

Futurism – Leapfrogging History – The Wiles of the Devil

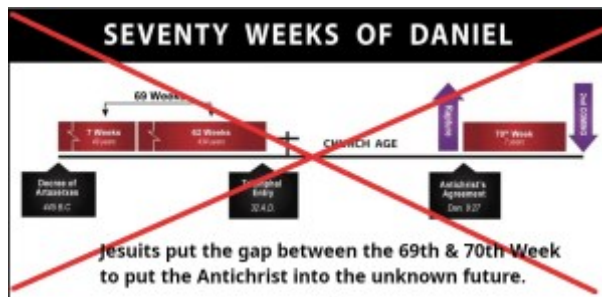


Chart made by deceived Bible teachers who follow Darby's and Scofield's Jesuit doctrine based false interpretation of Daniel 9:27.

This is the next chapter of the book, [The Foundations Under Attack: The Roots of Apostasy – By Michael de Semlyen](#)

Chapter 2

Futurism – Leapfrogging History – The Wiles of the Devil

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” – Ephesians 6:12

How then was the historical understanding of Scriptural prophecy lost to so much of the church?

Futurism, cleverly devised by Spanish Jesuit scholarship, was able to accomplish this in a fashion that is difficult not to admire. Such an accomplished counterfeit, which would involve a counterfeit church, a counterfeit bible and a counterfeit prophecy of antichrist, may have been foreseen by the Apostle John, “... and when I saw her I wondered with great admiration.” Revelation 17: 6b

It is important to realise that scholars—both Roman Catholic as well as Protestant—have agreed as to the Jesuit origin of the Futurist school of prophecy. The Roman Catholic “Truth Society” has described the Futurist School as that “founded by the Jesuit Ribera in 1591, which looks for Antichrist, Babylon, and a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, at the end of the Christian Dispensation.”

The second school of interpretation—the Praeterist (or Preterist) scheme— has been defined by the same Roman Catholic Truth Society as that, “founded by the Jesuit Alcasar in 1614, and explaining the book of Revelation by the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD or by the fall of pagan Rome in 410 AD.”

Both systems of interpretation, originated by the Counter-Reformation,

succeeded in divorcing the *antichrist*, revealed as *the man of sin*, *the little horn*, and *the Mother of Harlots*, from the here and now and from mediaeval and modern history. Between them these two schemes manage to avoid the entire period of more than fifteen centuries of the Papacy. They do so by stopping short of its beginnings in the fifth century and then by projecting forward from today into the unknown future.

Futurism denies that the dynasty of Popes is the Antichrist and points instead to a future individual world ruler at the end of the age. It thus postpones most of the prophetic predictions of Scripture including almost all the Book of Revelation into a fragment of time in the indefinite future. Ribera and later Futurist scholars determined that Daniel's seventieth week should be separated from the first sixty-nine and projected forward to the end of time, thus establishing "the futurist gap."

If we were to look ahead to a world leader who is yet to appear, our expectancy would inevitably be governed by the shaping of this event and not to the coming of the Lord. The Reformers and like-minded Christians before and since were described as "those who love the coming of the Lord." If we are to live in a manner that Scripture clearly requires, in the daily expectation of the Lord's return, how can it be that there is supposed to be so much unfulfilled prophecy in the Bible?

The result of this, inevitably, is that our guard is dropped. Vigilance is rare and few watchmen are at their posts.

Today's extraordinary paradox is that so many in the church say they believe in the imminent Second Coming, and yet interpret the prophecy of the Antichrist, which must be fulfilled before the Lord returns, to take place sometime in the indefinite future. This ambivalent thinking surely has much to do with the decline of holiness in the church today.

The Futurist Pre-Tribulation Rapture theory provides for the departure of the church before the world ruler antichrist makes his entrance to begin a seven-year tribulation period. Dispensational Futurism is not to be confused with historic pre-millennialism, which believes in a visible reign of Christ in glory on earth with the risen saints for one thousand years, but not a two-stage second coming begun by a "secret rapture" (nowhere to be found in the New Testament).

The Antichrist in the Historicist Protestant understanding is the longstanding spiritual enemy of the people of God, not discernible to the world but clearly recognised in Scripture and in history. Praeterism's Antichrist pre-dates the fall of the Roman Empire, is an individual persecuting ruler, and has often been identified as Nero. Futurism looks forward to the end of the age for Antichrist's appearance as a world dictator who will covenant with the Jews and then persecute them and the rest of the world in the great tribulation. The futurist system set out expressly to shield the Papacy from the identification of Antichrist and to counter the established historical view.

