

GOD'S AMAZING PROPHECY

Daniel 9:24-27

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

Summary and Historical Background

God promised Judah through the prophet Jeremiah that her captivity in Babylon would be 70 years (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10-11). However, God knew that most Jews would not take advantage of this opportunity to return to Jerusalem. So God sent Gabriel to tell Daniel that His work with Judah was not done. In the vision that Daniel received, God spoke of 490 years that remained and that number would not begin until a decree was made to rebuild Jerusalem. That decree was made almost 100 years later, when Nehemiah was allowed to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Furthermore, there was a gap of untold years after 483 years had transpired. So far, 2000 years are in this gap before the final seven years complete the 490 years. Why is it taking so long for God to restore His people in their land? It is their refusal to receive Jesus as their Messiah. But God knows that they will repent of their rebellion in the future and will receive His Son as their King. Then God will give them six great blessings (9:24) that will make them the greatest nation that this world has even known. Christ will rule the world from Jerusalem for 1000 years.

ISRAEL' SEVENTY WEEKS OF YEARS

I. Content of God's Program – 9:24

9:24 – Seventy “weeks” are said to be “determined” or “decreed” for the people of Daniel, i.e., the Jews and their “city,” Jerusalem. The intent of this prophecy is not for the Church, but it is for Israel. This is a very important point to remember when the purpose of the 70th week of years is considered.

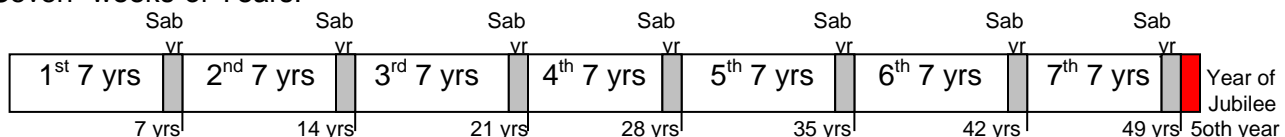
“Weeks” –the meaning of the word “weeks” must be determined to grasp the significance of this prophecy. The word “week” is commonly used today, but what does it mean? It simply means a “unit of seven,” just like “dozen” means a “unit of twelve.” Some commentators employ the Greek word “heptad,” which means the same thing, i.e., a “unit of seven” things. (A “heptagon” is seven-sided, and an “octagon” is eight-sided.) So the word “week” simply means “a unit of seven.” Thus, seventy of these units of seven were decreed for Israel.

Second, the span of these units must be determined. Usually when we think of a “week” today, we think of a “unit of seven” days. One week to us automatically equals seven days. But not necessarily so to the Jews. A heptad, or “week,” could be a unit of seven of anything – even years. In fact, the Jews were very familiar with the concept of a week of seven years. Just as a week of seven days ended with a day of rest (Sabbath day), a week of seven years ended with a year of rest (Sabbatical year – read carefully Lev. 25:1-7 and Deut. 15:1-12). Not only that, but after seven of these weeks of seven years, (49 years), there was another year of rest called the Jubilee year (50th year – read carefully Lev. 25:8ff). Notice the chart to help make these concepts more clear:

One “week” of Days:	1 st day	2 nd day	3 rd day	4 th day	5 th day	6 th day	7 th day Sabbath Day
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One “week” of Years:	1 st yr.	2 nd yr.	3 rd yr.	4 th yr.	5 th yr.	6 th yr.	7 th yr. Sabbatical Yr.
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Seven “weeks” of Years:

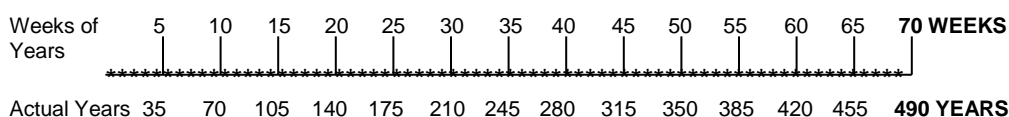


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If you are forty-nine years old, you have lived seven weeks of years! Next year is the Jubilee!!

The “weeks” in Daniel 9:24, then, are not weeks of days, but weeks of years. Several things indicate this:

- (1) Daniel was just praying about the 70 years of captivity. “Years” were on Daniel’s mind, not “days.” Then a new revelation was given him about 70 weeks (of years) to come.
- (2) If weeks of days were meant, the word “days” would probably have been included in the text to clarify the meaning (cf. Dan. 10:2-3 where the literal Hebrew says: “three full weeks of days.” Unfortunately, most translators leave the word “days” out of this verse.)
- (3) We know that the last “week” of Daniel’s prophecy, the 70th week, is seven years long (v. 27) because half of it is 3 ½ years (cf. Dan. 12:7, 11). The other weeks must then also be seven years each. Thus, Gabriel announced to Daniel a program involving 70 weeks of years, or 490 years altogether. Notice the chart: below that illustrates this truth.



Now that we understand the principle of a week of years, the question then arises, how long is one year? That is easy, for one year is 365 ¼ days long – correct? No! In prophecy, every month is 30 days, so a “year is 360 days long. This is easily seen by comparing Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6, and 13:5. The “forty-two months” total “1,260 days,” thus each month must be 30 days in length. This totals 3½ prophetic years, or ½ of the 7 years of Tribulation. Now then, Daniel’s total revelation involved 70 weeks of 360-day years.

“Are determined” – this refers to a six-fold blessing that is decreed for Israel when these 70 weeks are completed. What was “decreed” for the Jews and Jerusalem at the end of those 70 weeks? Six things were specifically mentioned.

- (1) “*Finish the transgression*” – i.e., bring Israel’s rebellions against God under control. Her greatest rebellion is her rejection of Christ and her acceptance of Antichrist. She will make a covenant with Antichrist, which will begin the Tribulation. Her troubles during the Tribulation will cause her to repent of her rebellions and receive Christ as her Messiah (Zech 12:10-13:1)..
- (2) “*Make an end of sins*” – i.e., terminate once and for all the sins/shortcomings of God’s people. This will happen when Israel is regenerated.
- (3) “*Make reconciliation for iniquity*” (crookedness) – i.e., accomplish the salvation of the nation (made possible by the death of Christ, but not realized until after the Tribulation - Rom. 11:25-27).
- (4) “*Bring in everlasting righteousness*” – i.e., establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.
- (5) “*Seal up the vision and prophecy*” – i.e., bring to complete fulfillment all of the prophecies given by God to Israel.
- (6) “*Anoint the most Holy*” – i.e., to consecrate the use of the holy of holies in the Millennial Temple (cf. Ezek. 43:1-5; 44:4; 45:3).

