Daniel - Commentaries by Alfred Henry Burton

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DANIEL's; LAST WEEK: WHERE FOUND

(Dan. 9:24-27.)

IN the April number, W. J. C. considers this question rather from the point of view as to what is the meaning of "unto the Messiah the Prince." It may be helpful to consider it for a moment from the other point of view, as to what is meant by the word "after" in verse 26. "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing." When is the cutting off?

Now it should be noted that Scripture does not say after sixty-nine weeks shall Messiah "come," but shall be "cut off" It should be equally noted that Scripture does not say "during," or, "in the midst of," the seventieth week, shall Messiah be cut off, but it says distinctly, "after sixty-nine weeks (7+62) shall Messiah be cut off" Scripture does not say how long after, but it is perfectly clear that the cutting off is subsequent to the completion of the sixty-nine weeks, "unto the Messiah the Prince." Therefore though Scripture does not speak of the seventieth week in so many words, the seventieth week is, for faith, clearly entered on before Messiah is cut off, there being no break between the sixty-ninth week and the cutting off.

I doubt not, therefore, that W. J. C. is correct, and that Matthew 3., that is, the Lord's baptism and presentation to Israel, after John had prepared His way, marks the moment "unto the Messiah the Prince," and that the three and a half years of the Lord's ministry immediately following after the sixty-nine weeks, are a certain fulfillment of the first half of the last or seventieth week. The nation had not eyes to see it. The Messiah was cut off and had nothing. The break in the seventy weeks is clearly at the cross.

This same "unbelieving generation" that received not Him who came in His Father's name, will, in their willfulness, again in the land, in accepting the "one week," be allowed to repeat the first half of the last or seventieth week, receiving the one that shall come in his own name. In the midst of that week, the godly remnant giving heed to the Lord's warning, "When ye shall see the abomination," &c., will, in faith, connect that moment, the beginning of the last half of the last or seventieth week, with the cross, which consummated the cutting off of Messiah, and closed the three and a half years of the Lord's ministry, or first half of the last or seventieth week, which to unbelief but surely not to faith, had gone for nothing.

The first half of the last or seventieth week has therefore a double fulfillment: first, when Messiah was here and was cut off — the true half week; and secondly, when the Antichrist will be here, and will be received of the many — a sort of Satan's counterfeit.

The break in the seventy weeks — the entire Church parenthesis — is therefore not between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week, but between the cutting off of Messiah at the cross and the definitely receiving of the Antichrist at the setting up of the idol of desolation, that is between the true first half and the last half of the last or seventieth week.

I say entire Church parenthesis, because the catching up of the saints (1 Thess. 4.) is short of the entire interval.

The false or repeated first half of the week is really a part of the break or parenthesis, and will retrospectively overlap the true first half of the week, and thus connect the last half week of Israel's history directly with them both, and so close up again the gap.

God in His wisdom does not allow "the chronologer" to fix His dates "to the very day," but He does give the wise to understand His Word (Dan. 12:10). K. J. K.

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(Dan. 9:27.)

"FROM the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and three score and two weeks;" this makes sixty-nine weeks, and leaves only one week to complete the seventy weeks.

In searching where the last week is to be found, two things should first be considered. In Messiah's time here, what point answers to "unto Messiah the Prince"? His birth? The beginning of His ministry and presentation to Israel? His public entry into Jerusalem? The cross? or what?

Also where comes the break in the course of the seventy weeks, for seventy weeks are not yet completed, and sixty-nine weeks transpired when Christ was here. This break undoubtedly may be seen at the cross. There Christ was definitely rejected, and there Jehovah breaks with Israel, and their house is left unto them desolate "till" by-and-bye (Matt. 23:38, 39).

At the beginning of His ministry we find in Matthew 3., He identifies Himself with the godly remnant, or those who answered to John the Baptist's call to repentance — the forerunner of Messiah. These, we read, "were baptized of him, confessing their sins.... Then cometh Jesus... to be baptized of him." Notice, He was not leading them to be baptized — as though He was an example for them. This He could not be, seeing He had no sins to confess, but He identifies Himself with the godly remnant, "the excellent of the earth, in whom is all My delight." (Psalm 16:3, 4, refers to the unbelieving mass of the nation, who hasten after Antichrist by-and-bye, when "he that believeth shall not make

haste” or “hasten away; as Isaiah 28:16 believing remnant who reject Antichrist.)

