for its object the restoration of divine authority in the earth." As with Ryrie, Scofield cannot have Jesus displaying His authority without a literal earthly kingdom.

#### **IV. PREMILLENNIALISM CHANGES THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH — WHAT IT IS<sup>84</sup>**

- A. Ryrie: "To sum up: In what ways are we today ministers of a new covenant? In the sense that we (1) minister in the power of the Spirit to bring life, and not with self-righteous works of the law to bring death, (2) place the substitutionary death of Christ (the blood of the a new covenant) central in all our ministry; and (3) proclaim the eschatological promises of the new covenant made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah" (*Disp.*, 205). Imagine how much this would change the messages proclaimed from pulpits and door-to-door!
- B. "In relation to this present age and the kingdom in mystery, the position of believers in the church is well summarized by Sauer: 'As to their persons they are citizens of the kingdom; as to their existence they are the fruit of the message of the kingdom; as to their nature they are the organism of the kingdom; as to their task they are the ambassadors of the kingdom'" (*ibid.*, 158). Note well: Does this note seem not to make sense, not to fit in with everything they've said about the Church and the Millennial Kingdom? This is where Ryrie writes, "How can the church be distinct from the kingdom purpose and yet be related to it? We must not try to understand such a seeming paradox by obliterating the distinction between the two purposes (as the antidispenationalist does) any more than such a procedure would satisfactorily harmonize sovereignty and responsibility. The truth must stand even though it may seem, to the human mind, to involve a paradox" (*ibid.*).

#### **V. IN PREMILLENNIALISM, NO PROMISE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS FULFILLED IN THE CHURCH**

- A. Geisler: "The Old Testament prophecies if literally interpreted cannot be regarded as having been fulfilled or as being capable of fulfillment in this present age" (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:554).
- B. Ryrie: "the church is not now fulfilling them" (*Disp.*, 172). In fact, according to Ryrie, distinguishing the kingdom of Israel and the church is the second *sine qua non* (his words) of being a true "Dispensationalist": "A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the church distinct" (*ibid.*, 46).
- C. Lewis Sperry Chafer (first president of Dallas Theological Seminary) on the Church in the "intercalation" period: "wholly unforeseen and is wholly unrelated to any divine purpose which precedes it or which follows it" (as quoted by Ryrie, *Disp.*, 176).

#### **VI. IN THE PREMILLENNIALIST SCHEME, DURING THE CHURCH AGE, HUMANS ARE NOT LIVING UNDER THE NEW COVENANT**

- A. Consider what Ryrie says here: "Is it true to say that any part of the new covenant as promised in the Old Testament has been inaugurated? Putting all the Old Testament passages together one finds these new covenant promises: (1) putting God's law into Israelites' hearts; (2) no necessity to teach His people; (3) forgiveness of Israel; (4) Israel restored to favor and guaranteed everlasting existence; (5) God's Spirit upon the people; (6) material blessing in the land of Israel; (7) peace; (8) God's sanctuary rebuilt. Of course, none of these promises has been inaugurated for the house of Israel and the house of Judah today. But are any of them similar to what God is doing for the church today? Yes..." (*ibid.*, 201).
- B. But there is division within the ranks— Norman Geisler, also a "Dispensational" Premillennialist, says something else!
1. Compare: "Whatever the significance of applying some of these covenant benefits to believers today, there will be a fulfillment of this in national Israel—exactly as the Old Testament prophesied" (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:522).
  2. And, about Matthew 26:26-28; Romans 8:2; 11:26-27; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6; Hebrews 8:7, 13; 9:15; 10:16-18, 28-29; 13:20, compare: "the manner in which the Old Testament passages are (1) cited by Jesus and (2) applied to the church rules out the classical dispensational view, viz. that there are two covenants. There is simply no textual indication that the New Testament writers did not see their application of this to the church as a fulfillment of the new covenant prophecies" (*ibid.*, 523).
  3. Let them argue among themselves (Acts 23:6).

#### **VII. IF THE PREMILLENNIALIST IS RIGHT, GOD HIMSELF IS UNTRUSTWORTHY**

- A. If Christ did not set up His Kingdom at His first advent like He said He would in His Old Testament and Gospels, **why believe Him** in the Old and New Testaments when He speaks about setting it up at the second advent???
- B. Who is our God?! This is what is at stake!

#### **VIII. IF PREMILLENNIALISM IS TRUE, GOD'S BIBLE IS UNTRUSTWORTHY**

- A. If the Kingdom does not exist today, then the Bible must be wrong, because the Bible reveals that it does exist now: For example, Colossians 1:13 and Revelation 1:9.
- B. What is our Bible? This is what is at stake!

<sup>83</sup> This line taken from "I Am His Child" (Donald M. Alexander). And of course, that He cannot be seen does not imply His Kingdom cannot be "seen."

<sup>84</sup> See footnote 81 (on the previous page).

## IX. IF THE PREMILLENNIALIST IS RIGHT, GOD’S NEW TESTAMENT IS UNTRUSTWORTHY

- A. If the nation of Israel is still God’s chosen people, then the New Testament is wrong because, for example, Peter calls Christians the nation of God (1 Peter 2:9).
- B. Peter got it wrong.
- C. So did Paul.
- D. Not much left of our New Testament!
- E. What is our entire Bible? This is what is at stake!

## X. IF THE PREMILLENNIALIST IS RIGHT, ALL THINGS ARE NOT IN SUBJECTION TO CHRIST BECAUSE ISRAEL IS NOT IN SUBJECTION TO HIM RIGHT NOW. What is our Bible? Compare Ephesians 1:20-23.

## XI. IF “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM IS TRUE, THOSE WITHOUT THIS UNDERSTANDING CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

- A. At least, “Dispensational” (specifically) Premillennialists make this claim, so far as I have read.
- B. Consider what Ryrie says in his *Dispensationalism* (a book that is primarily a defense of “Dispensationalism,” not Premillennialism per se, though Ryrie is both):
  - 1. “dispensational premillennialism...the only way to understand the Bible” (page 10).
  - 2. “The hermeneutic principle is basic to the entire dispensational system...it affects everything” (page 171).
  - 3. “The basic scheme involving the different dispensations remains the most helpful tool of consistent, noncontradictory interpretation of scripture” (page 14).
  - 4. “Only dispensationalism can maintain unity and diversity at the same time and offer a consistent system of interpretation” (page 39).
- C. In fact, “Dispensational” Premillennialists see this system as the only check against the unfettered imagination.<sup>85</sup>

## XII. “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM CAUSES DISUNITY

- A. According to “Dispensational” Premillennialists, since “Dispensational” Premillennialism is true, those who do not believe it should be questioned and even considered beyond the fringe and outside of their circle of fellowship.
- B. Compare what Ryrie writes in *Dispensationalism*:
  - 1. “Dispensationalism does foster Bible study, and if with that comes a dissatisfaction with an existing fellowship, that is not surprising” (page 86).
  - 2. “what to do in the complex relationship of one’s individual fellowship with other professed Christians is not a simple matter. In some relationships the servant of the Lord must in patience and gentleness seek to win back the apostate from is error back to the truth.... In other cases, apparently, apostates can go so far down the wrong road that the believer must avoid all contact with them...in some cases contact should be kept; in others it should be broken.... This is not to say that all the separatism that may in one way or another be linked to dispensational teaching is justified; but neither can antidispensationalists justify their emphasis that separatism is always wrong (1 Cor. 11:19)” (page 165).

## XIII. IF “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM IS TRUE, THEN JESUS WAS WRONG WHEN HE PRAYED FOR UNITY IN JOHN CHAPTER 17, AND PAUL WAS ALSO WRONG WHEN HE CONDEMNED DIVISION IN FIRST CORINTHIANS CHAPTERS 1-4

- A. The “Dispensationalist” believes there ought to be some division within Christendom, and those divided are still okay.
- B. Ryrie says, “The body is composed of dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists! We also need to be realistic about the matter of priority in fellowship.... Fellowship on the horizontal plan (that is, with other human beings) is like a series of concentric circles.... Our Lord shared certain things with Peter, James, and John that He did not share with the others.... Circles of fellowship are not in themselves wrong; it is our failure or refusal to recognize some of them that is wrong” (*Disp.*, 245-246).

## XIV. PREMILLENNIALISM DISTRACTS PEOPLE FROM STUDYING THE ACTUAL TRUTH

- A. Compare Ryrie: “The mention of the word *dispensationalism* usually evokes immediate reaction. For many Christians it reminds them of the help and blessing the ministries and writings of dispensational Bible teachers have been to them. They recall Bible conferences, prophecy conferences, special meetings, or books that awakened in them their first real interest in studying the Bible seriously and in depth” (*Disp.*, 13). All that wasted time. All those wasted resources. All the wasted....
- B. In fact, it also wastes the time of faithful people who have to refute it. If only we could spend our time..., or, as Jude wrote, *while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith...for certain persons have begun teaching “Dispensational” Premillennialism* (verses 3, 4; of course, I myself inserted “begun teaching ‘Dispensational’ Premillennialism”).

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<sup>85</sup> See Part Five, III.

## XV. PREMILLENNIALISM LULLS PEOPLE INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY, OF SALVATION

- A. Again, compare Ryrie: “The mention of the word *dispensationalism* usually evokes immediate reaction. For many Christians it reminds them of the help and blessing the ministries and writings of dispensational Bible teachers have been to them. They recall Bible conferences, prophecy conferences, special meetings, or books that awakened in them their first real interest in studying the Bible seriously and in depth” (*Disp.*, 13).
- B. But “Dispensationalism” is not a blessing! There has not<sup>86</sup> been a real awakening! They are not actually studying the Bible!

## XVI. PREMILLENNIALISM CAUSES PEOPLE TO MISS THE TRUTH

- A. Consider what Geisler says about Romans 8:2, *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death*: “Without naming it, this text seems to be a reference to the new covenant” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:521).
- B. “Seems”??? If only Geisler did not hold to Premillennialism.... I wonder what else they miss because of their hermeneutic.

## XVII. PREMILLENNIALISM CAUSES PEOPLE TO FOCUS ON THE WRONG THINGS AND NOT ON THE RIGHT THINGS — BEGINNING WITH THE TRUE PLAN OF SALVATION

- A. If satan can get you to focus on “666” instead Mt. 28:19....
- B. “Because of many natural desires to know the future, many have been far more interested in ‘the last things’ than in present conditions with God’s plan and purpose in this age of need” (Summers, 28).
- C. “To some the book becomes largely a problem of celestial mathematics; and they are more concerned with the calculating of time charts than they are of securing social and economic and political righteousness for their immediate neighbors” (Richardson, as quoted by Summers, 28).
- D. “One of the finest tributes to the beneficial effect of dispensationalism...was paid by one whose own theology was non-dispensational. George E. Ladd wrote, ‘It is doubtful if there has been any other circle of men who have done more by their influence in preaching, teaching and writing to promote a love for Bible study, a hunger for the deeper Christian life, a passion for evangelism and zeal for missions in the history of American Christianity’” (*Disp.*, 86). How sad!

## XVIII. PREMILLENNIALISM CAUSES A STUMBLING BLOCK TO HEARING THE TRUE PLAN OF SALVATION

- A. How many who call themselves “Christian” refuse to continue a discussion with a Christian who brings the true plan of salvation after they hear you do not believe in the literal restoration of Israel to their land and Jesus reigning on the throne of David in Jerusalem?
- B. How many have visited your assemblies up until they learned you were not Premillennialists!
- C. Sad!

## XIX. PREMILLENNIALISM OFTEN CAUSES PEOPLE TO LOSE WHAT FAITH THEY HAVE

- A. Those who try to set dates for the end-times— they do what is unbiblical.
- B. Those who try set dates for the end-times— they also destroy the faith of others when their predictions fail. For example: “In the year 1665, a fantastic manifesto made its way like lightning to all corners of the Islamic, Jewish and Christian worlds. Publicized by the charismatic rabbi, Nathan of Gaza, the letter announced that the Messiah had arrived: ‘Hear ye, brethren in Israel that our Messiah is come to life in the city of Ismir and his name is Shabbetai Zevi. Soon, he will show forth his kingdom to all and will take the royal crown from the head of the Sultan and place it on his own. When nine months have passed, our Messiah shall vanish from before the eyes of Israel, and no one should be able to say if he is alive or dead. He will cross the river Sambatyon, which as all men know no mortal has ever crossed. There, our Messiah shall ride forth through Jerusalem, with Moses and all the Jews of old mounted on horses. He himself shall ride on a dragon, and his bridle rein shall be a snake with seven heads. On his way, he will be attacked by Gog and Magog, the enemies of Israel, with a mighty arm. But the Messiah with the breath of his nostril shall he rout them, and by his word alone, shall he utterly destroy them. And when he is entered in Jerusalem, God will send down a temple of gold and precious stones from heaven, and it will fill the city with its brilliance. And on that day shall the dead throughout the world rise from their graves. I hasten to tell you these tidings.’ The news that the Messiah had arrived brought a wave of excitement in country after country. In a Messianic ferveur, many Jews began to sell off their property and prepare for the trip to the Holy Land” (*NovaOnline*, “Where are the Ten Lost Tribes?”). And you know how they felt when the “prophecy” turned out to be false. Note well: When hope is dashed, faith is dashed too—they throw the baby (God, Jesus, and His word) out with the bathwater (“Dispensational” Premillennialism); and this happened when first “prophesied” in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and it happened again when Nova retold it in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**We repeat what we said at the beginning of this section:**  
**Remember what God Himself says through His inspired apostle Peter about distorting scripture —**  
*The untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (2 Peter 3:16)*  
**This is nothing to play with. Yes, this is a “matter of salvation”!**

<sup>86</sup> Okay, someone may have been awakened — somehow being prompted to study the Word and come to the knowledge of the truth. But otherwise....

