

# Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

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## "The People of the Prince"

*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9:25-27)*

...and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. If we accept the integrity of Gabriel's timeline, Jesus began His public ministry at the beginning of the seventieth "week" of years in the prophecy. If we also accept the consistent depiction throughout Daniel that the four world empires were the four that dominated the Mediterranean world from Daniel's time till Jesus' coming; Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, we understand that Jesus made His appearance during the Roman era, the fourth and final of the four empires described in Daniel's writings.

This brings us to something of a challenge regarding the prophecy regarding "...the people of the prince that shall come..." In the spring of 70 A. D., after several years of escalating hostilities, the Roman occupying army engaged in a major offensive against the rebellious Jewish people in Judea. The offensive reached a crucial point as the Roman army approached and besieged Jerusalem, the capital city. This siege lasted till August of that year. The problem—this event did not occur within the sequential seventy weeks of years era—may be resolved by the simple observation that Gabriel's prophecy does not list this event as one of the six events included in that time frame. It occurred as a corollary to those events and the Jews' rejection of Jesus, but it was not part of the seventy week work outlined in Daniel 9:24.

Initially Vespasian commanded the Roman army in Judah, but during this offensive against the Jews Vespasian learned of major changes in Rome, changes that opened the door to his becoming the new Caesar, so he left his son Titus in charge of the occupying army and returned to Rome. Vespasian was successful in

gaining the position of Caesar. Caesar in Latin is equivalent to kurios in Greek (translated "Lord" in the New Testament), and it is equivalent to Kaiser in German. Effectively the position is that of ruler over the country. Thus Titus, the Roman general who commanded the siege of Jerusalem, was in effect a "prince," the son of the king. I find it amazing, a true witness to God's supernatural guiding of the writing of Scripture, that Gabriel would reveal these details to Daniel some time prior to five hundred B. C. Almost six hundred years before Vespasian rushed off to Rome, leaving his son Titus in charge of the Roman army in Judea, Gabriel revealed the matter to Daniel. The military commander who directed the flooding destruction of the city of Jerusalem was not merely an accomplished general; he was in fact a "prince."

*"...the end thereof shall be with a flood..."*

Do not discount the solemn words, words that Daniel would have not missed at all. In fact those words, "the end thereof," would likely be the cause for Daniel's broken heart and prolonged grief. His beloved people not only would so provoke their God as to bring His certain judgment against them, but they would also by that provocation end their existence as a nation favored and protected by God.

*Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O*

*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

(Matthew 23:34-39)

The religious leaders of the nation in Jesus' day self-righteously denied their ancestors and said, "...If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." (Matthew 23:30) Yet Jesus warned them that their own rebellion against their God would be profoundly greater than any of their ancestors. They would reject and seek the death of their promised Messiah, God Incarnate. It was this precise fact that prompted Jesus' words of severe judgment in the verses cited above. Upon first century Judah would fall God's pent up judgment against all the stubborn and rebellious people and their sins that went before. The sin of first century Jewish religious leaders was far greater than any sin of their ancestors.

Again in this citation we see the incredible precision of inspired words in Scripture.

*...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!*

The problem was not primary to the Jewish people of the first century, but to their leaders. Notice Jesus' words; "...would I have gathered **thy children** together...." Then notice the reason Jerusalem's children were not so gathered under God's motherly protective care; "...**ye** would not!" The English Bible does not contain many exclamation points, but we find one here, one that is well placed, for Jesus' words in this passage cry out to these people. The "ye" who would not permit Jerusalem's children to gather under their God's care were the religious leaders of the nation.

There are indications, as mentioned, that Gabriel informed Daniel that his beloved people would meet their end as God's favored people within the events of the seventy weeks of years prophecy. What does Jesus say about the future of the Jewish people in the passage cited above?

*Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

I do not advocate or condone one human imposing senseless abuse or prejudice against any other human being because of his/her race, gender, or culture; nor does Scripture.

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*  
(Galatians 3:28)

Therefore I offer the following thoughts with the careful precaution that they are Jesus' words, based on His knowledge and righteous judgment against that generation. They are not words that you or I are authorized to take upon ourselves and impose upon contemporary Jews or any other people.

Many people reacted with joy when Jewish pilgrims from many countries around the world united and gained a foothold in their old native land in 1947. Many Christians celebrated the event, claiming it was the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy and, trumpeted by the dispensational camp, heralded the beginning of the end. To them, this event clearly indicated that the final chapter of human history was closing in upon us.

Did the Jews' return to their historical land in 1947 fulfill Scripture? Listen to Jesus' words. Let them echo in your mind long and clearly.

*Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

Who came in the name of the Lord? Was it not Jesus Himself, God Incarnate? Is that not the message that Jesus delivered to the religious leaders of the day who were then plotting Jesus' death? I must ask the obvious question. Is there any indication that the returning Jews to the "Holy Land" in 1947 were returning to their God or to Jesus, their promised and long rejected Messiah? History answers the question without any doubt. These people were seeking relief from dreadful oppression and from the painfully recent memory of Hitler's ovens. I am thankful that they found or forged out a piece of land to call their own. However, I find nothing in the history leading up to 1947 or since that in any way indicates that the Jewish people who returned had also decided to embrace Jesus, He who came in the name of the Lord, as God Incarnate. And for that simple reason I see no basis to claim that their return was the fulfillment of any Bible prophecy. Noble as their plight was from a truly humanitarian point of view, they did not embrace Jesus, and they did not fulfill a Biblical prophecy.

The whole paradigm of the dispensational school of thought that alleges that the Second Coming cannot possibly occur until the Jews possess the whole of their ancient land, or any other human accomplishment for that matter, has no support from Scripture. The date of the Second Coming depends on God's timetable, not man's accomplishments.

Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church  
16434 Woodruff  
Bellflower, California

Worship service each Sunday      10:30 A. M.  
Joseph R. Holder                      Pastor