BCC Biblical Eschatology Course

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About this document

These are the weekly notes produced by Pastor Dale Gooding for our Biblical Eschatology Course by Dr Michael J. Vlach called "*Biblical Eschatology: What the Bible Teaches about Future Events*". David Richoux has taken the notes from each week and compiled them into this document so that we have a cumulative set of notes for the class.

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Week 1 - Introduction

Lesson 1 – Eschatology Explained

Scripture Preparation

Read: Isa. 46:9-10; Deut. 4:30; Isa. 2:2; Dan. 10:14; Hos. 3:5; Matt. 24:3; 2 Tim. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:3

Discussion Questions

1. How important is the doctrine of eschatology for understanding God's big-picture purposes?

2. What would you say to someone who claims eschatology is not that important or that churches should not emphasize teaching eschatology?

3. How important is it to understand the three phases of eschatology fulfillment (Old Testament, First Coming, Second Coming)?

4. If someone wanted to know why the study of eschatology is practical, what would you say?

Week 2 - Eschatology Issues 1

Lesson 2 – Bible Interpretation and Eschatology

Scripture Preparation

Read: 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 1: 10-12; Luke 24:25-27

Consistent Literal-Historical-Grammatical-Interpretation:

A) Literal = What the Author meant by what he wrote.
B) Grammatical = Understanding how words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and language work.
C) Historical = Understanding Historical Context of the Bible authors.
D) Interpretation = The process of understanding what the Bible author meant in this (reader grasps what the author meant).
E) Consistent: = Applying Literal-Grammatical-Historical Interpretation to all Scripture (OT & NT), and to all genres: Narrative, Wisdom, Legal, Gospels, Epistles, Poetry, Prophecy

Bible Interpretation and Eschatology Discussion Questions

1. How would you explain "Literal-Grammatical-Historical" interpretation in your own words?

2. How important is Literal-Grammatical-Historical Interpretation for understanding eschatology and Bible prophecy?

3. What can go wrong if we do not use consistent interpretation principles when it comes to understanding Bible prophecy?

4. If someone says, "We need more than "Literal Interpretation" to understand the Bible," how would you respond?

"Consistent Literal Interpretation applied to all Scripture can lead to a sufficient and accurate understanding of the Bible and events to come (Eschatology)."

Lesson 3 – Jesus' Role in Eschatology

Scripture Preparation

Read: Matt 5:17-20; 2 Corinthians 1:18-22; Luke 24:13-32; Acts 3:18-21

"Jesus is the Central focus of all Scripture" (2 Cor 1:20a).

Jesus' Relationship to Key Themes:

A) "Kingdom" = Jesus is the Ultimate King with the Ultimate Kingdom reign.
B) "Abrahamic Covenant" = Jesus is the Ultimate Seed of the Abr. Cov. (Gal. 3:16)
C) "Mosaic Covenant" = Jesus is the end of the Law for Righteousness (Rom. 10:4)
D) "Davidic Covenant" = Jesus is the Ultimate Davidic King.
E) "New Covenant" = Jesus established the New Covenant with His Blood (Lk. 22:20)
F) Jesus' Key Roles:
    1. Jesus is the Suffering Servant
    2. Jesus is the King
G) Jesus Guarantees the Entire OT will be Fulfilled & Accomplished (Matt 5:17-18)
H) Jesus Fulfills Messianic Prophecies - Lk. 24:44
I) Jesus Expected Literal Fulfillment - Matt. 24:15
J) How does Jesus Fulfill OT Prophecy:
    1. Literally:
    2. As the Means:
K) The Two Comings of Jesus' & Fulfillment:
    1. 1st Coming Fulfillment:
        - Suffering Servant
        - Atonement for Sin
        - Brings the New Covenant
        - Messianic Salvation for Gentiles
    2. 2nd Coming Fulfillment:
        - Day of The Lord
        - Kingdom
        - Judgments
        - Resurrections
        - Restoration of Creation

Closing: Acts 3:18, 20-21

Lesson 3 (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. How would you explain the significance of Jesus concerning the fulfillment of Bible prophecies?

2. What would you say to someone who does not believe Old Testament prophecies will be fulfilled literally because "Jesus fulfills the Old Testament"?

3. How does "fulfillment in Jesus" relate to the fact that there are two comings of Jesus to earth—one past and one future from our standpoint?

4. Can we bring glory and honor to Jesus if we talk about other things in the Bible like creation, Israel, nations, land, and physical blessings? Explain.

Week 3 – Eschatology Issues 2

Lesson 4 – Futurism and the Timing of Prophetic Fulfillment

Scripture Preparation

Read: Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24; Mark 13

I) When are the events of Matt. 24 Fulfilled?

- Wars
- False Messiahs
- Earthquakes
- Abomination of Desolation
- Worst period in human history
- Gospel preached to the whole world
- Cosmic Signs
- The Coming of Jesus

II) When are the events of Revelation 6-22 Fulfilled?

- Arrival of the Anti-Christ (False peace)
- War
- Famine
- Death
- Martyrdom
- Earthquake & sky rolled like a scroll

III) The 7 Trumpets:

- First: 1/3 of the earth, trees & grass burned up (8:7)
- Second: 1/3 or the sea creatures die and ships destroyed (8:9)
- Third: 1/3 of the waters are polluted & many die (8:10-11)
- Fourth: 1/3 of the sun, moon & stars are darkened (8:12)
- Fifth: Locusts / Demons are released to torment people (9:1-11)
- Six: 4 previously bound demons released to kill 1/3 of mankind (9:13-19)
- Seventh: Proclamation of Christ's Kingdom Reign (11:15-18)

Lesson 4 (continued)

IV) The 7 Bowls:

- 1st: Painful sores (16:2)
- 2nd: Sea becomes like blood & everything in sea dies (16:3)
- 3rd: Rivers & springs of water turn to blood (16:4-7)
- 4th: Sun scorches people with fire & heat (16:8-9)
- 5th: Darkness & Intense Pain (16:10-11)
- 6th: Euphrates River dried up, prepares way for Eastern kings (16:12-16)
- 7th: Severe earthquakes that split the great city into 3 parts; cities of Nations fall; severe hail (16:17-21)

V) The Return of Jesus Himself - Matt. 24:30-31 & Rev. 19, references of? What is your answer to the above passages?

- Past fulfillment?
- Present fulfillment?
- Future Fulfillment?
- Timing is not in view.

VI) Views:

1) Preterism: Fulfillment is past from our standpoint; all or mostly by AD 70
2) Historicism: Fulfillment continues between the two comings of Jesus
3) Futurism: Fulfillment of many prophecies is future from our standpoint
4) Idealism: Timing is a non-issue; God's principles: good triumphs over evil

Lesson 5 – Survey of Coming Prophetic Events

VII) Future Events:

Seventieth Week of Daniel (Tribulation Period)
Day of the Lord
Rapture
Rise and career of the Antichrist
Return of Jesus to Earth
Messiah's Earthly Kingdom
Healing of nature / animals
Judgments
Resurrections

Lessons 4 and 5 (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. What are your thoughts on the issue of the timing of Bible prophecy fulfillment?

2. Briefly summarize the following views concerning the timing of Bible prophecy fulfillment:
    a) Preterism

    b) Historicism

    c) Idealism

    d) Futurism

3. How important is having the correct view of the timing of Bible prophecy fulfillment for grasping an accurate understanding of God's purposes?

4. If someone asked you why you hold the view you do concerning the timing of Bible prophecy fulfillment, what would you say?