## PART SEVEN: REFUTING THE MILLENNIALIST'S POSITION IN GENERAL

### I. FIRST, FIVE FUN FUNDAMENTAL FUNDAMENTALS!

- A. We cannot guess at the referents of prophecy... at least not accurately!** Regarding interpreting Old Testament prophecy: Left alone, human beings are simply unable to guess accurately and would 99.99999999% likely be wrong.<sup>87</sup>
1. For example, no one no where no when would have guessed that Genesis 21:10 (or Isaiah 54:1 for that matter) would have any fulfillment in the Church. But we would have been wrong: Galatians 4:27.
  2. For example, no one no where no when would have guessed that Isaiah 49:6 would have any fulfillment —direct or indirect— in the apostles preaching the gospel to Gentiles. But we would have been wrong: Acts 13:47.
  3. For example, no one no where no when would have guessed that either Psalm 69:25 or 109:8 would have any fulfillment in Matthias (or anyone) taking Judas' place as an apostle. But we would have been wrong: Acts 1:20.
  4. We could multiply examples.
  5. And, in fact, even if we could guess right, it still would be only a guess; we would not have known (100% certainty) it is true and thus could not do anything with it (discussed more in B).
  6. **THE OBVIOUS IMPLICATION IS THAT OUR POSITION IS ONE OF TOTAL AND COMPLETE RELIANCE ON INSPIRED INTERPRETERS. THIS IS THE "KEY" TO INTERPRETING PROPHECY. DON'T MISS THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS! AND DON'T MISS THAT THIS IS SOMETHING "DISPENSATIONAL" PREMILLENNIALISTS DO NOT DO, AND EVEN RAIL AGAINST. WATCH FOR IT.**
  7. All of this is implied in such passages as 1 Peter 1:10-12; 1 Corinthians 2:6-16; and Ephesians 3:1-10.
- B. We may not base our teachings on mere assumption (or guesses)!** To state it another way, teaching must be from 100% certainty. And 100% certainty is found in (or based on) only forced (or necessary, or unavoidable, etc.) conclusions. And forced conclusions themselves are only found in (or discovered in) declarative statements, imperative statements, examples, and necessary inferences (and these only from the inspired authors).
1. To help flesh out what I mean here:
    - a) We are able to be certain, i.e., with 100% confidence, that elders must expose false doctrine and refute those who teach it, and this certainty is based in, among many passages, Titus 1:9: *holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*
    - b) On the other hand, anything less than 100% certainty is just a guess: "It's possible" does not equal "100% certainty." Neither does "It's probable." And this is true no matter how "possible" or how "probable" something may be.
    - c) Hope this helps.
  2. For example, in Matthew 19:3-6 we have an **example** of Jesus...
    - a) Making a **necessary inference** (it must have been necessary: Jesus made it!): *What therefore (ὅστε) God has joined together; let no man separate*
    - b) From a **declarative statement**: *For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh* (ἔνεκα τούτου καταλείπει ἄνθρωπος τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ κολληθήσεται τῇ γυναίκι αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν<sup>88</sup>).
    - c) And then issuing a **command**: *Let no man separate* (μὴ χωρίζετω).
  3. Another noteworthy example is found in Acts 15, which provides us with an **example** of the inspired apostles...
    - a) Making **necessary inferences**: Verses 10 and 19.
    - b) From **examples**: Verses 7-9, and 12.
    - c) And from **declarative statements**: Verses 15-18.
    - d) This example is also noteworthy because it attributes their conclusion —which they made through this process— to the Holy Spirit Himself in verse 28.
  4. Note well some "Dispensational" Premillennialists themselves get this overall point.
    - a) For example, Norman Geisler, who is also a "Moderate" Calvinist, when arguing against "Extreme" Calvinists —specifically refuting their claim that Mark 10:45 teaches limited atonement— asserts, "The conclusion that Christ did not offer Himself for everyone is not really an exposition of these passages (which say nothing about Atonement being limited) but rather a speculative inference. The inference is not logically necessary" (*Sys.Theo.*, 3:365).
    - b) So, for some, the issue is not familiarity with the principle; rather, the issue is consistency.
    - c) And to bring it home to me, the question is: Am I being inconsistent somewhere in my interpretations of scripture? May God continue to be patient with me!
  5. Having said all this, "Dispensational" Premillennialists do not adhere to this principle, at least not consistently.

Points A and B  
are very  
important!

<sup>87</sup> Maybe God would say we would be 100% wrong: Deuteronomy 29:29; Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; Isaiah 55:9-10; Jeremiah 10:23; Acts 13:27; Colossians 1:26 (if God hid it, I'm guessing we couldn't guess-find it).

<sup>88</sup> This doesn't change anything, but the last clause may carry with it the force of an imperative — an Imperative Future (Wallace, 569); compare verse 18.

C. We may not act or teach **presumptuously** (or add).

1. Moses and Israel understood this: Compare what God told them in Exodus 25:9 with *Just as the Lord had commanded* — a statement recorded some twenty times in chapters 39 and 40.
2. Teachers were forbidden from doing it on pain of death: Deuteronomy 18:20-22.
3. Nadab and Abihu’s generation learned this: Leviticus 10:1-3.
4. David’s generation was reminded of this: Compare 1 Chronicles 13:1-12 with 15:1-13.
5. David prays for the Lord to help him avoid this sin: Psalm 19:13.
6. Note well, to do this defiantly is **Blasphemy**: Numbers 15:30.
7. The underlying principle — *You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor shall you take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I am commanding you* (Deuteronomy 4:2)— is retained in the new law in 2 John 9; Revelation 22:18-19; Colossians 3:17; Romans 14:23; Galatians 1:6-9; and other places.
8. While this principle of teaching may (and should) be second nature to some students of the Bible, the “Dispensational” Premillennialist hurls it off with reckless abandon: The number of times they say “If,” “Possibly,” “Perhaps,” and “Maybe,” and then base their doctrine on that.... Look for it. **But this cannot be done while totally and completely relying on inspired authors. (No teacher should do this.)**

The *physical deaths* in the Old Testament emphasize how **seriously** God takes this.

The *spiritual death* of Romans 14:23 reveals that God **still** takes this **seriously** under the New Covenant.

D. We must recognize that prophecies were **mysterious** — even the prophets themselves often did not understand the very prophecies they uttered.

1. See again 1 Peter 1:10-12. Also, see Ephesians 3:1-10 and 1 Corinthians 2:6-16.
2. Premillennialists acknowledge this... at least, to a degree.<sup>89</sup>
  - a) Walvoord on 9:25: “It is questionable, however, whether Daniel actually understood it. Some of the later aspects of the prophecy of Daniel are clearly not understood by Daniel.”
  - b) Geisler says, “Old Testament believers did not understand the mystery of how Jews and Gentiles share the same footing in Christ’s body” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:545).
    - (1) And note the implications of these remarks— “It makes sense for Ezekiel to speak of the future temple in terms that the Israelites of his day would understand.... It is a figure of speech called...‘hypocatastasis’ by which one thing is employed as a substitute or equivalent for another. This figure is employed by the prophet to portray a future existing priesthood, using for this purpose the priesthood then known, just as future enemies of God are presented under the names Moab, Babylon, etc., of enemies then existing” (*ibid.*, 589).
    - (2) And it seems to me they forget it at times. Pay attention when they start talking about “meaning.” For example, “Does a text have one interpretation or many? The *sensus unum* view insists that there is only one (the one intended by both God and the human author), and the *sensus plenior* view claims there is more than one (the one intended by the human author and the one intended by God)” (*ibid.*, 450).

Reminder:  
All bolding and underlining is mine, and any italics *within* quotes are the original author’s emphasis.

E. We must recognize that any given prophecy may itself have more than one referent — **dual application**.

1. Geisler defines a referent as “an object to which a thought refers or may refer” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:415).
2. To make my point, consider, for example: Haggai 2:6 has immediate fulfillment in Ezra 6:4-8 and then again later as asserted in Hebrews 12:26. You may not like that example, but there are others — take 2 Samuel 7, which David applies to Solomon in 1 Kings 2:4, but ultimately it applies to Jesus (compare Acts 13:32-35, et al.).
3. Again, Premillennialists acknowledge this:<sup>90</sup> “The meaning cannot change, even though the application can; this is an instance of the ‘one meaning, many applications’ dictum of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic” (*ibid.*, 444). The issue is consistency.

F. Finally, there are **many** more fundamentals we must keep in focus when we approach interpreting prophecy (and all scripture), but for now we’ll pass over them.

## II. A SUGGESTED APPROACH TO REFUTING THE “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIAL POSITION

- A. Like putting out a fire or curing a sick person: Attack the source....
- B. First, destroy the underpinnings of the system. Be sure to repeat occasionally.
- C. Then, quickly and efficiently dispose of specific manifestations as they appear (picture putting out each flame as it lashes out its tongue).
  1. Often, specific manifestations arise from their **demand** for a literal fulfillment; again, they...
    - a) Seek a **literal** fulfillment.
    - b) Do not see it **literally** fulfilled in history.

<sup>89</sup> To see more about this, check out the accompanying collection of quotes from Geisler and Ryrie (in the Addendum). You’ll see that they grasp a lot of the true system of interpretation, but then they both ARE inconsistent AND add some no-no’s. This applies to both their conclusions and their explanations of the literal system of hermeneutics. In fact, for what it is worth, when I refute this stuff in my classes, whether it be the system or a specific conclusion, quite often I am able to point out, “They get it. **But then they add!**” And I make sure to do so whenever I can because it helps underscore my faith: We are not wrong in our conclusion; they are wrong in adding.

<sup>90</sup> See footnote 89.



- c) Say that it will be literally fulfilled in the future.
  - d) Repeat this pattern.
2. Often, specific manifestations arise from their **assumption** that the land covenant made with Abraham and the Kingdom covenant made with David were both *unconditional*: As Geisler says, “With a covenant, it is the ‘express terms’ that matter” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:576).
- a) But a quick look at 1 Kings 2:4 proves this is untrue. Who are you going to believe, God or Geisler?
  - b) Or, as Iain Provan says in the *English Standard Version Study Bible*’s note on 2 Kings 20:5, “God’s response to Hezekiah’s prayer (2 Kings 20:3) shows that many prophecies, though stated in unconditional terms (v. 1), have implied conditions.”<sup>91</sup>

### III. THERE IS PLENTY OF MATERIAL ABOVE FOR REFUTING THE PREMILLENNIALIST SYSTEM, ESPECIALLY...

- A. Part Four, III.
- B. Part Five, IV - VIII.
- C. All of Part Six (The Harm! of Millennialism — “Dispensational” or Other).

### IV. SOME MORE SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM IF PREMILLENNIALISM IS TRUE

(Though much of it is obvious, I found a lot of help for this section in Jim McGuiggan’s *The Kingdom of God and the Planet Earth*.)

- A. “Dispensational” Premillennialism would have two systems of atonement in the Millennial Kingdom.
  - 1. There would be Jesus’ sacrifice — compare (again) Ryrie, “The Crucifixion was as necessary to the establishing of the kingdom as it was to the building of the church. The kingdom has redemptive as well as legal and political aspects” (*Disp.*, 175).
  - 2. And there would also be the Mosaic, Levitical sacrifices for sin:
    - a) Compare Walvoord on Daniel 9:27: “The fulfillment of this prophecy necessarily involves the reactivation of the Mosaic sacrificial system in a temple in Judea.”
    - b) Did Jesus not provide atonement for sin? Is our New Testament wrong?
    - c) Note well Geisler sees a problem here: On Ezekiel 40-48’s sacrifices, “Hebrews teaches that Christ fulfilled and abolished the Old Testament sacrificial system and priesthood (8:8-10); taking Ezekiel literally would contradict the New Testament” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:589). Let the “Dispensational” Premillennialist’s argue among themselves (Acts 23:6ff).<sup>92</sup>
  - 3. Of course, the entire New Testament is not wrong and is in direct and complete conflict with this; compare Hebrews 10:1-10.
- B. “Dispensational” Premillennialism would have new —or old, as the case would be— memorials for Christ’s death in the Millennial Kingdom.
  - 1. Scofield, on Ezekiel 43:19: “Such sacrifices...will be memorial in character.”
  - 2. Geisler: “Hebrews (8-10) speaks of abolishing animal sacrifices in an *atonement* sense, not as regards a *memorial* observance” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:591).
  - 3. Walvoord (quoting A. C. Gaebelien): “We look back to the Cross. We show forth His death. It is ‘till He comes.’ Then this memorial feast ends forever. Never again will the Lord’s Supper be kept after the Saints of God have left the earth to be with the Lord in glory. The resumed sacrifices will be the memorial of the Cross and the whole wonderful story of the redemption for Israel and the nations of the earth, during the kingdom reign of Christ. And what a memorial it will be! What a meaning these sacrifices will have! They will bring to a living remembrance everything of the past. The retrospect will produce the greatest scene of worship, of praise and adoration this earth has ever seen. All the Cross meant and the Cross has accomplished will be recalled and a mighty ‘Hallelujah Chorus’ will fill the earth and the heavens. The sacrifices will constantly reminde the peoples of the earth of Him who died for Israel, who paid the redemption price for all creation and whose glory now covers the earth as the waters cover the deep” (“The Doctrine of the Millennium—Part I: The Righteous Government of the Millennium”).
  - 4. But note that the inspired prophet Ezekiel does not indicate these will be memorial in character or purpose — take a look at chapters 40-47 and see how many times he says “sin offering.”
- C. “Dispensational” Premillennialism would have two functioning priesthoods in the Millennial Kingdom.
  - 1. The inspired author of Hebrews, in chapter 5 verse 6, has Jesus being a priest *forever* and *according to the order of Melchizedek*.
  - 2. But the “Dispensational” Premillennialists also have the Levitical priesthood existing in the Kingdom, inseparable from the law of Moses (Hebrews 7:11ff), complete with temple sacrifices.
  - 3. Don’t forget what the Levitical priest’s purpose was: *every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.* (Hebrews 5:1) But we already have One Mediator, One High Priest!

<sup>91</sup> As I wrote before, the *ESV Study Bible* seems to lean away from “Dispensational” Premillennialism and toward Modified Covenant Theology, which holds that the promises in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the Church, but they also anticipate a future, literal fulfillment of the Old Testament covenants to ethnic Israel (Geisler, *Sys.Theo.*, 4:500). I base this conclusion on myriad notes throughout the *ESV Study Bible* and on Vern Poythress’ presence, himself a Modified Covenantalist. Iain Provan himself also expects a yet future fulfillment of Daniel 2, 7, 9, and Revelation (see his notes on Daniel 2, 7, and 9 in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*) but does not seem to be a “Dispensationalist.” I could be wrong.

<sup>92</sup> I also bring along Geisler, a self-described Moderate Calvinist, to argue with John Calvin and other Extreme Calvinists; he makes some really great points.

- D. “Dispensational” Premillennialism would have two laws and two heads in the Millennial Kingdom.
1. They have the law of Moses.
    - a) Again, compare Walvoord on Daniel 9:27: “The fulfillment of this prophecy necessarily involves the reactivation of the Mosaic sacrificial system in a temple in Judea.”
    - b) Note well Luke 16:29: *But Abraham said, “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.”*
  2. They also have the law of Christ, The King.
  3. But God said something about this, and with Moses standing right there! *This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!* (Matthew 17:5).
    - a) Note well, *This* is emphatic — as though God were also pointing His finger right at Jesus (οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα ἀκούετε αὐτοῦ).
    - b) Oh, don’t forget the end of the scene: *And lifting up their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone* (v. 8).
      - (1) Don’t miss all the emphasis here: The author could have written, “And lifting up their eyes, they saw Jesus.” Adding *no one except* (οὐδένα...εἰ μὴ) emphasizes! Then adding *alone* (μόνον) emphasizes even more!! Then adding *Himself* (αὐτὸν) emphasizes even more!!! Each and every one of these adds emphasis!!!!
      - (2) **But, the “Dispensational” Premillennialist has everyone looking at Moses again!!!!**
- E. “Dispensational” Premillennialism would have two circumcisions in the Millennial Kingdom.
1. They would have the literal circumcision given to Abraham and then again commanded in the law of Moses.
  2. And there also would be the figurative circumcision that occurs at baptism (Colossians 2:11-12).
  3. Of course, Acts 15, Galatians, Colossians, and a few other places all address this.
- F. “Dispensational” Premillennialism would have the Sabbath bound in the Millennial Kingdom. To bind one part of the law of Moses is to bind it all: Compare Galatians 3:10 and 5:3.

