

asked, “What will be the sign of Your coming & of the end of the age?” (vs. 3b). Jesus’ response has nothing to do with watching for signs or looking for certain events. Rather, He says, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone”* (vs. 36).

Is time running out? Absolutely! We have no idea when Christ will come back, so we must be prepared. He could return tomorrow but then again it could be hundreds of years. Life is fragile and our lives could end at any moment. However, we assume too much to think we have God’s time frame figured out.

— Shane Williams

God’s Plan for Saving Man

- ⇒ [Hear](#) the Gospel (Romans 10:17)
- ⇒ [Believe](#) the Gospel (Hebrews 11:6; John 20:31)
- ⇒ [Repent](#) of Past Sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30)
- ⇒ [Confess Faith](#) in Christ (Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32)
- ⇒ [Be Baptized](#) in water (Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16; Gal. 3:27; I Pet. 3:21)
- ⇒ [Be Faithful](#) until/ unto Death (Rev. 2:10)

Non-Profit Org
US POSTAGE
PAID
Permit #2
Kewanee, MO

Lilbourn Church of Christ
P.O. Box 270
Lilbourn, MO 63862

Address Service Requested



Times of Assembly:

Sunday:

Bible Class	9:45am
Morning Worship	10:45am
Evening Worship	5:30pm

Wednesday:

Bible Class	7:30pm
-------------	--------

Website:

www.geocities.com/heartland/cabin/8851/

Preacher and Editor:

Shane Williams
Office: 573-688-2234
Home: 573-748-5204

shanewms@sheltonbbs.com

‘Lilbourn Light’ is published monthly by the Lilbourn Church of Christ. It is mailed free upon request. Send all correspondence or address changes to the address above.

The Lilbourn Light



“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” -Psalm 119:105



Volume 7

August, 2006

Number 4

End Time Speculation

Man has always had a tendency to want to know things that God has not told us. Perhaps it’s our curious minds but maybe it comes from not being satisfied with what God has revealed to us through His word. Today, mankind very much wants to know when Christ will return. Man goes to great lengths to try and figure out “when” this is going to happen. Yet we are not content that Jesus Himself said, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only”* (Matt 24:36).

I have a listing on my computer of over 200 predictions for the end of the world. None of these have been right in times past, nor will they be in the future. That information has simply not been revealed. Is the end coming? Most assuredly! Should we prepare right now? Absolutely! Jesus said, *“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at*

an hour you do not expect” (Matt 24:44).

All the many passages that are pulled from the Old Testament and all the quotations from the book of Revelation do not change that fact of Jesus’ words! I firmly believe we do God’s Word a great injustice when we try to go beyond the writer’s intent.

Such is the case in Daniel’s “70 weeks” prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27. I don’t know of a passage in which more speculation exists than in this one. Yet, it seems that the historical context is greatly overlooked because people are so anxious to try and make application to the future.

Because of Israel’s apostasy, the prophet Jeremiah had foretold that the Jews would be delivered as captives to
(Continued on Next Page)

Babylon. In that foreign land they would be confined for seventy years (Jeremiah 25:12; 29:10). Sure enough, the prophet's warnings proved accurate. The general period of the Babylonian confinement was seventy years (Daniel 9:2; 2 Chronicles 36:21; Zechariah 1:12; 7:5). But why was a seventy year captivity decreed? Why not sixty, or eighty? There was a reason for this exact time frame.

The Law of Moses had commanded the Israelites to recognize every seventh year as a sabbatical year. The ground was to lie at rest (Leviticus 25:1-7). Apparently, across the centuries Israel had ignored that divine regulation. Before their captivity, there seems to be no example of their ever having honored the Sabbath-year law. So, according to the testimony of one biblical writer, the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity was assigned *"until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept Sabbath until seventy years were complete"* (2 Chronicles 36:21).

If each of the seventy captivity years represented a violation of the sabbatical year requirement (every seventh year), as 2 Chronicles 36:21 appears to suggest, this would indicate that Israel had neglected the divine command for approximately **490 years**. The captivity era therefore looked backward upon five centuries of sinful neglect. At the same time, Daniel's prophecy looked forward to a time when the "Anointed One" would "make an end of sins" (9:24). Daniel 9:24 sets forth the primary purpose of Christ's mission on earth. Let us notice how Christ fulfilled this passage with His 1st coming.

