

THE ONE WHO MAKES DESOLATE

David Baker, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 26 September 2021
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Introduction

Hello, everyone, and welcome to Session 22 in our series on 'The Seventy Weeks Prophecy'. This will be our final session in this series.

In our very first session, which was soon after Easter, we made the point that the Seventy Weeks prophecy description is only four verses long. But it is one of the most important and comprehensive prophecies in the Scriptures.

Over the last four months, or thereabouts, we have been considering the outcomes of the prophecy, the timing of the prophecy, the major waypoints in the prophecy. Also, of course, we have considered its *implications* for us, both now, in terms of our daily participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, and also concerning the days ahead.

As we begin this final session, by way of orientation, we will read the key verses again.

'Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to bring in everlasting or to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.' Dan 9:24.

We spent a session on each of those 'outcomes', and our major point was that all of those outcomes *have been achieved*. They have all been accomplished by *the one offering of Christ*, when He was lifted up on the cross.

Christ seated, ministering to us

And He is now seated, having *finished the work*.

He is *seated at the right hand of the Father*.

And He is *ministering to us our unique participation* in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, so that each of these outcomes – everything that He has finished – is accomplished, or fulfilled, in us as we continue to walk with Him in the fellowship of that offering.

God's command to restore

'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall

be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.' Dan 9:24.

We have considered the command of the God of Israel, the command of Cyrus, the command of Darius, and the command of Artaxerxes; all four commands are part of one, integrated package.

It was specifically the command of Artaxerxes which enabled Ezra to return to Jerusalem, to begin to restore the culture of the people's marriages and their families.

It was that command which was the definitive *beginning of the seventy weeks*.

Seven 'weeks' of restoration

'Seven weeks' is the period of forty-nine years when *grace* was being extended to the Jewish remnant for the sake of their restoration and the restoration of their culture as the Lord's people. This period of restoration began with the return of Ezra and continued with the return of Nehemiah. It concluded with the ministry of the prophet Malachi.

Sixty-two 'weeks' – no prophetic ministry

The 'sixty-two weeks' is the period of four hundred and thirty-four years, where there was no prophetic ministry from the time of Malachi until the coming of John the Baptist in the spirit and power of Elijah, to announce the coming of the Lord Himself.

Messiah cut off for our sake in the middle of the seventieth week

'And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah [Christ] shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and 'til the end of the war desolations are determined.' Dan 9:26.

When we read that 'the Messiah shall be cut off but not for Himself', we know that refers to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. And this is, of course, the central feature of the Seventy Weeks prophecy.

We have also discussed why the temple – the physical temple – and the city of Jerusalem were conquered and destroyed by the Roman army

under the command of Prince Titus, in AD70. Referring to Christ again; 'Then He shall confirm a covenant.' Dan 9:27. That is the Everlasting Covenant; the covenant of sonship.

'He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall *bring an end to sacrifice and offering*. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.' Dan 9:27.

We know that Jesus Christ came to 'confirm' the Everlasting Covenant – which is the covenant of sonship – 'with many *for one week*', by water and by blood, and by the Spirit.

After the first half of the week, which was the three and a half years of His earthly ministry, Christ offered Himself to the Father for our sake. He fulfilled the Law, abolished the Law Covenant, and put an end to all sacrifice and offering according to that Old Covenant.

The period of delay beginning in the middle of the seventieth week

Now, in our most recent sessions, we have particularly considered the period of 'delay' in the seventieth week, and the significance of that delay.

Jesus Christ is confirming the Everlasting Covenant *for the full seventieth week*. And the period of delay has 'stretched' that seventieth week, so that He is also confirming His covenant *with us*, in our day.

The final period of delay – the time of the end; a great multitude gathered

We have also focused on what will be the final period of this delay, which the Scripture calls 'the time of the end'. This is the time when Jew and Gentile believers will be united in the kingdom of God. It is the time when Jesus Christ and His messengers will gather 'a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people and tongue', into the kingdom of God.

This fulfils the statement in the Seventy Weeks prophecy that Jesus Christ will 'confirm the covenant with the many'. The 'many' is 'the great multitude'.

We have made the point, concerning this multitude, that the Lord will most likely bring

fifty percent of the world's population into the kingdom of God in the time of the end.

There will be delay no longer

Specifically, in our last session, we considered the end of this period of delay. We discussed the vision that the apostle John had of the mighty, or strong, angel, whom he saw 'coming down from heaven'.

This angel, whom we believe to be Michael, put his right foot on the sea. He put his left foot on the land. Then he lifted up his hand to heaven, and he swore by Him who lives forever and ever – the Father – that there would be 'delay no longer'. That will be the end of the period of delay.