## V. JUST A FEW OTHER OBVIOUS INCONSISTENCIES IN THEIR OWN APPLICATION OF THEIR OWN HERMENEUTIC

- A. Regarding *inconsistently* employing the literal hermeneutic—
1. Remember, the crux of their system is **consistency**. Quotes could be multiplied. One will suffice for now: “**consistent** literalism is the logical and obvious principle of interpretation” (Ryrie, *Disp.*, 103).
  2. Walvoord asserting that “sevens” refers to years (compare Part Four, I) is one good example among hundreds of obviously not interpreting prophecy literally.<sup>93</sup>
  3. One of Walvoord’s notes on Daniel 2:36-38 also falls into this category: “Daniel...goes on in verse 38 to describe his universal rule over ‘the children of men, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the heaven.’ He summarizes it: God ‘hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.’ Some have regarded this as hyperbole in that Nebuchadnezzar actually did not control the entire earth’s surface and the men, beasts, and fowls of the entire earth. What is obviously meant, however, is that he is in supreme authority insofar as any man could be.” But wait, if taken literally... If we were to apply the historical-grammatical system to it...<sup>94</sup>
  4. One of Walvoord’s notes on Daniel 2:39: “The descending scale of value of the four metals suggests the degeneration of the human race through the ages, as implied in Genesis 4.”<sup>95</sup>
  5. Walvoord does it again in Daniel 2:40-45: “the interpretation is much preferred that the expression ‘in the days of these kings’ refers to the kings who rule during the last generation of Gentile power. While it is true that this is not specifically related to the toes of the image... Inasmuch as other passages speak specifically of ten kings in the end times (Dan 7:24; Rev 17:12), it is not unreasonable to hold that this is a reference to the final state of the kingdom and the final rulers.”<sup>96</sup>
    - a) So the toes are not literally toes?
    - b) As we’ve seen before, it is nice when they admit their assumptions.
- B. Regarding “*un-biblically*” interpreting the Old Testament in light of the New Testament—
1. Compare the Norman Geisler of page 587 of his *Systematic Theology* with the Norman Geisler of page 523: “the manner in which the Old Testament passages are (1) cited by Jesus and (2) applied to the church rules out the classical dispensational view, viz. that there are two covenants. There is simply no textual indication that the New Testament writers did not see their application of this to the church as a fulfillment of the new covenant prophecies.”
  2. Again, compare the Norman Geisler of page 587 with the Norman Geisler of page 589 (on Ezekiel 40-48’s sacrifices): “Hebrews teaches that Christ fulfilled and abolished the Old Testament sacrificial system and priesthood (8:8-10); taking Ezekiel literally would contradict the New Testament.”
  3. Compare Walvoord on Daniel 7:7-8: “Probably the most decisive argument in favor of interpreting the fourth empire as Roman is in fact...that the New Testament seems to follow this interpretation.”
- C. Regarding the Old Testament *not* being silent about the “Church age”—
1. Compare the Charles Ryrie of *Dispensationalism*, “This clearly distinguishes those who have died ‘in Christ’ in this age from

<sup>93</sup> Of course, they will start talking about being “fulfilled literally” or “literally fulfilled.” Great! This is a valid distinction and discussion; this is a principle that must be thoroughly grasped in order to understand prophecy. And it is one that I am convinced they get... to a degree: They talk about it in theory, **but** then they either add or do not apply it consistently. Again, to see more about this, check out the accompanying collection of quotes from Geisler and Ryrie in the Addendum.

<sup>94</sup> See footnote 93.

<sup>95</sup> See footnote 93.

<sup>96</sup> See footnote 93.

believers who died before Christ's first advent, thus marking off the church as distinct to this age and a mystery hidden and unrevealed in Old Testament times" (on 1 Thessalonians 4:16), and "the Church intercalation—which was wholly unforeseen and is wholly unrelated to any divine purpose which precedes it or which follows it" (page 176), with the Charles Ryrie of the *Ryrie Study Bible* on Acts 15:15-17: "James specifies that the prophecy of Amos will be fulfilled after these things, i.e. after the present worldwide witness. Then, after the return of Christ, the *tabernacle of David* (in the millennial kingdom) will be established, and Jew and Gentile will know the Lord."

2. Walvoord does the same thing. Compare—

- a) The Walvoord on Daniel 9:25: "the present church age is not included in the Old Testament prophetic foreviews."
- b) With the Walvoord on Acts 15:15-19: "He [James, lmt] states, in effect, that it was God's purpose to bless the Gentiles as well as Israel, but in their order. God was to visit the Gentiles *first*, 'to take out of them a people for his name.' James goes on to say that this is entirely in keeping with the prophets, for they had stated that the period of Jewish blessing and triumph should be after the Gentile period: 'After these things I will return, and I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen.' Instead of identifying the period of Gentile conversion with the rebuilding of the tabernacle of David, it is carefully distinguished (sic) by the first (referring to Gentile blessing), and after this (referring to Israel's coming glory). The passage, instead of identifying God's purpose for the church and for the nation Israel, established a specific time order" ("Millennial Series: Part 17: The Kingdom Promises to David").

**One final time: On page 27 we wrote...**

- Observation One: Concluding a 1<sup>st</sup> century fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, and 9 is very reasonable, being very well-supported — both scripturally and historically.
- Observation Two: Asserting that the Messiah did not receive His Kingdom, etc. in the 1<sup>st</sup> century will take a very, very substantial argument.
- The question is: Does "Dispensational" Premillennialism have what it takes?

**AGAIN, AND FINALLY, FROM WHAT WE'VE SEEN IN THIS LITTLE EXERCISE (IN PARTS THREE THROUGH SEVEN), THE ANSWER IS NO. NO, "DISPENSATIONAL" PREMILLENNIALISM DOES NOT HAVE WHAT IT TAKES!**

**I AM EVEN MORE CONFIDENT IN MY KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH! I HOPE YOU ARE, TOO!**

I hope God has been glorified in this effort.

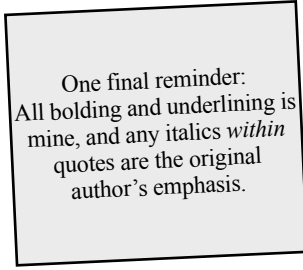
Thanks to Jeff for giving me the opportunity to speak at ETDS 2017.

Special thanks to the two proofreaders, Rick and Rhonda.

## ADDENDUM: MORE USEFUL(?) QUOTES

What follows is essentially a collection of quotes and notes I have from two of the books I read preparing for ETDS 2017. It is very sloppy. (No one proofread this part! I didn't even proofread it myself.) Some of it is redundant. And some of my own thoughts may not seem to fit with the quote I attached it to. (Sometimes, when I myself return and review, I cannot figure out what I was thinking! I assume you know how that goes.) But because I had already compiled these for myself, I thought, if I could get permission to use the quotes, other folks may also find them helpful. So I wrote and was granted permission. And here we are. "File 13" them if you want!

Or, if you somehow didn't get them but want them, write me: [lee@lmtosti.com](mailto:lee@lmtosti.com).



One final reminder:  
All bolding and underlining is  
mine, and any italics *within*  
quotes are the original  
author's emphasis.

## QUOTES FROM NORMAN GEISLER, ON “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM

(Unless otherwise stated, all quotes are from Norman Geisler’s *Systematic Theology*, volume 4. Page numbers are included.)

### I. FIRST, NORMAN GEISLER IS NOT A TRADITIONAL “DISPENSATIONALIST”; RATHER, HE IS A MODIFIED “DISPENSATIONALIST”

- A. “The overall testimony of the covenants, understood through the historical-grammatical hermeneutic, leads to the rejection of both the traditional dispensational and classical covenantal interpretations of Scripture. *There are not two new covenants.* The New Testament does apply Old Testament promises to church-age believers (contrary to traditional dispensationalism), and both testaments foretell a future literal fulfillment in restored national Israel (contrary to traditional covenantalism).” (523-24)
- B. At least, I think Geisler is a Modified “Dispensationalist,” e.g., “Even if Acts 15:14-18 is a direct reference to the church...there is no real dilemma for modified dispensationalism, since it does not deny that the church’s mystery...was not previously known. In context, this passage appears to provide strong support for modified dispensationalism.” (593)

### II. THESE WOULD BE FUNNY IF THEY WERE NOT SO SAD

- A. Under “Unless Premillennialism Is True, God Loses The War of History,” “If the Paradise lost is *not* a Paradise regained, then God will have lost the war; if physical death is not reversed by physical resurrection, then satan obtains ultimate victory; if literal perfection is not restored, then God will have lost what He created.” (565)
- B. Under “Unless Premillennialism Is True, History Has No Consummation,” “Without a literal historical millennium, there is no real end to history.” (565)
- C. “*a denial of Christ’s literal reign is, in effect, a denial of His literal resurrection body.*” (535)
- D. “If there were to be no future literal kingdom, this was His last opportunity to correct them” (535, regarding Acts 1:1-6)
- E. “If Christ is coming before the Millennium at a time we know not, we must live with a constant sense of expectation (Luke 19:13; John 9:4). Believing that time is limited, that Christ may come at any moment, and that the eternal status of human souls is on the balance heightens the realization that any hour might be our last to reach someone for Jesus.” (567)

### III. OH, GEISLER ADMITS THE RELATIVE RECENTNESS OF “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM (NOT THAT THIS MEANS ANYTHING TO HIM, HE’S “REFORMED”)

- A. “The major Reformers, like Luther and Calvin, were amillennials. As they were largely preoccupied with soteriological matters, they left latent their Augustinian eschatology to await a further consistent application of the literal hermeneutic (as they themselves had done to salvific matters, which made the Reformation possible).” (572)
- B. “Post-Reformation Teachers” “rediscovered the premillennialism of the New Testament and the early fathers.” (572)
- C. Under “Medieval Fathers,” “Through exegetical progress and reapplication of the literal hermeneutic, premillennialism has experienced revival.” (571)
- D. (For what it is worth, Charles Ryrie thinks the same; see below, under Ryrie, on “Dispensational” Premillennialism.)

### IV. IN SUMMARY

- A. Geisler does not see that the spiritual kingdom IS the messianic kingdom, e.g., “While Christ is not King of the church in the Davidic (or messianic) sense of the political ruler situated in Jerusalem —since the messianic kingdom has not yet begun— nonetheless, He is the sovereign Head of the church and reigns over it spiritually.” (494)
- B. This is because Geisler refuses to see the conditional nature of the literal promises to Abraham and David. (I stopped counting “Unconditional” and “Literal.”)
- C. But much of what Geisler writes (see bolding below) we can agree with; that is, regarding methodology in interpreting prophecy, Geisler is right about a lot. So how does he conclude and maintain “Dispensational” Premillennialism? Again, it is based on (1) Refusing to admit the literal promises to Israel were conditional, and (2) Refusing to see how the promises, though literal to Israel, God intended that they were also to be applied figuratively (as seen in the NT). (Note well: This is what we’ve seen all along from these people.)

### V. WHY GEISLER CONCLUDES WHAT HE CONCLUDES: A SPECIFIC LOOK AT HIS METHODOLOGY (Most of this is from chapter 13, “The Interpretation of Prophecy,” of his *Systematic Theology*, volume 4, pages 413-458.)

Note well that in this section, much of what Geisler says is actually true. Thus, the issue is consistency (or, inconsistency).

I don’t need to tell you that this suggests a three-part approach to refuting him: [1] Quote his words, [2] Point out his inconsistencies, and [3] Show what the Bible says. We’ll do a bit of this below; see the bolded material.

- A. The fundamentality Geisler attaches to the literal, historical-grammatical approach: (Again, Ryrie thinks the same; see below.)
1. “Because dispensationalists non-negotiably maintain literal interpretation of scripture, they are forced to acknowledge a literal national future for Israel.” (448)
  2. “The basic debate is between what are commonly known as the *literal* and *allegorical* schools of interpretation.” (413).
  3. “Premillennialism is rooted in a literal interpretation of prophecy. A consistent literal interpretation...inexorably yield dispensational premillennialism.” (553)
  4. On the other hand...
    - a) “the assertion that Israel does not mean Israel, and that literal kingdom-prophecies can be made to mean a spiritual kingdom, leads at once and inevitably to amillennialism.” (586)
    - b) Compare (what Geisler says when addressing Progressive “Dispensationalists”): “this is implicit amillennialism, since if its hermeneutic were applied consistently it would lead to a denial of premillennialism.” (494)
  5. **Point/Observation: This suggests an approach to refuting DP because, as Geisler admits —“A bad methodology leads to a bad theology” (440), to demonstrate the fault of the approach is to destroy any teaching that rests on it.**
  6. Also, note well the straw man:
    - a) Geisler rails against the allegorical school (421) —as in the allegorical methodology of the middle ages and before [Note well: (1) This is a straw man. (2) We need to understand so we can see and help him], (the following are Geisler’s representations of the allegorical school) — “What the allegorical method represents” (423):
      - (1) “Meaning is not in letters and words, but in the spirit behind them.” (423)
      - (2) “Truth is not in the grammar but beyond the grammar. The text itself is only the shell; the pearl of truth, the real meaning comes from a deeper and more significant level.” (423)
      - (3) “The allegorical method is the literal method’s antithesis (opposite); a passages basic sense is taken spiritually, esoterically, or even mystically.” (423)
      - (4) “regards the literal sense as the vehicle for a secondary, more spiritual and more profound sense.” (423) Note well: Here Geisler crosses over into something that legitimately happens, especially, at times, with prophecy — consider initial literal promises with either dual application or single, primarily figurative application/implication.
    - b) (This possibly fits here, too.) “*Sensus plenior* (lat: ‘the fuller sense’) conceptualizes a deeper sense to these prophetic texts than what the author supposedly intended. The Bible is coauthored, and God intended more by each text than the human author did.” (429) (In representing their approach, when Geisler writes “each text,” does he mean the entire Bible?)
      - (1) If so, straw man. No one says the entire Bible.
      - (2) If not, even assuming God could NOT *mean* (as Geisler uses this term very specifically) more, God COULD have *intended* more. God could have intended...
        - (a) **another application, as Geisler himself admits:** “There is only one meaning in a text — the one meant by the author. Simultaneously, there are many implications and applications of that text; God is aware of these, and subsequent readers can be aided by later revelation to see them.” (441)
        - (b) **another implication that the author himself did not get, as Geisler himself admits:** “thoughts logically implied in other thoughts, whether or not the one is expressing the thoughts is aware they are implied” (414) **and** “while both God and the human author affirmed the same meaning/interpretation, the human author may or may not have had all the implications/applications in mind” (450)
        - (c) **and this additional application itself could be spiritual, as Geisler himself admits:** “the literal meaning, once determined, can be applied in legitimate spiritual ways. Sometimes the New Testament does this in its use of the Old Testament.” (417)
        - (d) Note well: “The meaning cannot change, even though the application can; this is an instance of the ‘one meaning, many applications’ dictum of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic.” (444; and again on 539) A distinction without a difference? Certainly leads to confusion. Note well, Geisler rails against Progressive “Dispensationalism” for confusing meaning and significance (441).
- B. The expressed motive/concern Geisler has to so adamantly protect and use the historical-grammatical approach:
1. “Literal interpretation is the only ‘sane and safe check on the imagination of man.’” (421)
  2. “John Walvoord adds correctly: If a person does not interpret the plan statements of prophecy literally, there is no rule by which any consensus of meaning can be established; the existence of a wide diversity of interpretations shows the failure of this approach.” (415)
  3. Again, Ryrie makes the same claims; see below.
  4. **Note well: This suggests an approach to helping Geisler. First teach him SCENI + “Silence” and the peril of speaking presumptuously which is his/their major problem!**
  5. But he has more along these lines:
    - a) “The limit or boundary on such spiritual applications is the essential meaning of the text.” (417-418)
    - b) A symbol “does not spiritualize away the literal truth.” (420; he states this point numerous times throughout the book)
    - c) “The Bible is *filled* with symbols; even so, each symbol is emblematic of something literal. Take, for example, Revelation, which contains symbols from beginning to end, yet every one of them represents something literal and is so interpreted by the book itself.” (419)
    - d) “A chair is made to sit on, but to use it otherwise wouldn’t destroy either its original purpose or its structure; for example, a chair can be

used to stand on or used to prop open a door. On the other hand, taking a chair outside of its feasible usages would turn it into something other than a chair — for instance, it cannot be used as kindling wood without destroying its form, that is, its ‘chariness.’” (418)