Week 4 - Israel and the Church 1

Lesson 6 – Israel's Place in Eschatology

Scripture Preparation

Read: Gen. 12:2-3; Lev. 26; Deut. 4:25-31, 30:1-10; Isa. 49; Eze. 36-37; Rom. 11:11-29

Israel's Place in Bible Prophecy

- Israel is significant not only in the past, but also in the present and in the future.
- Replacement Theology / Supersessionism has often led to the place of Israel in God's plans being ignored or distorted.

What is Israel?

- Ethnic: Descended from the promised seed line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
- National: Common ancestry, language, history, customs, law, etc.
- Territorial: Linked with the land of promise (Genesis 15:18-21)

Israel's Purposes

- Bless all families and nations of the earth (Gen. 12:2-3; 18:18; 22:18)
- Be a light and mediator to other nations (see Deut. 4; Exod. 19:5-6)
- The Scriptures (Rom. 3:2)
- From whom is the Messiah (Rom. 9:5)

Israel in Eschatology

- To be enslaved in Egypt for 400 years and then delivered with blessings (Gen. 15:13-14)
- Destined for the Promised Land (Gen. 12:6-7; 15:18-21; Joshua)
- Will disobey God and be dispersed / scattered to nations (Deuteronomy 30)
- In the Latter Days Israel to be gathered from the nations (Deut. 30:3-4)
- Israel to repent and be saved as a nation in latter days (Deut 30:2, 6)
- Israel to be restored to the Abrahamic Covenant, including the land of promise. (Deut. 30:5; Leviticus 26:40-45)
- Destruction of Temple with Babylon(586 BC) and Romans (AD 70)
- Israel missed Jesus (Luke 19:41-44)
- Times of the Gentiles continues (Luke 21:24b)
- Israel currently experiencing a partial, temporary hardening (Rom. 11:25)
- Will be in covenant with the Antichrist for a seven-year period (Dan. 9:27)
- Will experience the abomination of desolation and the wrath of the Antichrist in the Tribulation Period (Dan. 9:27: Matt. 24:15-20)
- Will believe in Jesus and be saved in the Last Days (Rom. 11:26-27)
- Israel will be rescued (Zech 14; Matthew 24:30-31)
- Will bring more blessings to nations when she believes (Rom. 11:12, 15; Isaiah 2)

Lesson 6 (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. How important is understanding "Israel's Place in Eschatology" for properly grasping God's purposes?

2. What can go wrong if one does not understand the place of Israel in God's purposes?

3. What would you say to someone who says, "The church is the fulfillment of God's purposes for Israel so there is no future significance for national Israel in Bible prophecy"?

Week 5 - Israel and the Church 2

Lesson 7 – The Church's Place in Eschatology

Scripture Preparation

Read: Revelation 2–3; 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10

A. The Church Defined

1. It is a Messianic / New Covenant community of believing Israelites and Gentiles in this age between Jesus' two comings.
2. The Church is related to Old Testament promises that the Messiah would bring blessings to Israel and Gentiles. (Rom. 11:17-24)
3. Church is founded upon Jesus, the apostles, and New Testament prophets (Eph. 2:20)

B. What the Church Does

1. The church is the pillar and support of the truth in this age. (1 Tim. 3:15)
2. The church is the means for Gospel proclamation in this age.
   - Great Commission (Matt 28)
   - Gospel to world (Acts 1)
3. The church should be a means to make Israel jealous to believe in Jesus as Messiah. (Rom. 11:14)

C. Eschatology in Revelation Chapters 2 and 3

1. ***Ephesus***: "To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."
2. ***Smyrna***: "He who overcomes will not be hurt by the second death."
3. ***Pergamum***: "To him who overcomes, to him I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."
4. ***Thyatira***: "He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; 27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father; 28 and I will give him the morning star."
5. ***Sardis***: "He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels."
6. ***Philadelphia***: "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.
   1. *"He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God, and My new name."*
7. ***Laodicea***: "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

D. The Church is looking for The Lord to Return

1. "looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:13)
2. "You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near." (James 5:8)
3. "Do this, knowing the time, that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep; for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light." (Romans 13:11-12)
4. He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. (Revelation 22:20)

E. The Church will be Evacuated from the Day of The Lord

1. But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man." (Luke 21:36)
2. "Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth." (Rev. 3:10)
3. "and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come." (1 Thess. 1:10)
4. "For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9)

F. The Church Will Rule the Nations in the Millennial Kingdom

1. He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; 27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces (Rev. 2:26-27)
2. "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth." (Rev. 5:10)
3. "He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." (Rev. 3:21)
4. The first appeared, saying, 'Master, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, "Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.' The second came, saying, 'Your mina, master, has made five minas.' And he said to him also, 'And you are to be over five cities.' (Luke 19:16-19)

Lesson 7 (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. How important is understanding "The Church's Place in Eschatology" for knowing God's purposes?

2. What do you think of the idea that members of the church are headed for a kingdom reign with Jesus on earth after Jesus' return?

3. Do you believe churches talk about eschatology too much, too little, or just right? Explain.

Week 6 – Personal Eschatology 1

Lesson 8 – Death: An Eschatological Perspective

Scripture Preparation

Read: Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 3; Heb. 9:27; Heb. 2:14-15; Rom. 8:38-39; 1 Thes. 4:13-15; 1 Cor. 15:44-46; Isa. 25:7-8

1. **Death:**
   - Separation
   - End of Life
   - Cessation of all life activities

2. **Adam, Sin & Death:**
   - Genesis 2:16-17 - "The Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."
   - Genesis 3:19 - "By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."

3. **Romans 5:12:**
   - "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—"
   - Gen. 5 - "And he died…" x8

4. **Types of Death**
   - Physical Death
   - Spiritual Death
   - Eternal Death

5. **The Three Types of Death Explained**
   - Physical Death = Cessation of Bodily Life
   - Spiritual Death = Separated from God
   - Eternal Death = Conscious Life apart from God Eternally; punishment and banishment from God for eternity. This happens to those who physically die while spiritually dead.
     - Unbelievers will experience eternal death separated from God's presence (2 Thes 1:9). The lake of fire is their destiny (Rev. 21:8).
     - Death ushers a person into direct accountability with God (Heb. 9:27).
     - Jesus warned that people should fear God "who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).
   - Physical Death - While sentencing to the lake of fire awaits final judgment, the destiny of the unsaved is sealed at the point of death.
   - Proverbs 11:7a sums up what death means for the wicked: "When the wicked dies, his hope will perish."

6. Facing Death for Christians

- Believers in Christ are not spared physical death. They are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), but decay of their physical bodies still occurs.
- As Paul stated, "Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16).
- While heading to physical death, the Christian does not have to fear death. Christ has conquered it (Rev. 1:18).
- Jesus, through His sacrificial death is able to "deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery" (Heb. 2:14–15).
- Paul said, "For I am sure that neither death nor life . . . will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38–39).
- Paul viewed the choice between remaining on earth and departing to be with Christ as a difficult choice: "If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account" (Phil. 1:22–24).
- Paul told the Corinthians, "Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8).
- Paul viewed departure from the body (physical death) as preferable since he would be with Jesus

7. Death seemed like sleep to for believers in Jesus

I Thes. 4:13-15 – "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep."

8. The Defeat of Death

1 Cor. 15:26 - "the last enemy will be abolished is death."

Rev. 20:13-14 - "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire."

Isaiah 25:7-8 - "And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord God will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the Lord has spoken."

Rev. 21:4 - "and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

- Death is Defeated because of Jesus

- Because He rose from the dead, YOU will rise from the dead.

Lesson 8 (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. Explain the three types of death.

2. How does Jesus' resurrection impact how you view death?

3. Should there be a difference between how a Christian views upcoming physical death and how a non-Christian views death? Explain.

4. Hypothetical scenario: A non-Christian, who is weeks away from dying, watched a hospice nurse on YouTube say that she has seen hundreds of people die and death should not be feared. This person, who is dying, want to know what you think about this issue. What would you say?

Week 7 – Personal Eschatology 2

Lesson 9 – The Intermediate State

Scripture Preparation

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:22-24 Revelation 6:9-11

Vlach's Notes on the Intermediate State

The intermediate state refers to conscious existence for people between physical death and the resurrection of the body.

It applies to both believers and unbelievers, although the destinies of these two groups are different.

Since the focus of the NT is on the imminent return of Jesus and the kingdom of God on earth (Isa. 11; 65:17–25; Rev. 20–22), scriptural data concerning the intermediate state is brief. Yet significant information exists about the intermediate state in the Bible.

Two Views of Intermediate State before Jesus' death and resurrection:

1. Old Testament saints went to the good compartment of Sheol/Hades waiting for Jesus to come and release them to Heaven.
2. Old Testament saints went directly to Heaven.

The Intermediate State of the Unbeliever

The intermediate state of unbelievers after death involves conscious torment in a place called Hades.

In the NT Hades refers to the place of the wicked prior to final judgment in the lake of fire (Rev. 20:13).

- And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. (Rev. 20:13)
- Hades, therefore, functions as a temporary place of conscious torment for the wicked.
- The most explicit discussion of hades is found in Luke 16:19–31 with the account of the "Rich Man and Lazarus."

Intermediate State of the Believer

The intermediate state for the believer is drastically different from that of the unbeliever.

The intermediate state involves conscious, peaceful existence in heaven with Jesus between physical death and resurrection of the body.

The intermediate state for the believer involves his soul being translated immediately to the presence of Jesus in heaven upon physical death (2 Cor. 5:8 Phil. 1:21–24).

> *For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight— we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord*. (2 Cor. 5:1-8)

> *For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake*. (Philippians 1:21-24)

As Stephen was being stoned he cried out to Jesus whom he saw in heaven, "**Lord Jesus, receive my spirit**" (Acts 7:59).

To the repentant thief on the cross, Jesus promised, "**Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise**" (Luke 23:43).

The intermediate state also means rest from the toils of this life. Revelation 14:3 states:

> *"And I [John] heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Blessed indeed,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!'"*

Revelation 6:9–11 offers the most detailed information concerning the intermediate state. The apostle John witnessed a scene in which souls appeared in heaven under an altar. These are the souls of those "who had been slain for the word of God and for they witness they had borne" (Rev. 6:9). These are Christian martyrs whose souls now appear in heaven. Verses 10–11 state:

> *They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.*

This scene refers to martyrs during the coming great tribulation. Yet, several truths about the intermediate state of believers can be learned here.

First, in heaven these saints have keen self-awareness and knowledge of others and world circumstances at the time. They know they were killed for their testimony for Jesus and they want judgment on earth for their murderers. These saints remember past experiences and have hope for the future.

Second, they are aware of the distinction between heaven and earth. They do not forget about earth altogether with their arrival in heaven or act as if heaven is all that matters.

Third, heaven is not their final destiny. Even in heaven, the saints long for justice upon the earth, a justice that comes with the return of Jesus and the saints in Revelation 19:11ff.

Fourth, the martyred saints in heaven appear to have some body-like form, perhaps an intermediate state body. They can be seen by John ("I saw . . . the souls"). They have an audible element in that they can speak and be heard ("They cried out with a loud voice"). Also, they can wear clothing ("they were each given a white robe"). And they operate within the confines of time ("they were . . . told to rest a little while longer").

Intermediate state saints in heaven have a real existence. This is not bodily existence as we experience now. Physical death has occurred and their bodies remain in the ground awaiting resurrection. Nor is this existence comparable to that of the resurrection of the body.

Yet on the other hand, this is more than just a static, invisible state. Certainly, there is an element of mystery regarding the essence of intermediate state bodies, but a real and localized presence of believers in heaven appears to be the case.

The Significance of the Intermediate State

What role does the intermediate state play in God's broader cosmic plans?

- The resurrected Jesus shares the throne of deity with the Father (Ps. 110:1).
- It is from heaven that God maintains sovereign control over the universe (Psalm 2).
- The souls of saints who die go immediately into the presence of God in heaven.

So the intermediate state is important in God's plans.

Yet it is possible to fall into extremes when it comes to the intermediate state's importance.

One extreme downplays the significance or even existence of the intermediate state. Some teach that there is no intermediate state existence for believers or unbelievers or that there is no biblical information on this topic. Some deny an intermediate state and opt for what can be called "soul sleep." Supposedly, when a person dies he slips into a temporary unconscious existence until Jesus comes and the resurrection of the body takes place. But as shown, multiple passages describe conscious existence for people between physical death and resurrection of the body.

On ***the other side***, the intermediate state can be overemphasized in two ways: The first occurs when the intermediate heaven is viewed as the final state of all believers. When Christians think their eternal destiny is heaven, not the new earth (Rev. 21:1), they are overemphasizing the present heaven. Some popular hymns such as "I'll Fly Away," with lyrics like "To a land where joy will never end, I'll fly away," might give the impression that the destiny of the Christian is "out there" forever, and that the "land" God promises is heaven. But heaven is not the ultimate destiny of believers—the new earth is. Peter declared, "But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13).

Another erroneous perspective is viewing the intermediate state as the millennial reign of Jesus and the saints in heaven. This is held by some who hold to amillennialism. But the Bible does not present the millennial reign of Jesus and the saints as occurring in heaven. Instead, it will be fulfilled on earth, from and over the realm where God originally tasked man to rule (Gen. 1:26-28).

Earth, not heaven, is where a millennial reign of Jesus and the saints is needed, not heaven, which already possesses the universal kingdom reign of God. The martyred saints who appear in heaven in Revelation 6:9-11 are pictured as longing for justice upon the earth. They are not reigning yet, but waiting to reign, a wait that is satisfied with the resurrection and reign of the saints after the return of Jesus (Rev. 20:4). In sum, the millennial reign of Jesus and the saints is not a hidden reign from heaven, but a visible, tangible reign in the realm where God created mankind to rule—the earth.

The intermediate state is an important state of existence for deceased believers in heaven or hades during this age before the second coming of Jesus and the resurrection of the body. But it is not the final state or destiny for human beings.

What we do not see in Scripture:

--Reincarnation

--Soul Sleep

--Purgatory

Discussion Questions

1. Do you believe the doctrine of the Intermediate State is practical for our present lives? Explain.

2. How does a correct understanding of the Intermediate State affect how you view the death of Christians you know?

3. Have you often thought of the distinction between the current intermediate state and the final state of believers in eternity? Does it matter? Explain.

Week 8 – Personal Eschatology 3

Lesson 10 – Heaven and the New Earth

Scripture Preparation

Read: Revelation 4; Isaiah 25; Isaiah 65:17-25; Revelation 21:1-8

1. What is the Destiny of the Believer?

- Heaven
- New Earth

2. What is the Destiny of the Believer?

a. Heaven in this age before the return of Jesus
b. A Millennial Kingdom on earth for 1000 years after Jesus returns
c. The Eternal Kingdom on earth after Jesus' Millennial Kingdom

3. Heaven

- The dwelling of God
- The center of God's universal kingdom
- The home of elect angels
- The home of the spirits of deceased believers
- Where rewards are accumulated and stored
- Heaven is the destiny of saints who die before the return of Jesus to earth

Philippians 3:20 - "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ"

1 Thessalonians 1:10 - "…and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come."

Matthew 5:12a - "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great" But the final and eternal destiny of the saved is not the current Heaven. When some think of the future destiny of the saved, they think of the current Heaven.