The little book reveals the events of the final half-week

We alluded to this in our last session, but we'll highlight now the fact that Michael also had an open book in his hand. It was described as 'a little book'.

Once he had announced the end of the period of delay, John heard a voice from heaven – the voice of Jesus Christ – instructing him to go and take the little book out of Michael's hand. As John took the little book, Michael said to him, 'This will be sweet in your mouth, but it will be bitter in your belly.' And when John ate the little book, it was indeed sweet in his mouth, but very bitter in his belly.

Michael said to him; this is 'You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.' Rev 10:11.

The little book contains the descriptions of the events that belong to the second half of the seventieth week. This includes the reign of Antichrist, for three and a half years.

It also includes the final outpouring of *the wrath of God* in the vials, upon Antichrist and his kingdom. We read that this wrath will be poured out upon him in the very 'first hour' of his reign.

The latter part of verse twenty-seven refers to these events. 'Then He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.

'[This is our focus] And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is

determined, is poured out on *the desolate* [or the desolator].’ Dan 9:27.

We note three major points of focus in this latter part of this verse - ‘the wing of abominations’; ‘the one who makes desolate’; ‘the consummation which is poured out on the desolator’.

‘The wing of abominations’

We will consider this phrase now - ‘the wing of abominations’. ‘Wing’ simply means ‘the edge’, or ‘the extremity’.

Using the imagery of a pair of wings, the old King James version translates this phrase as ‘the *overspreading* of abominations’. This imagery is helpful because it signifies to us that there is a period of abomination, which has a beginning and an end.

In this verse, we are focusing on the end, or ‘the uttermost extremity’, or ‘the tip of the wing’, of this period of abomination.

I. The wing of ‘abominations’ - the administration of Babylon ruling over the nations - judged

There are two major applications of this phrase. The first is that it is the *end* - or the extremity - of the wing of abomination of the reign of the administration of Babylon over the nations of the world.

The administration of Babylon was first established by the fathers of the nations in the plain of Shinar, after the flood. Under the leadership of Nimrod, the fathers of the nations conspired together to build a city and a tower that would reach into heaven – the tower of Babel – to ‘make a name for themselves’, and to avoid being scattered throughout the earth in obedience to the command of the Lord.

They built this city and this tower to ‘replace’ *the administration of Christ* over the nations. Babylon then became the administration through which Satan exercises his rulership over the nations of the world.

In the book of Revelation, the administration of Babylon is depicted as ‘a woman’, who is a great harlot; and she sits upon seven ‘mountains’, or the seven ‘kingdoms’, of the world. These seven kingdoms are Egypt, Syria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome; and the seventh world kingdom is the United Nations.

Significantly, in considering the history of these kingdoms, we see that, as one kingdom fell and another rose to take its place, the administration of Babylon *continued* to rule over the nations of the world. So, the administration of Babylon continued. As one kingdom fell and another rose to take its place, Babylon simply moved from one kingdom to the next.

And the administration of Babylon continued to evolve and develop. For example, in the time of the Medes and the Persians, the administration of Babylon developed to include ‘the rule of law’. This is why Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den. Even though the king wasn’t in favour of that happening, he was bound by the *law* of the Medes and Persians.

It further developed to incorporate the rulership of ‘human wisdom’ in the time of the Greeks. In considering the Greek empire, we see the influence and the prominence of everything that is ‘great’; for example, the first major ruler was Alexander ‘the Great’.

We read the history of the ‘great’ Greeks - the great philosophers, the great scientists, the great artists, the great sportsmen - everything that celebrates human achievement.

The administration of Babylon continued to develop with the rulership of state religions in the time of the divided Roman Empire. That was true in the West, and it was also true in the East.

Now, we currently live in the time of the *seventh* world kingdom. And ‘the administration of Babylon’ in our day continues to rule over the nations of the world through the various international organisations that belong to or are aligned with the United Nations.

Babylon is called ‘the mother of harlots’, because she has spawned all of the ‘harlot administrations’ that govern each nation of the world.

She is also called ‘the mother of the *abominations* of the earth’, because she has produced every manmade religion, all of which are abominations to the Lord. Rev 17:5.

Judgement in the seventh world ‘kingdom’; the opening of the ‘seals’

Now, the *judgement* of the seventh world kingdom will begin with the opening of the first four seals. During this time, one-quarter of the earth’s

population will be killed and go straight into hell under the judgement of 'warfare, famine and pestilence'; and then also by 'the beasts of the earth'.

This warfare, particularly, will continue to escalate throughout the opening of the seals. And it will reach something of a climax when the armies that are aligned with Gog and Magog camp around Jerusalem, on the mountains of Israel.