- e) **But on the spiritualizing the sacrifices of Ezekiel 40-48 (see below for more on this passage): “taking these prophecies as fulfilled in Christ does not violate a literal hermeneutic and open the door to other spiritualization; such a view preserves the literal interpretation in that Christ literally and physically fulfilled these sacrifices.” (591)**
- C. And while we’re here, don’t miss the importance Geisler attributes to national Israel:
1. “For both national Israel and the spiritual body of Christ, the ultimate purpose is to give glory to God.” (529)
  2. “God’s original intention for Israel will be established as she becomes a spiritual beacon to the nations (Isa. 61:6), making universally known the knowledge of the true God (59:19; Ezek. 37:28).” (562)
  3. Ryrie makes the same claims; see below.
  4. Of course, the spiritual body is the new body in which God’s light (and glory) is reflected, and which replaces ethnic national Israel.
- D. Geisler on “*Meaning*” (414):
1. **One meaning = one interpretation:** “Does a text have one interpretation or many? The *sensus unum* view insists that there is only one (the one intended by both God and the human author), and the *sensus plenior* view claims there is more than one (the one intended by the human author and the one intended by God).” (450)
  2. “Biblical inspiration means that in any given text, whatever the author affirms, God affirms, and whatever the author denies, God denies — no more and no less. There cannot be two meanings to the same set of words in the same context; meaning is discovered by context, and there is only one context for these same words.” (450)
    - a) This betrays a misunderstanding: There are actually two contexts, if you will — the original context (limited to the OT) AND the later, greater context (which includes the NT).
  3. Geisler disagrees with the Modified Covenantal view —viz.: “A Typological Fulfillment in the Church Does Not Cancel a Future Literal Fulfillment in Israel,” “A partial or initial spiritual fulfillment of these Old Testament promises in the church does not overthrow direct guarantees therein; the typological *complements* (not cancels) the literal. That there are two senses in a text does not mean one must nullify the other...one *supplements* the other and brings it to a higher level of fulfillment.” (432)
  4. Note well, Geisler rails against progressive “dispensationalism” for confusing meaning and significance. (441)
- E. Geisler on *Implications*:
1. **“thoughts logically implied in other thoughts, whether or not the one is expressing the thoughts is aware they are implied.” (414)**
  2. Note well: “There is only one *meaning* in a text — the one meant by the author. **Simultaneously, there are many implications and applications of that text; God is aware of these, and subsequent readers can be aided by later revelation to see them.**” (441)
    - a) “The meaning cannot change, even though the application can; this is an instance of the ‘one meaning, many applications’ dictum of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic.” (444)
    - b) “New Testament revelation does not change the meaning of these texts; it may give more implications than the original author had in mind, and it may give more information on the topic being discussed, but it cannot change the meaning so that what was meant for Israel is now fulfilled in the church.” (587)
- F. Geisler on *Referents*:
1. “an object to which a thought refers or may refer.” (415)
  2. **“The meaning cannot change, even though the application can; this is an instance of the ‘one meaning, many applications’ dictum of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic.” (444)**
- G. Geisler on what I refer to as “Picture and the Point”: **“The literal method of interpretation does not mean that everything in the Bible is true literally; rather, it means that everything in the Bible is literally true.” (417)**
1. “I.e., that not everything in the Bible is true literally means that it is not necessarily a physical actuality or a tangible reality.” (417)
  2. “While everything in the Bible is literally true, not everything is true literally.” (338)
  3. “all the Bible is literally true but not all is true literally.” (448)
  4. “Jesus told many parables...but even though the literary genre was parabolic, nevertheless there was a literal truth conveyed. While the parable is symbolic, it is symbolic of an actual reality.” (451)
  5. “It is a figure of speech called...‘*hypocatastasis*’ by which one thing is employed as a substitute or equivalent for another. This figure is employed by the prophet to portray a future existing priesthood, using for this purpose the priesthood then known, just as future enemies of God are presented under the names Moab, Babylon, etc., of enemies then existing.” (589)
- H. Geisler on “What the Literal Method *Is Not*” (417)
1. **“It does not eliminate spiritual application” (417):**
    - a) **“the literal meaning, once determined, can be applied in legitimate spiritual ways. Sometimes the New Testament does this in its use of the Old Testament.” (417)**
    - b) **“While there is only one interpretation of a text —the one literally meant by the author— there are many implications. This is why the New Testament use of the Old Testament sometimes seems removed from a proper interpretation; the New Testament is often not giving an interpretation, but an implication or application of that text. A text’s correct interpretation is the historical-grammatical interpretation.” (418)**
    - c) **“There is only one meaning in a text — the one meant by the author. Simultaneously, there are many implications and applications of that text; God is aware of these, and subsequent readers can be aided by later revelation to see them.” (441)**
  2. “It does not eliminate figures of speech” (418):
    - a) “It can be difficult to determine when a passage should not be taken literally.” (418)
    - b) “It recognizes figures of speech within the literal meaning.” (451)

- c) “Jesus told many parables...but even though the literary genre was parabolic, nevertheless there was a literal truth conveyed. While the parable is symbolic, it is symbolic of an actual reality.” (451)
3. “It does not eliminate the use of types”:
- a) **“This fulfillment is in no sense a spiritualization or allegorization of any literal thing or event; it is a literal fulfillment of the literal type by a literal antitype.”** (419)
4. “It does not eliminate the use of symbols” (419):
- a) “The Bible is *filled* with symbols; even so, each symbol is emblematic of something literal. Take, for example, Revelation, which contains symbols from beginning to end, yet every one of them represents something literal and is so interpreted by the book itself.” (419)
5. “It does not eliminate the use of parables and allegories”:
- a) “Though the many parables of Jesus are not to be taken literally, they convey a literal **point** nonetheless.” (420)
- b) “Different literary genres must be distinguished — taking them all literally will obscure the textual meaning.” (420)
- c) “every parable or allegory conveys a literal truth.” (421)
- I. Geisler about Old Testament prophets speaking to Old Testament people about future things but in a way that they would actually understand:
1. **“It makes sense for Ezekiel to speak of the future temple in terms that the Israelites of his day would understand.”** (589) See more below under Ezekiel 40-48.
2. **“It is a figure of speech called...‘hypocatastasis’ by which one thing is employed as a substitute or equivalent for another. This figure is employed by the prophet to portray a future existing priesthood, using for this purpose the priesthood then known, just as future enemies of God are presented under the names Moab, Babylon, etc., of enemies then existing.”** (589)
- J. Geisler’s Guidelines “for assistance in knowing when a text should be interpreted figuratively”:
1. “when it is obviously figurative.”
2. **“when the New Testament authorizes the figurative sense.”** Note well, “sense” applies to meaning, not implication or application. Sometimes the OT means something literal that the NT also figuratively applies to something else by implication. Note well, later (just below) Geisler will tell us **NOT** to interpret the OT in light of the NT!
3. **“when literal interpretation would contradict non-figurative portions of scripture.”**
4. “As the dictum goes,  
When the literal sense makes good sense,  
seek no other sense,  
lest it result in nonsense.”  
(418-419)
5. **Note well that Geisler gets it... sometimes, e.g.:**
- a) On hell: “the figures of speech that describe hell are contradictory if taken in a strictly physical sense.” (338)
- b) On Ezekiel 40-48’s sacrifices: “Hebrews teaches that Christ fulfilled and abolished the Old Testament sacrificial system and priesthood (8:8-10); taking Ezekiel literally would contradict the New Testament.” (589)
- c) Regarding Luke’s use of Isa. 40:4 (Lk. 3:5): “Of course the New Testament does not take it literally, and for very good reason: it was never intended to be taken literally. These are figures of speech, and *the literal method of interpretation insists that figures of speech be taken figuratively — this is literally the way they were meant to be understood.*”
- K. Geisler on **NOT** interpreting the Old Testament in light of the New Testament — which would be a “retroactive hermeneutic”:
1. “A common thread in these points is a **retroactive method of interpretation**: Rather than the Old Testament being interpreted within its own context, the New Testament is read back into the Old Testament. For example, in the historical-grammatical context, it is clear that Abraham’s descendants would unconditionally inherit the Promised Land, from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean; when these texts (Gen. 12-18) are read retroactively through a New Testament lens, the literal promise is cancelled and replaced by a spiritual fulfillment in the church.” (430)
2. “There *are* Old Testament types that find a spiritual fulfillment in the New Testament... However, using typology of the levitical system in a way the New Testament explicitly approves is one thing; using it as a way of interpreting Old Testament prophecies made to Israel is another.” (434) (No, using the inspired author’s explanation of an OT prophecy is one thing, using Geisler’s uninspired interpretation of an OT prophecy is another.)
3. Geisler, pointing out the problems of Progressive “Dispensationalism”: “the progressive genre-driven hermeneutic has a **retroactive move of its own, reading the Old Testament in light of New Testament events.**” (440)
4. Geisler, speaking against Progressive “Dispensationalists” and the Covenantal hermeneutic, and referring to OT texts and interpreting them retroactively, thinks it is **not** good to assert that “These texts have a message that extends beyond the original setting in which they were given.” (440)
5. Geisler, pointing out the problem of the amillennial view: “The Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament and so must be understood in light of its fulfillment.” (549)
6. **“the amillennial hermeneutic is both retroactive and unbiblical.”** (587)
7. **“the Old Testament should *not* be interpreted in light of the New, because later writings, inspired or not, do not change the meaning of earlier writings.”** (587)
8. **“the retroactive hermeneutic is seriously misdirected as to Old Testament promises and prophecies about Israel — it is not exegetical but eisegetical.”** (587)
9. “The Old Testament is to be interpreted in light of *itself*; whatever it meant in that context by those authors who wrote to those people is what it still means.” (587)
10. Again, Ryrie makes the same explicit claims; see below.



**NO WONDER THESE FOLKS END UP WHERE THEY DO!!!**

**11. At the same time:**

- a) “There is only one *meaning* in a text — the one meant by the author. Simultaneously, there are many implications and applications of that text; God is aware of these, and subsequent readers can be aided by later revelation to see them.” (441)
- b) “The meaning cannot change, even though the application can; this is an instance of the ‘one meaning, many applications’ dictum of the historical-grammatical hermeneutic.” (444)
- c) “Neither does it mean that a text has only one application or implication, nor that further revelation cannot add to our comprehension.” (447)
- d) “We have already demonstrated that a text has only *one interpretation*, but that it may have *many implications/applications*; while both God and the human author affirmed the same meaning/interpretation, the human author may or may not have had all the implications/applications in mind.” (450)
- e) Et al.
- f) **In fact, Geisler does this himself:**
  - (1) See below on Isa. 40 and Lk. 3. (pp. 445-446).
  - (2) And re. Matthew 26:26-28; Romans 8:2; 11:26-27; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:3,6; Hebrews 8:7, 13; 9:15; 10:16-18, 28-29; 13:20: “the manner in which the Old Testament passages are (1) cited by Jesus and (2) applied to the church rules out the classical dispensational view, viz. that there are two covenants. There is simply no textual indication that the New Testament writers did not see their application of this to the church as a fulfillment of the new covenant prophecies.” (523)
  - (3) “promises were made for Gentile salvation, but Old Testament believers did not understand the mystery of how Jews and Gentiles share the same footing in Christ’s body.” (545) Note well, if they, themselves, originally, in their dispensation, in their context, did not understand, then how can we understand what it originally meant to them? The point: DPs themselves also interpret the Old Testament in light of the New!

**12. About literal promises made to Israel but applied in the NT:**

- a) “while the New Testament sometimes gives an application (rather than an interpretation) of an Old Testament passage, it never spiritualizes away the literal truth of an Old Testament text.” (444; compare. 538, 581)
- b) Also, “the new covenant is said to be made ‘with the house of Israel’ (Jer. 31:31), that it is applied to the New Testament church is appropriate for several reasons.” (521)

**L. Geisler wants explicit statements:**

1. E.g., “The New Testament never says, ‘Christ is the Land.’” (540)
  2. Re. 1 Peter 2:9: “We have seen that this does not affirm the church as a spiritual Israel and/or that Israel’s literal promises are fulfilled spiritually. (1) Peter doesn’t quote this passage but borrows some language from it. (2) He applies these words to the church; he doesn’t claim that this is the fulfillment of the original text. (3) Even if it could be shown that the church is somehow a fulfillment of some Old Testament promises, it wouldn’t mean that all of Israel’s literal land- and kingdom-promises are transferred spiritually to the church.” (583)
  3. **Geisler on covenants: “With a covenant, it is the ‘express terms’ that matter.” (576)**
- M. “A bad methodology leads to a bad theology” (440) and, “A text taken out of context is a pretext” (416) and, “Scripture is the best interpreter of scripture.” (420)

**VI. WHAT GEISLER CONCLUDES, PART 1: SOME OF HIS ASSERTIONS AND INCONSISTENCIES**

- A. First, “A bad methodology leads to a bad theology” (440) is illustrated here! And, “A text taken out of context is a pretext” (416), and “Scripture is the best interpreter of scripture.” (420)
- B. Re. 1 Pe. 2:9: We have seen that this does not affirm the church as a spiritual Israel and/or that Israel’s literal promises are fulfilled spiritually. (1) Peter doesn’t quote this passage but borrows some language from it. (2) He applies these words to the church; he doesn’t claim that this is the fulfillment of the original text....” (583)
- C. The church is not known in the OT:
  1. At times Geisler seems to mean unrealized/non-existent.
  2. At times Geisler clearly means un-propheesied: “The universal church is the body of Christ, which began at Pentecost and wherein the unity of Jew and Gentile is one non-ethnic spiritual body is a mystery not known in Old Testament times.” (436) (Maybe not understood by men, but revealed by God. A NT example of this incongruity would be Peter in Acts 2-10.)
  3. The church “was concealed and not revealed” in the Old Testament. (545)
    - a) “Prophecy skips over the church age...” (592)
    - b) Geisler objects to the statement, “contrary to traditional dispensationalism, the church is predicted in the Old Testament.” (592)
    - c) Modified “Dispensationalists” on Acts 14:14-18: “The old testament predicted Gentile blessing for this age but not the mystery of the church.” (593)
  4. “promises were made for Gentile salvation, but Old Testament believers did not understand the mystery of how Jews and Gentiles share the same footing in Christ’s body.” (545) Note well, if they, themselves, originally, in their dispensation, in their context, did not understand, then how can we understand what it originally meant to them? The point: They also interpret the Old Testament in light of the New!

