

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks

A Supplemental Study to Daniel Nine and the Revelation Series

Compiled and Edited by
Kevin S Lucas, Bible Teacher
Victory Baptist Church
Macon, GA

"About the time of the End, a body of men will be raised up who will turn their attention to the prophecies, and insist upon their literal interpretation, in the midst of much clamor and opposition." Sir Isaac Newton

The Passage Itself – Daniel 9:24-27

“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. 25 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. 26 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. 27 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

Some Introductory Thoughts

When it comes to the subject of biblical prophecy, there is simply no more important passage than Daniel 9:24–27, especially in the area of the first coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and of the coming Great Tribulation Period. Understanding this key passage of Scripture is crucial to making sense of all biblical prophecy. Other Bible teachers have recognized its importance in their words form a fitting

introduction to this very important supplement to our study of the book of Daniel and the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Alva J. McClain wrote a remarkable study of this passage in his little book ***“Daniel’s Prophecy Of The Seventy Weeks.”*** McClain was the late president of Grace College and Seminary in Winona Lake, Indiana for 25 years and he composed this book in 1940 after a study of a lifetime! He was a very diligent student of the Word of God and a diligent teacher. His little book is a classic and is getting harder to find. But one of the things I look for when I visit any pastor’s library is a copy of this slender volume which testifies of his commitment to a dispensational interpretation of biblical prophecy. Here are some things that McClain had to say concerning this passage:

“Probably no single prophetic utterance is more crucial in the fields of Biblical Interpretation, Apologetics, and Eschatology...A proper understanding of the 70 weeks of Daniel not only safeguards the Christian against the elaborate guesswork of those who persist in setting dates for the Lord’s return, but also furnishes the infallible key to the real chronology of all New Testament prophecy.”

The late Dr. John Walvoord of the Dallas Theological Seminary is acknowledged by many as the Dean of American writers on the subject of biblical prophecy from a dispensational standpoint. Listen to what he has to say about this passage:

“In the concluding verses of Daniel nine, one of the most important prophecies in the Old Testament is contained... Properly interpreted, the prophecy of Daniel furnishes an excellent example that prophecy is subject to literal interpretation. Practically all expositors, however opposed to prophecy per se, agrees that at least part of the 70 weeks of Daniel is to be interpreted literally... If the first 69 weeks of Daniel were subject to literal fulfillment, it is a powerful argument that the final 70th week will have a similar fulfillment.”

Clearly this is a crucial passage of Scripture and its interpretation is the key to most of the New Testament’s prophetic utterances. Therefore, we’re going to study this passage in more depth than usual. These notes, gleaned from my study of this passage and from the works of some of the best authors on the subject, are offered as a signpost to help direct you in your further study of this passage at home.

The Background of the Passage

In order to fully grasp the significance of this passage from the book of Daniel, we must understand the background and context of this passage. Dr. J Vernon McGee gives us a very clear summary of what Daniel had in his mind before this prophecy was given:

"Now Daniel was puzzled as to how the end of the seventy years of captivity would fit into the long period of Gentile world dominion which the visions in chapters 7 and 8 had so clearly indicated. He obviously thought that at the end of the seventy years his people would be returned to the land, the promised Messiah would come, and the kingdom which had been promised to David would be established. How could both be true? It appeared to him, I am sure, to be an irreconcilable situation created by these seemingly contradictory prophecies.

The Seventy Weeks, or the seventy sevens, answer two questions. Israel's kingdom will not come immediately. The seventy sevens must run their course. These seventy sevens fit into the Times of the Gentiles and run concurrently with them. They are broken up to fit into gentile times. The word for determined literally means "cutting off." These seventy sevens are to be cut off, as the following verses will indicate. The seventy sevens for Israel and the Times of the Gentiles will both come to an end at the same time, that is, at the second coming of Christ. This is important to know in the correct understanding of the prophecy." McGee, J. V. (1997). Thru the Bible commentary (electronic ed., Vol. 3, p. 587). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

The Value of This Passage

There are three extremely important observations made by McClain concerning the value of Daniel 9:24-27 to those of us who are living in the church age and waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. This passage serves as a witness to the truth of Scripture.

"That part of the prophecy relating to the first sixty-nine weeks has already been accurately fulfilled (as I expect to show), and in this remarkable fulfilment we have an unanswerable argument for the divine inspiration of the Bible. It is, in fact, nothing less than a mathematical demonstration. For only an omniscient God could have foretold over five hundred years in advance the very day on which the Messiah would ride into Jerusalem and present Himself as the "Prince" of Israel. Yet this is precisely what has been done in the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks."

2. This passage exposes the folly of the critic of biblical prophecy.

It is "the impregnable rock upon which all naturalistic theories of prophecy are shattered. These theories deny the possibility of any "predictive element" in prophecy. And since the Book of Daniel did forecast many well attested historic events, the critics have sought to save their theories by denying to Daniel the authorship of the book and moving its date down to a point subsequent to the events described, thus making the unknown author a mere historian who pretended to be a prophet. In this rather easy and summary fashion, they hoped to get rid of the troublesome specter of "predictive prophecy." But no critic has ever dared to suggest a date for the Book of Daniel as late as the birth of our Lord. Yet Daniel's prophecy of the Seventy Weeks predicts to the very day Christ's appearance as the "Prince" of Israel. Therefore, when the critics have done their worst, no matter where they place the date of the book, the greatest time-prophecy of the Bible is left untouched. And on this prophecy, the whole case of the critics goes to pieces. For if even so much as one predictive prophecy is established, there remains no valid a priori reason for denying the others."

3. This passage is the chronological key to New Testament prophecy.

It is "the indispensable chronological key to all New Testament prophecy. Our Lord's great prophetic discourse (the Olivet) recorded in Matthew and Mark fixes the time of Israel's final and greatest trouble definitely within the days of the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-20). And the greater part of the Book of Revelation is simply an expansion of Daniel's prophecy within the chronological framework as outlined by the same Seventieth Week, which is divided into two equal periods, each extending for 1260 days, or 42 months, or 3 1/2 years (Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5). Therefore, apart from an understanding of the details of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, all attempts to interpret New Testament prophecy must fail in large measure."

Nine Key Points to Keep in Mind

As we begin our study in Daniel 9:24-27, there are nine things we must keep in mind in order to be faithful to the teaching of God's Word. If we anchor our thinking around these nine points, biblical prophecy will not confuse or confound us.

1. The focus of this passage is upon Daniel's people (the Jews) and their city (Jerusalem). See verse 24. Keep in mind the Church is not here. It is not in view at all! (Reformed theology attempts to substitute the church for both Daniel's people and his city-this is clearly not taking the Bible literally!)