And, right there, the Lord Himself will sovereignly intervene in 'the affairs of men'.

He will sovereignly judge those armies on the mountain of Israel. When we read the description of this in the books of Ezekiel and Zechariah, we understand that it is very likely that this judgement will happen in the midst of nuclear warfare.

Following this judgement, it will take the survivors seven months to bury the dead, and seven years to burn the weapons.

In the same way that the United Nations was established in the aftermath of the second world war, in the aftermath of this sovereign judgement of the Lord in the midst of nuclear warfare, there will be a renewed resolve among the nations of the world to 're-cohere' the administration of Babylon to ensure peace and prosperity in the aftermath of this judgement.

However, the key point is that the administration of Babylon will *not* have the opportunity to regroup in order to sit upon another world kingdom!

The final judgement on Babylon with the blowing of the seven trumpets

The Lord will pronounce the final judgement upon Babylon when *the seven trumpets* are blown by the seven angels in the heavenly places. The seven trumpets announce the sovereign judgement of God upon the administration of Babylon.

Specifically, when the second trumpet is blown, 'a great mountain burning with fire' will be thrown into the sea. This is what the apostle John saw in the revelation of Christ when the second trumpet was blown. Rev 8:8.

This will be the fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the final judgement of Babylon. The Lord declared to Babylon through

Jeremiah, 'Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, who destroys all the earth,' says the Lord. "I will stretch out My hand against you, roll you down from the rocks, and make you a burnt mountain". Jer 51:25. This is definitive, isn't it!

'"They shall not take from you a stone for a corner nor a stone for a foundation, but you shall be desolate forever," says the Lord.' Jer 51:26.

That is the first element of 'the wing of abominations', and that period coming to an end.

2.'The abomination that stands in the holy place' - the violation of the fellowship of the Lord's table

The second application of this phrase, 'the wing of abominations', is that it is also the end of the 2000-year prophecy.

In addition to the administration of Babylon – which is 'the mother' of all of the abominations that belong to the earth – there is also 'an abomination which makes desolate which *stands in the holy place*', or in the heavenly places.

It was revealed to Daniel that this abomination in the holy place will give Satan access to the heavenly places, and will cause Christ's messengers and His people to be 'trampled' on the earth for a period of two thousand three hundred years. For this reason, we often refer to this as 'The 2300-year prophecy'.

'The abomination which makes desolate, standing in the holy place', is *the violation of the fellowship of the Lord's table*.

The clearest example of this is when Judas – who had received another word; he had believed the lie of Satan – sat in the fellowship of the *agape* meal at that final Passover. And, 'as cool as you like', he received the bread from Jesus, and then went out from that *agape* meal to betray Jesus to the religious leaders, who then delivered Jesus up to the secular rulers of the day, so that He was 'trampled' and crucified by them.

As another example, we remember that, following the crucifixion of Jesus, the religious leaders – the priests – sewed up the veil in the temple, which had been torn in two from top to bottom, when the spear pierced the side of Christ. They sewed it back up, and they continued to make animal sacrifice. That animal sacrifice was 'an abomination' to the Lord.

However, it is important to recognise that the abomination of the animal sacrifice was not yet 'in the holy place'.

It was in the altar in the earthly temple, but that was no longer the holy place; the holy place was now in heavenly places.

It was when the religious zealots, who were committed to keeping the Law and also aspired to be followers of Christ, imposed the need to keep the Law and to continue to make animal sacrifice. They imposed that 'doctrine', if you like, upon the elders of the Jerusalem church. They 'overcame' the elders so that, finally, the elders themselves imposed the need to keep the Law in their treatment of the apostle Paul.

Once it was operating in the church and the presbytery of that church in Jerusalem in that manner, the abomination was now 'standing in the holy place'.

For all the believers in Jerusalem, this was a major sign. And it was followed by a number of signs, which signalled to them that it was time to get out of Jerusalem, because it was soon to be 'made desolate'.

The abomination of Greek philosophy, the eucharist, and sacramentalism; false doctrines and practices

Now, by the time that this specific form of abomination came to an end, when the temple and the city of Jerusalem was destroyed in AD70, another abomination standing in the holy place had already taken over and become entrenched in the Gentile churches.

This abomination was that the illumination of the Scriptures by the Spirit had been replaced by Greek philosophy.

Also, the *fellowship* of the *agape* meal was being replaced by the eucharist and by sacraments.

When Jesus addressed the presbyteries of the lampstand churches in Asia, He identified many doctrines and practices that had already become entrenched within the presbyteries and within those lampstand churches. He identified the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, the doctrine of Jezebel, the doctrine of Balaam and the doctrine of the Laodiceans. It is these various doctrines of Satan that have continued to perpetuate the

trampling of the Lord's messengers and His people, right until our present day.