- D. Re. “The argument from Luke 3:5” (Luke quotes Isaiah 40:4) (445-446)
1. “Since no such topographical changes occurred when John preached, it is objected by some...that this is an example of the New Testament spiritualizing an Old Testament prediction. Certainly, the New Testament does not take it literally.”
  2. “Response”: “Of course the New Testament does not take it literally, and for very good reason: it was never intended to be taken literally. These are figures of speech, and the literal method of interpretation insists that figures of speech be taken figuratively —this is literally the way they were meant to be understood.”
    - a) **Note well: Geisler can get it! He got this one!**
    - b) How did Geisler *know* they were not supposed to be taken literally?
      - (1) First, the NT inspired author said “This is it!”
      - (2) Second, it didn’t happen literally.
      - (3) Note well, what one would *think* is literal in the original setting is proven not to be:
        - (a) We, left to ourselves and the OT text, cannot know what God intended.
        - (b) We must rely on NT inspired authors.
        - (c) Compare what Geisler says about Hell: “the figures of speech that describe hell are contradictory if taken in a strictly physical sense.” (338) **Again, Geisler can get it! He gets this one, too. And on the sacrifices in Ezekiel 40-48, “Hebrews teaches that Christ fulfilled and abolished the Old Testament sacrificial system and priesthood (8:8-10); taking Ezekiel literally would contradict the New Testament.” (589) He gets it here! See more below under Ezekiel 40-48.**
- E. Geisler himself allegorizes...
1. Lk. 19:11-27 (483-484) and Mt. 25:1-13 (485).
  2. See below on Ezek. 40-48.
  3. Re. Rm. 4:13-16: “From this passage it is argued that Abraham has spiritual seed.... While this is correct, it doesn’t necessitate that the unconditional land-promises God made to Abraham’s literal seed (Israel) are not literally true and will not be literally fulfilled. Abraham has two ‘seeds,’ physical and spiritual; the spiritual seed is parallel (not a replacement) seed.” (540; see also 581)
  4. On the number “1000”:
    - a) “Some [DM’s, lmt] have taken the word *thousand* to be symbolic of a long period of time (eg. 1 Chron. 16:15) or a great number of things (eg. Job 33:23), as indeed it sometimes is.” (558)
    - b) “Literal numbers can have symbolic significance.... Relatedly, *thousand* can symbolize a long period of time and still be literally true.” (559)
  5. Note well, under “Only Premillennialism Employs a Consistent Hermeneutic,” “Nonpremillennialism takes parts of the Bible nonliterally.” (566)

## VII. WHAT GEISLER CONCLUDES, PART 2: SOME MORE OF HIS ASSERTIONS AND INCONSISTENCIES

- A. On the kingdom(s) of God:
1. “God’s kingdom means God’s *reign*.” (461)
  2. “God’s kingdom is also called....”
    - a) “the kingdom of heaven (cf. Matt. 3:2; 10:7).” (460)
    - b) “the kingdom of God’s dear son (cf. Col. 1:12).” (460)
    - c) “the kingdom of our father David (Mark. 11:10).” (460)
  3. The Overarching, Constant, Invisible, Universal. Psalm 103:19; 145:13. (461, 464)
    - a) “This divine reign is the foundation for all other spheres of His sovereign rule....” (464)
  4. The Messianic (461):
    - a) “Visible, earthly, political, promised to Israel, in which Christ will reign on the throne of David in Jerusalem over the whole earth, with His apostles and other disciples, for 1000 years.” (461)
      - (1) “Only an unacceptable allegorical interpretation of these texts can avoid this conclusion.” (465)
    - b) “God’s reign through a divinely appointed representative.” (461) **Yes. This is the current dispensation! (Compare Eph. 1, 3.)**
    - c) “messianic events predicted by the prophets have *literal identity* with the life of Christ. Again, with all these literally fulfilled, why should anything else be expected for the rest of the messianic oracles concerning a literal, political earthly kingdom?” (478) **Ans.:** Because conditional... and God knew they would not fulfill their conditions AND He used them/these promises as figures/types, etc.
    - d) “God’s time-clock for Israel stopped at Messiah’s rejection.” (487)
    - e) “Since the chosen nation would completely reject and then crucify her Messiah, the freight train of Israel would be *temporarily* sidetracked (Rom. 11:15) in order to allow the express train of the church to come through on the main tracks (v. 25).” (493)
    - f) In the Messianic Kingdom, Moses will be the head. (531)
    - g) They are still waiting for the Lord’s Prayer to be “literally and ultimately” fulfilled. (535)
    - h) “*One faith will be established over all the earth.*” (562) Note well, it would be Judaism!
  5. The Spiritual “(in the Broad sense).” (461)
    - a) Began with Jesus’ announcements of the mystery of the kingdom
      - (1) “The spiritual kingdom is what He established while He was on the earth the *first time*.” (491; see also 556, “*Christ Instituted A Present Spiritual Kingdom Until He Returns*”)
        - (a) Exactly!
        - (b) Note well that Geisler means while Jesus was actually still alive.

- i) “God’s spiritual kingdom began while Jesus was on the earth, and the church did not start until the Day of Pentecost.” (494)
      - ii) Which is wrong.
      - iii) But we have Geisler admitting that Jesus established a spiritual kingdom!
    - (2) Note well, Geisler admits Jesus reigns as king in this spiritual kingdom! “While Christ is not King of the church in the Davidic (or messianic) sense of the political ruler situated in Jerusalem —since the messianic kingdom has not yet begun— nonetheless, He is the sovereign Head of the church and reigns over it spiritually.” (494)
      - (a) **On 1 Tm. 1:17:** “While Christ is never called King of the church in so many words, nevertheless He does reign over it as ‘head of all things to the church’ (Eph. 1:22, NKJV). Since the interregnum between His comings is a spiritual kingdom (cf. Matt. 13), there is no reason to deny His spiritual kingship in the present.” (496)
      - (b) Note well that the issue is misunderstanding the Davidic (or messianic) sense.
    - (3) Note well: “All the basic elements of the Old Testament prophetic kingdom are found in Christ’s message and miracles: *spiritual...moral...social...ecclesiastical...political...and physical.*, eg the Virgin Birth, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection.” (555)
    - (4) **Note well Geisler on Heb. 8:7-13:** “Applying the benefits to one group does not mean that are thereby cancelled for the other; it means that the same thing literally promised for Israel (to be fulfilled in the future) is also presently true of New Testament believers.” (445) **SOOO CLOSE!** And true, the *application* itself to one does not mean they are cancelled for the other; rather, their *failure to meet conditions* (elsewhere stated) does mean they are cancelled. And the application to the one is another God-intended implication/application, possibly spiritual, and presently true for NT believers.
    - (5) Note well — Geisler says this about his understanding of the messianic kingdom but of course it actually applies to the true understanding of the messianic kingdom: “Jesus never intimated that His kingdom was any different than what the Old Testament presented; by contrast, He insisted that there was complete continuity in His teaching (Mat. 5:17-18).” (478)
      - b) “Christians” professing faith.
      - c) Wheat and tares not separated.
      - d) Ends at 2nd coming.
      - e) Called the “Kingdom of Heaven” in Mt. and the “Kingdom of God” in parallel passages (462). Note well: “That Matthew’s gospel also uses ‘kingdom of God’ (eg. 12:28; 19:24; 21:32, 43) suggests that he may regard them interchangeably...” (462)
      - f) Note well Geisler on the glory of God and the current purpose of the church:
        - (1) “For both national Israel and the spiritual body of Christ, the ultimate purpose is to give glory to God.” (529)
        - (2) “God’s original intention for Israel will be established as she becomes a spiritual beacon to the nations (Isa. 61:6), making universally known the knowledge of the true God (59:19; Ezek. 37:28).” (562)
  - 6. The Spiritual (Narrow sense) (463). (These are paraphrases, if not quotes.)
    - a) Invisible.
    - b) Spiritual reign...
      - (1) of God.
      - (2) in the hearts of believers.
    - c) Beginning when the first person was saved.
    - d) Excludes all unsaved: Christians possessing faith.
    - e) Can only enter by believing and being born again.
  - 7. The God’s spiritual reign in the church
    - a) **“Kingdom of God is also used of the New Testament church.” (463)**
- B. Geisler on NT usage of the word “Israel”: “There is no instance in Biblical literature of the term *Israel* being used in the sense of the church, or the people of God as composed of both believing ethnic Jews and Gentiles.” (542)
- C. The fullness of times is “the coming age.” (414)

## VIII.GEISLER ON SOME SPECIFIC PASSAGES

- A. Note well: Geisler, in 782 pages of volume 4 of his *Systematic Theology*, has no comment on Acs 13:32-37.
- B. Re. Isa. 11:11-12: “Not only is this a literal prediction of a literal return to a literal land, it has been literally fulfilled in part since May 15, 1948, when Israel was declared a nation.” (468)
- C. Re. Isa. 65:25: “*There will be no carnivorous animals.*” (563)
- D. Re. Jer. 31:31-33: “the new covenant is new in relation to the time-bound Mosaic covenant, which it replaced, but it gives no implication of annulling the unconditional, timeless Abrahamic and Davidic covenants.” (469)
- E. Re. Jer. 31:36-37: “God’s promise is unconditional and irrevocable.” (469)
- F. Re. Ezek. 11:23: “the earthly kingdom, set up as a vehicle through which Messiah could reign, was destroyed by the Babylonians.” (469)

- G. Re. Ezek. 37:10-23: “This will be *after* Israel is resurrected; verses 9 and 12, taken literally, refer to their bodily resurrection in the last days.” (521)
- H. Re. Ezek. 40-48: 589
1. Some DPs take it figuratively:
    - a) **“Since Christ literally fulfilled these types, they [viz. Premillennialists who argue for a symbolic interpretation of this text, lmt] insist that symbolic interpretation, in this case, does not forsake literal historical-grammatical interpretation.” (589) Talk about arbitrary!**
    - b) **“It makes sense for Ezekiel to speak of the future temple in terms that the Israelites of his day would understand” (589) Compare.**
      - (1) “It is a figure of speech called...‘hypocatastasis’ by which one thing is employed as a substitute or equivalent for another. This figure is employed by the prophet to portray a future existing priesthood, using for this purpose the priesthood then known, just as future enemies of God are presented under the names Moab, Babylon, etc., of enemies then existing.” (589)
      - (2) “For example, also consider primitive weapons of warfare being used to speak of literal future (modern) weapons (in Ezek. 39).” (589)
    - c) **“Hebrews teaches that Christ fulfilled and abolished the Old Testament sacrificial system and priesthood (8:8-10); taking Ezekiel literally would contradict the New Testament.” (589) He gets it here!**
  2. Some DPs take it literally (as does Geisler himself):
    - a) Including animal sacrifices (590):
      - (1) Note well: “celebration of the Eucharist will end at the Second Coming (1 Cor. 11:26).” (590)
      - (2) Note well: “Hebrews (8-10) speaks of abolishing animal sacrifices in an *atoning* sense, not as regards a *memorial* observance.” (591)
      - (3) But re. the Mosaic Covenant: “it involved sacrifices and types pointing forward to fulfillment in Christ (1 Cor. 5:7); once they were fulfilled there was no longer a need for a type—the antitype had arrived.” (514)
  3. **“Notwithstanding, either the symbolic or the literal interpretation would answer the objection that Ezekiel’s predicted animal sacrifices are inconsistent with New Testament teaching, for they could be understood literally in a memorial (of not spiritual) sense.” (591)**
  4. **“taking *these* prophecies as fulfilled in Christ does *not* violate a literal hermeneutic and open the door to other spiritualization; such a view preserves the literal interpretation in that *Christ literally and physically fulfilled these sacrifices.*” (591)**
- I. Re. Dn. 9: “God’s time-clock for Israel stopped at Messiah’s rejection; hence, there is a break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel in which the church fits.” (487)
- J. Re. Hos. 3:4: “from here onward it was a matter of prophesying a coming messianic kingdom.” (470)
- K. Re. Amos 9:11: “There is no sense in which a merely spiritual restoration can meaningfully fulfill this prediction.” (470)
- L. Re. Lk. 19: “Jesus was going away to receive a kingship. When He returned, He would establish His kingdom. Until that time His followers were to fulfill the responsibilities He gave them. On His return He would reward the faithful commensurate with their service to Him, and His enemies would be judged before Him.” (480; quoting Walvoord.)
- M. Re. Ac. 1:6-11:
  1. “The disciples were not speaking out of ignorance” (488; Geisler’s referring back to 1:3)
  2. “If there were to be no future literal kingdom, this was His last opportunity to correct them.” (535)
- N. Re. Ac. 2:30-35: Geisler totally and obviously butchers it. See page 532. Make a lesson out of this.
- O. Re. Ac. 3:19-26: “There is not the slightest hint that any spiritual kingdom had replaced these prophecies.” (489)
- P. Re. Rm. 4:13-16: “From this passage it is argued that Abraham has spiritual seed... While this is correct, it doesn’t necessitate that the unconditional land-promises God made to Abraham’s literal seed (Israel) are not literally true and will not be literally fulfilled. Abraham has two ‘seeds,’ physical and spiritual; the spiritual seed is parallel (not a replacement) seed.” (540; see also 581)
- Q. Re. Rm. 9-11, but especially 11: “*Israel* throughout this passage, continually and consistently delineates a group of people known as literal, physical, national Israel. There is no hint of any alleged spiritual Israel that has replaced Israel in God’s plan.” (485)
- R. Re. Mt. 26:26-28; Rm. 8:2; 11:26-27; 1 Co. 11:25; 2 Co. 3:3,6; Hb. 8:7, 13; 9:15; 10:16-18, 28-29; 13:20: “the manner in which the Old Testament passages are (1) cited by Jesus and (2) applied to the church rules out the classical dispensational view, viz. that there are two covenants. There is simply no textual indication that the New Testament writers did not see their application of this to the church as a fulfillment of the new covenant prophecies.” (523)
- S. Re. Rm. 11:26-27: “This crucial text shows a future new covenant in a restored Israel. That is, whatever the significance of applying some of these covenant benefits to believers today, there will be a fulfillment of this in national Israel—exactly as the Old Testament promised.” (522)
- T. Re. Rm. 11:1-32: “That there is no explicit mention of their land being restored is no problem; it is implied in the nation being restored, since they cannot be nationally restored unless they are geographically restored.” (510)
- U. Re. 1 Pe. 1:10-12:
  1. “Some infer that God God intended more by the prophecies than the human authors did...the human authors meant exactly the same thing God

mean by their words.” (428).