The seventy weeks were specifically decreed by God to bring to the accomplishment all of these concepts. Obviously, they all deal with the 1000-year reign of Christ on the earth, the Kingdom for which the Jews anxiously awaited.

II. Chronology of God’s Program – 9:25-27

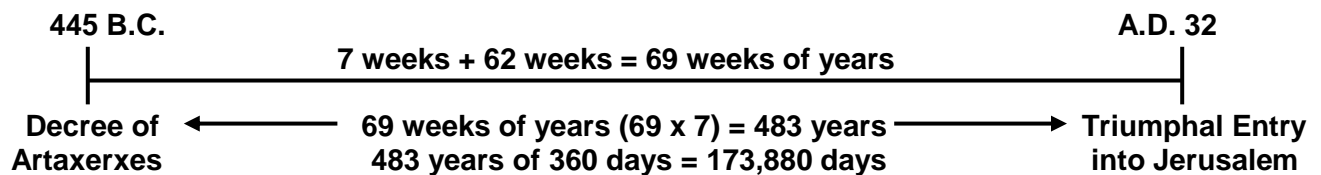
A. Sixty Nine Weeks of Years – 9:25

9:25 – The first question that would naturally arise in Daniel’s mind is this: when will the 70 weeks begin? The answer is clearly given in this verse. The 70 weeks began at “the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.” This is where Jeremiah’s prophecy and Daniel’s prayer enter in (Dan. 9:2), for this involved the final phase of the restoration of the Jews. Although the Jews went back to Palestine about 536 B.C. to rebuild the Temple, it was not until 445 B.C. that Artaxerxes made the decree that the city of Jerusalem be rebuilt (read carefully Neh. 1:3; 2:5-8). Thus, the 70 weeks began in 445 B.C. with this decree of Artaxerxes. This was 93 years after Daniel received this revelation. Now the 490-year prophecy begins. During the first seven weeks (49 years) Jerusalem is restored. Her walls and streets are restored in times of trouble (cf. book of Nehemiah).

“From the decree...unto Messiah the prince” – this would be 69 weeks (7 weeks + 62 weeks). It is interesting that in the chronology, the end of the 70 weeks was not the next thing mentioned. Rather, Gabriel mentioned to Daniel what would happen after 69 weeks (483 years) had passed.

There are two good reasons for uniting the 7 weeks with the 62 weeks. (1) The two time periods are connected by a simple *waw* (“and”), which unites the two so there is no gap between them. (2) The events of the 7 weeks are revealed after the 62 weeks are mentioned. It is not natural to do it this way, unless the two time periods are united.

“Prince” – the Messiah would come as Prince (or, King) to finish the 69 weeks of years. Beginning in 445 B.C. with the decree of Artaxerxes, 69 weeks of 360-day years would arrive at 32 A.D., the probable year of Jesus’ “Triumphal Entry” into Jerusalem when He was hailed as the King (Luke 19:28-40).

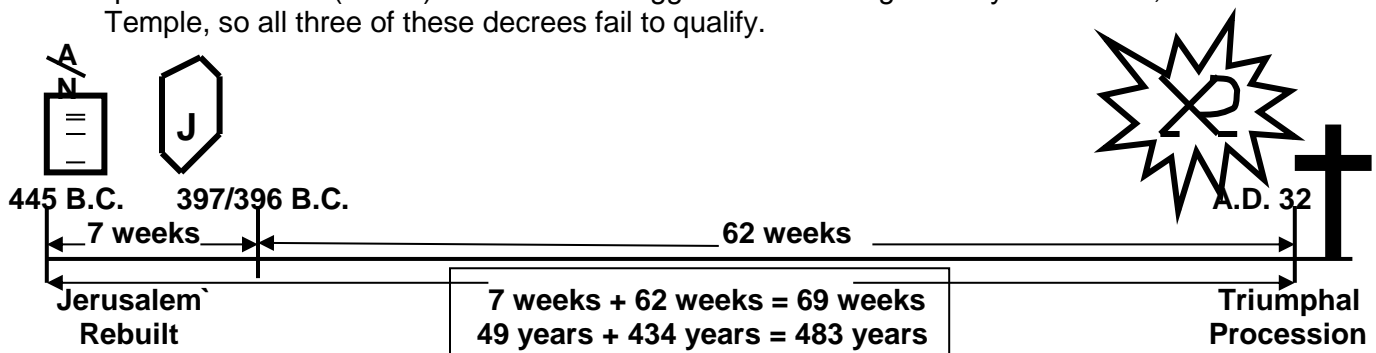


Three other decrees that have been considered as the year when this prophecy was initiated.

- (1) Cyrus made a decree in 538, 537 B.C. to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Ez 1:1-2; 4:1-5; 6:1-5).
- (2) Darius issued a decree in 519 B.C. to finish building the Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 6:6-15).
- (3) Artaxerxes decreed in 458 B.C. to enhance the Temple and provide sacrifices in it (Ezra 7:11-26).

Two criteria are needed to qualify as the right decree.

- (1) It must allow for 483 years from the time it was issued until Messiah would be present in the world. The first two decrees are disqualified.
- (2) It must be issued for the purpose of building Jerusalem, i.e., the “street” and “wall” (KJV), or the “plaza and moat” (NASB). These terms suggests the building of a city’s defenses, not the Temple, so all three of these decrees fail to qualify.

