Time periods - originally addressed to SDA pundits

Before we get into the day for a year dilemma we need to ask another equally important question and that is what are the time periods for in the first place? Why did God give us all these prophetic time periods? Were they given to predict the 2nd coming? As strange as that may sound, some to this day still believe that. They have jubilee calendars and charts and go into great detail as to why Jesus will come in 2021 or 2030 or whatever ridiculous date they have come up with. They seem incapable of escaping the errors and mistakes of the past. The time periods were never given to predict the 2nd coming. Jesus himself said when you see all these things come to pass (end-time events) you will know that his coming is near even at the doors. There are many events that have to happen before the 2nd coming. Like the reign of the little horn, the seven trumpets, the mark of the beast and the seven last plagues. All of these things happen first so Jesus will not be coming tomorrow or next month or next year. When the rivers and seas have turned to blood and world is in shambles and the battle of Armageddon is raging we will know that we're close even at the doors but that's not today!

So the purpose of the time periods is to show the duration of major events of the last days like the reign of the little horn, the ministry of the two witnesses, the reconstruction of Jerusalem and the temple, the abomination of desolation and the time of trouble with the seven last plagues. Most are not aware of this but there is actually a time period for the time of trouble when the seven last plagues are poured out and that is three and a half years (also Rev. 12). In Dan. 12 the time of trouble is mentioned and then the question is asked how long till the end of these wonders? And the answer given is there shall be a times, time and a half and all these things shall be finished. So the time of trouble has its own time period and Jesus speaking of the great tribulation which is the same thing said that unless those days would be shortened then no flesh would survive. This final three and half years will be shortened to three years or two and a half no one knows but God but this would be very useful information to those living thru that time. If they know there is a set time period it will strengthen their faith to hold on because with war, famine, disease and death around every corner those will be some hard days.

Hopefully we are beginning to see how useful it would be to know the mechanics of the last days. The time periods in a literal understanding have great value but those same time periods in a day for a year setting where they stretch out over thousands of years are utterly worthless and do nothing but wrest the scriptures. God has actually predicted events to the very day which is much more amazing than predicting something to the year. In the next installment we will be discussing the 2300 days which is roughly six and a half years and this fits very well into an end-time scenario. Also it is impossible to understand Daniel and Revelation without a correct understanding of Israel. There is an Israel of the flesh (1Cor. 10:18) and there is an Israel of the Spirit (Rom. 2:28.29). Spiritual Israel is rejected by most Christians today and they are left with the most ridiculous understanding of scripture. The 144,000 are an excellent example of this. The only ethnic tribes remaining in the 1st century were Judah, Benjamin and a few Levites. It would be physically impossible to have 144,000 pure blood, virgin Jews at the end of time seeing they didn't even exist 2000 years ago. God does not deal in worthless genealogies anymore. If we have faith we are accepted into the beloved and adopted into the Israel of God.

The 2300 days put Adventism on the map with their sanctuary doctrine and cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. Unfortunately today, Adventism faces an identity crisis where they try to live off the truths of those that came before them. They have no truth of their own and get labeled as legalists and cult members and fanatics when they try to foist their unscriptural ideas on other Christians. These labels are well deserved because if something cannot be supported or defended from the scriptures then it needs to be abandoned. So let's take a closer look at the 2300 days. First off the correct reading is 2300 evenings and mornings which is the same language from Genesis and the creation account where the evening and morning were the first day, second day and so on. These are days not years and a literal reading is always the most accurate unless a symbol has been specified and there is no symbol here. The Adventist assertion that the subject of the 2300 days is the heavenly sanctuary is actually correct and we will go into that in detail. I try not to always sound like the jaded church member but I can admit when Adventists are right about something. It so rarely happens though that I guess even a blind squirrel finds a nut sometimes!

The little horn became great even to the host of heaven and it cast down some of the host and stars to the ground. He magnified himself to the prince of the host and by him the daily was taken away and the place of his sanctuary was cast down (Dan. 8:10,11). This little horn is one powerful king! He actually has power and mastery over the angels of heaven. He exalts himself to the prince of the host which would be Jesus and the place of Christ's sanctuary is cast down. The removal of the daily ministration of Christ is the cause of the defilement to the heavenly sanctuary. And coincidentally there is a separate time period that begins with the removal of the daily and setting up of the abomination of desolation but we will discuss that later. So how could this little horn do these things? It's plausible that he could have the mastery over angels but never Christ himself. The little horn could never have power over Christ but what he could do is command the world to worship a false Christ in a false temple and by so doing he would remove the daily or high priestly role of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. The little horn will remove the daily and cause defilement to the heavenly sanctuary by deception.