- a) Even allowing this (viz. “meant”), using Geisler’s own definitions (on p. 415), God may have intended more implications/applications than the authors realized; furthermore, some of these could additional applications have even been spiritual (417). Note well: Geisler rails against Progressive “Dispensationalism” for confusing meaning and significance (441).
- V. Re. 1 Pe. 2:9: “We have seen that this does not affirm the church as a spiritual Israel and/or that Israel’s literal promises are fulfilled spiritually. (1) Peter doesn’t quote this passage but borrows some language from it. (2) He applies these words to the church; he doesn’t claim that this is the fulfillment of the original text. (3) Even if it could be shown that the church is somehow a fulfillment of *some* Old Testament promises, it wouldn’t mean that *all* of Israel’s literal land- and kingdom-promises are transferred spiritually to the church.” (583)
- W. Re. Revelation: “The Bible is *filled* with symbols; even so, each symbol is emblematic of something literal. Take, for example, Revelation, which contains symbols from beginning to end, yet every one of them represents something literal and is so interpreted by the book itself.” (419)

## IX. GEISLER ON CONDITIONAL UNCONDITIONAL COVENANTS

### A. Assertions of unconditionality of the Abrahamic and Davidic promises, which are the the Land and Kingdom covenants:

1. “the Mosaic covenant dealt not with the blessings of being *given* the land, but with the conditions of *living* in the land. While the land grant to Abraham was unconditional, the blessings that came from living in the land were conditional.” (513)
2. “The stress on the importance of Israel being in the Promised Land is not because that is a condition for God giving them the land; rather, it was a condition for them receiving the blessings that accrued to this promise. The *gift* of the land is unconditional; Israel’s *blessings* for dwelling in the Land were conditional!” (577)
3. And many more.

### B. But...

1. **While “It is contrary to the Biblical teaching of grace (unmerited favor) to say that anything, including our obedience, is a condition for God granting us His grace” (576; compare “A similar distinction is found in our salvation.” 577);**
2. **Compare “While obedience was a condition for Abraham’s seed to *experience* the blessings of the covenant, it was not a condition for God *giving* them.” (576)**
3. Re. “Some covenant theologians claim that Esau’s exclusion from the blessing is a proof that the Abrahamic covenant is not unconditional” (577): “In response, *no one* entered into the blessing of the covenant by virtue of being a physical descendant of Abraham (cf. Rom. 9:6-7); *only* those who appropriated the blessing by faith were able to enjoy it (cf. 4:13-16). Esau is portrayed as an unbeliever in Hebrews 12:16-17, so he forfeited his enjoyment of the covenant blessings by his unbelief.” (577) So I guess there were conditions!
4. “ethnic heritage is a necessary condition for this blessing but not a sufficient one.” (577) So there are other conditions!

### C. Note well: “With a covenant, it is the ‘express terms’ that matter.” (576)

1. Ct. *ESV/SB* —maybe not DP but at least Covenant Theologians— note on verse 2 Kg. 20:5: “God’s response to Hezekiah’s prayer (2 Kings 20:3) shows that many prophecies, though stated in unconditional terms (v. 1), have implied conditions.”
2. Note well that the question is: How did David understand it? Compare. 1 Kings 2:4.

### D. “Of course, there is a sense in which God cannot fulfill His ultimate purposes to have a redeemed Israel in the land of a crucified and resurrected Messiah-king unless both the Redeemer and the redeemed exercise their freedom to accept God’s will for them. This, though, is another version of the predestination/free-will question already discussed in detail. In brief, the answer is that God both foreordained and foreknew exactly who would believe (1 Peter 1:2; Rom. 8:29).” (578) But Calvinist predestination is illogical.

1. Compare Philip Schaff (Reformed) on Predestination: “Logic is a two-edged sword. It may lead from predestinarian premises to the conclusion that God is the author of sin, which Calvin himself rejects and abhors as a blasphemy. It may also lead to fatalism, pantheism, or universalism. We must stop somewhere in our process of reasoning, or sacrifice a part of the truth. Logic, it should be remembered, deals only with finite categories, and cannot grasp infinite truth. Christianity is not a logical or mathematical problem, and cannot be reduced to the limitations of a human system. It is above any particular system and comprehends the truths of all systems. It is above logic, yet not illogical; as revelation is above reason, yet not against reason.” (*Hist.*, 8:572)

### THIS! IS! HUGE!!!

**Geisler admits that something itself can be both unconditional from God’s perspective but conditional from man’s perspective, and both are in play.**

- Compare, re. “It is contrary to the Biblical teaching of grace (unmerited favor) to say that anything, including our obedience, is a condition for God granting us His grace.” (576; compare “A similar distinction is found in our salvation.” [577]):
  - “Total depravity...means ‘total inability to achieve/obtain the solution to our sin by ourselves,’ not ‘total inability to accept it from God.” (Vol. 3, 126)
  - On “Between Conditions for Giving and Conditions for Receiving”: “The first and most basic differentiation is that between the condition(s) for God *giving* the gift of salvation vs. the condition(s) for *humans receiving* it.” (Vol. 3, 470)
  - On “The Condition for Giving vs. the Condition for Receiving” (Vol. 3, 182): “Salvation is unconditioned from the perspective of the giver, but it is conditional from the view of the receiver...” (Vol. 3, 182)
  - To verify that I understand Geisler correctly on this: Compare re. “The Strong Reformed View on The Condition For Salvation,” “some who strongly claim to be heirs of the Reformation (i.e. the Reformed) do not believe there is even one condition necessary for a human being to receive salvation” (vol. 3, 475-476) with “there is no condition for God’s *giving* salvation, but there is one and only one condition laid down for *receiving* the gift of eternal life: faith... Therefore, the reception of salvation is conditioned on our belief.” (Vol. 3, 182)
  - For fun: “The act of receiving a gift by faith is no more meritorious than a beggar receiving a handout; it is illogical to assert that a receiver gets credit for accepting a gift rather than the giver who offers it. The act of faith in receiving God’s unconditional salvation accrues no merit to us—all praise and glory goes to the Giver or ‘every good and perfect gift.’ (Vol. 3, 488) N.B.: re. “beggar receiving a handout by acting” —compare vol. 3, 148: “Does it cease to be a pure gift, *because the beggar extends his hand to receive it?*”
- **So what? That the land is a gift from God, this alone does not preclude that there might be conditions for Abraham to receive it!**
- **Now, can we find some conditions? Compare 1 Kings 2:4.**

2. Ryrie on DP itself! “How can the church be distinct from the kingdom purpose and yet be related to it? We must not try to understand such a seeming paradox by obliterating the distinction between the two purposes...any more than such a procedure would satisfactorily harmonize sovereignty and responsibility. The truth must stand even though it may seem, to the human mind, to involve a paradox.” (*Disp.*, 158)
- E. Re. the Mosaic Covenant: “it involved sacrifices and types pointing forward to fulfillment in Christ (1 Cor. 5:7); once they were fulfilled there was no longer a need for a type—the antitype had arrived.” (514)
- F. Re. “Observations on the New Covenant” (523)
1. “First, the manner in which the Old Testament passages are (1) cited by Jesus and (2) applied to the church rules out the *classical dispensational view*, viz. that there are two covenants. There is simply no textual indication that the New Testament writers did not see their application of this to the church as a fulfillment of the new covenant prophecies.” (523; note well that Geisler means two *new covenants*: 524)
  2. “The overall testimony of the covenants, understood through the historical-grammatical hermeneutic, leads to the rejection of both the traditional dispensational and classical covenantal interpretations of Scripture. *There are not two new covenants.* The New Testament does apply Old Testament promises to church-age believers (contrary to traditional dispensationalism), and both testaments foretell a future literal fulfillment in restored national Israel (contrary to traditional covenantalism).” (523-24)
- G. Re. The spiritual blessings of the New Covenant: “even though the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-33) was *made* with Israel, it is also *applied* to the church.” (530, 581)

## X. GEISLER ON THE CHURCH NOT BEING IN ANY WAY THE FULFILLMENT OF OT PROPHECIES TO JEWS OR A PATH FOR BLESSINGS PROPHECIED TO THE JEWS

- A. “Believers today do not possess the Holy Land in the way which it was promised to Israel, namely, as a national inheritance.” (544) Note well: He admits they do possess it in some way! Compare “the church does not directly possess the world or any piece of property in it. Whatever we possess is indirect; we are possessed by Christ, who possesses the world.” (544)
1. Note well: Does Jesus possess it literally or figuratively?
  2. Also, “The New Testament never says, ‘Christ is the Land.’” (540)
- B. “No New Testament believers—Jews or Gentiles, members of Christ’s body—have any claim on the promises made to believing Jews as part of ethnic Israel.” (544)
- C. “The New Testament church is not a funnel through which Gentiles can receive Jewish blessings.... The ancient prophecies made to Israel, if interpreted literally, make an ethnic distinction.” (544)
- D. “to affirm functional equality of the church with Israel is to reject historical-grammatical interpretation of the texts that gave a *functionally* superior place to Israel in the future messianic kingdom.” (544)
- E. “Gentile inclusion does not mean Jewish exclusion.” (539)
- F. “The messianic promises to Israel (delayed until Jesus comes back) are not to be confused with spiritual blessings for the church; they are distinct entities, and literal promises are not to be spiritualized away.” (535)
- G. But re. the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant:
1. “even though the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-33) was *made* with Israel, it is also *applied* to the church.” (530, 581)
  2. **On Heb. 8:7-13: “Applying the benefits to one group does not mean that are thereby cancelled for the other; it means that the same thing literally promised for Israel (to be fulfilled in the future) is also presently true of New Testament believers.” (445) SOOO CLOSE!**

## XI. OTHER MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Geisler on stopping mid-prophecy implying the other parts of the prophecy have yet to be fulfilled literally. (This is standard operating procedure for “Dispensational” Premillennialists.)
1. Re. Isa. 61:1-2 and Lk. 4:18-19: “When sharing the fulfillment of this passage, Jesus stopped in the middle of a sentence (from Isaiah). The rest of that prophecy refers to His second coming and was not yet fulfilled.” (426)
  2. “like the First and Second Comings, which the Old Testament sometimes connects (Isa. 61:1-2), even so the Millennium and the new heaven and new earth are spoken of together (Isa. 66:22-24; cf. 65:17ff).” (580)
  3. “Some one hundred thirteen prophecies of the coming Messiah were fulfilled by Jesus of Nazareth in the New Testament. Many of these are connected to the claims that he will one day set up a messianic government in Jerusalem and reign over the whole earth.” (472)
  4. Note well the bait and switch: “it is not uncommon for future events to be initially lumped together, and then for further revelation to show that they are separable.” (474)
    - a) This is actually true, at least, at times: Compare OT prophecies of the glories upon return from exile with Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, and 10-12.
    - b) But where will DP’s apply it? Where do they run with this.
    - c) **And the REAL question is: What does an inspired author say? Anything else is speculation.**
- B. Geisler on “The issue of ‘Forever’” (473) in some prophecies:
1. “one problem should be addressed. Throughout these texts (above), Messiah’s kingdom is said to last ‘forever’....” (473-474)
  2. “the New Testament says that the messianic reign has an actual ending point.” (474)
  3. Re. Ps. 89:28-37: “The text does not say David’s throne will never be left unoccupied.” (527)
- C. Geisler on the issue of gaps in prophecy:

1. Re. Dn. 9: “God’s time-clock for Israel stopped at Messiah’s rejection; hence, there is a break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of Daniel in which the church fits.” (487)
2. Explaining away Daniel 9:24-27: “there are other gaps in biblical prophecy. For instance, Malachi 3:1 foretells the coming of John the Baptist, followed by Christ’s second advent, without mentioning the gap of at least two thousand years between the events. Likewise, Isaiah 9:6 speaks of Christ’s birth, followed by His earthly reign, without referring to the same span; this is also true of Zechariah 9:9-10.” (643)
3. “while the Old Testament made promises fulfilled in Christ, it never says all of this would be completed at the First Coming, or that the literal, unconditional land- and throne-promises (sic) (to Abraham and David, respectively) would fulfilled in the church as a ‘spiritual Israel’ replacing national Israel.” (583)
4. “The messianic promises to Israel (delayed until Jesus comes back) are not to be confused with spiritual blessings for the church; they are distinct entities, and literal promises are not to be spiritualized away.” (535)

## **XII. GEISLER SEARCHES FOR UNITY AMONG “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISTS AND THOSE WHO DO AND DO NOT USE THE LITERAL HERMENEUTIC**

- A. Regarding the timing of the second-coming “They are all within the boundaries of evangelicalism.” (552)
- B. “These precious truths about Christ’s return, which constitute one of the faith’s great fundamentals and are held by all orthodox Christians, *are* a test of orthodoxy. That the intramural debate about the Millennium is not a test of orthodoxy does not mean it lacks importance; one could say that the literal hermeneutic (which yields premillennialism) is a hermeneutical fundamental, though not a doctrinal fundamental.” (553)
- C. Note well: Geisler wants people to take on this hermeneutic and these doctrines: “The premillennialist rejoices that at least some amillennialists have taken the promises as literal, as yet unfulfilled, and as finding their fulfillment in the new earth (as premillennialists have upheld all along).” (580)

# QUOTES FROM CHARLES RYRIE, “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM

(Unless otherwise noted, all quotes are from Ryrie’s *Dispensationalism: Revised and Expanded*. Page numbers included.)

## I. FIRST, CHARLES RYRIE (D. 16 FEBRUARY 2016) WAS NOT A CLASSICAL OR NORMATIVE OR TRADITIONAL “DISPENSATIONALIST” BUT A REVISED OR ESSENTIALIST OR MODERATE “DISPENSATIONALIST”

- A. Compare Ryrie himself on the development of “Dispensationalism” (190):
1. Classical, Normative, Traditional: “Initial period started with J. N. Darby and continued through the publication of L. S. Chafer’s *Systematic Theology* in 1948.”
    - a) “I personally think it makes better sense to divide the early/Darby period from the Scofield/Chafer period.”
  2. Essentialist, Revised: “The second (or third) era extends from the 1950s almost to the 1990...John Walvoord, J. Dwight Pentecost, and myself”
  3. Progressive: “The third (or fourth) present period differs from the previous ones because it includes ‘a number of modifications’ and ‘sufficient revisions’”
- B. This according to Norman Geisler also (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:499, 680).