The song, "I'll Fly Away" - Just a few more weary days and then I'll fly away To that land where joy will never end I'll fly away.

The Old Rugged Cross - One line says, "Then he'll call me someday to my home far away, Where his glory forever I'll share."

Thomas Aquinas (13th century)

- Empyrean Heaven
- Heaven was beyond the Universe in a spiritual realm
- Only activity was contemplation of God

In reality, the destiny of the saved after Jesus' return is a **restored earth**

Psalm 115:16 - The heavens are the heavens of the Lord, But the earth He has given to the sons of men.

Matthew 6:9-10 - 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Craig Blaising, "Premillennialism," 163 - "Whereas the believing dead are in the presence of Christ now, this model expects that their vision of and fellowship with God will be enriched within the fullness of life in a new creation."

The New Earth

- "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth" (Isa. 65:17a)
- "And the Lord will be king over all the earth" (Zech 14:9)
- "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5)
- "But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells." (2 Peter 3:13)

> "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1a)
>
> "You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth" (Rev 5:10)

Matthew 19:28-29 28 - And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.

The Reign of Jesus and Believers Has Two Earthly Phases

- Millennial Kingdom on earth (Revelation 20)
- Eternal Kingdom on earth (Revelation 21-22)

Lesson 10 (continued)

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think so many Christians think that Heaven, not earth, is the final destiny of believers?

2. What do you think of the idea that the Millennium and Eternal State will take place on earth?

3. What do you think of Jesus' statement in Matthew 19:28-29 that the kingdom will involve relationships, houses, and farms?

Week 9 – Personal Eschatology 4

Lesson 11 – Sheol & Hades

Scripture Preparation

Read: Psalm 139; Luke 16:19-31

Sheol

A) Sheol occurs 66 times in the Old Testament
B) Evenly distributed throughout the Old Testament
C) Sheol Defined: the destiny of both the righteous and unrighteous; the realm of the dead; a dark, shadowy existence under the earth that contains both the righteous and the unrighteous. NOTE: Some think sheol means "grave" with no hint of consciousness after death. But sheol probably includes some aspect of conscious existence.
D) Contrast with Qeber
    1. The most common term for grave in the Old Testament is qeber. (67 times)
    2. Qeber is translated "grave," "tomb," "sepulchre"
    3. Focus is on the burial of the body after physical death
    4. Qeber focuses on the grave of bodies while Sheol seems related to shadowy existence after death

- In the New Testament, Hades will be used of Sheol, and Hades involves consciousness after death.
- People go "down to Sheol" (15x in OT)
    - Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, "Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son." So his father wept for him. (Gen. 37:35)
    - But Jacob said, "My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he alone is left. If harm should befall him on the journey you are taking, then you will bring my gray hair down to Sheol in sorrow." (Gen. 42:38)
    - "When a cloud vanishes, it is gone, So he who goes down to Sheol does not come up. (Job 7:9)
    - "They spend their days in prosperity, And suddenly they go down to Sheol. (Job 21:13)
    - What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his soul from the power of Sheol? (Psalm 89:48)
    - I said, "In the middle of my life I am to enter the gates of Sheol; I am to be deprived of the rest of my years." (Isaiah 38:10)

Sheol (continued)

- Place of Punishment for the Wicked
    - "But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord." (Num. 16:30)
    - The ground that was under them split open; 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions. 33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. (Num. 16:33)
    - "Let death come deceitfully upon them; Let them go down alive to Sheol, For evil is in their dwelling, in their midst." (Psalm 55:15)
- Sheol for the King of Babylon
    - "Sheol from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come; It arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth" Isa. 14:9
    - 'Your pomp and the music of your harps Have been brought down to Sheol; Maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you And worms are your covering.' (Isaiah 14:11)
    - "Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit. (Isaiah 14:15)
- God Will Save Righteous from Sheol
    - For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. (Psalm 16:10)
    - But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, For He will receive me. Selah. (Psalm 49:15)
    - For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. (Psalm 86:13)
    - The cords of death encompassed me And the terrors of Sheol came upon me; I found distress and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the Lord: "O Lord, I beseech You, save my life!" (Psalm 116:3-4)
    - "Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol? Shall I redeem them from death? O Death, where are your thorns? O Sheol, where is your sting? Compassion will be hidden from My sight." (Hosea 13:14)
    - "and he said, "I called out of my distress to the Lord, And He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; You heard my voice." (Jonah 2:2)
    - If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. (Psalm 139:8)
- Two Compartments of Sheol Theory
    - A blissful place for the righteous (Abraham's Bosom)
    - A place of torment for the unrighteous
    - The righteous dead in the OT did not go to Heaven but the good part of Sheol. After Jesus' death He went and released the saints so they could go to Heaven.

Hades

In the Greek translation of the OT, Hades is used for the Hebrew term Sheol.

Sheol (OT) ←----------→ Hades (NT)

- Key terms in New Testament
    - Hades 10 times in NT: translated "Hades" and refers to a place where departed spirits go.
    - Taphos 7 times in NT: "tomb," "grave," "sepulchre"
    - Mnēmeion 40 times in NT: "tomb," "grave," "sepulchre"
    - Hades contains the spirts of the unrighteous dead in this age before the final judgment.
    - But Hades is not a permanent existence. Those in Hades will be placed in the Lake of Fire
    - Rev 20:13-15 - "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."
    - Matthew 11:23 (NASB): "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day."
    - Matthew 16:18 (NASB): "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.
    - Luke 10:15 (NASB): "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!"
    - Acts 2:27 (NASB): "Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay."
    - Acts 2:31 (NASB): "he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay."
    - Rev 1:18 (NASB): "and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades."
    - Rev 6:8 (NASB): "I looked, and behold, an ashen horse; and he who sat on it had the name Death; and Hades was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth."
    - Rev 20:13-14 (NASB): "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire."
- Hades in Luke 16:
    - Rich man died and was in conscious torment in Hades.
        - "and the rich man also died and was buried. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and *saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his
        - bosom. And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'" (22-24)

Hades (continued)

- Two Compartments of Hades View
  - Some believe that before Jesus' resurrection that Hades had two components:
    - A blissful side for the saved
    - A fiery place of torment for the wicked
  - But after Jesus' resurrection the souls of the saved were taken to the third Heaven to be with God.
  - Thus, after the resurrection, Hades only refers to the holding place of the unsaved until they are transferred to the Lake of Fire.
- Comparing Sheol and Hades
  - In the OT both the righteous and unrighteous go to Sheol, although the righteous have hope of deliverance from it.
  - In the NT, the righteous are not said to go to Sheol. They go to Heaven.

Discussion Questions

1. What are your thoughts about Sheol and Hades after watching the video?

2. Do you believe the Old Testament discussed conscious life after death?

3. What we can learn about Hades from the account of the Rich Man & Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31?

Week 10 – Personal Eschatology 5

Lesson 12 – Hell

Scripture Preparation

Read: Isaiah 66:24; Matt 10:28; 2 Thess 1:8-9; Rev 14:9-11; 20:13-15; 21:8

Hell

The Bible presents hell as a real place of unending fiery torment and the permanent destiny for the lost.