2. This passage features two impressive and powerful Princes. They are separate and distinct from each other. They must not be confused in our thinking.
 - a. The first Prince is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. He is here called “Messiah the Prince.” See verse 25.
 - b. The second Prince is the coming Prince whose people destroyed the city of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. These people are the Romans. This Prince is to be a leader of a revived Roman Empire in the 70th week of Daniel. He is none other than the Antichrist. See verse 26.
3. The entire time period is designated as “70 weeks.” See verse 25. These 70 weeks are further divided into **three** distinct periods.
 - a. **First**, there is the initial period of 7 weeks which deals with the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.
 - b. **Second**, there is a period of 62 weeks which ends with the Messiah making an appearance and then being cut off for the people.
 - c. **Third**, there is one last week in which the Jews will be betrayed and slaughtered by the Antichrist.
4. The **beginning** of the 70 weeks is foretold. See verse 25. This event is **clearly marked by the issuing of the decree by a Gentile ruler to rebuild Jerusalem.** This decree, noted in both the Bible and secular history, can be **historically verified.**
5. The end of the **7 weeks** and the **62 weeks (7 weeks +62 weeks = 69 weeks)** is clearly marked by the **sudden appearance** of “**Messiah the Prince.**” See verse 25.
6. **Sometime after the 69 weeks end, two** significant events are to occur:
 - a. Messiah the Prince will be **cut off** (and not for Himself)
 - b. Jerusalem **will be destroyed** by the people of the prince who is yet to come.
7. After the cutting off of Messiah the Prince and the destruction of Jerusalem, there will be a **final week** (the 70th week) *the beginning of which is to be marked by the confirming of a covenant or treaty of peace with the Prince who is to come* (the Antichrist) for a period of one week. See verse 27.
8. In the **middle** of the 70th week, the **Antichrist will break his covenant** with the Jews and cause sacrifice to cease. This will plunge Israel into a time of severe suffering and desolation under the wrath of God lasting until the consummation (the end of the week). See verse 27
9. **At the time of the completion of the entire 70 weeks,** there will be a time *great and unparalleled blessing* for **Israel** and *by extension for the world* (see verse 24). These blessings include:
 - a. “To finish the transgression”

- b. “To make an end of sins”
- c. “To make reconciliation for iniquity”
- d. “To bring in everlasting righteousness”
- e. “To seal up the vision and prophecy”
- f. “To anoint the most holy.”

The Meaning of the Word “Weeks”

Our Scripture announces that “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.” Daniel 9:24

Naturally the first question we must ask ourselves is “what does the word ‘weeks’ mean?” When we think of weeks we think in terms of periods of seven days. This is not necessarily what Daniel would have thought. “Weeks” שָׁבָעִים or “shabus” is somewhat akin to our English word “dozen.” For us, “dozen” means “12 of something.” It could be 12 days, 12 months, or 12 years-the word doesn’t simply tell us. It just says that we are going to be dealing with 12 of something. Likewise, in the Hebrew vocabulary, the word “weeks” means “seven of something.” Applying that to our verse, God is saying seventy “sevens (weeks)” are involved in God’s prophetic plan. It becomes very important for us to determine exactly what is being measured when God uses the term “weeks.”

The Jews of the Old Testament recognized three classifications of weeks:

1. **A week of days (7 days) or a Sabbath week.** This is a period of six working days and one day of rest on the Sabbath day or the seventh day. In the Jewish economy it began on Sunday and ended on Saturday night. This arrangement can be noted in the creation account and also in the law of Moses as quoted below:

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exodus 20:8–11

2. **A week of years, which was reckoned from one sabbatical year to another, and consisted of a period of seven years.** It consisted of six working years and one year of rest called the sabbatical year. We can illustrate this usage of the word “weeks” by two examples:

- a. **God commanded His people to work the land for six years and on the seventh or sabbatical year allow the land to lie fallow and “rest.”**

“And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD. 3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; 4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. 5 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land. 6 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, 7 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat. Leviticus 25:1–7

- b. **This type of week is also referred to in the crooked dealings of Laban with his son in law Jacob.** This is a very sad and unfortunate incident in the life of the future children of Israel but it clearly demonstrates the use of seven year periods as weeks.

*“And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? tell me, what shall thy wages be? 16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. 17 Leah was tender eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. 18 And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, **I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.** 19 And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me. 20 **And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.** 21 And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her. 22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. 23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in unto her. 24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an handmaid. 25 And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? 26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. **27 Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.** 28 **And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week:** and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also. 29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his handmaid*

to be her maid. 30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, **and served with him yet seven other years**". Genesis 29:15–30

You could certainly asked Jacob how he understood the word “week” and the term seven-year period would have easily been interchangeable here

3. **There was also the “week” of 7×7 years (that is seven sabbatical years) which marked the beginning of the year of Jubilee-every 50th year.** This is detailed in Leviticus 25:8-13:

“And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. 9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. 10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. 11 A jubile shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed. 12 For it is the jubile; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field. 13 In the year of this jubile ye shall return every man unto his possession.”

Please note the phrase “seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years” was understood by Israel to mean **weeks of years**. Here clearly the period of seven years was looked on as one week.

And I believe a strong case can be made that when Daniel heard “**70 weeks**,” he would have automatically thought of seventy-sevens of years or a period of 490 years. And here’s why this is true:

1. **Daniel had just been thinking in terms of periods of seven years. This chapter opens with his contemplation.**

*“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; 2 In the **first year** of his reign I Daniel understood by books the **number of the years**, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish **seventy years** in the desolations of Jerusalem.” Daniel 9:1–3*

2. **Daniel knew the length of the captivity of his people was based upon the Sabbath law.** The land was to rest for the Sabbath years missed by the people. Seventy of the seven-year periods were missed, which amounted to **490 years** during which the practice was ignored. So, the children of

Israel were taken out of the Land of Promise and placed into captivity so that the Land could have her rest. They were exiled **one year for every seven-year period that they missed** which totals a 70-year period of captivity.

*"To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until **the land had enjoyed her sabbaths**: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil **threescore and ten years**." 2 Chronicles 36:21*

*"And **this whole land shall be a desolation**, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. 12 And it shall come to pass, when **seventy years** are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." Jeremiah 25:11-12*

3. Daniel would have understood the significance at the end of this 70-year period of judgment for the Jews. An angel was sent to him with the announcement that a **NEW ERA** of God's dealings with the Jews which would be **exactly the same length as the previous period of 490 years** for which they had been judged. As Lehman Strauss so aptly says:

"Returning now to Daniel nine, the conclusion is that the prophecy of the "70 weeks" refers to seventy sevens of years, 490 years. Daniel had been reading in Jeremiah of the 70 years' captivity recorded by Jeremiah are coming to an end. Then it is as if God said, "yes, Daniel, you have discovered rightly that the seventy years captivity recorded by Jeremiah are coming to an end. But now I want to show you another 70, a time. Within which I will accomplish all my plans for my people and my holy city."

Daniel clearly understood in the context of all of these factors that God was referring to a time period of **70 weeks of years** or **seventy sevens of years** or (more simply) **70 x 7 = 490 years**.

And it is also interesting that Daniel 10:2-3 is the only other mention of the word "weeks" in the book of Daniel.