## II. SECOND, ABOUT RYRIE’S BOOK *DISPENSATIONALISM*

- A. Note well that this book is primarily a defense of “Dispensationalism”, not premillennialism (though Ryrie is a “Dispensational” Premillennialist), e.g. “The premillennialist who is nondispensational also compromises the literal principle.” (95)
- B. Frank E. Gaebelein: “this book is mandatory reading for those who have attacked dispensationalism.” (8) Re. Gaebelein himself ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank\\_E.\\_Gaebelein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frank_E._Gaebelein). Accessed Dec. 28, 2016):
1. Vice-chairman for Oxford University Press’s preparation of the *New Scofield Reference Bible*. (Compare “Contributors” page in the *Scofield Study Version*, 2004.)
  2. Style editor for the translation committee of the New International Version of the Bible.
  3. The point: This is the best. Or: Refute this book and refute “Dispensationalism,” I guess.

## III. RYRIE ON THE GENERAL IDEA OF A “DISPENSATION” AND “DISPENSATIONALISM”

- A. “Dispensationalism views the world as a household run by God.” (34)
- B. “God does not rule in only one way or through only one means.” (183)

## IV. RYRIE ON WHO IS A REAL “DISPENSATIONALIST”

- A. Note well: Some Millennialists are not “Dispensationalists” (e.g., “The premillennialist who is nondispensational also compromises the literal principle” [95]), and some who believe in a future literal reign of Jesus on the earth in Jerusalem on the throne of Jesus are neither “Dispensationalists” nor Millennialists (e.g., “According to modified covenantalism...the church is the New Testament Israel in which there is spiritual fulfillment of these Old Testament covenants, even though there also will be literal future fulfillment of them in ethnic Israel. Most modified covenantalists do not believe these will be fulfilled in a literal thousand-year reign of Christ (the Millennium), but in the new heaven and new earth.” Geisler, *Sys.Theo.*, 4:500).
- B. But regarding “Dispensationalism”:
1. “Any person is a dispensationalist who trusts the blood of Christ rather than bringing an animal sacrifice.” (20)
  2. “Any person is a dispensationalist who observes the first day of the week rather than the seventh.” (20)
  3. “A person can believe in dispensations, and even see them in relation to progressive revelation, without being a dispensationalist.” (45)
  4. We agree... to a degree, compare: Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tm. 1:4. While we’re here, Ryrie on “The fullness of times”: “Most commentaries that are not premillennial refer the phrase ‘the dispensation of the fullness of times’ (Eph. 1:10 KJV) to the present gospel age, while those that are premillennial refer it to the millennial kingdom.” (55)
  5. But the three “*sine qua non*”s of a “Dispensationalist” (further discussed 51ff):
    - a) First, “A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the church distinct.” (46)
      - (1) Note well: “The one who fails to distinguish Israel and the church consistently will inevitably not hold to dispensational distinctions; and one who does will.” (46)
    - b) Second, “This distinction between Israel and the church is born out of a system of hermeneutics that is usually called literal interpretation.” (47)
      - (1) Note well: “This does not preclude or exclude correct understanding of types, illustrations, apocalypses, and other genres...” (47)
    - c) Third, “Concerns the underlying purpose of God in the world...namely, the glory of God.” (48) While we are here, regarding God revealing His glory now through Christians as He intended to do long ago through Israel, Ryrie is not far from seeing the truth:
      - (1) “Concerning the goal of history, dispensationalists find it in the establishment of the millennial kingdom on earth...they insist that the display of the glory of God who is sovereign in human history must be seen in the present heavens and earth.” (21)
      - (2) “The very giving of the law itself was that which made Israel famous among the nations (Deut. 4:6-8; 33:1-4).” (127)
    - d) Note well: “The number or names of the dispensations to which one holds is not essential to Dispensationalism.” (52)
  6. Ryrie tacitly admits using the term “Dispensation” in a sense that is not in the Bible:
    - a) “It is perfectly valid to take a Biblical word and use it in a theological sense *as long as the theological use is not unbiblical*. (32)

Ryrie’s three  
*sine qua nons*.



- b) “At least the dispensationalist finds the word *dispensation* used of one or two of his specific dispensations” (Eph. 1:10; 3:9). (220) But not actually used completely in the same sense.

#### V. RYRIE ON THE RELATIVE RECENTNESS OF THE “DISPENSATIONAL” “SYSTEM” OF THEOLOGY/ HERMENEUTICS (NOT THAT THIS IS ANY HINDERANCE TO HIM...)

- A. “Dispensationalists recognize that as a *system* of theology it is recent in origin.” (71)
- B. “The fact that the church taught something in the first century does not make it true, and, likewise, if the church did not teaching something until the twentieth century, it is not necessarily false.” (19)
- C. “That the systemizing of dispensationalism is recent should not be surprising.” (80)
- D. “as a system, dispensationalism was largely formulated by Darby, but that the outlines of a dispensationalist approach to the scriptures are found much earlier.” (70)
- E. “dispensationalists do not claim that the system was developed in the first century; nor is it necessary that they be able to do so. Many other doctrines were not developed in the early centuries—including covenant theology, which originated in the seventeenth century. Doctrinal development is a perfectly normal process that has occurred in the course of church history.” (70)
- F. “Nondispensationalists surely know that baptismal regeneration was taught in the early centuries, and yet many of them would not include that error in their theological systems simply because it is historic.” (70)
- G. “The charge of newness was leveled long ago at the doctrine of the Reformers.” (71)
- H. “That it has laid long unknown and buried is the fault of man’s impiety.” (71)
- I. “It was a truth that was brought to light again at that time and given the natural emphasis of rediscovery.” (180)
- J. “[overemphasis] was a natural one that grew out of the lack of any teachings on the subject in the days in which dispensationalism began to flourish.” (180)
- K. “We should remind ourselves again that the antiquity of a doctrine does not prove its truth, nor does the recency of a doctrine prove its falsehood.” (214) Conflating doctrine with systemization of hermeneutics.
- L. **“We believe that the Holy Spirit can lead the Church into new apprehensions of the truth” (215) One question among many: *Directly or Indirectly?***
- M. “Those who are of the Reformed tradition always attempt to imply that dispensationalism is a mere infant compared to the ancient and wise man of covenant theology.” (215)
- N. “If lack of antiquity is detrimental and refinement is disallowed for dispensationalism, then by the same two criteria covenant theology is discredited.” (218)

#### VI. RYRIE ON “DISPENSATIONALISM” CREATING DIVISION... AND BEING ALL RIGHT WITH IT

- A. “Dispensationalism does foster Bible study, and if with that comes a dissatisfaction with an existing fellowship, that is not surprising.” (86)
- B. “what to do in the complex relationship of one’s individual fellowship with other professed Christians is not a simple matter.” (165)
- C. “The body is composed of dispensationalists and non-dispensationalists! We also need to be realistic about the matter of priority in fellowship.... Fellowship on the horizontal plan (that is, with other human beings) is like a series of concentric circles.... Our Lord shared certain things with Peter, James, and John that He did not share with the others.... Circles of fellowship are not in themselves wrong; it is our failure or refusal to recognize some of them that is wrong.” (245-246)

#### VII. RYRIE ON THE UNREASONABLENESS AND PARADOX OF “DISPENSATIONAL” PREMILLENNIALISM: DON’T THINK! WHATEVER YOU DO, DON’T THINK! (You’ve seen this before.)

- A. **“How can the church be distinct from the kingdom purpose and yet be related to it? We must not try to understand such a seeming paradox by obliterating the distinction between the two purposes (as the antidispensationalist does) any more than such a procedure would satisfactorily harmonize sovereignty and responsibility. The truth must stand even though it may seem, to the human mind, to involve a paradox.” (158)**
- B. **“If the dispensational emphasis on the distinctiveness of the church seems to result in a ‘dichotomy,’ let it stand as long as it is a result of literal, historical-grammatical interpretation.” (166)**
- C. Re. “any more than such a procedure would satisfactorily harmonize sovereignty and responsibility,” compare Philip Schaff, et al. on Calvinism, e.g., (on predestination): “But while his inexorable logic pointed to this abyss, his moral and religious sense shrunk from the last logical inference of making God the author of sin; for this would be blasphemous, and involve the absurdity that God abhors and justly punishes what he himself decreed. He attributes to Adam the freedom of choice, by which he might have obtained eternal life, but he willfully disobeyed. Hence his significant phrase: ‘Man falls, God’s providence so ordaining it; yet he falls by his own guilt.’ Here we have supralapsarian logic combined with ethical logic. He adds, however, that we do not know the reason why Providence so ordained it, and that it is better for us to contemplate the guilt of man than to search after the hidden predestination of God. ‘There is,’ he says, ‘a learned ignorance of things which it is neither permitted nor lawful to know, and avidity of knowledge is a species of madness.’ Here is, notwithstanding this wholesome caution, the crucial point where the rigorous logic of Calvin and Augustin breaks down, or where the moral logic triumphs over intellectual logic. To admit that God is the author of sin would destroy his holiness, and overthrow the foundation of morality and religion. This would not be Calvinism, but fatalism and pantheism. The most rigorous predestinarian is driven

to the alternative of choosing between logic and morality. Augustin and Calvin could not hesitate for a moment.” (*Hist.*, 8:554-555)

- D. Instead of considering there may be something wrong with their hermeneutic and/or doctrine, and putting it/them to the test, they refuse to think about it and are satisfied.

## VIII. WHY RYRIE CONCLUDES “DISPENSATIONALISM”: A SPECIFIC LOOK AT SOME OF HIS METHODOLOGY — THE LITERAL, HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL HERMENEUTIC

- A. First, the fundamentality Ryrie attaches to the historical-grammatical approach: Its relationship to “Dispensationalism”:
1. “consistent literalism is the basis for dispensationalism, and since consistent literalism is the logical and obvious principle of interpretation, dispensationalism is more than justified.” (103)
  2. “If the plain or normal interpretation is the only valid hermeneutic...as consistently as he uses it in interpreting scripture, to that extent he will of necessity become a dispensationalist.” (24)
  3. “dispensational premillennialism not only includes a description of the future but also involves the meaning and significance of the entire Bible.” (171)
  4. “The hermeneutic principle is basic to the entire dispensational system...it affects everything.... Consistent literalism is at the heart of dispensational eschatology.” (171)
  5. “dispensational premillennialism...the only way to understand the Bible.” (10)
  6. “The basic scheme involving the different dispensations remains the most helpful tool of consistent, noncontradictory interpretation of scripture.” (14)
  7. “dispensationalism is the more valid and helpful system.” (21)
  8. “only normative dispensationalism with its consummation within history in the dispensation of the Millennium offers a satisfactory system.” (22)
  9. “It provides consistent hermeneutics.” (23)
  10. “The understanding of God’s differing economies is essential to a proper interpretation of His revelation within those various economies.” (34-35)
  11. “We see the close connection between dispensationalism and hermeneutics.” (37)
  12. “Only dispensationalism can adequately account for the variety of distinguishable economies or dispensations in (not apart from) the outworking of God’s purpose.” (39)
  13. “Only dispensationalism can maintain unity and diversity at the same time and offer a consistent system of interpretation.” (39)
  14. “Only dispensationalism with its cross-sectional and longitudinal/spiral perspectives can recognize the wealth, mobility, and complexity of the history of God’s running the affairs of this world.” (43)
15. **This suggests an approach:**
- a) As fellow “Dispensationalist” Norman Geisler admits —“A bad methodology leads to a bad theology” (*Sys.Theo.*, 4:440), **to demonstrate the fault of the approach is to destroy its teaching.**
  - b) **...AND THEN END UP AT THE TRUTH! Compare:**
    - (1) “If the yet unfulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament made in the Abrahamic, Davidic, and new covenants are to be literally fulfilled, there must be a future period, the Millennium, in which they can be fulfilled, for the church is not now fulfilling them. In other words, the literal picture of Old Testament prophecies demand either a future fulfillment or a nonliteral fulfillment. If they are to be fulfilled in the future, then the only time left for that fulfillment is the Millennium. If they are not to be fulfilled literally, then the church is the only kind of fulfillment they receive, but that is not a literal one.” (172)
    - (2) “If He were not preaching about the millennial kingdom when He said, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’ (Mat. 4:17), then He must have been talking about a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men (for there are no other choices).” (178)

### B. Ryrie on retroactively interpreting the Old Testament in light of the New — or “Complementary Hermeneutics,” as he calls them (205):

1. “Some nondispensationalists argue against dispensationalism and a literal hermeneutic on the basis of their understanding of how the New Testament authors use the Old.” (99) **Ryrie will not address this for another 125 pages (see next).**
2. “covenant theology has been forced to place as its most basic principle of interpretation the principle of interpreting the Old Testament by the New.... ‘The main guide to the interpretation of the Old Testament is certainly found to be in the New’.... Of course, there is everything right about letting the New Testament guide us in our understanding of the Old Testament, but there is everything wrong about imposing the New Testament on the Old. And that is exactly what the covenant theologian does under the guise of a basic hermeneutical principle that tries to make Christ all in all but that in reality is guilty of superimposing Him arbitrarily on the Old Testament.” (223) **Blame the apostles and inspired prophets and other inspired authors!**
3. **Also**, “Certainly in the progressive nature of revelation (not all was given at one time, but progressively), the New Testament reveals matters not communicated in the Old Testament. But one must beware of the word ‘change’ in the revisionists’ definition of complementary hermeneutics. Amillennialists, for example, understand change to mean that the promises made to Israel in the Old Testament are fulfilled by the church in New Testament times, without any future fulfillment (since amillennialists do not believe in a future, present earth Millennium).” (205-206)
4. **Note well Ryrie gives it up by admitting that we can not necessarily base our understanding of what God meant in a dispensation based on their understanding of what God meant in a dispensation:** “the distinguishableness of a dispensation is related to what God is doing, not necessarily to what He reveals at the time, and least of all to what man understands of His purposes. It is certainly true that within the scope of any dispensation there is progressive revelation, and in the present one it is obvious that not all of what God was going to do was revealed on the Day of Pentecost. These are economies of God, not of man, and we determine the limits of a dispensation not by what any one person within that dispensation understood but by what we may understand now from the complete revelation of the Word.” (235) **Exactly! Despite his own misuse of it (see next quote), Ryrie gave it all away!**
5. **The Arrogance!** “Actually, we are in a better position to understand than the writers of the New Testament themselves.” (235)
6. **In summary: “Don’t look at the NT; rather, look only at the OT and US!”**

### C. Oh, and don’t miss the expressed motive/concern Ryrie has to so adamantly protect and use the historical-grammatical approach:

1. “If one does not use the plain, normal, or literal method of interpretation, all objectivity is lost. What check would there be on the variety of interpretations that mans imagination could produce if there were not an objective standard, which the literal principle provides?” (92)
2. This suggests an approach: The him SCENI+ “Silence” and the danger of speaking presumptuously, etc.