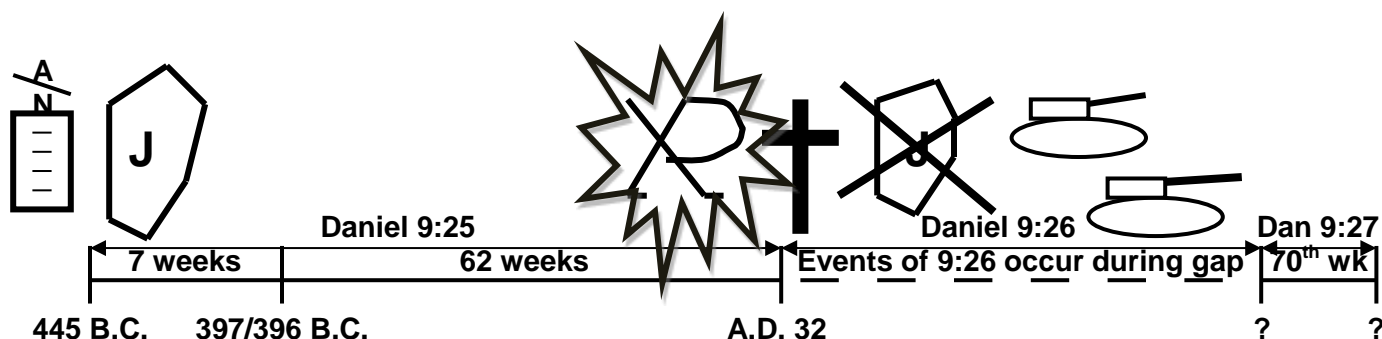


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B. Space of Unknown Years – 9:26

9:26 “And” – this is a Hebrew perfect consecutive (*waw + a perfect*). The KJV translates it “and,” but it could be translated “then.” “Then” seems better because it alerts the reader that something important is going to happen after the 69th weeks are finished. These events happen before the 70th week starts, so there is a space of many years between the 69th and 70th weeks—a very long gap. So far it is almost 2000 years. Alva McClain deals with this space in greater detail in his booklet, *Daniel’s Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks*, which is summarized at the end of this chapter.

Three things happen between the 69th week, which ended with Jesus’ “Triumphal Entry,” and the 70th week, which begins in verse 27. What happens during this space of years in God’s prophetic time-table?



1. Messiah is Crucified.

“Cut off” – Jesus, first hailed as King, is crucified a few days after His “Triumphal Entry.”

“Not for himself” – means “having nothing.” Jesus would be slain and not have His kingdom and the six blessings that will accompany it, which are promised in 9:24.

2. Jerusalem is Destroyed.

“The prince that shall come” – this is the Antichrist. He is the Roman little horn (7:8). He will not come until the 70th week and when he is revealed the Tribulation begins (9:27).

“The people of the prince” – the people are the Romans, which is clear in the next phrase. Since these Romans are the people of the prince, the Antichrist will be a Roman.

“Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary” – the city is Jerusalem and the sanctuary is the Temple. Both of them were destroyed by the Roman people in A.D. 70 under the command of Titus. The prince that shall come is not Titus, but he is the Antichrist, the archenemy of Jesus Christ during the 70th week. Titus was a Roman general who put down the Jewish rebellion against the Roman occupation.

“The end shall be with a flood” – could refer to the rapid overflowing of Titus’ troops into Jerusalem in A.D. 70, when he completely overwhelmed the Jewish people and they were scattered everywhere in the world. Renald Showers believes the “end” refers to Antichrist’s end when the wrath of God like a flood pours down on him (*The Most High God*, pp. 128-29).

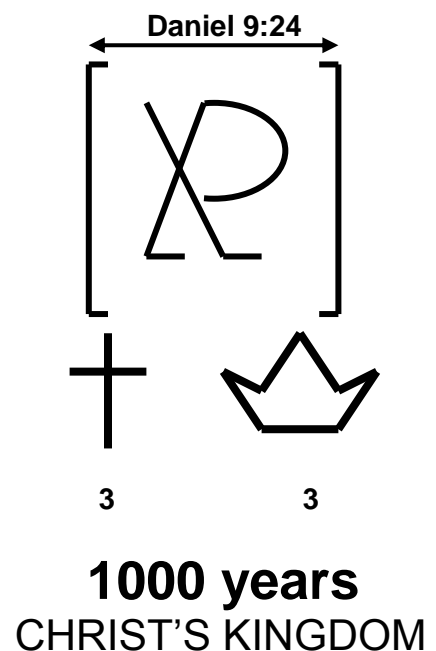
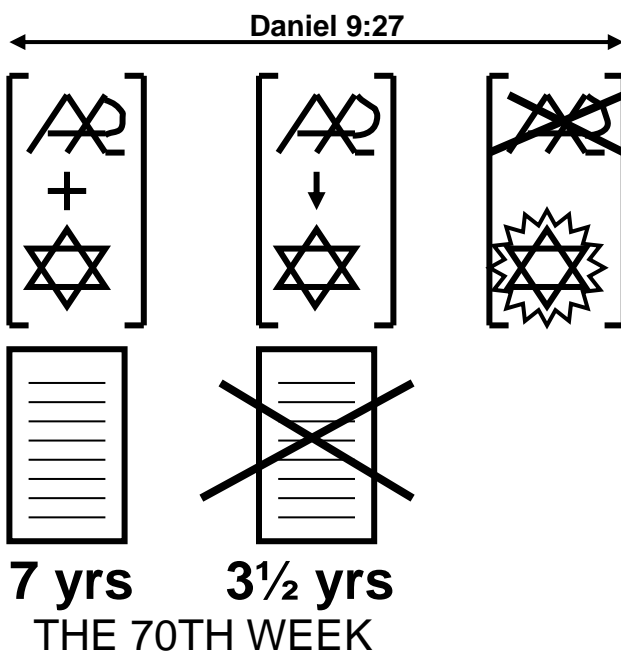
3. Wars are Inevitable.

“And unto the end wars and desolations are determined” (literal translation) – mankind will constantly live with war and desolations until the 70th week comes, and then the biggest war of all time takes place.

C. Seventieth Week of Years – 9:27

9:27 – “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week” – this refers to the 70th week. It will be seven years of Tribulation. The subject of this sentence (“he”) is the “prince” of verse 26, the Antichrist. He “confirms” a “covenant” with “many” (Israel) for seven years. This is the climax of Israel’s sin, when she trusts the Antichrist for temporary peace after she had rejected the true Christ for eternal peace. This is the “falling away” (**the** apostasy) that must come first, and then the “man of sin” (lawless one, the Antichrist) will be revealed. This also will begin the climax of Gentile world dominion. It officially begins when this leader of the ten-nation revived Roman Empire (cf. Dan. 2 and 7) signs a covenant with Israel to protect her and provide her peace. Israelites will receive him as their messiah and will believe that he is the fulfillment of God’s promises to them. This betrayal of their true Messiah will cause Israel much trouble (Jer. 30:7) and will bring God’s wrath upon the whole world (Isa. 13:9; Matt. 3:7; Rev. 6:15-17). The purpose of the Tribulation is not to purify the Church. The true Church has already been washed by the blood of Jesus Christ (Rev 1:5; 5:9) and has been washed by the water of the word so that she can be presented to Christ as a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish (Eph 5:26-27). Therefore, the Church saints will be saved from God’s wrath by the Rapture when they join the Lord in the heavens before this time (I Thess. 1:10; 5:9; Rom. 5:9). The purpose of the Tribulation is to stop Israel’s rebellion against Christ so they will receive Him as their Messiah. This will finally happen during the last half of the 70th week. Many Israelites will repent and be cleansed (Zech 12:8-13:1; Isa 12:1-6).