1). He would come and deal with the problem of sin (9:24). Note three different phrases used in the prophecy; *"to finish the transgression"; "to make an end of sin"; "to make atonement for iniquity."* That theme is developed throughout the New Testament (Matthew 1:21; 20:28; 26:28; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians

1:4; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20; 1 Peter 2:24; Revelation 1:5). Jesus introduced a system by His own blood through which one can be washed from his sins and held accountable for them no more. Jesus came so that the effects of sin could be reversed.

It is interesting to note that Daniel emphasized that the Anointed One would address the problems of "transgression," "sin," and "iniquity." The Lord is capable of dealing with evil in all of its hideous forms. Similarly, the prophet Isaiah, in the 53rd chapter, revealed that the Messiah would sacrifice Himself for "transgression" (5, 8, 12), "sin" (10, 12), and "iniquity" (5, 6, 11).

2). He would bring in everlasting righteousness (9:24). Jesus enacted heaven's plan to make sinners righteous by grace through faith (Romans 1:16,17; 3:21-26).

3). He would seal up the vision & prophecy (9:24). This means to bring to completion; to close or finish. With the coming of Jesus and His new covenant, Divine revelation was completed. With the generation who were alive during Jesus' life, we see the last of the prophets. With them and the messages given through them, prophecy would cease. (Hebrews 1:1,2; 1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

4). He would anoint the Holy Place (9:24). Jesus is the Messiah (Hebrew), or Christ (Greek). Both of these words mean *"anointed one."* When Jesus ascended into heaven, He entered the true, spiritual Holy Place where He lives and intercedes for us (Hebrews 9:11,12).

Daniel was to understand that from the time the order was issued to rebuild Jerusalem until "Messiah, the Prince" was to come, there would be seven weeks, then sixty two weeks. Cyrus issued the order to rebuild Jerusalem in

539 B.C. This was prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 44:28; 45:13). The work of rebuilding Jerusalem was to be done during the first seven week period. Then a period of sixty two weeks would pass before the Messiah comes. We also read in verse 25 of the rebuilding that takes place. The streets and walls would be built in times of distress, as you can read about in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Daniel's prophecy showed the Roman invasion of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish temple. The prophet spoke of a certain "prince who is to come," who would "destroy the city and the sanctuary" like an overwhelming flood (9:26b). All of this was "determined" (see 9:26b, 9:27b) by God because of the Jews' rejection of His Son (Matthew 21:37-46; 22:1-7).

If there were ever any doubts about these things, they should be laid to rest because Jesus gives us commentary on these very events!!

Jesus, on the Mount of Olives, was talking to His disciples about the Temple. He told his disciples that there would be a time when not one stone of the temple would be left upon another (Matthew 24:1-2). His disciples then asked Him two questions: *"Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"* (vs. 3). The first half of Matthew 24 is in telling the disciples when Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed (Matthew 24:1-34). It is in this section that Jesus talked about *"the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet"* (24:15). The Lord was referring to Daniel 9:27. The *"abomination that makes desolate"* was the Roman army, under its commander, Titus ("the prince"—9:26b), who vanquished Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Neither Jesus nor Daniel were talking of a seven year tribulation period,

peace treaties with the antichrist or modern day Israel. They were talking about the destruction of Jerusalem! You must ignore the context of Matthew 24 to come up with these other conclusions.

Jesus talks in the first half of Matthew 24 about signs that could be seen that show this destruction is close. He talks of wars, earthquakes, famines, false prophets, false Christs, lawlessness, etc. These were not signs concerning the end of the world but of Jerusalem's destruction. This is why he tells them to flee to the mountains, to not turn back to get their coat, to pray that it doesn't occur in the winter or on the Sabbath, etc. It would make no sense to instruct concerning these things if it was about Christ's return. After all, where are you going to run? However, it would make perfect sense when Rome's army came to

destroy Jerusalem!

The lesson to be learned from the fig tree in vs. 32-33 was about recognizing these signs. You can tell when summer is near by the growth of the fig tree. Likewise, you can tell when the destruction of Jerusalem is close by the signs that Jesus related in the previous verses. This verse has nothing to do with the modern nation of Israel! Jesus was not warning the disciples of the 1st century about Israel in the 20th & 21st centuries!!

Jesus said, *"Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place"* (Matt 24:34). The destruction of Jerusalem would occur in the lives of those to whom Jesus was talking. **To make this passage apply to OUR generation is to make Jesus' entire conversation irrelevant to His audience!**

The second question that Jesus answers begins in verse 35. The disciples had also
(Continued on Back Page)

Daniel's prophecy showed the Roman invasion of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish temple.

Matthew 24:36, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone"