

A NEW LOOK AT THE BOOKS OF REVELATION & DANIEL END-TIME PROPHECIES

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PART 1

CORRECTING THE END-TIME PROPHETIC TIMETABLE

One of the greatest obstacles to correctly understanding the prophetic timetable of End-Time events is the Futurist interpretation of Daniel 9:27. We once accepted the popular teaching that the 70th Week of Daniel refers to a future seven-year Tribulation.

However, as we studied the Word of God, the Spirit of God clearly guided us to see the error of this interpretation. We do see that the Rapture takes place simultaneously with the resurrection of the Two Witnesses (Revelation 11), and that this event takes place immediately before the Judgment Bowls of Revelation, which are preceded by the 7th Trumpet. But we now understand

that all seven Seals and the first six Trumpets of Revelation have already been fulfilled, having to do with the fall of the Roman and Byzantine Empires (6th and 7th Heads of the Beast) and the rise of Islamic Empires (8th Head of the Beast). This perspective of the End-Time prophetic timetable reveals that we are much closer to the Rapture and Second Coming than the popular teaching of a future seven-year Tribulation indicates.

JESUIT ORIGIN OF FUTURE ANTICHRIST

A major correction of the End-Time prophetic timetable is that Daniel's 70th Week is not about a future seven-year Tribulation. The interpretation of a future seven-year Tribulation and a future Antichrist was promoted by a Spanish Jesuit in opposition to Protestant reformers correctly identifying the Papacy as Antichrist:

Some critics object to *futurism* on the basis of its origins. FRANCISCO RIBEIRA, A SPANISH JESUIT, IS KNOWN TO HAVE ORIGINATED THIS APPROACH TO REVELATION IN 1585 FOR THE PURPOSE OF REFUTING THE *HISTORICIST* VIEW, AND THE [PROTESTANT] REFORMERS' INSISTENCE THAT THE "BEAST" WAS THE PAPACY. Ribeira taught that the "Antichrist" had not yet come and would be an individual arising "in the last days." Protestants rejected this view for over 200 years, but it was finally introduced in Protestant circles by Samuel Maitland in 1827 and popularized in the works of J. N. Darby, the founder of dispensationalism, beginning in 1830. Protestant interpreters sometimes still look upon this approach with suspicion because of its roots (emphasis in capitals added).¹

Francisco Ribeira (Ribera) wrote a 500-page commentary on the Book of Revelation, proposing that the Antichrist would rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem, be received by the Jews, proclaim himself to be God, kill the Two Witnesses, and conquer the world.² It is no coincidence that a

¹ Steve Gregg (Editor), *Revelation: Four Views – A Parallel Commentary*, p. 42.

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Ribera

Jesuit of the Apostate Roman Church, the very apostasy the apostle Paul warned about in Thessalonians 2:3, was the author of this false interpretation of Bible prophecy.

For over 200 years, Protestants rejected this false interpretation. Unfortunately, because this erroneous interpretation has become such a popular prophecy teaching today, it has prevented believers from correctly understanding the prophetic timetable of End-Time events. We are deeply grateful to our gracious Lord for correcting our understanding of this subject, which has opened up our understanding of prophetic events and the End-Time prophetic timetable.

OVERVIEW OF END-TIME PROPHETIC TIMETABLE & EVENTS

In this multi-part study, we will show from the Word of God and historical events that:

1. The covenant of Daniel 9:27 is the New Covenant established by Messiah Yeshua (Jesus), not a false peace treaty made by a future Antichrist with Israel. Yeshua's ultimate sacrifice for sin atonement "put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering" because no other sacrifice for sin was either acceptable to God or efficacious for sin atonement.

2. A translation error adds "for" (not in the original text) to "one week", leading to the false conclusion that the covenant of Daniel 9:27 lasts only seven years. However, "one week" refers to the 70th Week, when God's plan of salvation according to the New Covenant was fulfilled through Yeshua's crucifixion and resurrection, and the True Church of Messiah Yeshua was born through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers.

3. The 70 Weeks Prophecy of Daniel (Daniel 9:24-27) is about the First Coming of Messiah Yeshua, who confirmed the New Covenant during the 70th Week. The 70 Weeks Prophecy also shows the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. There is nothing in the 70 Weeks Prophecy having to do with a future Antichrist.

4. The Roman Emperor Constantine fits the prophetic picture of the Man of Lawlessness, who established the Apostate Roman Church ("the apostasy" – 2 Thessalonians 2:3). Constantine

appointed himself as the sole and supreme head of the Christian Church, thus intending to replace Messiah Yeshua, who is the one and only head of the True Church. By intending to replace Messiah Yeshua (God), Constantine falsely proclaimed himself as God (2 Thessalonians 2:4; Daniel 11:36).

What Constantine established made it possible for the Roman Papacy to rise to great power and eventually assume the position of sole and supreme head of the Apostate Roman Church. In this role, the Papacy also fits the prophetic picture of the Man of Lawlessness. Constantine and the Papacy “intend[ed] to make alterations in [God’s] times and [God’s] law” (Daniel 7:25) by replacing the Biblical Holy Days (Appointed Times of the Lord) with pagan holidays, thus obscuring the true Biblical prophetic pattern and timetable of God’s plan of redemption (Leviticus 23); and replacing Biblical doctrines with unbiblical doctrines, including pagan beliefs, customs and rituals, in contradiction to God’s Word and His commandments.

5. After Rome fell (“fatal wound” of the 6th Head of the Beast – Revelation 13:3), Papal Rome rose in its place (“fatal wound ... healed”) and the Roman Papacy became the sole and supreme head of the Apostate Roman Church. Falsely claiming to represent Christ (God) on earth, the Pope in effect proclaims himself as God.

6. The apostle Luke clearly shows that the Abomination of Desolation (Matthew 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20) refers to the pagan Roman armies (“the abomination”) that surrounded Jerusalem, bringing total destruction (“desolation”) to the city and Temple. The “holy place” referred to in Matthew 24:15 is the holy city of Jerusalem, not a rebuilt Temple. The Temple will not be rebuilt until after the Islamic enemies that attack Israel are destroyed (War of Gog-Magog, Ezekiel 38; Armageddon, “Har Magedon”, Revelation 16:16).

7. The kingdoms in Daniel’s prophecies are: Babylonian Empire (Gold), Media-Persian Empire (Silver), Greek Empire (Bronze), Roman Empire (Iron), and Islamic Empire(s) (Clay); the Feet and Toes of Iron and Clay represent the “divided kingdom” of Christian and Islamic empires and nations arising out of the ancient Roman Empire (Daniel 2). The kingdoms represented by Revelation’s Beast with 7 Heads, plus 8th Head, are: Egyptian Empire, Assyrian Empire,

Babylonian Empire, Persian Empire, Greek Empire, Roman Empire, Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire, and Islamic Empire(s) (Revelation 17). Revelation's Beast with 2 Horns represents the Christian Roman Empire (Revelation 13). The 2 Horns represent the two divisions of the Roman Empire: the Western Roman Empire, with Rome as its capital; and the Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire, with Constantinople as its capital.

8. The Seals of Revelation have to do with the fall of the 6th Head of the Beast (Rome and the Western Roman Empire). The first six Trumpets of Revelation have to do with the fall of the 7th Head of the Beast (Eastern Roman/Byzantine Empire) and the rise of the 8th Head of the Beast (Islamic Empires).

9. To understand what the Mark of the Beast is requires that we understand what the Mark of God is. The Mark of the Beast has to do with one's spiritual condition, not an external physical mark or device, such as a computer chip.

10. The "great tribulation" of Matthew 24:21 refers to the terrible conditions of the Roman siege of Jerusalem and its utter destruction (Josephus records 1.1 million Jews died and 97,000 were sold into slavery), resulting in almost 2,000 years of exile of the Jewish people from Jerusalem and the Land of Israel. The "great tribulation" of Revelation 2:22 relates to a false prophetess of the church of Thyatira and those who followed her. The "great tribulation" of Revelation 7:14 refers to a period of intense persecution and martyrdom of early believers by the Roman Empire.

11. There is a future three-and-a-half-year period yet to come, during which time the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11 accomplish their mission. The 7th Trumpet sounds at the time the Two Witnesses resurrect, coinciding with the Rapture, on Rosh HaShanah (Feast of Trumpets). Immediately, the Judgment Bowls of Revelation pour out on the world through Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). God's judgment includes the destruction of the Apostate Roman Church (Revelation 18), as well as the destruction of the Islamic enemies that attack Israel (Ezekiel 38).

12. The 144,000 does not refer to 144,000 Jews during a future seven-year Tribulation. Jews are from the Tribe of Judah, whereas the number includes the 12 Tribes of Israel, except for Dan who is replaced by Manasseh (Revelation 7:4-8). The number 144 is the product of 12 x 12, the number 12 signifying the governmental perfection of God. The number 144,000 represents all who are redeemed by the blood of Messiah Yeshua, marked with the seal of God's Holy Spirit (Revelation 7:3, 9), including Gentiles, who are grafted into Israel (Romans 11; Galatians 3:29).

13. The Word of God tells us that Yeshua's Second Coming will be "like a thief in the night" to those who do not know Him (1 Thessalonians 5:2-4). For this reason alone, the teaching that a future seven-year Tribulation starts with a false peace treaty made by Antichrist with Israel cannot be correct because it predicts the timing of Yeshua's Second Coming seven years later. Those who are looking for a future Antichrist to rule the world, make a false peace treaty with Israel, rebuild the Temple, and then enter the Temple proclaiming himself to be God, will certainly be surprised because these events will not happen prior to Yeshua's return.

REFERENCES

Gregg, Steve (Editor), *Revelation: Four Views – A Parallel Commentary*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1997.