“In the midst of the week” – this refers to the middle of the 7 years, after 3½ years of Tribulation.



“He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” – in the middle of the Tribulation Antichrist will stop the Jewish worship of God (Rev. 11:1-2). He will only tolerate the worship of himself (Rev. 13:14-15), and will greatly oppress the people of God. This begins what is known as the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:21-22; Rev. 7:14). The last half of the Tribulation “week” will be far worse than the first half. It will be worse than any trouble that this world has ever before experienced (Dan 12:1).

“For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate” – this is a difficult phrase, but the “overspreading of abominations” has the idea of a climax or pinnacle of abominations. And it is better to

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translate “desolate” as “desolator.” With these explanations, it may be easier to understand this phrase when it is translated “and on account of the climax of abominations shall be a desolator.” Israel reaches the climax of her abominations when she makes a covenant with the Antichrist and for this reason God allows the Antichrist to be a desolator to her.

“Even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate” – the last phrase could read “even until the decreed destruction shall be poured out on the desolator.” The Tribulation will continue until God finally pours out His wrath upon the Antichrist, who brings great desolation on the people of this world, especially upon God’s people, Israel. God will severely punish those who hurt His people. Though God allows Israel to be punished, He has promised to deliver her. When He does deliver Israel, all of the blessings of v. 24 will be realized. The Millennial Kingdom will be established, Christ will reign as its King and there will be peace on the earth.

Certainly Daniel had no idea that his concern over Jeremiah’s prophecy would result in such a fantastically detailed account of a much greater program of God for Israel. Only the New Testament book of the Revelation rivals this prophecy in scope and detail. Yet far less would be known concerning John’s Revelation, had not Daniel’s prophecy of the 70 weeks been revealed!

In 9:27 **a covenant is made** by someone for “one week.” Some believe this is the covenant that Christ made by His death on the cross. Here are the problems if this covenant is made by Christ.

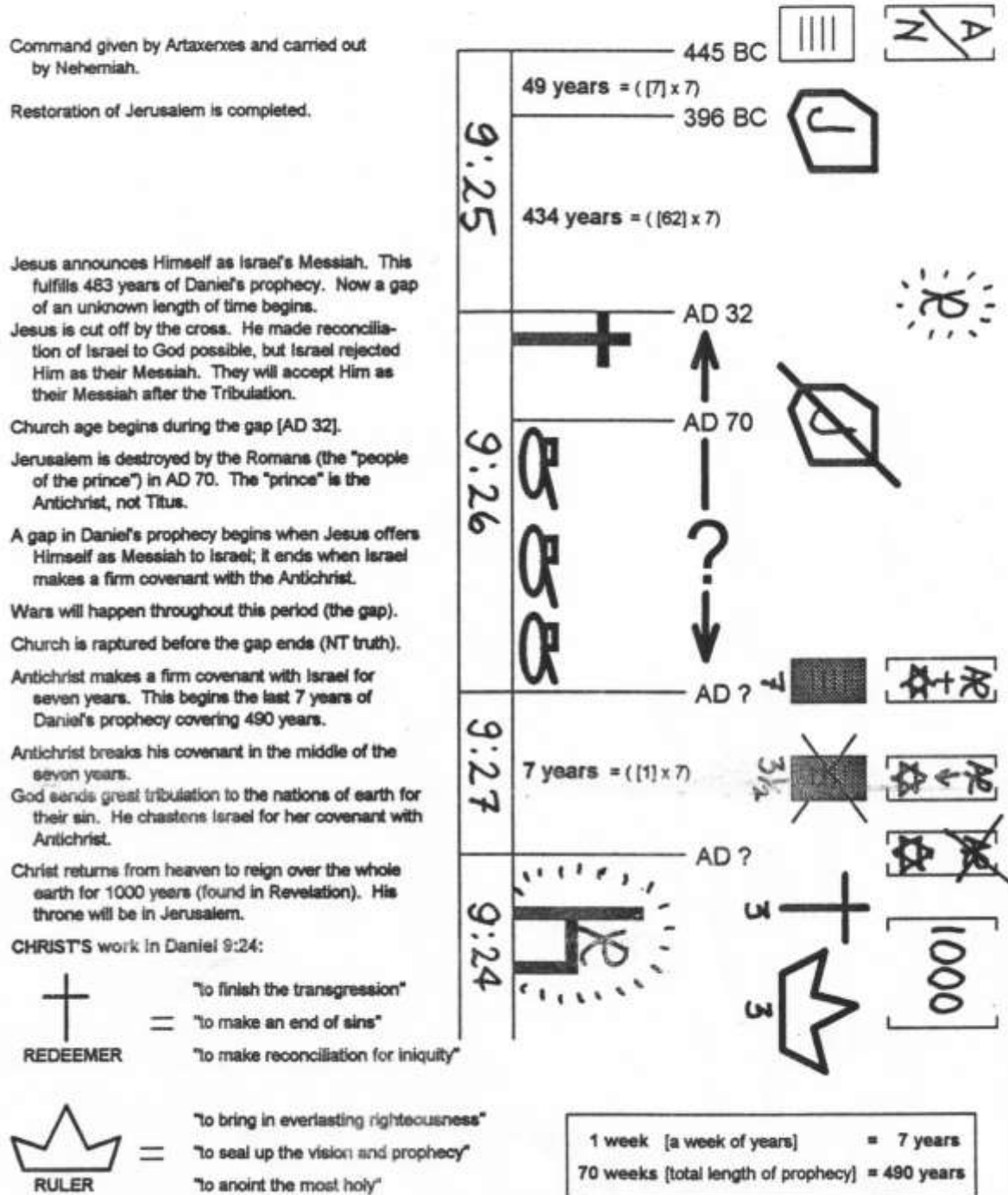
- (1) There is no evidence of such a covenant between Christ and the Jews for 7 years.
- (2) Whoever makes this covenant brings “an end to sacrifice and offering.” But Jewish sacrifices did not cease after Christ’s death. They did not cease until AD 70.
- (3) Christ did not cause the sacrifices to cease in the first century – the Romans did this when they destroyed the Temple and Jerusalem in AD 70.
- (4) The 70th week is still future. We are still waiting for the prophecies to be fulfilled that are related to this week.