The historical view sees the prophecies in Daniel, the letters of Paul and

John, and the Revelation as fully and faithfully laying out the entire course of Christian history. In contrast, the Praeterist view sees them as having been fulfilled before the fall of the Roman Empire, while the Futurist view sees them as dealing with a new scenario, within a future fragment of time at its close, after what has become known as “the futurist gap.”

The Seventy Weeks

As the new Futurist system evolved during the nineteenth century, the fragment of time predicted as the period of the great tribulation became identified in Scripture with “Daniel’s seventieth week.” To this end, this week of seven day-years is detached from the previous sixty- nine weeks and pitched forward to a time still in the future, revealing “the futurist gap.” Ribera, the father of Jesuit Futurism, had postulated this in his scheme. For Ribera, “prophecy stopped with the fall of the Roman Empire only to resume at the time of the Rapture. It was as though God put a giant rubber band on the Messianic time measure ... this is exactly the scenario used by Hal Lindsey and a multitude of other prophecy teachers.”⁸ This supposed gap of around two thousand years or more is a concept which, apart from Ribera, had found very little support throughout all of church history until a South American Jesuit’s theories were taken up and developed at the time of the Oxford Movement. The gap has no Scriptural support, seems to be arbitrary and illogical and stretches the meaning of the Hebrew translation into grammatical inconsistency.

The modern versions’ translations of Scripture undoubtedly favour the futurist gap theory. A comparative study reveals how the great prophetic passage in Daniel 9:24-27 calls for an entirely different interpretation in the new Bibles—relating to both Christ and Antichrist, rather than, as indicated in the Authorised Version, to Christ alone. In fact, the eclipse of the historical interpretation of prophecy was, very likely, a determining motive in the move to replace the Authorised Bible in the nineteenth century. This consideration and the wide disparity in the translation of key passages, between the Authorised Version following the received or majority text, and the new versions with their favoured selections from differing eclectic Greek texts, is the subject of much of the second part of this book.

Seventy, in Scripture, is a number of special significance, signifying completeness. The children of Israel, the family of Jacob that went into Egypt were **seventy**. (Exodus 1:5) The Lord commanded Moses to appoint **seventy** elders to help him bear the burden of the people. (Numbers 11:16) He sent out **seventy** other disciples also ahead of His own ministry. (Luke 10:1) He commanded his disciples to forgive each other “*seventy times seven*”. (Matthew 18:22) The Babylonian captivity was to last **seventy** years. (Jeremiah 25:11,12) Then Daniel, who understood by Jeremiah the expiration of the seventy years of the captivity, was employed to make known to the church another more glorious release, at the end of seventy, not years, but weeks of years. (Daniel 9:2)

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and

to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. "

(Daniel 9:24-27)

This great prophecy of completeness is centered on Jesus Christ and His cross and was completely and perfectly fulfilled when, after three and a half years of His ministry, He was cut off in death in the middle of the seventieth week of seven years. He confirmed the covenant with His blood of the new covenant (testament), finished transgression and made an end of sins, caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease with His complete and perfect once-for-all sacrifice, reconciled His people to Himself, brought in everlasting righteousness imputed to the believer, and sealed up the vision and the prophecy at the precise time in history defined by Daniel.

The confirmation of the covenant *"upon thy [Daniel's] people"* for the week of seven years was fulfilled by the Lord's ministry before the cross and the apostles' ministry for three and a half years afterwards*, specifically proclaiming the gospel to *"the lost sheep of the house of Israel."* (John 1:31, Matthew 10:5-6)

* No seven-year agreement was to be made by the Antichrist with the Jews to enable them to rebuild the temple and offer sacrifices which will be broken after three and a half years so that the sacrifices cease—no "futurist gap."

The remainder of this prophecy of the complete work of God is fulfilled finally with another "seventy"—AD 70—when the people of the prince that shall come (the predicted Messiah) will destroy Jerusalem and the Temple, in judgement, with a vast Roman army (with a "flood"). The Son of God lamented as he looked ahead once more to the destruction and desolation of His own—as a hen her errant chicks—knowing what lay ahead. Again and again the rebellious children of Jerusalem had been chastised for their transgressions by the invasions of foreign armies. The Lord of Hosts, the Prince, was the One who sent them. The great tribulation of that time would be carried out once more by the pagan armies of the World Empire of the day. This time, those armies would come from Rome. In Old Testament times the terrible judgements of the Lord had been carried out by Assyria, Babylon, and neighbouring nations. This was *"the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,"* the Roman host of idol-worshipping Gentiles who would *"stand in the holy place"* (Matthew 24:15,16) in Jerusalem, which would be *"compassed with armies"* and from which believers would be enabled to make their escape.

Continued in [chapter 3, The Counter-Reformation – The Source of the Futurist View of Prophecy](#)

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