*"In those days I Daniel was morning **three full weeks**. 3 I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till **three whole weeks** were fulfilled."*

However, Daniel used a different form of the Hebrew word which can only mean "weeks of days" in Daniel chapter 10. Why use a different form? Simply put, Daniel did not fast for 21 years, but 3 weeks of days or 7 days x 3 weeks of days = 21 days. He used the different form because he wanted to make a clear separation between the **weeks of years in chapter 9** and **the weeks of days in chapter 10**. So, it is clear

that the 70 weeks or “seventy sevens” of Daniel are a period of 7×70 years or 490 years. Or as Alva J McClain puts it:

*“Therefore, by every fair and sensible rule of interpretation, the **seventy sevens** must be understood as years, not days which we must surreptitiously change in the years to make the prophecy come out right.”*

What is the Length of a Year in Prophecy?

If the prophecy of the 70 weeks is a period of 490 years in which God is going to accomplish His full purpose with the nation of Israel, we must ask the question just how long is the year in prophecy? After all, our way of marking time is somewhat different from that of the Jews of the Old Testament. The history of setting up calendars to mark the passing of time is a rich one. Our own calendar openly admits a flaw in its own system because every fourth year (leap year) we must add a day to make the calendar come out right. It is a scientific fact that it takes the earth about 365 and ¼ days to completely rotate around the sun which is one of our basic measures of time – we call this complete rotation around the sun a “solar year”.

*However, this was not measurement of time for the **Old Testament Jews** and it is very clear. **There is abundant evidence that the prophetic year as mentioned here in Daniel (and elsewhere in the Bible) is composed of 360 days or 12 months of 30 days each (which is essentially a lunar year).***

There are two great arguments for the 360-day lunar prophetic year. One is based on history and the other on prophecy itself. Let’s examine both carefully. The historical argument goes like this. In Genesis we are told that the flood began on the **seventeenth day** of the **second month**.

*“In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, **in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month**, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.” Genesis 7:11*

And we are told that the ark came to rest in the seventh month also on the seventeenth day:

*“And the ark rested in the **seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month**, upon the mountains of Ararat.” Genesis 8:4*

The period of time between the second month and the seventeenth day of the month and the seventh month and the seventeenth day of the month is exactly five months. And as God would have it we are told the time in numbers of lunar days as well, namely 150 days.

“And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days.” Genesis 7:24

“And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.” Genesis 8:3

So, **five months equals 150 days** which comes out to **five months of exactly 30 days** each! If we assume this extends to an entire year, a year of 12 months of 30 days each would be the result and the entire year would be 360 days long.

The prophetic argument of the year being 360 days in length is even more convincing and powerful because it arises directly out of this passage in Daniel chapter 9. In Daniel 9:27 we read:

*“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 9:27*

In this verse he, the antichrist, makes a peace treaty (covenant) with the Jewish people for **ONE WEEK** and in the **middle of that week** he shall cause the sacrifices of the Jews to end. The Antichrist makes a treaty of peace for a period of **one week** or as we shall see **SEVEN YEARS**. In the middle of that seven-year period (3 ½ years) he turns on the Jews and persecutes them until the end of the seven years or for the last **3 ½ years** – we call the seven years “the Tribulation Period” and the **last 3 ½ years are called the “Great Tribulation” or “time of Jacob’s trouble.”** This same time period is referred to in Daniel 7:24-25:

“And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be

given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”
Daniel 7:24–25

A time, times, and the dividing of a time is an Aramaic idiom for 3 ½ years (**a time = one year, times = two years, the dividing of time = ½ a year – thus 1+2+ ½ = 3 ½ years**). This same period of time is referred to in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ in Revelation 12:13-14:

“And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. 14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.” Revelation 12:13–14

Now, in this exact context of prophetic history, the Apostle John declares that the persecution of the Jews will last **42 months**:

“And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Revelation 13:4–7

To make it even more clear, John tells us that this same period would be “**a thousand two-hundred and three score days.**”

“And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Revelation 12:6

Therefore, we have *the same period of time* referred to as **3 ½ years** (a time, times and the dividing of time); **42 months**; and **1260 days**. Each term is precisely **identical**:

- 42 months of 30 days is precisely 1,260 days.
- 42 months divided by 12 months of 30 days in a year = 3.5 years or 3 ½ years.

- 1260 days divided by 30 days in a year = 42 months.
- 360 days in a year (12 months of 30 days) x 3.5 years = 1,260 days.

Bottomline: Any way you chose to add it up, the prophetic year is a period of 360 days in duration. With that in mind, we can now begin to understand the 70 weeks of Daniel.

The Historical Event That Begins the Seventy Weeks of Daniel

This is very clearly spelled out for us in Daniel 9:25 –

*“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.”
Daniel 9:25*

The event that marks the beginning of Daniel’s Seventy Weeks is “the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” This is the command or decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. History tells us of three decrees concerning the restoration of worship of God in Jerusalem.

1. The first decree was issued by Cyrus in 538 BC and is recorded in Ezra:

*“NOW in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 3 Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and **build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem.** 4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, beside the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.” Ezra 1:1-4*

You will note that this decree was LIMITED to the rebuilding of the temple. Therefore, this cannot be the decree referred to in the ninth chapter of Daniel.

2. The second decree was issued by Darius in 517 BC and is recorded in Ezra 6:1-12.

“Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. 2 And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein was a record thus

written: 3 In the first year of Cyrus the king the same Cyrus the king made a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem, **Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid;** the height thereof threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof threescore cubits; 4 With three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expences be given out of the king's house: 5 And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which is at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, **be restored, and brought again unto the temple which is at Jerusalem,** every one to his place, and place them in the house of God. 6 Now therefore, Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shethar-boznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which are beyond the river, be ye far from thence: 7 **Let the work of this house of God alone;** let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. 8 Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews **for the building of this house of God:** that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expences be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. 9 And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which are at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: 10 That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. 11 Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. 12 And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter and to destroy **this house of God which is at Jerusalem.** I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed." Ezra 6:1-12.

Once again, this decree is LIMITED to the rebuilding the Temple and thus it does not satisfy the requirements of Daniel chapter nine.

3. **The third, and final, decree was issued by Artaxerxes in 445 BC as recorded by Nehemiah:**

"And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence. 2 Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, 3 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? 4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. 6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. 7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; 8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall

of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.” Nehemiah 2:1-8

This meets EXACTLY the requirements of Daniel 9 and we are given precise details as to the actual date that it was issued. Note again Nehemiah 2:1

“And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king...”

We know Artaxerxes came to the throne in 465 BC. The month was Nisan and it was a Hebrew custom that the date would be understood as the first of the month if no other date is given. Therefore, according to our calendar the date would have been March 14, 445 BC.

The Beginning and End of the First Sixty-Nine Weeks

We have now established the Seventy Weeks are weeks of years, and that length of the year is 360 days. This whole period of Seventy Weeks began on March 14, 445 BC. Now we are ready to make some computations which will take us to a significant event of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. All of the following information was first worked out by Sir Robert Anderson, the real-life Sherlock Holmes who was not only the head of Scotland Yard during the days of Jack the Ripper but also a brilliant Bible scholar. The organization of this information comes from Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks by Dr. Alva J McClain from with now I quote:

“In order to find the end of the Sixty-nine Weeks, we must first reduce them to days. Since we have 69 Weeks of seven years each, and each year has 360 days, the equation is as follows: $69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$ days. Beginning with March 14, 445 B.C., this number of days brings us to April 6, 32 A.D.

In order to prove that the 173,880 days equal exactly the period from March 14, 445 B.C., to April 6, 32 A.D., it is necessary to compute this period in terms of our own calendar year, as follows:

445 B.C. to 32 A.D. is 476 years (B.C. 1 to A.D. 1 is one year)

$476 \times 365 \text{ days} = 173,740 \text{ days}$

Add for leap-years 116 days (3 less in four centuries)*

March 14 to April 6 24 days (inclusive)

Total 173,880 days

* (Just for you math junkies: To divide 476 by 4 would give 119 leap-years. But since century-years are not leap-years unless divisible by 400, and since 476 years involve four centuries, it follows that only one of the four century-years would be a true leap-year. Therefore, it is necessary to subtract 3 from 119 to get the exact number of extra leap-year days in 476 years. You want precision – God has it!)

April 6, 32 A.D., therefore, is fixed definitely as the end of the era of the first 69 Weeks; and according to Daniel's prophecy, it should mark the very day of Messiah's manifestation as the Prince of Israel. Without attempting to enter into the clear but intricate chronological calculations set forth by Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince* (pages 95-105), I shall simply state his conclusion that April 6, 32 A.D., was the tenth of Nisan, that momentous day on which our Lord, in fulfilment of Messianic prophecy, rode up to Jerusalem on the "foal of an ass" and offered Himself as the Prince and King of Israel."

The Gospel record gives us a precise account of the events of April 6, 32 AD (and please note the precise language which our Lord uses concerning it):

"And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem. 29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, 30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. 31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. 32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. 33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? 34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him." Luke 19:28-34

All of this the Lord Jesus Christ did in exact fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9

*"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, **thy King cometh unto thee**: He is just, and having salvation; Lowly, and riding upon an ass, And upon a colt the foal of an ass."*

CHRIST IS MESSIAH THE PRINCE!

Continuing on in Luke's account we read:

“And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. 36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. 37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; 38 Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.” Luke 19:35–38

The multitude understood this symbolism from Zechariah 9 and from Daniel 9:25 and they began to cry out using the quotation from the Messianic Psalm 118:22-26

“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. 23 This is the LORD’s doing; It is marvellous in our eyes. 24 This is the day which the LORD hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. 25 Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. 26 Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: We have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.”

Returning to Luke’s account, we read this in verse 39:

“And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. 40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” Luke 19:39–40

You will recall in your reading of the Gospels that the LORD JESUS CHRIST was continually warning the disciples not to make Him known, **BUT HE NOW** only urges them on, but makes it clear this is His will. **WITHOUT A DOUBT WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THIS DAY IS NOTHING SHORT OF THE DIRECT FULFILLMENT OF DANIEL 9:25!** Now Christ can be fully revealed to the nation of Israel! His hour has come! Messiah the Prince is revealed at exactly the correct date: April 6, 32 AD.

Even more powerful than these incidental observations are the **direct words of our Lord Jesus Christ on this occasion:**

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. 43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” Luke 19:41–44

Standing and weeping as He looked over the skyline of Jerusalem **on that day** (April 6, 32 AD), our Lord Jesus Christ makes it clear that this is **an important day for the nation of Israel**. Had they but recognized Who He really was, their joy would have been complete. But the Lord Jesus Christ knew the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks was being literally fulfilled.

Remember again the words of Daniel 9:25-

“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. 26 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.” Daniel 9:25–26

And now, 483 years after the clock of prophecy had begun to tick on the fate of Israel with the decree of Artaxerxes in 445 BC, the very moment had arrived. Messiah the Prince had come and presented Himself to the nation.

Now **two great events** were certain to occur:

- ❖ Messiah would be cut off, but not for Himself.
- ❖ And the city of Jerusalem with its Temple would be destroyed.

Within days, the Lord Jesus Christ would be betrayed, crucified, declared dead and be buried in the borrowed tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and precisely one-week (seven days) Christ would rise from the dead victorious over sin, Satan, and death!

Within one generation (AD 70 to be precise), the second part of Daniel’s prophecy would come to pass as the city and the sanctuary would be utterly destroyed, fulfilling the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself also on this occasion:

“For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, 44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” Luke 19:43–44

Let me bring this section of our study of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks to a close with the concluding words of Dr. Alva J. McClain from his book “**Daniel’s Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks**”:

“Thus the 173,880 days of the first Sixty-nine Weeks ran their course to the very day-- deep and abiding encouragement to all who love the Lord and His precious Word of prophecy. And I close this discussion with but one remark: The exact fulfilment of this prophecy is sufficient to demonstrate the accuracy of Daniel and also by implication the inspiration of the Bible and the truth of Christianity. Only God can "declare the end from the beginning" and forecast to the very day "things that are not yet done" (Isa. 46:10).”

The Gap Between the Sixty-Ninth Week and the Seventieth Week

Before turning to the final or sixty-ninth week of this prophecy, we need to consider the break between the sixty-ninth week and the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy. If, as we have shown, the first sixty-nine weeks came to an end on April 6, 32 AD what happened to final week or the final period of seven years?

I strongly believe that Dr. Alva J. McClain was right when he wrote:

“...there is a great parenthesis of time between these two which has already lasted for over nineteen hundred years, and therefore the Seventieth Week still lies in the future.”

Dr. Lehman Strauss agrees:

“Now the question that confronts us is, did the seventieth week (7 years) run its course successively, without interruption, meaning of course that it is now past, and its prophecy has been already fulfilled? The answer is a clear and emphatic, No! The sixty-nine weeks are separated from the last week by an interval of time. Verse 26 refers to the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD., while verse 27 passes on to a time yet future. The seventieth week of seven years awaits its fulfillment at some future date....There is then a "gap" or "parenthesis" between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, an undetermined period of time not included in the writings of the Old Testament prophets.”

Now let's be clear about this - this is not an arbitrary or innovative method of interpretation. We are not inventing a method of viewing the Scriptures so that they say what we want them to say. Rather, we are letting the Scriptures speak for themselves in their entire context. There are very sound and Scriptural reasons for concluding that God had fully intended a gap between the 69th and 70th week, and that this time-gap is not at all uncommon in the Scriptures. Both Strauss and McClain give solid arguments from the Scripture concerning the gap between the 69th and 70th week which I would like to summarize for you. I will then throw in an argument of my own:

1. As McClain points out: "Such a gap in time before the Seventieth Week is implied by the most natural reading of the prophecy." The late great professor Melvin Grove Kyle often spoke of "our Anglo-Saxon passion for a continuous chronology" is simply not something which the Oriental mind is interested in. According to Dr. Kyle, the Oriental mind is interested in the next important event and not in the time-line which might intervene!

When we read Daniel 9:24-27 we are not immediately brought to the conclusion that these weeks have to be continuous except for the statement in verse 24 that the weeks are "determined" or "cut off" as the Hebrew word implies. But if you carefully read verses 25- 27 and notice the order of the events there is a clear indication of a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks . The end of the 69th week is plainly marked by the appearance of Messiah the Prince according to verse 25. After these 69 weeks are complete there are two really key events: the death of Messiah and the utter destruction of the city of Jerusalem. A simple and plain reading of the text indicates that these two events occur between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel.

2. This leads to the second clear argument for the gap between the 69th and 70th weeks, as McClain spells it out: "A gap in time between the Sixty-ninth and Seventieth Weeks is demanded by the historical fulfillment of the two predicted events of verse 26." Remember that the death of Messiah and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem took place *after the end of the sixty-nine weeks*. History records that Titus the Roman completely destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D. *nearly 40 years after the end of the 69 weeks*. But the prophecy the destruction of the city of Jerusalem is placed *before the events of the final or seventieth week*. As McClain points out "the very historical fulfillment of this one detail of the prophecy...demands a gap of at least thirty-eight years and provides an infallible clue to the problem which has puzzled so many interpreters. *For if even so much as one year is allowed between the last two weeks, the principle of the gap interpretation is admitted.* And if, as we have seen, there must be at least thirty-eight years, then we have no...reason for denying that there may be nineteen hundred." The beauty of this argument is that it is founded upon the rock of fulfilled prophecy and *nothing assures us more of the fulfillment of unfulfilled prophecy more than the clear fulfillment of other parts of that same prophecy.*
3. The third argument is a common-sense argument. If the Seventy Weeks are continuous then where in recorded history do we find the tremendous

accomplishments listed in verse 24? You will recall what verse 24 promises:
"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."

Keeping in mind that these events are for the Jews (**thy people...thy holy city**) ask yourself the question: when have these things ever come to pass? If you take the position that there is no gap, then ***you must believe that events of the 70th week have already occurred***. Following a strict continuous chronology these events would had to occur sometime in the early days of the book of the Acts of the Apostles! Even a light surface reading of the Acts ought to be sufficient to prove that these events simply never took place during that time. As McClain says:

"But the history of those years contains nothing that in any reasonable way corresponds with what Daniel saw at the end of the Seventy Weeks. Even if we should adopt the "spiritualizing" scheme of interpretation, still the bed is too short and the cover too narrow. Where in the history of Acts, for example, can you find any finishing of Jewish transgression, or an ending of Jewish sins? On the contrary, the transgression of the chosen nation increases by leaps and bounds until the crisis comes in the twenty-eighth chapter, where Paul turns definitely to the Gentiles. Or where in the period of the Acts can we find the "sealing up of the vision and the prophecy"? On the contrary, it is during this period and beyond that we find the greatest loosing of "vision and prophecy" in all the history of Revelation (Ed. note i.e.. the entire New Testament). But at the second coming of our Lord in glory, which will take place at the close of the Seventieth week, vision and prophecy will no longer be needed. The Word of God will be present in visible manifestation, and His law will go forth from Jerusalem."

4. The fourth argument for a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks is the example of the Scriptures themselves. ***The Bible is replete with examples of the gap between two events which at first appear to be continuous***. Look carefully at these examples.
- In Isaiah 9:6, which is clearly a Messianic prophecy, we read: *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* We all know that the first part of the verse *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:"* was fulfilled at Christ's first coming 1900 years ago but the last part of the verse *"and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* has yet to be fulfilled and will only be fulfilled at the Second Coming of the Lord

Jesus Christ. These two parts of this verse appear to be continuous, yet between them is over 1900 years!

- In Psalm 34:16 David wrote *"The face of the LORD is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth."* Peter quotes from this Psalm in third chapter of his first epistle *"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."* 1 Peter 3:12. However, you will note that Peter does not give the entire quotation. Why? We would argue the Holy Spirit prevented Peter from writing it. God is against those who do evil, but He has reserved their judgment until the future, again indicating a gap of time between the first part of the verse and the second part of the verse.
- Still clearer is an example we have already looked at in this paper, namely the prophecy of Zechariah fulfilled by Christ at the Triumphal Entry. Read it again: *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; Lowly, and riding upon an ass, And upon a colt the foal of an ass."* Zechariah 9:9 That's where we usually stop. But without the slightest literary or chronological break the next verse continues: *"And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, And the horse from Jerusalem, And the battle bow shall be cut off: And he shall speak peace unto the heathen: And his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, And from the river even to the ends of the earth."* Zechariah 9:10 This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, but it will be fulfilled just as surely as the first part was. This illustrates the gap that often appears between prophecies in the Old Testament.
- Perhaps the best example of this is from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. It was His habit to read in the synagogue in Nazareth the precious Scriptures. Oh, to have been there to hear Him read the Word of God! One Saturday He took the Book and turned to the passage which we know as Isaiah 6:1-3. The whole passage reads like this: *"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified."* But a strange thing happened, after He finished the first verse, He started the second verse and ended the reading before the verse ended. Let's allow the Spirit of God paint the picture for us:

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. 17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the

book, he found the place where it was written, 18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 20 And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” Luke 4:16–21

Christ stopped His reading in mid-verse. Why? The answer is clear. The first coming of Christ would be the proclamation of the acceptable year of the Lord and in His second coming we find the "day of vengeance of our God." So far there is a least a nineteen-hundred-year gap between those commas! As McClain put it so well:

“By this one single act of His, our Lord as the infallible Interpreter, laid down the principle of "gap interpretation" apart from which the chronology of the Old Testament prophecy is an insoluble enigma.”

Even the Hebrew prophets themselves recognized this curious practice of inserting long gaps in the very same prophecy. You will recall that Peter wrote:

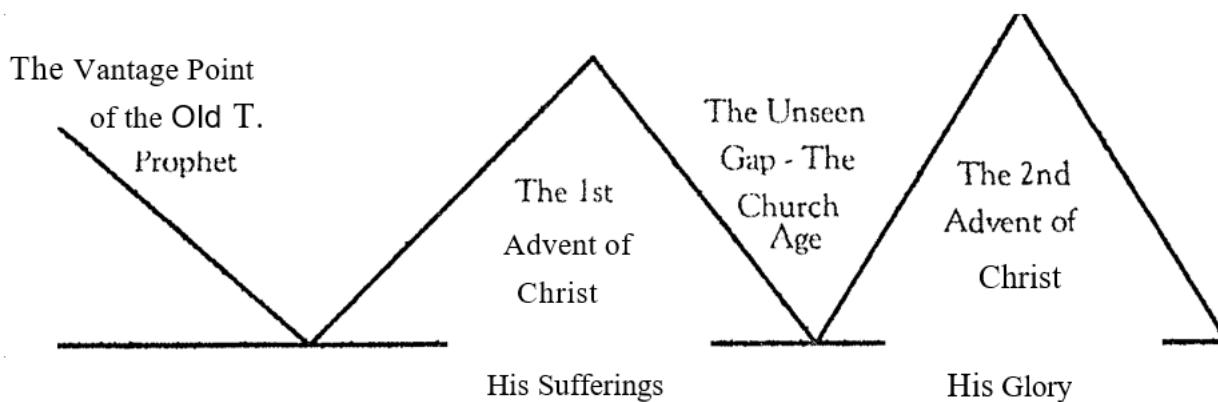
“Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” I Peter 1:11

The prophets often puzzled at the same prophecies which they gave because they testified on the one hand about the sufferings of Christ and at almost the same breath they testified of the glories of Christ. The two parts of the prophecy seemed almost incompatible. But our Lord put them together when, on the day of His resurrection, He taught the first Sunday School class consisting of two disciples on their way home from Jerusalem. Listen to the story and pay close attention to what He told them:

“And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. 17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? 18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? 19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21 But we trusted that it had been he

which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done. 22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. 25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:13–27

The Hebrew prophets of old saw from a distance the first and second advents of Christ together like a man looking from a long distance at a mountain. But as he draws near he discovers that it is not one mountain he is seeing but two! So the Old Testament prophets saw the first and second comings of Christ as one event, but they did not see the wide gap of over 1900 years in between.



5. A fifth argument for a gap between the 69th and 70th week is the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself that the 70th week was yet to come in the future. Verse 27 of this passage says:

“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 9:27

The Hebrew text is exceedingly difficult here as reflected in our English translation which is also difficult. The word “overspreading” is the same word in our Bible that is sometimes translated “wings”. Martin Luther rendered this

verse like this: "Upon the wings stands the abomination of desolation." This same expression is found in Daniel 12:11

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

We will save a discussion of the abomination of desolation for later in our study of the books of Daniel and Revelation but suffice it to say that Daniel understands that it is directly connected with the ending of the Jewish sacrifices in the middle of the 70th week.

Now turning to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ in the 24th chapter of Matthew we find that Christ is speaking of the same thing as Daniel. In the 15th verse He warns the Jews to flee from their homes to the mountains:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)"

Then He gives the reason for the warning in verse 21:

*"For then shall **be** great tribulation, such as **was** not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."*

But the Lord made it clear to them that they were not to be utterly disheartened because:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:29-31

Now Daniel has clearly placed these events in the middle of the Seventieth Week and our Lord has further explained that they will immediately precede His second coming in power and glory. Therefore, it is abundantly clear that Seventieth Week must also come at the end of the present age of grace just prior to Christ's return to this earth to set up His earthly kingdom for 1,000 years! Now this is the clear teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ on the matter and it ought to once and for all settle the matter. Our Lord has not yet come in His glory. The Seventieth Week is still in the future. There is a clearly

discernible scripturally supportable gap between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel.

6. The sixth argument for the gap between the 69th and 70th week is my own and yet I think it falls right in line with the other arguments. It is simply this: **Daniel did not know about the great plan of God which Paul would reveal**, that is the mystery of the Church. Romans 16:25 "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began." In the Bible sense, *a mystery is a doctrine revealed in the New Testament that was concealed in the New Testament*. This mystery was the *plan of God to set Israel aside for a time because of their rejection of Christ and unbelief* and **to create a new body of believers here upon the earth called the "church"** as mentioned in Romans 11:25 "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

It was the plan of God that Israel be set aside and that a mostly Gentile Church take her place in the plan and program of God following the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. God has stopped the clock so to speak on His dealings with the Jews on a national level. The clock of God's dealings with Israel will resume when the Church is taken out of the world at the rapture. God is not finished with the Jews! They will be restored to their place of prominence in God's prophetic plan! And this return to focus on the Jews after the rapture of the Church happens to coincide nicely with the beginning of the tribulation period, which is Daniel's Seventieth Week! The Word of God interpreted literally and dispensationally dove-tails so smoothly that it appears to be seamless.

To conclude this part of the paper I would like to give you four practical benefits of understanding this gap between the 69th and 70th week as pointed out by McClain:

1. Understanding that there is a gap between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel will keep us from being confused as we interpret the Bible. Great scholars of the past have really stumbled over the chronology of the seventy weeks. Dr. Nathaniel West expressed the feelings of many of the great scholars of the past who failed to understand the nature of the gap when he wrote: "The effort to connect it (the 70th week) immediately with the sixty-ninth has led to

results in exegesis both amazing and amusing. Never was the hopelessness of any task more thoroughly evinced than here." One writer while defending the literal fulfillment of the first sixty-nine weeks admits: "Chronology fails as to the last week." Dr. E. B. Pusey, a scholar of the Church of England of the last century known for his orthodoxy and scholarship honestly confesses his inability to understand this passage. He writes that he cannot explain the final week because "we do not have the chronology data to fix it." One writer put it very clearly when he wrote: "every fresh interpretation only adds to the force of our conviction that some radical error lies at the foundation of all our Christian interpretations, and, till it is discovered, the Seventy Weeks of Daniel will remain unexplained and inexplicable to the comprehension of every unprejudiced inquirer."

As McClain answered so well: "This 'radical error' was the failure to see the great interval of time between the Sixty-ninth and Seventieth Weeks. Delitzsch stated clearly the general principle which was needed by the interpreters when he said, "All prophecy is complex; that is, it *sees together what history out rolls as separate*: and all prophecy is apotelesmatical; that is, it sees close behind the nearest-coming, epoch-making turn in history, the summit of the End." This certainly clears up the confusion! We can now "rightly divide the Word of Truth". It underscores a solid need for understanding the dispensational nature of the theology of the Bible!

2. The second practical point made by McClain is that "this important principle explains why the whole of our present age, so great in so many respects is passed over by the prophets with comparative silence. And it constantly keeps us on our guard against attempting to find things in Old Testament prophecy which are not there." One thing is for certain, you will not find the Church or the Church age in the Old Testament at all.
3. The third principle is that this understanding of the gap between the 69th and 70 weeks of Daniel is proof that God is not yet finished with the nation of Israel. The rise of Reformed and Charismatic theologies in the past few years with their insistence that the Church replaces Israel and the promises of God to Israel have been assumed by the Church has led to the feeling that God is forever finished with Israel. A clear understanding of the gap here presented reconfirms to us that God is not yet finished with Israel. There seven years to

go, and then an earthly kingdom of 1000 years in which Israel will play a conspicuous role.

4. The final practical principle, and I think the most important is the observation made by McClain that "acceptance of the Gap interpretation of the Seventieth Week ***makes utterly impossible all date setting schemes for the present age and for the second coming of the Lord***, since the entire parenthesis of time is both unrevealed and elastic from the human standpoint. ***Every scheme of date-setting requires for its basis a continuous prophetic chronology covering the present age***. Without this, date-setters are helpless. And according to the Gap principle, there can be no such chronology. Only an omniscient God could have given such a continuous chronology, and He, for good and wise reasons, did not give it. Therefore, we need not waste any time even discussing the possibility of setting a date for the Lord's return. It simply cannot be done.

The Seventieth Week

So far in our study of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel we have focused on the first Sixty-nine Weeks of prophetic years. The period began on March 14, 445 B.C. with the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild and restore Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-18) and concluded with the so-called "Triumphal Entry" of the Lord Jesus Christ on April 6, 32 AD. when our Lord presented Himself as the King of Israel and was rejected by the nation. This period encompassed sixty-nine sevens of years or 483 years out of a total of 490 years.

Then, we examined the gap between the fulfillment of the 69th and the 70th week. We demonstrated that the 70th week was postponed for indefinite period of time which we know has now extended almost two thousand years. This gap, we have proven, is not unusual in the Scriptures and is marked by two events of enormous importance: the cutting off of Messiah (at Calvary), and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Temple (in 70 AD. by Titus the Roman). These two events have occurred just as they were prophesied. Now the Seventieth Week of Daniel is clearly yet to be fulfilled in the future. It is this last week of years, the final period of seven years, which is our focus in the closing pages of this study.

The Seventieth Week of Daniel is found detailed in Daniel 9:27 *"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."*

But before look closely at this verse we must pick up one thought out of Daniel 9:26.

"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." Daniel 9:26

The first thing that ought to be immediately obvious is the mention of two different princes. In the first part of verse 26 we read about "Messiah" who is called "the Prince" in verse 25. This is the Lord Jesus Christ Who we are told in this verse is "cut off, but not for himself." That is, the Lord Jesus Christ took your place and mine on the cross of Calvary and paid our sin debt by the shedding of His own precious blood. He became the propitiation for our sins and satisfied fully the righteous demands of the Father as our sinless substitute by means of His vicarious atonement. He was cut off, so that we might be accepted in the Beloved!

But there is a second prince here who is wholly unlike Messiah the Prince, although he would like very much to be thought of the same way. He is "the prince that shall come." Unlike Messiah, who arose out of the nation of Israel, this prince shall be a descendent of the people who destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its Temple. History, of course, clearly records that Titus the Roman and his legions of Roman Soldiers destroyed the city and the temple in AD. 70. So this prince comes from somewhere within the Roman Empire, possibly Italy itself, but most assuredly Europe. This prince is known in the Scriptures by other names: "the little horn", "the son of perdition", "the beast", and "the antichrist". He is clearly identified as a ruler who will arise out of the area once encompassed by the Roman Empire. It is my personal belief that this one is a Gentile, because the times of the Gentiles, beginning with destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and ending with the setting up of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ in Jerusalem, will not have yet been fulfilled. The antichrist will be the last great Gentile ruler who will hold sway in Jerusalem.

Now in verse 27 we are given a rather disturbing picture of this prince who shall come:

"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."

He will make a covenant with the nation of Israel for a period of seven years ("one week") and in the middle of that period he will break the covenant, and turn against

the people of Israel with a vengeance.

Having identified the antichrist, now let's examine the nature of this last week of seven years in which he acts as the principal player on the world stage. McClain gives us an excellent breakdown of this Seventieth Week into six points which I will largely follow here:

The Seventieth Week is a period of seven years which takes place in God's prophetic plan between the Rapture of the Church and the Revelation of Christ (His return in glory at Armageddon). We have clearly established that the Seventieth Week of Daniel is yet future of our own time for several reasons which we have already spent abundant time upon and which will not be repeated here. But let's simply remind ourselves that the Lord Jesus Christ Himself says that the “abomination of desolation” of the Seventieth Week would appear before His own return to the earth in power and glory.

“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:15–30

But we can be even more precise. We know that this Roman prince, the antichrist will make his appearance on the earth at the beginning of this final seven-year period. But we also know from the Scripture that the antichrist cannot make his appearance

until the rapture of the Church. Listen to the words of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-9:

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders”

Now the restraining influence that withholds the revelation of the man of sin cannot be anything less than the direct influence of the Holy Spirit of God, Who presently indwells the life of every believer in this Church Age. In order of the man of sin to be revealed the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit must be removed, hence the Seventieth Week cannot begin until the Church is raptured out of the world. Then, and then only the man of sin can be revealed and be allowed to plunge the world into tribulation. The language here is crystal clear. The Roman prince cannot be revealed until the removal of the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit after the rapture of the true church from the earth. Immediately after the rapture, the man of sin quickly moves into the world spotlight and takes command. For years good men have labored greatly in the field of speculation concerning the identity of the antichrist. This passage, concert with Daniel 9, makes it very clear that his identity is secret and will remain so until after the rapture. We ought to be focusing our attention not on the antichrist, but on the real Christ. He alone has the answers to the deepest need of the human heart.

It is also very clear that what marks the end of this Seventieth Week is the return in glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is true for a number of reasons.

- First, the blessings listed in Daniel 9:24 will come to Israel at the end of the Seventieth Week and as we shall see later in this study, these blessings can only be brought in by the literal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to set up the Throne of David again and His direct rule over the earth for 1,000 years.
- Second, since the evil power of the Roman prince continues to the full end of the Seventieth Week as predicted in 9:27, and since this same evil man is the one “whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming”, it only makes sense that the

appearance of the Lord Himself mark the end of the Seventieth Week. In fact, as McClain points out "it will be the glorious second coming of Messiah which will terminate the entire period of the Seventy Weeks and usher in the covenanted blessings to Israel."

The Seventieth Week gives us an exact and precise chronological framework for the climactic events recorded in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ from chapters six to nineteen. I am referring to the last 3 1/2 years of the seven-year period. This period is referred to as the Time of Jacob's Trouble or the Great Tribulation period. We have already studied the extraordinary occurrences of references to this time period in the Biblical record. It is called "a time, times, and half a time" in Revelation 12:14 and in Daniel 7:25, 12:7. It is called "forty and two months" in Revelation 11:2 and 13:5. And it is called "a thousand two hundred and threescore days" in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6. However you slice it, it all adds up the same: 3 1/2 years of 360 days each!

Now understanding that these three- and one-half years of Jacob's Trouble as recorded in the book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ are identical to the last half of Daniel's Seventieth Week we can use the prophecy of the Seventieth Week as an inspired key to the interpretation of the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Note Revelation 11:2-3 for the key to unlock the chronology of the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ:

*"But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.
3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."*

Now the 42 months mentioned in verse two is when the Holy City (Jerusalem) will be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. Naturally, this 3 1/2 year period represents the latter half of the Seventieth Week when the antichrist is in full possession of his powers and authority and stops the Jewish sacrificial system from functioning (Daniel 9:27). It is likewise clear that the "thousand two hundred and threescore days" of verse 3 which features the work of the two witnesses speak of the first 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation period. The two witnesses are able to work unmolested until the antichrist reaches the height of his power in the middle of the Tribulation Period. Thus, we can say that the book of the Revelation encompasses the entire Seventieth Week of Daniel. The first half marked by the work of the two witnesses and rise to power of the antichrist, and the second part marked by the man of sin's absolute domination of the world and

his awful persecution of the nation of Israel. The middle point in the Tribulation appears to be the slaying of the two witnesses in Revelation 11 and the sounding of the seventh angel (Revelation 11:15-19).