At this moment “when He was baptized,” “the heavens were opened unto Him,” and He is accredited by the voice from heaven — “This is My beloved Son, in whom I have found My delight.” Compare Matthew 3, Mark 1, and Luke 3.

In Matthew, the gospel of the Messiah, — “this,” marking His presentation to Israel.

In Mark, — “Thou,” the personal acknowledgment of the servant about to take up service.

In Luke, — “Thou,” the Man in lowly grace among men.

Is not this moment of His identification with those Jews, who were taking their true place in “confessing their sins,” a most important and definite point in Messiah’s time here, and answering to “unto Messiah the Prince”? Then, it was, He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, and constituted Messiah officially, while, of course, from His birth He was personally such. Besides, His being the Messiah was preached by the Twelve, and received by some, and confessed by Peter (Matt. 16.). If, then, Matthew 3. marks the moment “unto Messiah the Prince,” when sixty-nine weeks are expired, then His three and a half years’ ministry following is seen to be the first half of the last or seventieth week, and the last half is all future, and begins with the abomination (idols) that makes desolate standing in the holy place (Dan. 9:27, and Matt. 24:15).

But, it may be objected, are we not told of “one week” at the end by-and-bye? Yes, but notice the connection of “one week” in the context. Some seeing “one week” yet to come, have been forced to conclude that no more than sixty-nine weeks can be found up to the cross. “He shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week.” Here “one week” is found in connection with “the many” or mass of the unbelieving nation. For them, they having rejected their Messiah, His three and a half years of patient service and presentation of Himself goes for nothing, and for them “one week” is found yet future and in connection with the infidel “beast,” showing awful departure from Jehovah (Isa. 28:15-19).

The Antichrist is not seen here, and in all this connection the remnant are not found. Possibly Antichrist would favor this covenant till the “midst of the week” when the covenant is broken; then, he establishes idolatry “in the holy place.” This may be when he is definitely accepted by the nation. But this point of idolatry established is what the Lord directs His disciples to, saying, “When ye shall see the abomination that makes desolate stand in the holy place, then let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains” (Matt. 24.). This appears to be morally, and in God’s estimate, the recontinuation of the course of the seventy weeks. It had been broken off at the cross. “I am come in My Father’s name, and ye receive Me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive” (John 5:43). Notice, “Ye” (Matt. 24:15) — the then Jewish remnant, and looked at as the one remnant going on to the end — the Church parenthesis which we know does not belong to Israel’s history, is here, in Matthew 24, not noticed.

In accordance with the foregoing it has been noticed: there are two great crises in Israel’s history, viz., their rejection of Messiah at the cross, and their acceptance of Antichrist: these points morally coalesce in their history (John 5:43). These points looked at historically and extended in time would show the present parenthesis of Church calling and history.

And now we should consider what “the chronologer” says, who would fix the point of “unto Messiah the Prince” or the expiration of sixty-nine weeks “to the very day,” at the Lord’s public entry into Jerusalem. Chronologers might differ about this. However this may be, an interpretation of where “unto Messiah the Prince” is found, if the chronologer so trusts his chronology as to disregard the time of Messiah’s ministry to Israel beginning at Matthew 3 and also His being accredited by the voice from heaven, and also His being anointed by the Holy Spirit, &c., — the literal counting of the sixty-nine weeks “to the very day” may be distrusted. Is it known when the seventy weeks began “to the very day?” Also, when the public entry into Jerusalem “to the very day?” The occasion of the public entry was, no doubt, a fulfilling of Scripture (Zech. 9:9), which testified to Messiah, but did it testify to the occasion being that of “unto Messiah the Prince?” Again, we should remember that God’s dates are moral dates, and apart from this consideration, the chronologer would fail to interpret the seventy weeks, e.g., mere chronology would fail to fix when is “unto” and “after” of Daniel 9:25, 26. W. J. C.

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