

THE GREATEST PROPHECY EVER FULFILLED

L. R. Shelton Jr.

Message #4.

In our previous messages on THE GREATEST PROPHECY EVER FULFILLED from Daniel 9, we gave an outline of verse, 24thru27 and what we believe the Holy Spirit had laid upon our hearts to bring forth from this great prophecy. We have shown that it had been revealed to the prophet Daniel that God had determined to show forth His GOODNESS and His SEVERITY upon his people, the Jews, and that this would take place in a framework, or measure of time, beginning with the return of the Jews out of Babylonian captivity. This time would be 70 weeks of days, or 490 years, a year for a day.

God showed Daniel through the angel Gabriel, that the greatest portion of this prophecy would be fulfilled in the 70th week or the the Lord from last 7 years and it would have to do with the Messiah, be crucified. or glory; and the Jewish nation would cause Him to cut off, in the middle of the 70th week, or after 3 and one half years of His earthly ministry.

We are now in verse, 24 of Daniel 9 wherein 6 things were determined to come to pass in this 70th week; and set forth before our eyes is both the GOODNESS of God and the SEVERITY of God. The GOODNESS of God is seen in sending His only Begotten Son to die, God is seen in the place of His people; and the bringing in utter desolation upon the very nation, the Jewish nation of whom it was said "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever, amen" (Romans, 9,4thru5). You ask, "And why such judgment against the very nation who was the depository of the truth of God, the only true and living God, and the very vehicle that God used to bring His Son into the world?"

The answer to that question lies upon the pages of the Old Testament wherein we find the Jewish nation continually rebelling against the only true and living God, His light, His knowledge, His Word, His prophets, His providence, His patience, His longsuffering, and living in a state of unbelief.

So in this time table of 490 years their transgression would be fulfilled and God would bring upon them all of the promises of wrath which had so carefully been laid before them in Leverage, 26, Deut. 28 and all the Prophets unto John the Baptist.

Now we have looked at the first three things mentioned in Daniel 9,24 that were determined upon Daniel's people, the Jews, and the holy city. namely, "to finish the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity."

Let us begin our study now at the fourth thing determined, and that is, that the Messiah was "TO BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS." No prophecy of God could cause His people to rejoice any more than to know that the Messiah, the anointed of God, would bring in everlasting righteousness to a people who are nothing but hell deserving sinners. But this is just what our Blessed Lord did by His virgin birth, His holy life, His vicarious death, and His bodily resurrection from the grave.

Jeremiah prophesied of this bringing in of righteousness in Jeremiah, 23,5 thru 6 in these words, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth...and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

Now to me, the most prominent feature of the kingdom of God is His righteousness which was brought in by the King, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Listen how this is set forth in the New Testament. Matthew, 6,33 reads, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness..." Why? Because it is such a vital part of God's kingdom, as brought out in Romans, 14,17—"The kingdom of God is not in meat and drink; but righteous, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Why are we to seek it? Because without this perfect righteousness we cannot be justified before a holy God. God demands a spotless righteousness before He will allow a sinner into His presence, and this perfect righteousness can only be found IN CHRIST This is set forth in such detail in Romans, 3,21 thru 26 where we are told that God has declared His righteousness, that He has set it forth by the redemption in Christ Jesus; and that He, an offended God, because of man's sins, can yet be just when He justifies a believing sinner who has trusted his soul in the hands of the Divine Substitute.

We can say then that a work of righteousness was to be done, and now has been done; for 1st Corinthians, 1,30, records that Jesus Christ has been made unto us "righteousness" by His cross work, and this is greatly confirmed in these words found in 2nd Corinthians, 5,21—"For God hath made Christ to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Listen now as we go into the fifth thing that was determined upon the Jews as recorded in Daniel 9 which reads "AND TO SEAL UP THE VISION AND PROPHECY." I want you to pay particular attention to this "sealing up the vision and

prophecy" for, if rightly understood, much light will be shed upon many Old Testament prophecies concerning the Jews. In fact I will admit that these passages of Scripture always puzzled me until I was able to see them in the light of Daniel 9,24.