Jesus addressed Hell often:

- and whoever says, "You fool!" will be liable to the hell of fire (Matt 5:22).
- And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell (Matt 10:28).
- You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? (Matt 23:33).
- And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire (Mark 9:43).

The term translated "hell" in the above passages is *gehenna*. *Gehenna* occurs twelve times in the NT and derives from the Hebrew *ge hinnon*, which refers to the Valley of Hinnon on the south and east sides of Jerusalem. Infants were sacrificed in fire to the god Molech in this place. The Valley of Hinnon also was the place where dead bodies of criminals and animals were burned.[1] This awful place of fiery doom was used by Jesus and NT writers to represent future punishment of the wicked.

Other passages speak of eternal fire awaiting the wicked:

- Then he [Jesus] will say to those on his left, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt 25:41).
- If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night (Rev 14:9–11).
- And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:15).

[1] See Paul Enns, The Moody Handbook of Theology (Chicago: Moody, 1989), 375.

Hell is associated with three negative consequences: (1) punishment; (2) destruction; and (3) banishment.

No one of these concepts explains all of what hell is but together they offer a multi-dimensional understanding of why hell is so awful.

First, the wicked are punished for their deeds (Luke 12:47-48).

Second, hell involves destruction. This involves the concepts of ruin and waste. Those who died in unbelief squandered opportunities to live a life that mattered for God. Loss and ruin is their fate (Matt 7:19).

Third, hell includes banishment. The wicked are banished from the blessings of the kingdom of God and are not allowed access to the glories of the new earth. God as King has removed them from His presence with no hope of entering (Rev 22:14-15).

How God Relates to the 3 Depictions of Hell

1. God as Judge punishes unrepentant sinners
2. God as Warrior destroys His enemies
3. God as King banishes the wicked from His kingdom

Three Main Depictions of Hell in the Bible

1. Punishment (what God does to a sinner)
   a. Is just
   b. Involves suffering
   c. Is conscious
   d. Is eternal
2. Destruction (what hell means for the sinner)
   a. Ultimate loss
   b. Ultimate ruin
   c. Ultimate waste
3. Banishment (what the sinner misses out on)
   a. Forever cut off from Jesus/God
   b. Forever cut off from God's kingdom
   c. Forever cut off from the New Jerusalem

Eternal Hell in the Bible

Old Testament

1. Isa 66:24 - "Then they will go forth and look
   On the corpses of the men
   Who have transgressed against Me.
   For their worm will not die
   And their fire will not be quenched;
   And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

2. Dan 12:2 - Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

Eternal Hell in the Bible (continued)

New Testament

1. Matt 3:10-12 (Destruction)
2. Matt 5:22 (Punishment)
3. Matt 5:25-26 (Punishment)
4. Matt 5:29-30 (Punishment)
5. Matt 7:19 (Destruction)
6. **Matt 7:23** (Banishment)
7. Matt 10:28 (Destruction)
8. Matt 13:36-42 (Destruction)
9. Matt 13:49-50 (Destruction)
10. Matt 18:9 (Punishment/Destruction)
11. Matt 22:13 (Banishment)
12. Matt 23:33 (Punishment)
13. **Matt 25:41, 46** (Banishment/Punishment)
14. Mark 9:42-48 (Punishment/Destruction)
15. Luke 12:47-48 (Punishment)
16. Luke 13:27-30 (Banishment)
17. Luke 16:19-31 (Punishment)
18. John 5:28-29 (Punishment)
19. John 15:6 (Destruction)
20. **2 Thess 1:5-9** (Punishment/Destruction)
21. Heb 10:26-31 (Punishment)
22. 2 Peter 2:4-10 (Punishment)
23. Jude 7 (Punishment)
24. **Rev 14:10-11** (Punishment)
25. Rev 20:14-15 (Destruction/Punishment)
26. Rev 21:8 (combination?)
27. **Rev 22:14-15** (Banishment)

Wrong Views of Hell

A real and unending hell for the lost is an unpleasant matter to think about. It is a doctrine that many in our age refuse to believe. Some have offered alternatives to the biblical doctrine of hell. The following are distortions of this doctrine.

1. **Universalism** The view that all people will end up in heaven in the presence of God and that no one is lost in hell forever. This view is called "universalism" since it affirms that all people universally will be saved. Universalism can take several forms:
   - First, some believe that the atoning work of Christ is applied to all people whether they believe or not. (Karl Barth)
   - Second, others hold that people are given a post-mortem or after-death chance to believe in Jesus, in which all will respond to positively.
   - A third form of universalism asserts that people could be punished for a while in hell but eventually will be allowed into heaven.

Wrong Views of Hell (continued)

2. **Annihilationism** The view that the wicked at some point are snuffed out of existence. This allegedly can occur at a coming judgment day when God causes the wicked to cease to exist. Or there could be a temporary period of punishment and then the person ceases to exist. With both forms of annihilationism, though, the wicked reach a point where they cease to exist.
3. **Eternal Spiritual Punishment** Some hold that there is eternal conscious punishment for the lost but this punishment is not physical punishment in a literal place of fire. For them, fire is not literal but represents dramatic imagery to depict spiritual alienation from God. Hell is primarily about spiritual separation from God, not physical anguish in a tangible lake of fire.
4. **Negative Conditions in this Life** Some relegate hell to a figure of speech or metaphor for difficulties in this life. Statements such as "War is hell" or "My life is a living hell" reflect this thinking. Such a perspective trivializes what hell really is and can lead some to think that this life is the worst things can be.

Three Challenges

1. The "Enlightenment" Challenge
   a. Hell does not seem reasonable to modern man
   b. Man is basically good
2. The "Others Don't Believe it Anymore" Challenge
   a. Liberal Protestants
   b. Post-Vatican II Catholics
   c. Some Evangelicals
3. The "Believe it but Neglect it" Challenge
   a. Evangelical Churches that affirm eternal Hell in doctrinal statements but neglect teaching or emphasizing the doctrine. Just not taught anymore.

Hell Discussion Questions

1. What thoughts do you have after going over the passages that discuss Hell?

2. What did you think of the discussion that Hell involves three aspects: (1) Punishment; (2) Destruction; and (3) Banishment?

3. What thoughts do you have concerning wrong views of Hell that were mentioned in the video?

4. How can the doctrine of Hell motivate you and impact you as one who is headed for Heaven and the New Earth?

Week 11 – Day of the Lord 1

Lesson 13 – Seventy Weeks of Daniel

Scripture Preparation

Read: Read Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:15; Revelation 11:1-3; 12:6

Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy

Daniel 9:24-27 and its "seventy weeks" prophecy is one of the most important prophetic passages in the Bible. This text has often been referred to as the "backbone of Bible prophecy." Several New Testament prophetic passages rely on its contents (Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2; Rev. 11; 12; and 13). A proper understanding of Bible prophecy hinges on rightly interpreting this text. It reads:

> 24 "Seventy weeks [sevens] have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.
>
> 25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.
>
> 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.
>
> 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

The context is Daniel's awareness of Jeremiah's prophecy that Jerusalem's desolation at the hands of the Babylonians would end after seventy years (Dan 9:2; Jer 25:12; 29:10).

> Daniel 9:2: "in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years."

Leviticus 25 stated every seventh year the people of Israel were to give the land a rest. But on 70 occasions Israel failed to observe a sabbath rest for the land. The 70-year Babylonian captivity was God's way of giving the land the rest he wanted. As Daniel contemplated Jeremiah's prophecy, he prayed on behalf of his sinful people (Dan 9:3-19). The angel Gabriel then was sent to Daniel to relay a vision concerning Israel's future.

The "seventy weeks" of 9:24 is at the heart of this prophecy and concerns Daniel's "people" and "the holy city." Daniel's "people" must be Israel since the Babylonian captivity affected the people of Israel and Daniel's prayer was on behalf of his fellow Jewish people. The "holy city" must refer to Jerusalem since Jeremiah's prophecy concerned "the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem" (Dan. 9:2). To interpret "Israel" and "Jerusalem" as anything else does injustice to the context.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy (continued)

But what is the "seventy weeks" to which Gabriel refers? In Hebrew, "seventy weeks" is literally "seventy sevens." Seventy sevens (70 x 7) equals 490. But 490 what? Days? Months? Years? The context indicates 490 years are in view since Sabbath-year violations were the reason for Israel's expulsion and the ensuing seventy-year Babylonian captivity. Also, a period of 490 days or 490 months would be far too short for the fulfillment of the six matters predicted in 9:24.

This 490-year period will accomplish six results: (1) "finish the transgression"; (2) "make an end to sin"; (3) "make atonement for iniquity"; (4) "bring in everlasting righteousness"; (5) "seal up vision and prophecy"; and (6) "anoint the most holy place."

These six can be put into two categories. The first three focus on defeating sin in regard to Israel. The final three focus on positive developments—the bringing in of righteousness to Israel which is Messiah's kingdom; bringing to fulfillment all prophecies in Scripture; and anointing the temple in Jerusalem. The basis for the first three was accomplished with Jesus' first coming and death although their application to Israel as a nation is still future.

The final three await fulfillment at the second coming of Jesus. At this point in history everlasting righteousness has not been brought in, all prophecies in Scripture have not yet been fulfilled, and the temple in Jerusalem has not been anointed. But these will occur when Jesus' millennial kingdom is established.

The seventy weeks (490 years) begins with "the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem" (v. 25). This likely was fulfilled on March 5, 444 B.C. when King Artaxerxes decreed that the Jews could return and rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. 2:1-8). Next, the "seven weeks" or 49 years could refer to the closing of Nehemiah's career in the rebuilding of "squares and moat," as well as the end of the ministry of Malachi and the close of the OT. After these 49 years, then another "sixty-two" more weeks or 434 years (62 x 7) is added to the timeline. Put together, this 483 years following the Artaxerxes' decree in 444 B.C. culminates in the coming of the Messiah with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on March 30, A.D. 33.

Verse 26 declares that "after" sixty-two weeks, which is really sixty-nine weeks (7+62), the "anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing." Days after Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem Jesus was crucified. The fact that the Messiah "has nothing" is shocking. The Messiah of Israel comes, is killed, and dies with nothing. No kingdom, and no everlasting righteousness occurs. The rest of verse 26 describes other events "after" the first sixty-nine weeks—"And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed." This predicts the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple with the Roman invasion of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Luke 21:20-24).

The "people" in verse 26 is the Romans since they were the ones who destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. From this "people" a "prince who is to come" will someday arrive. This is an evil antichrist figure who arises sometime after the destruction of the city and the sanctuary. That this is an evil person and not Jesus the Messiah is affirmed by the descriptions of him in verse 27 in which he commits an abominable act in the temple and is destroyed for his desolations.

Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy (continued)

Also, he will make a covenant with the people of Israel for one week (7 years), something Jesus never did. So, the context points to an evil antichrist figure who is also identified as the "little horn" in Dan 7:8 and the "willful king" of Dan 11:36. The reference to "there shall be war" and "Desolations are decreed" (v26) reveal that Jerusalem's trials and woes will continue even after the destruction of Jerusalem. That certainly occurred as Israel's tumultuous history since A.D. 70 shows. Jesus himself predicted that the "times of the gentiles" would continue even after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Luke 21:24).

With v27 the evil prince from the Romans "shall make a strong covenant with many for one week." The "many" refers to the people of Israel. The "one week" is a 7-year period. Just as the first 69 weeks were literal so too must the last week of seven years be literal. To make the final week anything other than a 7-year period is to violate the context. That this covenant is future from our standpoint is verified by the fact that no 7-year covenant between a leader from the Roman Empire and the Jewish people has ever happened.

At "half of the week" (3.5 years) this leader breaks the covenant with Israel. He "shall put an end to sacrifice and offering." In other words, he halts the Jewish worship system. This happens "on the wing of abominations" by the "one who makes desolate." This desolator sets up an abomination in an area of the temple. Jesus picks this wording up in Matthew 24:15 when he states, "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place."

Yet this desolator is headed for destruction. He does his "abominations" only "until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator" (v. 27). God's wrath will be poured out on this evil prince. Paul draws upon Daniel 9:27 when he refers to a coming "man of lawlessness" (2 Thess 2:3) whom Jesus will slay with his coming: "And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8).

Gap Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks

Many interpreters agree that the 69 weeks (483 years) of Daniel's prophecy were fulfilled with Jesus' first coming and his death around A.D. 33. But disagreement exists whether the final week of years, a seven-year period, was fulfilled immediately after the first sixty-nine weeks expired. Or is there is a gap of time between the end of the sixty-nine weeks and the beginning of the seventieth week? In other words, did Daniel's seventieth week expire in the late 30s A.D. in the seven years following the end of the sixty-ninth week around A.D. 33, or will Daniel's seventieth week be fulfilled in the future?

Opponents of a gap often claim, "Where in Daniel 9:24-27 do we see any evidence of a large gap between the 69th and 70th week?" For them the seventieth week runs immediately after the sixty-ninth week. However, evidence for a gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week is strong. The seventieth week of Daniel is still future from our standpoint in history. The following are reasons why there is a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel.

Gap Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks (continued)

1. A gap exists between the first and second comings of Jesus. Bible prophecy is best grasped in the context of the two comings of Jesus. A significant gap of time exists between the first coming and second coming of Jesus. Since this is the case it is reasonable there could be a gap in the fulfillment of predictions concerning Jesus. For example, Zech 9:9 predicted that the Messiah would come to Jerusalem lowly on a donkey. This was fulfilled with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Matt 21:1-8). But verse 10 also declares a worldwide reign of the Messiah on the earth—"… he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth." This verse will be fulfilled with Jesus' second coming and certainly did not follow his entry into Jerusalem on a donkey in the first century. So, a gap of time separates verse 9 from verse 10. Also, Isaiah 9:6a predicted, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given." This was fulfilled with Jesus' birth. But 9:6b-7 states, "and the government shall be upon his shoulder … on the throne of David and over his kingdom …" The governmental rule of Jesus and his sitting up the Davidic throne are future events (Matt 19:28;25:31). So, there is a gap between the fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6a and 9:6b-7. Gaps of time in other prophetic passages indicate a gap could be present in Daniel 9:24-27.

2. Daniel 9:26 states that the Messiah will be cut off "after" the 69 weeks. Daniel's use of the word "after" reveals a gap. Daniel 9:26 states: "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing . . ." The Messiah is not cut off at the "end" of the 69 weeks or at the "beginning" of the seventieth week. Instead, he is cut off "after" the sixty-nine weeks. So, within the text itself there is an indicator that a gap exists between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week.

3. The destruction of Jerusalem occurred after the culmination of the sixty-ninth week. Verse 26 states that "after the sixty-two weeks" the coming prince "will destroy the city and the sanctuary"—a reference to Jerusalem and the temple. This destruction took place in A.D. 70. If the entire seventy-week prophecy continued with no gap, the seventieth week would have expired in the 30s A.D. But Jerusalem and the temple were not destroyed then. Since Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed nearly four decades after the end of the sixty-ninth week a gap between the sixty-ninth week and seventieth week is necessary.

