

LifeSavers Bible Studies

#9: The Beginning of the End

Check one answer for each question:

I. The End of the Age

1. Jesus responded to His disciples' question about the time of His Second Coming with a description of the "end of the age."

Matthew 24:3-14: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

2. This chapter lists many developments that will take place in the end-time, including the appearance of false christs, false prophets and deceptive miracles.

Matthew 24:24: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

3. In lesson 2, the metal image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream presented a broad prophetic view of the time of the end. According to Daniel's dream, the feet and toes of the immense statue represented the end time that we're studying about now.

Daniel 2:41-44: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

God made it clear that Jesus would not return to earth until after the fall of the 4th Empire, Rome, and its territory was subdivided into the ten divisions (see lesson 6). In Matthew 24, Jesus describes what the physical, political, religious, social, and moral condition of the world will be when He returns to earth. But did you know that God, out of love for humanity, and not wanting to keep His friends in the dark regarding His plan (John 15:14-15), proclaimed a prophecy that reveals the exact year, month and day when He would begin the judgment that would determine who will be saved and who will be lost?

II. A Pre-Advent Judgment

Three angels are depicted as delivering God's last-day message with a loud and distinct voice (Revelation 14:6, 8-9). The everlasting gospel is to be preached to all the world so that we might be prepared for the coming of Christ. In light of this message, evangelizing the world now becomes a matter of great urgency, for the prophecy proclaims an event that has begun in heaven which ushers in the beginning of the time of the end.

4. According to the first angel, the hour of God's judgment *has come*.

Revelation 14:6-7: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

This announcement, given prior to Jesus' return, states that the judgment of the world is in progress. A pre-advent judgment harmonizes with the rest of Scripture: the righteous dead will be the first ones to be resurrected at the second coming (1 Thessalonians 4:16), while the wicked are not resurrected until much later (Revelation 20:4-6); and God will have pronounced guilt or innocence on each individual before Jesus returns (Revelation 22:11-12). Since Jesus brings rewards with Him when He comes, there must be a judgment before He comes to determine who is to receive eternal life.

5. According to Daniel, judgment begins in heaven before the Son of Man comes to receive His kingdom. Note especially the last part of verse 10.

Daniel 7:9-14: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

III. Modern Meaning to Ancient Symbolism

6. Having a knowledge of the ancient Jewish sanctuary service helps us better understand Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary today.

Hebrews 8:1-5: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

All the rituals performed in the earthly sanctuary system were merely a shadow of the heavenly; that is, they served to enlighten us about how God works. By means of the ceremonial system, God had planned to instruct the people regarding the plan of salvation so that they might understand and receive insight into what God was doing for them through His Son, Jesus. Therefore, an understanding of what happened in the earthly sanctuary of Israel will show us how God, in Heaven, must deal with the issue of sin.

An important principle is brought to light here. The New Testament cannot be properly understood without a working knowledge of the Old Testament. The plan of salvation did not change from the Old Testament to the New. The message has always been the same; God merely changed the method of communicating it. (For more on this topic, see Hebrews 9:1-14, 23-24.)

In the following verses, read the account of the yearly service that was a day of judgment in Israel. Leviticus 16:7-10, 16, 20-22, 29-30.

7. In verses 30-34 of this passage the word "atonement" is used repeatedly to describe the work of the priest.

Leviticus 16:30-34: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

Within the sanctuary compound a variety of services were conducted. Every morning and evening a lamb was offered on the altar of burnt offering in the Tabernacle courtyard (Numbers 28:4-6). This lamb prefigured the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. For Israel this symbolized God's continual love and

forgiveness of their sins—the morning sacrifice covering the sins of the day, and the evening sacrifice covering the sins of the night—a perpetual umbrella of forgiveness.

In addition to the daily sacrifices, there were sin offerings. The sinner brought a lamb to the priest, and after confessing his sin, some of the blood of the slain lamb was sprinkled by the altar of burnt offering. These offerings represented the transfer of the sin from the guilty sinner to the dying lamb and hence to the sanctuary.

