

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks - 4

Last time we noted how Israel's **weeks** were associated by the law of Moses with the **redemption** of God's people from sin and death. The years also ran by sevens, in which the seventh was a **sabbatical year**, at the end of which was a general release - from all debt - **Deuteronomy 15:1-11**, and of all Hebrew slaves - **verse 12**.

- Seven sets of seven years brought the **Jubilee - Leviticus 25:4-17** - in which every man returned to his family inheritance, whose landmarks had been laid when God brought Israel into Canaan under Joshua - **chapters 13, 18**.

But in the case of the Seventy **Weeks** = Strong 7620 Hebrew *shabuwa`* = "sevens", the end would bring the **ultimate release**, liberation from sin and death - **Daniel 9:24**.

- Totally unexpected by Daniel and his fellow Israelites was the announced "**cutting off**" of Messiah - **Daniel 9:26**. While their ultimate hope was in Messiah's rule in the restored kingdom of God over Israel - **1 Chronicles 28:5** - this prophecy speaks of Messiah's death! That Messiah's death was necessary for man's redemption from sin and death is shown in the account of Adam's fall. Adam's guilty conscience was accompanied by a desire to cover his nakedness, and he did so with some hastily sewn fig leaves - **Genesis 3:7**.

After informing the couple about the enmity which God put between the offspring of the serpent and of the woman, "**also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them**" - **Genesis 3:21**. The lesson was that man could not cover his own guilt of sin. God was graciously willing to do so, but only through the taking of a life - the animal **had to die**, its blood shed, to provide the tunic of skin.

- The prophecy of **Isaiah 53** speaks of one who was to be "**brought as a lamb to the slaughter**" to be "**cut off from the land of the living**", being killed "**for the transgression of my people**" - **Isaiah 53:7-8**. The previously mentioned Jonathan ben Uzziel, although he rendered **verse 5**, as we noticed previously, to show the redemptive work of Messiah, paraphrased **verses 7 and 8** to omit the death of Messiah - *The Chaldee Paraphrase on the Prophet Isaiah*, p. 183. On the other hand, the JPS version is substantially the same as the main Christian versions, retaining his being "**led as a lamb to the slaughter**" and being "**cut off from the land of the living**".

This person is identified in **verse 1** as "**the arm of the Lord**" (JPS version) who would be made "**an offering for sin**" - **verse 10**. In other words, God would act through Messiah to bring salvation - **Isaiah 59:16**. Having accomplished this role of "**pouring out his soul unto death**" and "**making intercession for the transgressors**", Messiah would be exalted to his high status - "**therefore will I divide him a portion with the great**" - **Isaiah 53:12**.

- For Messiah's subsequent exaltation to occur, he must be brought back to the land of the living. Because Messiah fulfilled the role of the sacrificial lamb, which had to be "**without blemish**" - **Exodus 12:5**, he was of unblemished character and could declare in public, "**Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?**" - **John 8:46**.
- Messiah, being without personal transgression, could therefore rightly be called the "**most holy**" one whom God anointed - answering to **Daniel 9:24**, "**to anoint the most holy**". This is the one spoken of by David in **Psalms 16:10** - "**You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.**"

More about this soon, God willing.