And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed Dan. 8:14. At the end of these 2300 days the sanctuary will be cleansed from the defilement caused by the little horn. When we look at 1844 was anything cleansed or made right in that year? No, nothing was cleansed and even Adventists have to admit this. The best they can say is that the cleansing began in 1844 and will end at some undetermined time which makes the 2300 days meaningless. In Revelation we are given picture after picture of the heavenly sanctuary with the altar of incense or prayer and then the temple is opened and the ark of the testament is seen and finally God's glory fills the temple like smoke and the seven last plagues are poured out. When the sanctuary is cleansed the seven last plagues or the wrath of God is poured out and this is an end-time event so the 2300 days would have to pertain to the end-time. The 2300 days are for the entire vision of Dan. 8 including the ram, goat and little horn so this roughly six and a half years will be for the beginning of the end-time and then with the time of trouble scheduled for three and a half years we see that the total end-time period will be roughly ten years.

The next time period that we touched on briefly is the 1290 day prophecy. This prophecy begins with the removal of the daily by the little horn and ends with the setting up of the abomination of desolation. The final king of the north does the same things as the little horn so it is very likely they are the same entity. It seems there are many who just despise the sanctuary doctrine no matter how it is presented from Daniel. Personally, I despise the date 1844 because nothing happened in 1844 except a whole lot of people were wrong about a whole lot of things. But the sanctuary doctrine behind 1844 is actually biblical starting with Daniel 7 where a judgment scene is presented in heaven during the three and half year reign of the little horn. And then in Daniel 8 this same little horn exalts himself to the prince of heaven and the place of his sanctuary is cast down. There is no doubt that this is referring to the heavenly sanctuary because even in Revelation 13 when the beast is fully formed and the little horn becomes the spokesman it says - *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven Rev. 13:6.* The little horn definitely has a problem with the things that are taking place in the heavenly tabernacle.

The little horn will remove the daily sacrifice. The daily or continual offering was from the OT sanctuary service where a lamb was offered every morning and evening as a perpetual sacrifice. This was the basis of all other sacrifice and offering and most truly represents Christ the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The removal of the daily will deal directly with Christ's high priestly role in the heavenly sanctuary. The little horn could never physically remove Christ from heaven but he doesn't need to because when Satan comes at the end of time to impersonate Christ it will appear that Christ has come to earth and the whole world believe that. They will think that Christ has come to usher in his 1000 year reign of the throne of David. All the prayer and worship that would normally ascend up to heaven as a sweet savor will be re-directed to and accepted by Satan the antichrist. The daily ministration of Christ for all intents and purposes will be removed and this will begin the 1290 days that will end with the abomination of desolation.

Jesus said in the Olivet discourse that when the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place it will be a sign to flee Judea and Jerusalem. So whereas the beginning of the prophecy deals with the heavenly sanctuary, the end will deal primarily with an earthly temple that will be reconstructed in the last days. Paul says the same thing is 2nd Thess. where the man of sin will sit in the temple of God and show himself to be God. This temple is not a church and is the same word used all throughout the NT in reference to the Jewish temple. This abomination will usher in the seven last plagues which occur just after the glory of God fills the heavenly tabernacle like smoke. When Solomon dedicated the first temple there is a record of the Glory of God filling the temple like smoke so that no priests could minister in the temple 2Chron. 5:14, 1Kings 8:11. This happened in the seventh month when the ark of the covenant was brought from the city of David to the most holy of the new temple. While there is no record of Yom Kippur being kept at the dedication of the temple it is noteworthy that the glory of God filled the temple when it should have occurred. We would expect that the true pattern of the earthly temple will be followed by the heavenly. Which leads us into our next time period that we will discuss - the seventy weeks. The commandment that goes forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple will be issued by the antichrist making the ones issued by Cyrus, Darius and Artaxerxes historically irrelevant.

The 70 week prophecy does not use the day for a year principle per se but employs a week of year's principle which is the crazy uncle of the family. This prophecy has been so butchered by Jewish and Christian scholars alike that we need to take our time and go thru it piece by piece. The first point of contention is the word week which is 'shabuwa' and has been misused and misapplied into a week of years by nearly all scholars across the board. This word was used throughout the OT in reference to the feast of weeks or Pentecost which were literal seven day weeks not some mythical day/year conversion. Also Daniel uses this exact word in chap. 10 where he fasted for three full weeks (Dan. 10:2). We know that Daniel did not fast for 21 years so once again the literal reading is the most accurate. From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the prince shall be 69 weeks. The next area that we want to discuss is Messiah the prince which is probably the worst translation in all of scripture.

