

The Great Controversy Series

Sermon 28: The 2300 Year Prophecy

Last time we introduced William Miller to you as an American Reformer. In his youth Miller was a deist but he found neither comfort nor hope in that belief system. Later, by studying the Bible for himself verse by verse he found in Jesus Christ a friend, Savior and Lord.

His years of Bible study convinced him that as we approach Jesus' coming the world will not be better but worse. He understood that the world in general would not accept Jesus and become believers. Along with this Miller found that Jesus' second coming would not be spiritual but physical and in person.

He also found in the Bible prophecies that predict history. The predicted events occurred in a specific time period. All of them occurred in in order in history. So when Miller found a prophecy in the Bible that apparently revealed the time of Jesus' second coming he couldn't ignore it. Here is that prophecy:

Daniel 8:14 And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

When Miller was reading the Bible and he came across a text that was hard to understand he would find a solution by comparing it with other verse in the Bible. We gave some examples of that last time. Miller learned that in symbolic prophecy a day represents a year. When we talked about 1260 year period of papal dominion we talked about this. 1260 days in symbolic prophecy represents a year. To refresh our memories on this concept let's quickly look at texts that support this. You remember that when the people of Israel left Egypt, the Lord had taken them to the border of the promised land. When they arrived there the Lord commanded that they send 12 men to spy out the land. But as most of the men gave a bad report, the people of Israel rebelled against the Lord. Then the Lord said these words to them:

Numbers 14:34 'According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection.

For this reason the people of Israel stayed in the desert for forty years —one year for each day.

We see this concept in another place. As a physical example to the people of Judah, the Lord commanded Ezekiel to lay on his side in front of the people.

Ezekiel 4:6 "And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.

Thus when the heavenly messenger said to the prophet Daniel, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed" Miller understood that this was 2300 years.

The word translated "sanctuary" here is the Hebrew word "qodesh." You know there is an older translation of the Turkish Bible called the Kitabı Mukaddes. The word mukaddes word and qodesh share the same root. It means "holy" and it can mean "holy place" according to its context. In the Bible it frequently means the whole temple or it implies the first or second apartment of the sanctuary.

Miller understood that the 2300 years extended well beyond the time of Daniel and past the period of Israel. Therefore he understood that the text was not talking about the sanctuary of Israel. Miller wondered which sanctuary the text was talking about. Miller had accepted the popular view widely held in Christianity in general that the world was the sanctuary. For this reason Miller thought that the cleansing of the sanctuary as the cleansing of the earth by fire at Christ's second coming. There is the following verse:

2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

Miller thought that if he could find the beginning of the 2300 days that he would be able to establish the time of the second coming. The angel Gabriel was sent to Daniel to explain the vision that he saw.

Daniel 8:17 So he came near where I stood, and when he came I was afraid and fell on my face; but he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to the time of the end."

But when Daniel saw in the vision the persecution time of the Church he fainted and was sick.

Daniel 8:27 And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days; afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

Gabriel had given only a partial explanation to Daniel. For this reason Miller could not find the 2300 days' beginning point in Daniel chapter 8. The Lord had commanded that Daniel be caused to understand the vision. So the angel came again to Daniel while Daniel was praying.

Daniel 9:20-24 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,²¹ yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time

of the evening offering.²² And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand."²³ "At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:²⁴ " Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

The word translated "determined" is the Hebrew word "hataq" and literally signifies "to cut off." The 70 weeks, that is 490 years were cut off. But cut off from what? In Daniel chapter 8 because the only time frame is the 2300 days it is cut from there. The 490 year period is cut off from that and it must be a part of that period and start together with it.

When did the 70 weeks begin?

I want to show this to you. But to do this I will use the Kitabi Mukaddes translation that I mentioned before. Why will I use the Kitabi Mukaddes translation and not the Kutsal Kitap translation? Because the verses I will show you in the Kutsal Kitap translation are translated incorrectly. I will give the reasons in summary.

But before I do this, let me say this. No translation is perfect. Be careful! I didn't say that the Scriptures were changed. I said that no *translation* is perfect. We are human and when translators do their translation work their experience, education, opinions and suppositions naturally enter into the translation. This is normal. Thus if we don't know the original languages of the Scriptures, different translations can be a help to our understanding. The Kutsal Kitap translation in general, outside of the book of Daniel, is a really good translation and most of the time we use it. In that translation people will find Jesus and salvation. That is the goal of the Scriptures. We will not throw the Kutsal Kitap translation in the garbage.

In spite of this, there is a thesis that has widespread acceptance about the book of Daniel. Most of the scholars in the Christian world believe that the book of Daniel was not written by the prophet Daniel who lived in the 6th century B.C. They have put forth many ideas concerning this. These scholars assert that there are as many as 2, 3, up to 9 different authors from the 6th to the 2nd century B.C. According to these theories these secret authors used Daniel's name and that the events supposedly prophesied were actually written after the events. That is, according to these scholars, there are no events in the book of Daniel that were predicted prophecy.

According to these theories the main subject of the book of Daniel is the persecution of the Jews by a Greek king named Antiochus IV Epiphanes whose name does not even appear in the book of Daniel. These scholars believe that all of the events mentioned occurred before Jesus came. Many of the theories are contrary to one another and there are debates among them. When these

scholars translated the book of Daniel, they translated according to this bias. Most members of Protestant churches don't know this and if they learned it they would be shocked. Because the Scripture says:

Daniel 7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head while on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.

The average church member after reading this will understand that the prophecies in the book of Daniel came from Daniel but the scholars say something else. According to the scholars the authors are many and unknown. O.K. if the church member can't trust what is written in the Scriptures, what assurance does he have on any subject?

The subject is large and later we will dwell on the subject and do a more detailed explanation. Let's not get too far away from the subject and let me say this: Seventh-day Adventists believe that the book of Daniel was written by the prophet Daniel who lived in the 6th century B.C. We believe that the prophecies in the book of Daniel really do predict the future. We don't believe that all the events in the book of Daniel happened before Jesus. To demonstrate this I will appeal to just one scholar. That scholar's name is Jesus Christ.

Matthew 24:15 " Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),

These scholars believe that the desecration of the temple took place during the persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes who reigned from 175 to 164 B.C. in the Greek Seleucid dynasty. That believe that it was not Daniel but others who wrote the events. However Jesus said that Daniel wrote the book of Daniel. One. Two, when Jesus spoke to His disciples about the abomination of desolation He said the event was yet future. Who are you going to believe? Jesus Christ or these Protestant scholars? Let this be enough said this time. Now let's go to Daniel 9:25-27 in the Kitabı Mukaddes translation to determine the starting point for the 70 weeks.

Daniel 9:25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

The 70 weeks begins with the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. This command is found in Ezra 7. But we read the following in Ezra 6:

Ezra 6:14 So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.

Three Persian kings gave commands concerning the restoration of Jerusalem. Every one expanded the work step by step. In the end, the command of Artaxerxes brought the situation to the condition required by the prophecy. In the verse, the expression “according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia” reads in the Hebrew with the word “command” in the singular. This word is translated as a plural in Turkish to match Turkish grammar. But in the Bible these three commands appear as one commandment. O.K., When did the command reach its final state? It was completed in 457 B.C.

The angel had said to Daniel in Daniel 9:24, “Seventy weeks are determined for your people.” Seventy weeks, that is 490 years, was especially allotted to the Jews from 457 B.C. to A.D. 34.

Now continuing other fantastic prophecies come out.

The expression, “To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks” speaks about 69 weeks, that is, 483 years. The commandment of Artaxerxes was issued in the fall of 457 B.C. If we add to this 69 weeks, that is 483 years, we come to the fall of A.D. 27. O.K. in the fall of A.D. 27 did the Messiah or anointed one appear? Yes!

Acts 10:37-38 "that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: ³⁸ "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Jesus said:

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

The one who was anointed was Jesus. After Jesus was baptized, the following happened:

Mark 1:14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

What time was fulfilled? The time of Daniel 9:25 was fulfilled. Prophecy predicted Jesus' coming forth as Christ hundreds of years beforehand and which year He would appear! This is an

amazing prophecy! This prophecy is not about events concerning Antiochus IV Epihanes! No friends! The Scriptures point to Jesus!

We continue:

Daniel 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

The "one week" spoken about is the last week of the 70 allotted to the Jews. In this last 7 years between 27 A.D. and 34 A.D., first with Jesus and later with His disciples, the gospel was given especially to the Jews.

The New Testament testifies to this:

Matthew 10:5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.⁶ "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Daniel 9:27 says, "But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering." Three and one half years after Jesus was baptized in the year 31 A.D. our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. The great sacrifice of Jesus on the cross of Calvary ended that system of animal sacrifices that pointed to the Lamb of God for 4000 years. The animal sacrifices were only examples. The real sacrifice came at last with Jesus and eliminated the necessity of animal sacrifice.

We saw earlier that the 70 weeks, that is the 490 years allotted to the people of Israel ended in the year 34 A.D. The Sanhedrin, the high court of Israel, by executing Stephen, and the Jews, by persecuting the followers of Christ sealed their rejection of the gospel. Then the gospel message was no longer restricted to the chosen people but went to the world.

Up until now, with the day-for-a-year understanding in symbolic prophecy, Daniel's prophecy is fulfilled in a striking manner. 1810 days remains after taking away 490 days from the original 2300. If we add 1810 years to A.D. 34 it brings us to 1844.

Daniel 8:14 And he said to me, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

William Miller concluded that the sanctuary would be cleansed in 1844. At that time among Christians, they believed that the cleansing of the sanctuary would happen with Christ's second coming. Thus Miller expected Jesus to come to this earth in 1844.

Next time we will talk about the religious revival that happened with the proclamation of this message.

Perhaps our subject was hard for you today. Don't worry. We will talk more about it. You will understand. But I want to say this. In this world it isn't always easy to understand and appropriate valuable things. For this reason lies abound and they are believed. People don't want to make an effort to arrive at truth. They want fast-food religion. You work hard to make a living in this world. Is it worth an effort to obtain eternal life? In these last days is it worth the effort to learn what is the Lord's will for you?

2 Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.