Let us keep in mind what we have said many times before and it is this, that this prophecy has to deal with both the GOODNESS and the SEVERITY of God. And I do believe that in this expression, "to seal up the vision and prophecy" we have the severity of God upon the Jewish nation. Now, by comparing this prophecy with Isaiah, 6,10 we have set before us the statement that God would "seal up the vision and prophecy" to the Israelites after the flesh as part of the punishment they brought upon themselves. God said to Isaiah. "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isaiah, 6,9 thru 10).

Isaiah the Prophet also brings this out in another prophecy "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes, the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed" (29, 10 thru 11).

These words of Isaiah along with the words spoken by Gabriel to Daniel in Daniel, 9,24 gives us a remarkably accurate description of the spiritual blindness of the people and their rulers in Christ's day, who, though they read the prophets every Sabbath day, yet because they knew not their voices, fulfilled them in condemning Him (Acts 13,27).

Let us keep in mind what is being said here, and it is this, that the vision and prophecy would be sealed up, that both vision and prophet—both eye and ear—would be closed up, so that "seeing they would see not and hearing they would hear not" (Isaiah, 6,10).

Let us go further. Two times in the New Testament our Lord applied this prophecy of Isaiah, 6,9 thru 10 to the multitude to whom He was speaking. In Matthew, 13 when asked by His disciples why He was speaking to the people in parables, He said, "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance, but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (Matthew, 13,11 thru 13). But our Lord does not leave us without an answer to these few words. No, He goes on in verse 14 thru 15 and gives the reason why this was being done. It was to seal up the vision and

prophecy so that they would have no more light from God because their transgression against God was filled up.

Listen to what He says in verse, 14 thru 16! "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive, for the people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." But he adds to His disciples, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear" (verse, 16).

What our Lord is saying here and which fulfills Isaiah 6,9thru10 and our text in Daniel, 9,24 is this, that He would give the scribes and Pharisees and the host of multitudes that followed Him no more light, so that they would fill up their transgression in crucifying Him, thus bringing down the wrath of God on that generation. This is brought out so clearly in our Lord's words of Matthew,, 23,32,34 thru 36,38.

Again in John's gospel we have reference to this prophecy of Daniel, 9,24, "The sealing up of the vision and prophecy," and also in Isaiah, 6,9 thru 10; 53,1. Listen to John 12,37 thru 41, "But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him, that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Isaiah, when he saw Christ's glory and spake of him."

All of this is confirmed again by Brother Paul in Acts 28,24 thru 27, when he quotes from Isaiah, 6,9thru10 and shows that this darkness of heart, dullness of hearing, blindness of eyes had come upon the Jews of his day to the uttermost because they had filled up their transgression, and the sealing up of the vision and prophecy had taken place.

If you will turn again to Isaiah, 6 you will find Isaiah asking the Lord a question in verse, 11, "Lord, how long?" How long will the darkness of heart, dullness of hearing, and blindness of eyes be upon the people? And here was the Lord's answer, "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land" (verse, 12).

All of this came to pass in A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was utterly destroyed—"Not one stone was left upon another" (Matthew,24,2); "The temple laid waste" (Matthew,, 24,15); "Great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time" (Matthew, 24,21) came upon them, and those who did not die were scattered among the nations of the earth and cut off from before God as a nation. What an awful judgment came upon this most blessed of all nations! Why? Because of rebellion, unbelief and idolatry. And God's judgment is going to fall upon our nation like this someday unless there be a returning to Him in repentance, with broken hearts and contrite spirits.

I will say again as I have said before, no wonder this GREATEST PROPHECY that has ever been fulfilled has been so misinterpreted in our day by putting all of this in the future and applying it to an antichrist. Satan has tried to deceive the hearts of men concerning the Sovereign God of the universe who is both a God of love and mercy, and a God of wrath and judgment.

To every true follower of Christ, I extend this word of warning from Romans, 11,22, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God, on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, IF thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." May God have mercy upon us is my prayer.