Renald Showers comments on “**the overspreading of abominations** he shall make it desolate.” He follows the NASB: “the wing of abominations one who makes desolate.” He says, “The word translated, ‘wing’ refers to the pinnacle or extreme point of something.” He believes Antichrist will commit the pinnacle of all abominations after he stops the sacrifices in the Temple. Then he considers the abominations of the past.

- (1) The Babylonians destroyed Solomon’s Temple in 586 AD.
- (2) Antiochus Epiphanes rededicated the Temple to Zeus and had a pagan altar built over the altar of God and instituted the sacrifice of pigs in it.
- (3) The Romans destroyed Herod’s Temple in AD 70.
- (4) The Antichrist will stop the sacrifices of a future Temple, will magnify himself to the level of deity, will take his seat in the Temple, will announce he is God, will demand worship and will have an image of himself outside of the Temple. This last act will be the pinnacle of all human abominations against God’s Temple (*The Most Holy God*, pp. 134-135).

CHART OF DANIEL 9:24-27

by Roger L. Peterson



AN EXPLANATION OF THE SYMBOLS IN THE CHART FOR DANIEL 9:24-27



Artaxerxes – King of Medo-Persia
Nehemiah – cupbearer for Artaxerxes



Decree of Artaxerxes in 445 B.C.



Wall around Jerusalem



Symbol for Christ and the glory lines around Him indicate His triumphal entry into Jerusalem



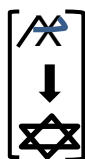
Jerusalem destroyed



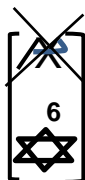
Represents war



Antichrist makes a firm covenant  with Israel for seven years



Antichrist breaks his covenant  after 3½ years and attacks Israel



Antichrist is cast alive into the Lake of Fire and Israel is given six blessings



Christ is on His glorious throne ruling the world for 1000 years

BLESSINGS FOR ISRAEL WHEN THE 70 WEEKS ARE FINISHED DANIEL 9:24

BLESSINGS FROM JESUS AS REDEEMER ON THE TREE

“Finish the transgression” – Israel’s national rebellion against God ends when she finally receives Christ as her Savior (Zech 12:10-13:1).

“Make an end of sins” – Israel’s personal daily sins are sealed up (forgiven), buried forever in the sea (Mic 7:18-19), when individuals receive Christ.

“Make reconciliation for iniquity” – Atonement for Israel’s perverse sin was made possible by Christ’s death on the cross, but it is completed when she accepts Christ as her Savior (2 Cor 5:19-20).

BLESSINGS FROM CHRIST AS RULER ON THE THRONE

“Bring in everlasting righteousness” – Christ will bring in lasting righteousness when He establishes His Kingdom in Israel (Isa 11:2-5), because He is fully righteous (Jer 23:5-6), and He will rule the world in righteousness (Zec 14:9-21).

“Seal up the vision and prophecy” – When Christ reigns over the earth, visions and prophecies will cease and all promises and predictions regarding Israel will be fulfilled (Dt 30:1-10; Jer 31:33-40; Ezk 36:24-38).

“Anoint the most holy” – When Christ comes to rule the earth, He will dedicate the millennial Temple located in the midst of Israel (Ezk 43:1-5; 44:4; 45:3).

THE STUDY OF DANIEL 9:24-27

from *Daniel's Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks*, Alva McClain.

Notes were condensed by Roger L. Peterson

INTRODUCTION

Probably no prophetic passage is more crucial in the fields of Bible interpretation, apologetics and eschatology. Reasons:

1. The "seventy weeks" has great value as a witness to the truth of Scripture. 69 weeks have already been fulfilled--proof of divine inspiration. Only God could have told the very day Jesus would present Himself as the "Prince" of Israel over 500 years in advance.

2. This prophecy is a rock that shatters all naturalistic theories of prophecies. Unsaved critics deny the predictive elements in prophecy. They have denied Daniel as the author of this book because of the clear predictions about Persia and Greece. They say a later author had to write it. But what can they do about this prediction of Christ? The author they suggest still came before the birth of Christ by several hundred years. So if this prediction about Christ in the "seventy weeks" is true, then all the predictive statements about Persia and Greece must stand too.

3. It is an indispensable chronological key to all NT prophecy. Consider Christ's prophetic discourse in Mt 24:15-22 and Mk 13:14-20 which refers to Daniel 9:27. If one does not know what Daniel 9:27 means, he cannot know what Jesus is saying. Also notice how John in Revelation (the Apocalypse) expands Daniel's prophecy of the 70th week by measuring the second half of that week in three different ways: 1260 days; 42 months; 3 1/2 years (Rev. 11:2-3; 12:6,14; 13:5).

THE MAIN FEATURES OF DANIEL 9:24-27

1. The entire prophecy deals with Daniel's "people" and "city" (24).
2. There are two different princes: Messiah the Prince (25) and the prince that shall come (26).
3. The entire period is exactly 70 weeks (24); and this is divided into three lesser periods: 7 weeks; 62 weeks; and one week (25, 27).
4. Beginning of 70 weeks: "the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" (25).
5. The end of the 7 weeks plus the 62 weeks (69 weeks) will be the appearance of Messiah as the "Prince" of Israel (25).
6. After the 69 weeks, Messiah the Prince will be "cut off", and Jerusalem will again be destroyed by the people of another "prince" who is yet to come (26).
7. After these two events, we come to the 70th week which will begin with a firm covenant (treaty) between the coming prince and the Jewish nation for "one week" (27).
8. In the "midst" of the 70th week, the coming prince breaks his treaty and will cause Jewish sacrifice to cease and will cause great wrath and destruction for Israel until the "full end" of the week (27).
9. After the 70th week great blessings will be given to Israel (24).