The word for Messiah is 'mashiyach' and is used 41 times in scripture and in every occurrence except for Daniel it is translated as anointed. Even in my second favorite translation (Young's literal translation) it is rendered as 'Messiah the leader'. So the correct translation should be the anointed prince or leader. Questioning this verse is not meant in any way to imply that Jesus is not the Messiah because he is but the anointed prince of verses 25 & 26 is most likely one of the two anointed ones or witnesses of Rev. 11 who are both killed in the midst of the week and whose bodies lie in the streets for three and a half days. The prophecy of the two witnesses has been so badly interpreted by historicists that they relegate it to church history and see none of the parallels between the two. Both prophecies have something occurring in the middle of the final week and both take place in Jerusalem. When we begin to understand that Jerusalem and the temple will be reconstructed in the last days and the anointed prince is the leader of the two witnesses it completely changes our outlook on apocalyptic prophecy.

The last error which is so prevalent in Adventist eschatology is that the most holy place phase of Christ's high priestly role in the heavenly sanctuary adds to what he accomplished on the cross. This should be rejected hands down. The work of Christ on the cross for our redemption is perfect, finished and complete. I actually incorporate a final work of Christ in the most holy place in my own expose of prophecy but this is a sealing time - it adds nothing to what Christ has already accomplished. And when we study the day of atonement ceremony the sacrifice was still offered in the courtyard and then the blood was brought into the most holy indicating that Christ's sacrificial death is the basis for the cleansing of the most holy. The final 70 weeks of human probation is the time when this will occur. Satan will rebuild earthly Jerusalem with an earthly temple and will counterfeit the final work taking place in heaven. These two events will happen simultaneously with Christ sealing his followers by writing the love of God in their hearts and Satan marking his followers by forcing the law of Moses to be kept on pain of death. Once this time is finished there will be no possibility of switching sides. Jesus made a cryptic reference to this time when he told Peter he should forgive his brother seventy times seven. Forgiveness will come to an end at the conclusion of the seventy weeks where it is said - *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 Dan. 9:24.*

As we discovered in our previous studies, a correct understanding of the prophetic beasts is the only way to see the time periods as literal and part of the end-time. Probably the best evidence in scripture of this is the lamb-like beast in Rev. 13. This beast is said to be a lamb who speaks as a dragon. This should not be that hard to figure out seeing that Christ is always symbolized by the lamb and Satan by the dragon. This beast is Satan when he appears as Christ to deceive the world. Also he calls fire down out of heaven and performs miracles. How could a nation or country do this? They could not because the beasts do not represent nations. Nearly all prophecy students across the board including historicists, futurists and preterists see the beasts as ancient kingdoms. This belief is so firmly rooted in tradition that any talk to the contrary is just dismissed out of hand. So the best way to deal with this is by showing what the word of God has to say. The four living creatures around the throne are a different order of angels known as Seraphim and these angels have the appearance of animals or beasts. There is the lion and ox and eagle and the fourth is like a man. Satan who is part of an order of angels known as Cherubim took the form of a serpent in Eden, was symbolized by a dragon in the book of Revelation and is said to be like a roaring lion by Peter.

Satan's appearance as Christ in the last days will be the greatest deception of all time so you would think the bible would have something to say about this and it does. We already mentioned the lamb-like beast who speaks as a dragon but there is more. The first seal in Revelation pictures a rider on a white horse who goes forth conquering and to conquer. The four riders are all evil so this is another picture of Satan when he comes as the conquering king to devour the earth and trample it down. Christ is also pictured riding on a white horse in Rev. 19 so once again we see the elements of deception where Satan will assume the persona of Jesus. The lion in Daniel chap. 7 is said to have wings that are plucked and is made to stand on his feet like a man and a man's heart is given to him. If we apply this language to the kingdom or nation of Babylon it makes no sense at all because how could a kingdom stand on its feet like a man and be given a man's heart? Logically it could not and the lion corresponds with the head of gold of the great image who was identified as Nebuchadnezzar or the king of Babylon. And it just so happens that Satan is also identified as the king of Babylon in Isa. 14.

Bible prophecy far from telling the story of ancient kingdoms is telling the story of the greatest deception of all time. The lion and the white rider both represent Satan's initial appearance as the conquering king who will come to conquer the world. After him other angels will appear until the beast is fully formed. The horns would represent the human kings that these angels control or leaders of nations. The lamb-like beast represents the final stage of Satan's reign when he commands the world to worship him as God and forces the mark of the beast on the world. Most think that the greatest thing they have to fear is evil men but this is false. The bible says that we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places Eph. 6:12. The end-time will bring a whole new dimension to the war between good and evil, between light and darkness. In the days of Christ evil angels were very active in the world of men but since then they have hidden their presence so as to make many question if they even exist. They do exist and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.