Once a year, on the Day of Atonement, sins were removed from the sanctuary by a special service. Two goats were selected by the priest, the Lord's goat and one for Azazel, a Hebrew word meaning Satan. The Lord's goat, representing Jesus, was slain to affect forgiveness for all who had sinned, confessed and exercised faith in what God had provided during the past year. Then the priest confessed over Azazel, the Scapegoat, all the sins and wickedness of Israel. Why on Satan? Because Satan is responsible and must pay with his own life for all the sins he tempts the human race to commit. The Scapegoat was then taken into the wilderness and left to die, typifying Satan, who pays with his own eternal death for the accumulated evil he has caused through the thousands of years of his rebellion against God (Ezekiel 28:18-19). His death is in no way atonement for our sins, but for his own evil life.

The sins of the righteous are paid for and forgiven by Jesus, who died as a sacrifice for my sin, your sin, and the sins of the whole world.

IV. Christ, The Messiah, is the Key to This Prophecy

8. According to Daniel's prophecy, the cleansing of the sanctuary takes place at the end of a 2,300-day time period.

Daniel 8:14: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

If the time period of 2,300 days were understood literally, it would equal six years and three months of actual time. Daniel prophesied in the late 6th and early-to-mid 5th centuries B.C. The sanctuary in Jerusalem was in ruins all during that period because the Jews were still held captive in Babylon. Daniel was, at first, confused by this, but was led to understand that the prophecy would be fulfilled sometime in the future (note verse 19). The angel later returned to help Daniel have a more complete understanding of how this prophecy relates to the plan of salvation.

9. The angel Gabriel told Daniel that the beginning date for the 2,300-day prophecy would coincide with a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

Daniel 9:24-25: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

This prophecy coincided with the decree that allowed the Jews to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem. The first seventy weeks of the 2,300 days were to be set aside, determined or cut off (see Bible margin), from the main body of this prophecy and would pertain primarily to Daniel's people, the Jews (verse 24). The Bible says that this decree went into effect in the fall of the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, the Persian ruler (Ezra 7:6-8). His seventh year corresponds with the year 457 B.C. on our calendar. A literal 2,300 days (6-1/2 years) from that date brought the Jews no closer to finishing their rebuilding (completed in 408 B.C.), and therefore they were, as yet, unable to cleanse the temple from the Babylonian desecration. Furthermore, the prophecies regarding the Messiah (verses 24-27)

could not have been fulfilled during this time for He did not come during the mid-5th century B.C. What is the solution to this dilemma of 2,300 days?

10. In Ezekiel 4:6 we discover another way to interpret prophetic *time*.

Ezekiel 4:6: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

When 2,300 days is understood as a symbolic time period representing 2,300 years, with each day representing a year, the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 suddenly comes to life. (See Chart below).

- a. The seventy weeks *determined* for the Jews becomes 490 years (7 x 70).
- b. Seven weeks, or 49 years (7 x 7), from the starting date of 457 B.C. was exactly how long it took for the Jews to rebuild the temple completed in 408 B.C. (Daniel 9:25).
- c. Sixty-two weeks, or 434 years later (7 x 62), Christ, the Messiah was baptized in 27 A.D. As He came up out of the water, the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of a dove to signify heaven's anointment and approval. Christ immediately began his official ministry. (Matthew 3:16).
- d. One week, or seven years, is left in the seventy weeks that were determined (cut off) for the Jewish people. In the middle of that week, three and one half years from Jesus' baptism, the Messiah was cut off, or crucified. This was in the spring of 31 A.D. (Daniel 9:26-27).
- e. Another three and one half years brings us to 34 A.D., the end of the seventy weeks. In that year the Jewish Sanhedrin voted to begin persecution of Christians. The first to die was Stephen, a young deacon in the new Christian Church (Acts 7). With his execution, not only have the Jews rejected their Messiah, but the preaching of His messengers is now opposed, thus confirming the covenant against the Jewish nation (Daniel 9:27). God is now forced to do what Jesus said He must do. Israel will be rejected as the instrument of blessing to the world. God gives the commission of preaching the gospel to the gentiles who have gladly received Christ. (Matthew 21:33-44).

This Christ-centered prophecy finds its fulfillment in the ministry and death of Jesus. When He died, the veil in the temple, separating the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place, was ripped apart from top to bottom, thus signifying the end of this ceremonial system (Matthew 27:51); Type had met Antitype. The uncanny accuracy of this prophecy thus far builds confidence that its last predicted event, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, will also be fulfilled.

V. The Day of Judgment Revealed

The 2300-day prophecy and the seventy week prophecy have the same beginning date, since the shorter prophecy is "cut off" from the longer. 490 years (70 x 7) subtracted from 2,300, leaves 1,810 years still remaining in the prophecy.

11. The seventy weeks ended in 34 A.D. (see question 10). If we follow 1,810 years beyond that date to the very end of the 2,300 year prophecy, we arrive at 1844 (34+1810=1844).

☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

12. The prophecy said the world would be destroyed at the end of the 2,300 years.

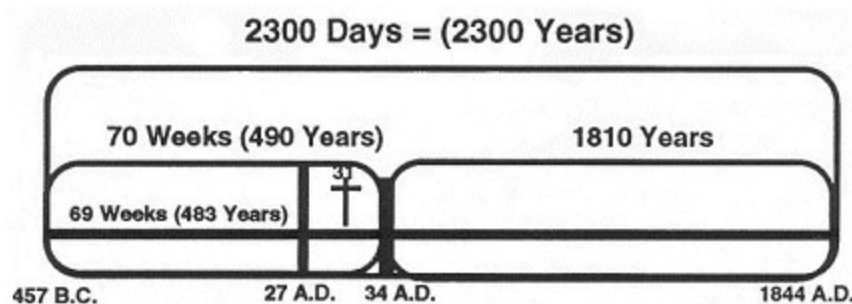
Daniel 8:14: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

The Jewish nation's rejection of Christ was complete in 34 A.D., and their city and temple were destroyed by the Romans in the year 70 A.D. Therefore, it is impossible for this prophecy to have been fulfilled in the Hebrew sanctuary. But since Jesus is the fulfillment of the ceremonial system, He is not only the Lamb of God that was slain (John 1:29), but is also our High Priest in heaven. "Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people." "Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation...For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 2:17; 9:11, 24).

13. Like its earthly counterpart, the heavenly sanctuary needs to be cleansed from sin, but in a different way.

Hebrews 9:22-24: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

When we confess our sins, Jesus, the Lamb of God, can take our sins upon Himself and substitute His death for ours. He bears the record of these sins with Him to heaven, offering His blood as a sacrifice on our behalf. Since God has fulfilled the symbolism portrayed in the sanctuary service, we know that the process of cleansing the heavenly sanctuary from the sins Jesus took with Him to the cross and ultimately into the heavenly sanctuary, began in 1844 the ending date of the 2300-day prophecy. The typical day of atonement was on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. The antitype (fulfillment) for us would be on October 22, 1844. No one knows how long heaven's Day of Atonement will be, but it is certain that the beginning of the end is now in progress. The investigation that will determine who will receive the righteousness of Christ, and those who have refused it, is the present work of Jesus, our High Priest.



14. When Christ finishes His work in the heavenly sanctuary, He will declare the righteousness or unrighteousness of all who have ever lived!

Revelation 22:11: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

**15. After this announcement Jesus will return to earth to reward those who have chosen His way.
This indicates the judgment takes place before His Coming.**

Revelation 22:12: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

16. If we confess our sins, Christ promises to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9: ☐ TRUE ☐ FALSE

www.biblebay.org © 2001-04, Westlake Village, CA 91359