THE FIRST 69 WEEKS AND THE COMING OF THE MESSIANIC PRINCE: 9:25-26.

Purpose. To ascertain the nature and length of the "weeks"; to discover in history the events which mark the beginning and ending of these "weeks"; and then to see whether the prediction fits history. All agree that the first 69 weeks are history. Four questions will cover the study.

1. What is the measure of time indicated by the "weeks" in this prophecy?

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"Week" (7) is like the English word for "dozen" (12). "Week" always refers to seven of something, just as "dozen" refers to twelve of something. The Hebrew word is shabua and the Greek word is heptad.

Jews were familiar with "sevens": 7 days = 1 week; 7 weeks + 1 day = Pentecost (reckoned from the Passover); 7 years = sabbatical year; 7 sabbatical years + 1 year = the year of jubilee.

The reasons for believing the 70 sevens represent 70 years: **(1)** Daniel had been thinking of years of captivity (70 years of 10 sevens)--9:1,2. **(2)** The captivity was caused by Israel's violation of the sabbatical years over a period of 490 years (70 sevens of years)--II Chron. 36:21. **(3)** The whole context of the prophecy demands years, not days (490 days would be too short to fulfill all the things that need to be accomplished in the prophecy. **(4)** The Hebrew word, shabua, is found only in one other passage in Daniel (in 10:2-3). Daniel mourned for three full "weeks" of days. If days were meant in chapter 9, why did he not use the same expression as in chapter 10? He meant to make a difference in the mind of the reader between chapters 9 and 10 by designating days in chapter 10.

Therefore, the "weeks" in chapter 9 are weeks of years and not weeks of days.

2. If these "weeks" are composed of years, what is the length of a year?

Are these years composed of 365 days? No. *A year is 360 days with 30-day months.*

a. Historical argument for a 360 day year: Noah's flood.

Gen. 7:11 - the flood began on the second month, the 17th day.

Gen. 8:4 - the flood ended on the seventh month, the 17th day.

Gen. 7:24; 8:3 - the flood lasted exactly 5 months, or 150 days.

The earliest known length of a month in the Bible is 30 days with a year of 360 days.

b. Prophetic argument for a 360 day year. Daniel and Revelation (Apocalypse).

Dan. 9:27 - the Antichrist's persecution of Israel begins in the middle of the 70th week and continues to the end of that week = 3 1/2 years.

Dan. 7:24-25 - "time and times and the dividing of time" = 3 1/2 years [1+2+1/2=3 1/2]. Does "times" in Daniel mean two? Although "times" in 7:25 is a plural Aramaic word and can mean more than two, "times" in 12:7 (same expression) is a dual Hebrew word and can only refer to two. . So "time" [1], "times" [2] and "the dividing of time" [1/2] is 3 1/2 years. When the same wording is used in Rev. 12:13-14, it also means 3 1/2 years.

Rev. 12:6 - 1260 days, which is 3 1/2 years [a month is 30 days and a year is 360 days].

Rev. 13:4-7 - 42 months, which is 3 1/2 years.

3. When did the whole period of the 70 weeks begin?

Dan. 9:25 says it begins with the "commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. This is not a reference to the decrees of Cyrus or Darius which are recorded in Ezra. They refer to the building of the TEMPLE, not the WALLS and the CITY. Read Ezra 1:1-2; 4:1-5; 6:1-5, 14-15; 7:11,20,27 = "house of the Lord."

[Note by RLP: Ezra gives a record in Ezra 4 of the troubles the Jews received from the Samaritans during their building projects. Ezra 4:1-5, 25 refers to the opposition they received when they were building the temple. Ezra 4:6-23 is an example of the fierce conflict the Jews still suffered in Ezra's day, when the enemy stopped the rebuilding of Jerusalem during the reign of Artaxerxes. This was over fifty years later. At that time the enemy appealed to Artaxerxes

and he gave them permission to stop the building of the city until he gave another commandment, but not only was the building of the city stopped, the walls were torn down and the gates were burned. The news of this hostile activity against Jerusalem reached Nehemiah in Persia and caused him great grief [Neh 1:1-4]. So Ezra is using the opposition the Jews suffered during the building of the city to illustrate the opposition they suffered much earlier during the building of the temple].

If interpreters use the command in Ezra as the starting point of 70-week prophecy, the end of the 69th week will come near the birth of Jesus. But this is not the right command. The only decree that truly fits Daniel 9:25, 26 is found in Nehemiah 1:1-4 and 2:1-8. Note three facts from these passages:

- a. The report of the ruined condition of the WALL and GATES of the CITY cause Nehemiah great grief (1:4; 2:1,2).
- b. After earnest prayer he dared to petition King Artaxerxes that he would be sent to Jerusalem to rebuild it (2:5).
- c. The king granted him his request (2:8). Nehemiah recorded the exact date of this decree as follows: "in the month Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes the king" (2:1). Artaxerxes' accession was 465 BC and his 20th year was March 14, 445 BC. Since no day is given, it is considered to be the first according to Jewish custom.

4. When did the first 69 weeks end and what happened on that date?

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 BC, this number of days brings us to AD April 6, 32. This marks the very day that Messiah manifested Himself as the "Prince" of Israel.

Our Lord understood the crucial nature of His action of that day: Luke 19:28-44. Note the following details:

- a. He sends the disciples to get a colt of an ass to fulfill Zechariah 9:9 (19:30-34).
- b. His disciples understood what Jesus was doing and began to shout, "Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord" Ps. 118:22-26, a Messianic Psalm (19:37-38).
- c. Although Jesus had previously forbid His disciples from declaring Him as the Messiah, now He rebukes the Pharisees who protest against the people's actions and He commends them by saying, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out" (19:39-40).
- d. Jesus wept over Jerusalem because He knew in advance that they would reject Him, (19:42): "If you had known, even you, **in this your day, the things which belong unto your peace**, but now they are hid from your eyes." What **day** was Jesus referring to? The day Daniel had fixed in his prophecy when the Messiah would present Himself to Israel--the 173,880 day of the prophecy. And what **things** was Jesus referring to? The blessings of Dan.9:24. But they would reject Him and by that action reject all their blessings too. Why would they do this? "Because [they] did not know the TIME OF [THEIR] VISITATION" (19:44).