4. The six predictions of Daniel 9:24 have not all been fulfilled yet. In 9:24, Daniel mentions six important predictions that will be fulfilled as a result of the seventy weeks decree: (a) "to finish the transgression" (b) "to make an end of sin" (c) "to make atonement for iniquity" (d) "to bring in everlasting righteousness" (e) "to seal up vision and prophecy" and (e) "to anoint the most holy place." If one holds that the seventy weeks expired in the first century A.D. then all six predictions should have been completely fulfilled in the 30s A.D. But they were not. The basis for the first three involving sin occurred with the first coming and death of Jesus. Jesus' death on the cross is an atonement for sin. Yet it is also true that Israel's sin against God has not been reversed yet. So even while atonement for sin has already occurred with Jesus' death, Israel has not yet experienced this benefit. The salvation of Israel is still to come (see Zech 12:10 and Rom 11:26). Then there are the other matters that have not occurred yet. Everlasting righteousness has not been established. Not all prophecies have been fulfilled. The anointing of the temple in Messiah's kingdom has not occurred yet. Since several predictions of Dan 9:24 have not occurred yet, we can look forward to a future period where they will be fulfilled.

Gap Between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks (continued)

5. What is described for the 70th Week of Daniel 9:27 has not been fulfilled yet. Lack of fulfillment of Daniel 9:27 is evidence that a future week (7 years) is needed in order for the fulfillment to take place. A coming evil prince from the Roman empire has not made a sevenyear covenant with the Jewish people. No violation of this covenant occurred after 3.5 years. No antichrist figure has completed abominations in the temple that has led to divine destruction of the one committing these abominable acts. These events were not completed in the 30s A.D. and await future fulfillment.

6. Jesus refers to the abomination of desolation of Daniel 9:27 as future. In Matt 24-25, Jesus predicts events to come. With Matthew 24:15, Jesus declared, "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)." This is the same event predicted in Daniel 9:27—"on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate." This event, though, was future from Jesus' current standpoint and was not fulfilled in the 30s A.D.

7. Paul spoke of the events of Daniel 9:27 as future in the 50s A.D. In 2 Thess 2, Paul wrote about a "man of lawlessness" being revealed who enters a temple and declares himself to be God (2 Thess. 2:3-4). He also speaks of this wicked man as facing the wrath of the Lord Jesus who slays him at his return: "And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8). Paul relies on Daniel 9:27 that there would be a coming abomination of desolation by a wicked person and that this person would be destroyed by God. That Paul is predicting these events in the 50s A.D. shows that these events are future from his standpoint and were not fulfilled in the 30s. The events of Daniel 9:27 await future fulfillment. Paul's inspired commentary of Daniel 9:27 shows the events of Daniel's seventieth week to be in the future.

8. Revelation places the timeframe of Daniel 9:27 in the future. Daniel 9:27 tells of a seven-year period in which a coming prince will make a covenant with the "many" for one week (seven years). But in the middle of this week, which is 3.5 years, he will break this covenant. Writing in the 90s A.D. the apostle John referred to a coming 3.5 year period on multiple occasions. With Revelation 11:2 he says that the "holy city" [Jerusalem] will be trampled for "forty-two months." "Forty-two months" is 3.5 years. And since Daniel 9:27 also speaks of an abominating event in Jerusalem, John is clearly connecting his statement with Daniel 9:27. Since John is writing several decades after the 30s A.D., he must view the last half of the seventieth week of Daniel as being future from his standpoint. And if so, there must be a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. John also predicts the nation Israel fleeing to the wilderness for "1,260 days" (Rev. 12:6). This time frame is equal to 3.5 years. With Revelation 13 John speaks of an evil "beast" who speaks arrogantly and blasphemes for "forty-two months" (Rev. 13:5). This parallels Daniel 9:27 and the truth that an evil figure will be associated with a 3.5 time period. In sum, since John refers to the time frame and events of Daniel 9:27 as needing to be fulfilled in the future, this shows that these events and time period must be future.

Summary of Daniel 9:24-27

24: summary of entire 70-week period

25: events through the first 69 weeks

26: events between 69th and 70th weeks

27: events during the 70th week

Reasons why the prince to come is not Jesus and is an evil figure

1. Seems natural to discuss another person after the Messiah is said to be cut off.
2. This prince arises from the people who destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70--the Romans
3. Jesus never made a seven-year covenant with any group.
4. Jesus did not stop sacrifices in the temple.
5. Jesus did not set up an abomination in the temple.
6. Jesus is not destroyed by the decree of God.
7. The figure who literally stops sacrifices in Dan 8 (Antiochus) is an evil figure and enemy of Israel; seems related to prince of Dan 9:27. Also opposes the Prince of princes.
8. An evil horn of Daniel 7 appears next to Jesus the Son of Man.
9. An evil figure appears in Daniel 11:36-45.
10. 2 Thess 2 refers to a man of lawlessness who does an abomination in the temple and is destroyed by Jesus.
11. John speaks of an evil satanic beast in connection with the 3.5 year time frame of Daniel 9:27. (Rev 13:5).

Three Temple Phases in Daniel 9:24-27

1. Temple anointed: "to anoint the most holy place" (v. 24) (Temple anointed with Messiah's Kingdom)
2. Temple destroyed: "the people of the prince who is to come will destroy . . . the sanctuary" (v. 26)
   (Romans destroy Jerusalem temple in A.D. 70)
3. Temple desolated: "he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate" (v. 27)
   (Antichrist desolates Jewish temple in Daniel's 70th week)

Daniel 9:24-27 Scenarios

24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. 25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

Dispensational Scenario

Verse 24 - A 490-year period has been decreed by God for Daniel's people Israel and the city of Jerusalem to do six things: (1) bring an end to Israel's sin of not obeying God; (2) bringing sin to an end; (3) making atonement for sin. The basis of these three areas was fulfilled with the first coming of Jesus although the application to the nation Israel awaits the future. The 490 year period will also bring (4) righteousness that will never end; (5) the ending of all visions and prophecies including the fulfillment of all prophecies given; (6) the anointing of the coming temple in Jerusalem. This verse is a summation of what God will do in this 490-year period. The next three verses explain how this will happen.

Verse 25 - The starting point for this 490-year period is a decree to restore the city of Jerusalem which occurred according to Nehemiah 2:1-8 in 444 B.C. From this decree to restore the city of Jerusalem in 444 B.C. until Jesus the Messiah and Prince there will be 49-year period followed by 434-year period which together is 483 years. The 49-year period culminated in the building of the city with plaza and moat in spite of difficulties from opponents. The coming of Jesus occurred in A.D. 33 exactly to the day 483 years after the Nehemiah 2 decree.

Verse 26 - After 483 years (49 + 434 years) Jesus the Messiah will be cut off or killed and have nothing. He will not have His kingdom at this time and this halts the plan for all six things mentioned in verse 24 from fully occurring. This killing of Jesus the Messiah on the cross happens after the 483 years expires, not at the end of the 483rd year or in the beginning of the 484th year. Thus there is a gap between the expiration of the 69th week and the start of the 70th week. Another event that occurs between the 69th and 70th week is the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. The Romans are the people from whom the coming evil Antichrist will come. The Antichrist is an evil prince who will come from the people of the Romans. This destruction of Jerusalem and the temple will come in quick and overwhelming fashion like a flood. This destruction is followed by continual war and desolations to the people of Jerusalem and Israel. This characterizes Israel's situation indefinitely until the 484th year (70^{th} week) begins.

Verse 27 - This coming Antichrist will make a covenant with the people of Israel for a seven-year period. There must be a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem at some point since at the midway point of this seven-year period (3.5 years) this Antichrist breaks the covenant and becomes an enemy of Israel by stopping their sacrificial worship system in the temple. This evil person commits an abominable act in the temple that causes it to be desolate. But this Antichrist himself, the one who makes the temple desolate, will face a complete destruction. God has decreed a destruction upon the Antichrist who brings desolation to the temple.

When all of this is complete then all six things mentioned in verse 24 will take place.

An Alternative scenario

Verse 24 - A 490-year period has been determined for Daniel's people which is not limited to Israel but will include all who by faith are the people of God. The six things mentioned by Daniel will be fulfilled with the first coming of Jesus. The first three things emphasize Jesus' dealing with sin. The last three things also relate to Jesus' first coming. The anointing of the temple refers to Jesus being the true temple and not to some future temple in Jerusalem.

Verse 26 - At the end of 483 years Jesus is killed on behalf of those whom His death is intended. The prince mentioned after Jesus is killed is also reference to Jesus and the people who are to come is the Jewish people. It is the Jewish people responsible for the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70. At this time destruction, war, and desolation came upon Jerusalem. The fact that the destruction of Jerusalem occurs outside the expiration of the 490 years in the 30s AD is no problem since Jesus declared the destruction of Jerusalem before the 490 years expired (Matt 23:28; Luke 21:20-24)

Verse 27 - Jesus is the "he" who makes a new covenant (or covenant of grace) with the people of God. In the middle of the last seven years (70th week) Jesus is crucified. His death brings an end to the Jewish sacrificial system marked by the tearing of the curtain in the temple. As a result of the abominations of the Jewish people comes a desolator of Jerusalem, either the emperor Vespasian or the Roman General Titus who destroyed the temple. But the one who destroyed the temple (Vespasian or Titus) will himself be destroyed based on the decree of God.

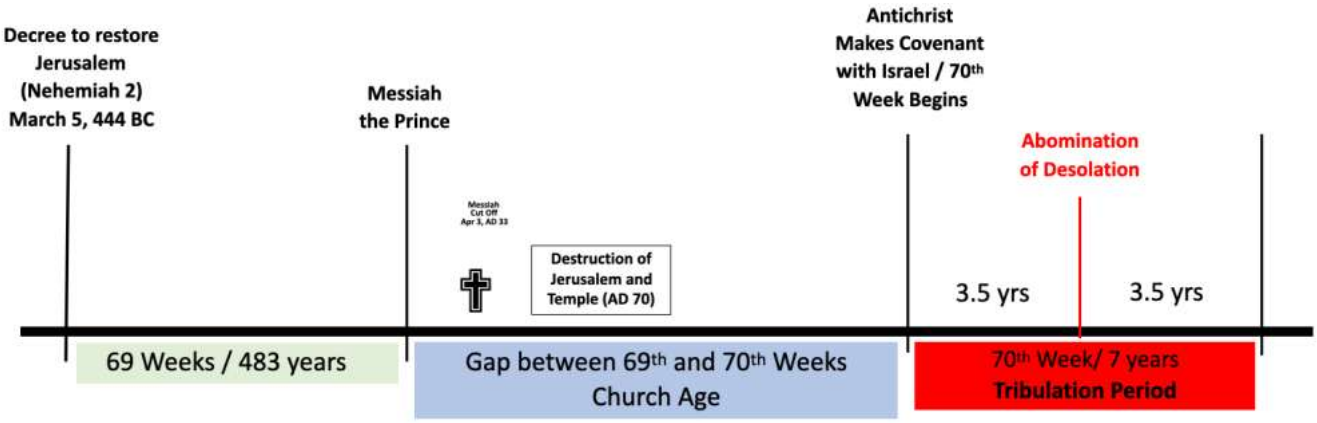
Areas of Agreement on Daniel 9:24-27 among Evangelicals

1. The seventy sevens refers to a 490-year period.
2. The six things referred to in v24 will be fulfilled in accord with the 490-year period.
3. At least some of the six matters of verse 24 were related to Jesus' first coming.
4. Messiah the Prince is a reference to Jesus.
5. The Messiah's cutting off is a reference to Jesus' crucifixion.
6. The destruction of the city and the sanctuary of verse 26 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70.

Areas of Disagreement on Daniel 9:24-27 among Evangelicals

1. Whether all of the 490-year period should be taken literally.
2. When the six matters of verse 24 will be fulfilled.
3. What the anointing of the most holy place (v. 24) refers to.
4. The starting point of the 490-year period.
5. Whether the seven and sixty two years run concurrently or not.
6. "have nothing" or "not for himself" in verse 26.
7. Who is the second "prince" mentioned? Christ or Antichrist?
8. Who are the people who will destroy the city in A.D. 70? The Jews or the Romans?
9. Do the desolations of verse 26 just apply to A.D. 70 or do they continue after A.D. 70?
10. Is there a gap between the 69th and 70th week?
11. Who is the "he" who makes a firm covenant? Jesus or Antichrist?
12. Who is the "man" with whom covenant is made? Jewish people or all of God's people?
13. What is this covenant? A covenant with the Jewish people or the New Covenant (or covenant of grace)?
14. Is this covenant for a literal seven years?
15. When did the sacrifices stop? In the 30s A.D. or A.D. 70?
16. What is the nature of the sacrifices that are ceased? No longer necessary because of Jesus' death or literal sacrifices stopped by the Antichrist?
17. Who is committing the abominations of verse 27? Antichrist? The Jewish people? Vespasian or Titus?
18. Who is the desolator that is destroyed? Antichrist? Jewish people? Vespasian or Titus?

70 Weeks of Daniel Prophecy



Daniel 9:26b-27 Connections in the New Testament

Daniel 9:26b-27

and the people of the **prince who is to come** will **destroy the city and the sanctuary**. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end **there will be war; desolations are determined**. 27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but **in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering**; and on **the wing of abominations *will come* one who [f]makes desolate**, even until a **complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate**."

Matthew 23:38
--Temple to be destroyed
(fulfills Dan 9:26b in A.D. 70)

Luke 19:41-44
--Jerusalem to be destroyed
(fulfills Dan 9:26b in A.D. 70)

Luke 21:20-24
--Jerusalem trampled by Gentiles
--Israel led captive to the nations
(fulfills Dan 9:26b in A.D. 70 and beyond)

Matthew 24:15-21
--Abomination of desolation standing in holy place (temple)
--Persecution in Israel
(fulfilled in coming 70th week)

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, 8
--Man of lawlessness revealed
--Takes his seat in temple of God declaring himself to be God
--Will be destroyed
(fulfilled in coming 70th week)

Revelation 11:1-3
--Temple and Jerusalem trampled by Gentiles for 42 months (3.5 years).
--1260 day time frame (3.5 years)
(fulfilled in coming 70th week)

Revelation 13:5-6
--Antichrist blasphemes God for 42 months (3.5 years).
(fulfilled in coming 70th week)

Revelation 19:20
--Destruction of Antichrist
(fulfilled in coming 70th week)

Seventy Weeks of Daniel Discussion Questions

1. What big-picture thoughts do you have concerning Daniel 9:24-27 after watching the video?

2. Did you learn anything from the video about Daniel 9:24-27? Explain.

3. What questions do you still have about Daniel 9:24-27? Explain.