Overcoming in our time of trampling

We know that we have been called to *overcome*.

Jesus concluded each of His admonitions to those presbyteries and to those lampstand churches; and this is also His admonition to us. It is a promise, then, 'to him who overcomes'.

We know that we have been called to overcome Satan 'by the blood of the Lamb' – that is by our participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings.

We also overcome 'by the word of our testimony', which is the word of faith that has been preached to us, which is now in our hearts and in our mouths.

As well, it is 'by loving not our lives to the death', as we are learning to love one another and to lay down our lives for our brethren in the fellowship of the body of Christ.

The book of Revelation does reveal that the 2300-year prophecy will come to an end when we overcome in this manner. And Michael and his angels will cast Satan and his angels out of heaven, forever.

In summary, the term, 'the wing of abominations', is drawing our attention to the time when the 2300-year prophecy comes to an end; Satan will be cast out of heaven, and the heavenly sanctuary will be *cleansed*.

It is also drawing our attention to or refers to the end of the reign of the administration of Babylon over the nations of the world.

The one who makes desolate – Antichrist

Coming now to consider 'the one who makes desolate', during the period of the trumpets, the administration of Babylon will fall.

The final Antichrist, who will lead the eighth world kingdom, will begin to 'emerge from the sea of the nations'. We will see this particularly from the blowing of the fifth trumpet, which is when the bottomless pit will be opened.

The Seventy Weeks prophecy refers to the Antichrist as 'the one who makes desolate'. The one who makes desolate could also be called 'the desolater'.

A composite group of 'kings' will reign with Antichrist for 'a short time'

This is the apostle John's vision of the emergence of the *eighth* world kingdom. He said, 'Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads *a blasphemous name*.' Rev 13:1.

We can contrast this to the *seventh* world kingdom, which is likened to a dragon – 'a great red dragon'. This is Satan's kingdom that has 'seven heads and ten horns'. But the crowns in the seventh world kingdom are 'on the heads', not on the horns.

In the eighth world kingdom, the crowns are 'on the horns', not on the heads. 'Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name.'

So, in contrast to the seventh world kingdom, when the ten kings are subservient to the seven administrative headquarters that belong to Babylon, this group of kings will rule and reign *with Antichrist* for a short period of time. The book of Revelation describes this short period of time as 'one hour'.

'Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.' Rev 13:2.

We need to understand this description of the eighth world kingdom. We need to go back and consider the vision that Daniel had of the kingdoms of the world.

When we read here that the eighth world kingdom is 'like a leopard', this means that it will be like the Greek empire. Its fundamental characteristics will be like the Greek empire, which is prophetically likened to a leopard in the book of Daniel. Dan 7:6.

When we read that the eighth world kingdom will have 'feet like a bear', it means that it will have a similar administrative structure to that of the Persian empire in ruling over all the regions of the world. Remember, the Persians had three commissioners, and then a hundred and twenty satraps, ruling over all of the various regions of their kingdom.

When we read that the eighth world kingdom will have 'a mouth like a lion', this means that the Antichrist will claim the same absolute rulership that King Nebuchadnezzar was given over the kingdom of Babylon. The kingdom of Babylon was the one that was likened to a lion.

The eighth world kingdom is a *composite* of all of these preceding kingdoms.

Antichrist will be demonically empowered; given power by Satan

The final Antichrist will be a unique ruler. He is described as 'a little horn' in Chapter 7 of the book of Daniel. However, he will not be like all of the various 'little horns' that preceded him, and rose to prominence because they were empowered by Satan from the heavenly places.

We see the Caesars, for instance, as being a series of little horns - and Pilate was representative of Caesar when Jesus Christ was crucified. They drew their power from heavenly places, because Satan had access to heavenly places.

Antichrist will be different from this. He will not be empowered from heavenly places because of 'a transgression which causes abomination'. The final Antichrist will be *demonically empowered from the bottomless pit*.

Having been cast out of heaven and flung to the earth, Satan will also give him his power, his throne and great authority. Rev 13:2.

The administration of Antichrist will be in his own image

Continuing to read, 'And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marvelled and followed the beast.' Rev 13:3.

This refers to the revival of the seventh world kingdom, because the eighth world kingdom is 'of the seventh', even though its characteristics belong to the preceding kingdoms.

At this time, the world will experience a unique transition of power. And as we've said, when we consider the history of the kingdoms of the world, we observe that each kingdom was conquered and replaced by a new kingdom. And then the administration of Babylon continued to reign over one kingdom to the next.