The accuracy of this fulfillment is sufficient to demonstrate the accuracy of Daniel in all of his prophecies and historical accounts. It also establishes the accuracy of all prophecy throughout the Bible. Only God can guide prophets to "declare the end from the beginning" and forecast to the very day "things that are not yet done" (Isaiah 46:9-10).

Summary

1. "Weeks" of the prophecy are weeks of years.
2. Length of a prophetic year is 360 days.
3. 70 weeks began with Artaxerxes command to rebuild Jerusalem (carried out by Nehemiah on March 14, 445 BC (Neh. 2:1-8).
4. From March 14, 445 BC until the appearance of Messiah as Prince of Israel was exactly 69 weeks of years (483 years)--Dan. 9:25.
5. At the end of these 69 weeks, AD April 6, 32, our Lord rode up to Jerusalem on a foal of an ass in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9.

THE PARENTHESIS OF TIME BETWEEN THE 69TH AND THE 70TH WEEKS

What is the relationship of the 69th week to the 70th week? There are two radically different views: [2] the continuous view and [3] the gap view.

Continuous View

There is no break between the weeks--no gap. If this view is correct, the 70th week is history. It came to an end shortly after Christ's death. There are three different views.

1. Christ died in the middle of the 70th week and the week ended 3 1/2 years later.
2. The last 1260 days are converted into years.
3. They spiritualize the last week to cover as much time as needed, because without spiritualizing the last week, it cannot go beyond AD 39.

Gap View

There is a break between the 69th and 70th weeks. A gap that has lasted to the present day. The 70th week is still future. There are five reasons for believing there is a gap.

1. Such a gap before the 70th week is implied by the most natural reading of the prophecy. Forget 9:24 and just read 9:25-27. Notice: two other events come between the 69th and 70th weeks, the death of the Messiah and the destruction of the city.
2. A gap in time between the 69th and 70th weeks is demanded by the historical fulfillment of the two predicted events 9:26. It is a well known fact that Rome destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70 by Titus. And since Christ did not die any later than AD 32, there has to be a gap of nearly 40 years after the close of the 69th week. Since there is a small gap, nothing forbids a large one.
3. The fulfillment of the tremendous events in 9:24 cannot be found anywhere in known history. What are they? "To finish the transgression" / "to make an end of sins" / "to make reconciliation for iniquity" / "to bring in everlasting righteousness" / "to seal up the vision and prophecy" / "to anoint a most holy place."

Did all or any of these events take place during the early part of Acts? Nothing like it, not even if we resort to spiritualizing these statements. Jewish transgressions were not finished, but rather they increased during this time. Also, vision and prophecy had not ceased during the early part of Acts. In fact, they came with a flood. But when Christ returns, there will be no more need of prophecy because the Word of God will be present with us. His law will go forth from Him out of Jerusalem.

4. An unseen gap in prophetic time is not at all an unusual phenomenon in OT prophecy. Notice these prophecies as an example: Isaiah 9:6; Zechariah 9:9-10; Isaiah 61:1-2 when compared with Luke 4:16-21. There is often little or no time perspective in the visions of the OT prophet.

5. The testimony of the Lord shows the 70th week is still future. Dan. 9:27 says, "Upon the wing of abominations shall come one that makes desolate." The Hebrew in this passage is difficult. The expression is repeated in Dan. 12:11. Jesus refers to the same event in Matthew 24:15 when he told the people to flee to the mountains when they would "see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place." The reason for this warning is indicated in Matthew 24:21: "For then shall be great tribulation" Then "after the tribulation of those days . . . they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (24:29-30).

The argument is clear: The "abomination of desolation" occurs during the middle of the 70th week (the great tribulation) and Jesus said that He would not come until this took place. Since He has not yet come, the 70th week is still future.

Preserved from Dangers. When we see that the 70th week is still future we will be kept from some common dangers in the interpretation of prophecy. Here are four dangers:

1. Confusion and despair so common among devout scholars. Dr. Nathaniel West said: "The effort to connect it (the 70th week) immediately to 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." Some great men have stumbled at this point (Hengstenberg, Pusey, Delitzsch).

2. It keeps us from trying to find things in OT prophecy that are not there. This prophecy explains why the whole of our present age is not mentioned by the prophets.

3. It keeps us from believing the doctrine of covenant theologians that God is finished with the nation of Israel. This is also the problem of Amillennialist and Post-millennialist theologians.

4. It keeps us from date-setting schemes for this present age. The gap view shows that there is no way we can set a date, for there are no clues when the gap will be concluded and the 70th week begins. Only God can reveal the future and He has chosen not to reveal this part of the future to us.

Conclusion

Does the prophecy of Daniel shed any light on the nature of our present age between the 69th and the 70th weeks? Two events are mentioned: (1) the death of the Messiah (AD 32); and (2) the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70). Outside of these two events nothing is mentioned, except a summary statement of this age: (1) "Unto the end shall be war"--this tells of the abysmal failure of unsaved men to make peace; and (2) "Desolations are determined"--this affirms God's sovereignty to permit failure and use it for His own purposes. Finally, there are some lessons to be learned: (1) there will be war on the earth among men until the Lord returns--no permanent peace even though men claim the opposite; and (2) the God of heaven is in control over the events of this sinful age--He has a plan which will be accomplished as He has determined.

THE SEVENTIETH WEEK, AND THE COMING OF THE ROMAN PRINCE

Daniel 9:26-27 is very difficult to translate in the Hebrew. A couple of changes from a study of the original languages may help in understanding these verses better:

Verse 26: "not for Himself" could read **"shall have nothing."**

Verse 26: "unto the end of the war desolations are determined" could read **"unto the end wars and desolations are determined."**

Verse 27: "confirm the covenant" could read **"make a firm covenant."**

Verse 27: "overspreading of abominations" could read **"climax of abominations".**

Verse 27: "he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" could read **"shall come a desolator, even until the decreed destruction shall be poured out on the desolator."**

Two princes are mentioned in these verses: (1) "Messiah the Prince"; and (2) "the prince that shall come." This last prince cannot be the Messiah because his people would destroy Jerusalem and the Temple. This was done by the Romans under Titus in AD 70, not by the Jewish people.