- D. Ryrie on what the Literal, Historical-Grammatical hermeneutic is:
1. "Literal hermeneutics...means interpretation that gives to every word the same meaning it would have in normal usage, whether employed in writing, speaking, or thinking." (91) Note well: Norman Geisler refers to this (eg. *Sys.Theo.*, 4:415); the point being, Geisler looks to Ryrie as an authority in this doctrine/system.
  2. "The literalist (so called) is not one who denies that *figurative* language, that *symbols*, are used in prophecy, nor does he deny that great *spiritual* truths are set forth therein; his position is, simply, that prophecies are to be *normally* interpreted (i.e. according to the received laws of language) as any other utterances are interpreted — that which is manifestly figurative being so regarded." (91) Ahh. But how will you know?
- E. Ryrie on his perceived pitfall of considering genre *a priori*: "one of the pitfalls is to claim that 'each genre represents truth in its own way and makes unique demands for how it should be read'." (90) But not unique within the genre itself.
- F. Ryrie on "meaning":
1. Pointing out the perceived problem of a non-"Dispensational" Premillennialist's hermeneutic: "Fuller's problem is that apparently his concept of progressive revelation includes the possibility that subsequent revelation may completely change the meaning of something previously revealed." (95)
  2. "In the progress of revelation there has been no change in the meaning of these words ['Israel' and 'church' lmt]." (97)
  3. "It is not a matter of superimposing a dual purpose of God on the scriptures, but it is a matter of recognizing that in the New Testament the word *Israel* does not mean the church and vice versa. The dispensationalist, then, recognizes the different peoples of God simply because of the distinction maintained by the text as literally interpreted." (103)
  4. "Certainly in the progressive nature of revelation (not all was given at one time, but progressively), the New Testament reveals matters not communicated in the Old Testament. But one must beware of the word 'change' in the revisionists' definition of complementary hermeneutics. Amillennialists, for example, understand change to mean that the promises made to Israel in the Old Testament are fulfilled by the church in New Testament times, without any future fulfillment (since amillennialists do not believe in a future, present earth Millennium)." (205-206)
  5. **Note well Ryrie gives it all up by admitting that we can not necessarily base our understanding of what God meant in a dispensation based on their understanding of what God meant in a dispensation: "the distinguishableness of a dispensation is related to what God is doing, not necessarily to what He reveals at the time, and least of all to what man understands of His purposes. It is certainly true that within the scope of any dispensation there is progressive revelation, and in the present one it is obvious that not all of what God was going to do was revealed on the Day of Pentecost. These are economies of God, not of man, and we determine the limits of a dispensation not by what any one person within that dispensation understood but by what we may understand now from the complete revelation of the Word." (235) Exactly!**
  6. Note well: Ryrie concedes two meanings of "Israel":
    - a) "'For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel' (Rom. 9:6) does not say that the spiritual remnant within Israel is the church. It simply distinguishes the nation as a whole from the believing element *within the nation*. This kind of distinction within the nation was often made in the Old Testament and thus would be familiar to Jews reading such a statement as Romans 9:6." (148)
      - (1) He's wrong about the application;
      - (2) But he's got two distinct Israels, with two distinct meanings: One word with two meanings.
    - b) "the word 'Israel' is applied to the Christian church for the first time by Justin Martyr c. A.D. 160." (150)
    - c) "Only when a believer belongs also to the Jewish race can he in any sense be called a spiritual Israelite." (161)
- G. Ryrie on elaborations and changes in subsequent "dispensations" not changing literal interpretation: "Something instituted may be elaborated or changed in subsequent dispensations (though always to be interpreted literally)." (66)

## IX. WHAT RYRIE CONCLUDES: SOME OF HIS INTERPRETATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- A. On Israel (and its Kingdom) and the Church being distinct — a *sine qua non*: Eg. "A dispensationalist keeps Israel and the church distinct." (46)
- B. On the distinctiveness of the Kingdom of Israel and the Church:
1. "The minimizing of a clear and consistent distinction between Israel and the church results in ignoring the great prophecy of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:24-27." (208)
  2. *Similarity* of [fill in the blank] regarding Israel and the church does not equal *identity* of Israel and the church:
    - a) "Similarity of blessings (even partial similarity) does not mean equation of covenants." (203)
    - b) "Is it true to say that any part of the new covenant as promised in the Old Testament has been inaugurated? Putting all the Old Testament passages together one finds these new covenant promises: (1) putting God's law into Israelites' hearts; (2) no necessity to teach His people; (3) forgiveness of Israel; (4) Israel restored to favor and guaranteed everlasting existence; (5) God's Spirit upon the people; (6) material blessing in the land of Israel; (7) peace; (8) God's sanctuary rebuilt. Of course, none of these promises has been inaugurated for the house of Israel and the house of Judah today. But are any of them similar to what God is doing for the church today? Yes..." (201)
  3. **Note well: "promoting kingdom righteousness in the present time is not the mandate of the church, though progressives and others make it so." (207)**
- C. On the results of "Literal" interpretation: Yet unfulfilled promises.
1. "In the prophecies of the Old Testament, plain interpretation finds many promises that, if interpreted literally, have not yet been fulfilled." (102) Of course, this suggests a test: Must they be interpreted only literally? (This is, even if were those prophecies and promises were meant to be interpreted literally, (a) were they conditional and (b) did God intend they also have a dual, spiritual fulfillment?)
  2. "If the yet unfulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament made in the Abrahamic, Davidic, and new covenants are to be literally fulfilled, there must be a future period, the Millennium, in which they can be fulfilled, for the church is not now fulfilling them. In other words, the literal picture of Old Testament prophecies demand either a future fulfillment or a nonliteral fulfillment. If they are to be fulfilled in the future, then the only time left for that fulfillment is the Millennium. If they are not to be fulfilled literally, then the church is the only kind of fulfillment they receive, but that is not a literal one." (172)

- a) Note well, “Non-literal fulfillment.”
  - b) Of course, this suggests a test...
3. “when the church was introduced God did not abrogate His promises to Israel or enmesh them into the church.” (97)
- D. On Israel still awaiting the establishment of the Davidic throne in Israel:
1. “Dispensationalism” and Ps. 132 and 110 and Ac. 2: “does not deny that our Lord has all authority in heaven and on earth or that He rules in the world and in the church; rather, it denies that He is ruling on David’s throne now and that the Davidic covenant has already been inaugurated.” (199)
  2. “David’s earthly throne and Yahweh’s heavenly throne should be distinguished.” (199)
  3. “Whether the kingdom in present form is the church or whether during this age the Davidic theocratic kingdom has been postponed depends on one’s view of the kingdom preached by Jesus.” (182)
  4. “David himself was designated and anointed to be king some time before he began to reign as king.” (199)
  5. “when the church was introduced God did not abrogate His promises to Israel or enmesh them into the church.” (97)
- E. On Israel still awaiting the New Covenant:
1. “Is it true to say that any part of the new covenant as promised in the Old Testament has been inaugurated? Putting all the Old Testament passages together one finds these new covenant promises: (1) putting God’s law into Israelites’ hearts; (2) no necessity to teach His people; (3) forgiveness of Israel; (4) Israel restored to favor and guaranteed everlasting existence; (5) God’s Spirit upon the people; (6) material blessing in the land of Israel; (7) peace; (8) God’s sanctuary rebuilt. Of course, none of these promises has been inaugurated for the house of Israel and the house of Judah today. But are any of them similar to what God is doing for the church today? Yes...” (201)
  2. “when the church was introduced God did not abrogate His promises to Israel or enmesh them into the church.” (97)
  3. “Some new covenant promises are clearly not being fulfilled or even inaugurated in any sense today. Here are some examples: (1) taming of beasts (Ezek. 34:25), (2) increased productivity of the land (vv. 26-27), and (3) no necessity to teach one another (Jer. 31:34).” (201)
  4. “Similarity of blessings (even partial similarity) does not mean equation of covenants.” (203)
- F. On the “Dispensationalist’s” doctrine of the Church:
1. “The dispensational premillennialist says that the church is not fulfilling these prophecies.” (172)
  2. “In the progress of revelation there has been no change in the meaning of these words [“Israel” and “church” lmt].” (97)
  3. “when the church was introduced God did not abrogate His promises to Israel or enmesh them into the church.” (97)
  4. “the clear and consistent distinction between Israel and the church, which is a vital part of dispensationalism. All other views bring the church into Israel’s fulfilled prophecies except dispensationalism.” (172)
  5. “The understanding of the how and when of the fulfillment of Israel’s prophecies is in direct proportion to one’s clarity and consistency in distinguishing between Israel and the church.” (172) Of course, this suggests an approach....
  6. “ecclesiology, the doctrine of the church, is the touchstone of dispensationalism.” (143)
  7. “this doctrine of the church is a watershed in dispensationalism.” (144)
  8. “sharply distinguishes the church from Israel.” (143)
  9. “dispensationalists have always taught that the church will share in the rule of that kingdom.... At the same time, dispensationalists maintain the separated place and distinct blessings of national Israel restored and regenerated in the millennial kingdom.” (157-158)
  10. According to Ryrie’s view of “Dispensationalism,” the church has similar blessings to what Israel will have when the New Covenant is inaugurated: “Is it true to say that any part of the new covenant as promised in the Old Testament has been inaugurated? Putting all the Old Testament passages together one finds these new covenant promises: (1) putting God’s law into Israelites’ hearts; (2) no necessity to teach His people; (3) forgiveness of Israel; (4) Israel restored to favor and guaranteed everlasting existence; (5) God’s Spirit upon the people; (6) material blessing in the land of Israel; (7) peace; (8) God’s sanctuary rebuilt. Of course, none of these promises has been inaugurated for the house of Israel and the house of Judah today. But are any of them similar to what God is doing for the church today? Yes...” (201)
  11. Note well that this suggests an approach: Show that the church is “Israel” in the New Testament and it will undermine this hermeneutic.
- G. On the Church being an unrevealed non-mystery in the Old Testament:
1. On 1 Thess. 4:16: “This clearly distinguishes those who have died ‘in Christ’ in this age from believers who died before Christ’s first advent, thus marking off the church as distinct to this age and a mystery hidden and unrevealed in Old Testament times.” (147)
  2. “the Church intercalation—which was wholly unforeseen and is wholly unrelated to any divine purpose which precedes it or which follows it.” (176)
  3. “Certainly in the progressive nature of revelation (not all was given at one time, but progressively), the New Testament reveals matters not communicated in the Old Testament.” (205)
  4. On “As” in Eph. 3:5:
    - a) “The amillennialist tries to undermine the importance of this declaration by insisting that the word *as* in verse 5 shows that this mystery was partially revealed in Old Testament times and therefore is not distinctive to the church age. Even if *as* could be so construed, that does not mean that the body composed of Jews and Gentiles was in existence in Old Testament times.” (144-145)
      - (1) Straw man: No one says the body was in existence; we only say it was revealed.
      - (2) But note Ryrie’s interpretation and perspective: The church was not even revealed in the OT.
    - b) “The contrast here, as Colossians 1:26 shows, is between the other ages and ‘now.’ It may be further remarked on this Ephesian passage that the ‘as’ does not give a comparison between degrees of revelation in the former time and ‘now.’ It denies that there was any revelation at all of the mystery in that former time; just as if one should tell a man born blind that the sun does not shine in the night as it does in the day time.” (167)
    - c) “The church as a living organism in which Jew and Gentile are on an equal footing is the mystery revealed only in New Testament times...” (145)
    - d) Note well that “Ultradispensationalists” get “as”: “The ‘as it has *now* been revealed’ may indeed suggest that his mystery has been hinted at in the Old Testament, but under veiled forms or types, and only now was properly revealed.” (237)
  5. The church is a parenthesis: “Classic dispensationalism used the words *parenthesis* or *intercalation* to describe the distinctiveness of the church in relation to God’s program for Israel” (156)
- H. Ryrie on the necessity of the crucifixion even for the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom:
1. “the crucifixion would have been necessary as foundational to the establishment of the kingdom even if the Church age had never been conceived in the purposes of God.” (176) How?

2. "There is no kingdom for Israel apart from the suffering Savior, as well as the reigning King. The Crucifixion was as necessary to the establishing of the kingdom as it was to the building of the church. The kingdom has redemptive as well as legal and political aspects.... But for the Church intercalation—which was wholly unforeseen and is wholly unrelated to any divine purpose which precedes it or which follows it— Israel would be expected to pass directly from the crucifixion to her kingdom; for it was not the death of Christ and His resurrection which demanded postponement, but rather an unforeseen age." (176)
  3. "The kingdom has redemptive as well as legal and political aspects." (176)
  4. "preplanned rejection." (177)
- I. On "The fullness of times": "Most commentaries that are not premillennial refer the phrase 'the dispensation of the fullness of times' (Eph. 1:10 KJV) to the present gospel age, while those that are premillennial refer it to the millennial kingdom." (55)
- J. Some of Ryrie's inconsistencies:
1. On Gal. 3:29: "It is quite obvious that Christians are called the spiritual seed of Abraham (v. 29). But that is so only because when one believes, he or she is baptized (by the Holy Spirit) into Christ (v. 27), who is the seed of Abraham, thus making believers in Christ also Abraham's seed." (161) **No matter why, Ryrie has allegorized, twice:**
    - a) First, they are not literally sperm.
    - b) Secondly, they are not literally descendants of Abraham.
  2. "Dispensationalists usually connect the future apostasy with mystery Babylon of Revelation 17. Older commentators have identified Babylon with the evil world.... Others have identified Babylon in Revelation 17 with Rome, that is, with the power of imperial Rome.... Since the time of the Reformation many commentators have identified Babylon with the papacy. Some do not restrict the identification to the papacy but, rather, see in the Babylon of Revelation 17 an apostate religious 'church'.... it does seem clear that mystery Babylon, the mother of harlots, is a vast spiritual power so ecumenical or worldwide that it can enter effectively into league with rulers and forces of the world and so anti-God as to bend its force to persecute to death the saints of God." (164)

## X. MISCELLANEOUS

- A. Ryrie on "Dispensationalists" overemphasizing material aspects:
1. "dispensationalists have undoubtedly emphasized the millennial kingdom and its relation to the fulfillment of Israel's promises almost to the point of neglecting other aspects of doctrine." (180)
  2. "The very fact that the millennial kingdom is earthly lends itself to a highlighting of the material aspects of that kingdom." (180)
  3. "[overemphasis] was a natural one that grew out of the lack of any teachings on the subject in the days in which dispensationalism began to flourish." (180)
  4. "It was a truth that was brought to light again at that time and given the natural emphasis of rediscovery." (180) Compare "SCENI" + Silence: Same time, same "rediscovery" of a "system," same charge of over-emphasis.
  5. "The contrast is not between 'materialistic' and 'spiritual' but between the presence and absence of the King on this earth." (184)
  6. **With this in mind, I found this interesting:** "Augustine tells us he was induced to forsake the pre-millennial view of the early Fathers because some perverted the doctrine to carnal views." (Biederwolf. 701) I guess these two go together, Premillennialism and carnality.

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