With those facts in mind, we can now locate the beginning and ending of the Seventieth Week of Daniel in the Book of the Revelation. We know that the Seventieth Week of Daniel will end with glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ from Heaven. So therefore, the Seventieth Week ends in Revelation 19:11-21 with His victory over the armies of the antichrist at the Battle of Armageddon. Since Daniel 9:27 tells us that the Seventieth Week begins with the signing of the peace treaty between Israel and the Beast, we can fix the beginning of the Seventieth Week to Revelation 6:1-2 where the false Christ rides out on his rise to world conquest. As McClain puts it:

"Thus chapters six through nineteen of Revelation cover the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy, an exact period of seven prophetic years divided into two equal halves at the sounding of the "seventh angel." Borne along by the same Spirit of prophecy, Daniel furnishes the chronological frame, and John fills in the details. If we separate the two, the prophecy becomes an insoluble enigma."

The Seventieth Week will begin with the making of a confirmed covenant between the Roman Prince and the Jewish people which will result in their being able to rebuild the Temple and restore the sacrificial system. I remind you that our text says:

"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."

Now this verse is rich in significance. Although we are not given the precise nature of the treaty between the Roman prince and the Jewish people, there is at least a clue in this verse. You will note that after 3 ½ years (the midst of the week) the Roman prince breaks the treaty and causes the "sacrifice and the oblation to cease". This suggests that a major feature of this treaty is the restoration of the Jewish sacrificial system.

Why would a treaty with a foreign power be necessary in order to commence the Mosaic sacrificial system? The answer lies in the current reality in the Middle East just as God had planned it in eternity past. With all of its wealth, power and sophistication, the nation of Israel lacks something that it desperately desires: the ability to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem and to reinstate the sacrificial system.

But the nation of Israel realizes that it would be national suicide to attempt such an undertaking. On the spot where the Temple once stood, on that holy ground, an Islamic mosque now stands. This mosque is one of the most sacred sites to the Islamic peoples of the Middle East. If Israel would raise a hand to tear this mosque down every Moslem country in the world would declare a holy war against Israel. All the military might of the United States would not be sufficient to save the Jews in such a case. So there they are locked in a stare-down, the Jews and their Islamic neighbors waiting for the other person to blink.

But what if there was a leader in Europe who could unite the countries the former Roman empire into a formidable fighting force? With the Soviet Union now broken and the United States on a moral, financial, and military decline the world is ready for the emergence of another superpower, and many are looking to the European Union for such a superpower. It would be almost as if the Roman Empire had come back to life again! The leader of this coalition would have to be a man of enormous personal magnetism. And a wonderful way for him prove his ability would be to orchestrate peace between the Jews and their Arab neighbors in such a fashion that the Jews would realize their cherished dream of reinstituting the Mosaic system. We can certainly see how a scenario like this could play out in the hands of the antichrist.

In the very middle of the Seventieth Week, the antichrist will suddenly and unexpectedly reverse his attitudes of friendship with the Jews and will shatter his covenant with them. He will put an end to Jewish worship in the reconstructed Temple. This will be a very dramatic shift. The antichrist uses his league with the Jews to rise to power and prominence. Then, when he is at the very pinnacle of power, he turns on the Jews. There are several reasons why this happens.

Let's remember who this is. He is the antichrist. He is a false Christ, empowered by Satan. He has no love for Christ, only an intense burning hatred. The true Church is safely beyond his reach, so he goes after the earthly people of the Lord Jesus Christi the Jews. He will be virulently anti-Semitic, making Hitler look like a Sunday School teacher. His treaty with the Jews is like everything else the devil does: it is a lie. Once he has the power and the wealth he needs, he will scrap the treaty and turn and rend Israel.

But there is a far more sinister and yet more obvious reason for his change of attitude toward the Jews. We read this in Second Thessalonians 2:

"3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for [that day shall not come], except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

The growing humanism of the age with the new age philosophy inherent in our institutions is paving the way for the religion of the antichrist. Listen to the words of McClain on this subject. "F. L. Godet, noted Swiss theologian, pointed out that the 'theological system' of the antichrist could be summed up in three propositions:

- 1. There is no personal God without and above the universe.
- 2. Man is himself his own god - god of this world.
- 3. I am the representative of humanity; by worshipping me, humanity worships itself."

From the middle of the Seventieth Week to its bitter end (3 1/2 years), Israel will be plunged into horrible "desolations" unlike anything ever seen on this earth before. Look at the end of verse 27 again:

"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."

This period of desolations begins in the middle of the week, after 3 1/2 years, so it will continue on for 3 1/2 more years. McClain points out that "this is exactly the time specified in Daniel 7:25 during which the Roman beast would "wear out the saints of the Most High"; the same measure of time given in Revelation 13:5-7 when this beast "shall make war with the saints and ... overcome them"; the same time mentioned in Revelation 11:2 during which the holy city shall be trodden down of the Gentile nations; the same time referred to in Revelation 12:6, 14 during which the "woman" (Israel) will be given the special protection of God. Thus all of divine prophecy fits perfectly together; the same persecutor, the same kind of persecution, the same nation under persecution, and exactly the same length of time....In this way, the prophecy of the Book of Revelation synchronizes exactly with Daniel's great prophecy of the end time."

There will be a sort of calm before the storm of the Tribulation. The first 3 1/2 years under the treaty of the man of sin. All will be relatively peaceful, but those last three- and one-half years will be so terrible that the Lord Himself said: "And

except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matthew 24:22 The word for "shortened" does not mean decreased but rather limited. The time of Jacob's Trouble will last exactly 1260 days, 42 months, or 3 ½ years whichever you want to say, and no more than that. If it were prolonged any more than that the nation of Israel simply would not survive it.

The end of this Seventieth Week, this final seven period, will bring to a close the entire prophecy of the Seventy Weeks (490 years) and will result in the blessings promised in Daniel 9:24. We end this paper where we came in. God began this prophecy with a promise that at the end of 490 years (70 weeks of sevens) that there would be great blessing. Let's look one last time at those blessings.

"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." Daniel 9:24

Let's remind ourselves that this is a prophecy to a certain people and to a certain city. The people are Daniel's people, the Jews, and the city is Daniel's city, Jerusalem. Therefore, the promises here are for the Jewish remnant left at the end of the Tribulation period. These are not promises for the Church nor even the Gentiles. They do, however, have certain applications which can be made for our spiritual profit.

- 1. "To finish the transgression and to make an end of sins." This refers to the sin and rebellion of the Jewish people. Never again will they stray or rebel from their God but rather will be in obedient submission to their Messiah.
- 2. "To make reconciliation for iniquity" This does not directly refer to what Christ did for the world when He died upon the cross. Rather, on the basis of His sacrifice on the cross for their sins, at His glorious appearing, He will draw the believing remnant of Israel to Himself and they will resume their status as His chosen people.
- 3. "To seal up the vision and the prophecy" This refers to the fulfilment of all the prophecies made to the nation of Israel throughout its long and troubled history. The office of prophet will not exist during the kingdom age because the Lord Jesus Christ Himself will speak directly to all mankind.

- 4. "To anoint the most holy" Some have thought this is a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, however from the context it appears that this has reference to the Millennial temple in the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will be a place of prayer and worship for all nations and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself will meet with men face to face. Someday He shall return and all the world will flock to meet Him in Jerusalem.