But this transition of power is unique. In contrast to previous times, the Antichrist will revive the

seventh world kingdom, and he will replace the administration of Babylon with a completely new administration *in his own image*.

'They *all* worshiped.' This is all of the world. 'They all worshipped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months.' Rev 13:4-5.

This 'forty-two months' is three and a half years, and this is the second half of the seventieth week in the Seventy Weeks prophecy.

The time of consummation; the complete wrath and judgement of God; the seven vials

Now, coming to 'the consummation', the reign of Antichrist will last for three and a half years.

However, and quite remarkably, the fullness of the wrath of God will be poured out upon him and his kingdom in the very first hour of his reign.

It means that, as soon as Antichrist begins to reign, and he believes that he has finally 'made it' - and the whole world will believe that with this new image they have finally 'made it' and have conquered the curse - right there, immediately, God will pour out upon him *the fullness of His wrath*.

So, as soon as Antichrist rises to power, he will immediately go to perdition.

The apostle John recorded, 'Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous: seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them the wrath of God is complete.'

Now, we have been considering that the judgement of God and the wrath of the Lamb *begins* to be revealed in the world with the opening of the *seals*. And the outcome of the opening of the seals is that one-quarter of the world's population will be killed under the judgement of God.

At the time of the *trumpets*, one-third of the population of the world will be killed.

At the time of the opening of the *vials* - and in many ways the trumpets are the harbinger of the vials - it is the *full and complete revelation of the judgement of God*, for in them the wrath of God is complete.

Now, when John saw the seventh angel pouring out the final bowl, he heard a loud voice coming from the throne in the temple of heaven.

This was the voice of the Father, who is seated in the throne. The loud voice proclaimed, 'It is done!' This is 'the consummation'!

We read in the Seventy Weeks prophecy that the consummation will be poured out upon 'the desolate'. So the consummation is much more than the completion of the seventy weeks. The word 'consummation' means 'complete and utter destruction'.

The kingdom of Antichrist; and the bride of Christ

The vials that contain the fullness of the wrath of God will be poured out upon the Antichrist, his throne, and upon all those who have received the mark of his name, and worship his image.

By this time, the world will be completely polarised. There will be no 'middle ground'. There will be no 'sitting on the fence'.

There will be a great multitude which no man can number, from every nation, tribe, people and tongue, who have received *the seal of the living God* in their foreheads, marking them as sons of God.

And then there will be those who belong to the kingdom of Antichrist, who have received the mark of his name and the number of his name.

We know that the church, who is the bride of Christ, will be miraculously *protected and nourished by the Lord* in the wilderness during the reign of Antichrist.

The witness of the 144 000

And while the church celebrates the wedding feast, the only remaining witness on the earth will be the ministry of Moses and Elijah, who will be supported by the 144 000. The 144 000 will be 'sealed' for this unique ministry of supporting Moses and Elijah, at the opening of the sixth seal.

Moses and Elijah will be clothed in sackcloth as they prophesy concerning the judgement of God upon the world. This is not an evangelistic ministry at this point. They will *bear witness to the judgement of God*.

As Moses and Elijah prophesy concerning the judgement of God upon the eighth world

kingdom, the 144 000 will support their ministry by playing on spiritual harps. They will bear witness to the judgement of God upon the world by singing 'the song of Moses' and 'the song of the Lamb'.

And we will also bear witness to the judgement of God. 'And true and righteous are His judgements.'

War against the saints, and the victory of Christ

Now, apart from being tormented by the ministry of Moses and Elijah during this time, Antichrist will spend the three-and-a-half-year period of his reign gathering the kings of the earth and their armies to make war against Jesus Christ and His saints.

However, Christ, riding on His white horse and followed by the armies of heaven, will come and will lay hold of the Antichrist, with his false prophet, and will cast them alive into the lake of fire. Remember that Christ will *continue* to ride on the white horse the whole way through the events described in the book of Revelation.

He will then slay the rest of the ungodly with 'the sword that proceeds from His mouth'. So, it's good to know that we certainly win in the end.

Our resurrected body and sonship inheritance

Immediately following this is 'the first resurrection', when we will all receive our incorruptible and immortal resurrection body, fashioned from the DNA of Christ's resurrection body.

This is our final, or full, *inheritance as sons of God*. And this is the finish of the Seventy Weeks prophecy. After that time, there is the millennial rest, and the new heavens and the new earth.

I trust that, over these previous months, this has been a helpful summary of the Seventy Weeks prophecy. We are appreciating together how central this prophecy is, with all of its implications. We look forward in the days ahead to considering other major prophetic themes in the Scripture.