The "prince that shall come" is the "little horn" of Dan. 7:8, 20, 21, 24-26. He is also referred to as the "man of sin" (II Thessalonians 2:3) and the beast "out of the sea" (Rev 13:1). He is Satan's false Christ. He will come to his end in the lake of fire at the conclusion of the 70th week (Rev. 20:20).

We must determine which "prince" the "he" refers to in 9:27. These are the arguments for saying it is the Roman "prince" and not the Jewish "Prince":

1. The Roman prince is the last named in 9:26.
2. He makes a firm covenant with the Jewish nation for one week (seven years). Messiah never made such a covenant. His covenant is eternal.
3. The theory that the Messiah made a covenant when He began His earthly ministry and that His death in the middle of the seven years caused the Jewish sacrifices to cease is incorrect in two ways: (a) no such covenant can be found in the Gospels; and (b) Jewish sacrifices did not cease until AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed.
4. To say the Messiah makes a firm covenant puts the 70th week in the past and that has been proven to be incorrect. So this is the Roman prince ("he") who makes a firm covenant (treaty) with the Jewish nation for seven years. And when he breaks it in the middle of the seven years, the Great Tribulation begins. This is the terrible time the Lord warned about in Matthew 24.

Now we are ready to consider the 70th week. **First**, the 70th week is a period of seven years which lies prophetically between the translation of the church and the return of Christ in glory. Matthew 24:15-30 shows that our Lord places the "abomination of desolation" prior to His return in power and glory. II Thessalonians 2:1-9 says the lawless one (Antichrist) cannot be revealed until the restrainer (the true church indwelt by the Holy Spirit) be taken away in the rapture of the true church (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). It is certain that this 70th week must come to an end when the Lord returns in glory for these reasons: (a) the blessings in Dan 9:24; (b) the Roman prince reigns in full power until the end of the 70th week (Dan. 7:25-27; 9:27), and he will be destroyed when the Lord comes (II Thessalonians 2:8-13). So the Lord's coming will occur at the end of the 70th. He will terminate the 70 weeks and give the blessings to Israel mentioned specifically in Dan. 9:24.

Second, this 70th week also provides the exact chronological framework for the great events recorded in Revelation 6-19. "A time, and times, and a half a time" - Rev. 12:14; "forty-two months" - Rev. 11:2; 13:5; and "1260 days" - Rev. 11:3; 12:6. Three and one half prophetic years of 360 days each.

Third, the 70th week will begin with the making of a "firm covenant" between the coming Roman prince and the Jewish people. Nothing precise is stated regarding the contents of the covenant, but the fact that Jewish sacrifices are stopped by the Roman prince when he breaks the covenant, they must be a part of the covenant. Israel is gearing itself for the time it can build its Temple and start its services. The Jews are looking for protection from the Arabs so they can start their temple rituals. This is the area that the Roman prince could offer to help Israel. To be a world ruler, he will need political prestige and financial support. Israel is willing to offer large sums of money for protection and this will aid the cause of the Roman prince. Together they strike a covenant and both get what they want.

Fourth, in the middle of the 70th week, the Roman prince will suddenly reverse his friendly attitude toward the Jew and "cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." We live in a day of "power politics." Force has taken the place of morality. The Roman prince will have no conscience about breaking his covenant with Israel. He will honor only the "god of forces" (Dan. 11:38). What are the motives which cause the treaty to be nullified? (1) Since he will hate Christ, he will also hate His people, the Jews. (2) His treaty is only for political expediency. Once he can get along without the Jewish nation, he will throw off the alliance. (3) He wants the world to worship him as god. Cf. II Thessalonians 2:4; Rev. 13:8-15. When the serious Jews resist, he will persecute them.

Fifth, the breaking of the "firm covenant" between the Jews and the Roman prince will mark the beginning of a period of unparalleled "desolations" for the Jewish people. The "desolations" begin in the middle of the last week and continue until the end. This is 3 1/2 years, the exact time specified in Dan7:25 when the Roman beast will "wear out the saints of the Most High"; the same time when the beast "shall make war with the saints and . . . overcome them" (Rev. 13:5-7); the same time when the holy city will be trodden down by the Gentiles (Rev. 11:2); the same time when the woman (Israel) shall be given special protection by God (Rev. 12:6,14).

Sixth, the end of this final seven year period will bring to its close the entire series of the 70 weeks, and therefore usher in the great blessings promised to Israel in Dan. 9:24. Notice several things of importance: (a) these blessings have to do with Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem; (b) "to make reconciliation for iniquity" does not here refer to the death of Christ, but what God will do for Israel on the basis of Christ's death. He will reconcile His chosen unto Himself; (c) "To seal up vision and prophecy" means prophecy is closed to men, probably due to Jesus' presence on earth. No prophet will be needed, because His word will go directly from His mouth to the people; and (d) "to anoint the most Holy (place)" is a reference to the great millennial Temple which will be constructed as a place of worship and prayer for all nations.

CHART FOR VISIONS IN DANIEL 8 AND 9

KINGDOM	DANIEL 8	DANIEL 9
BABYLONIAN		
MEDO-PERSIAN	Daniel has a vision of a ram with two horns; one was higher (Persia) than the other (Media). The ram was the symbol of M-P, The ram pushed west (Lydia & Babylon), south (Egypt) and North (Scythia) – Dan 8:3-4.	In 445 B.C. Artaxerxes made a decree to let Nehemiah rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. In the next 49 years Jerusalem was rebuilt (seven weeks of years) – Dan 9:25; see Neh 2:1-8; 6:15.
GRECIAN	Male goat (Greece) came rapidly from the east; it had a big horn (Alex). It ran into the ram and destroyed it. The big horn was broken (Alex' death). Kingdom divided into 4 Grk nations; two of them oppressed Israel. Out of Syria came a little horn that persecuted the Jews and polluted the Temple, but he was judged by God--Dan 8:5-12, 16-25. He is a type of Antichrist.	62 weeks of years *(434 years) covered the last part of the Medo-Persian rule, all of the Grecian rule, and the first part of the Roman rule. Nothing is said about the Grecian rule in this vision. Much more will be said about the Grecian rule in Daniel 11.
ANCIENT ROMAN		The 62 weeks of years will continue "unto Messiah the Prince." This refers to Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem, called Palm Sunday. Now there is a gap in the prophecy. 69 weeks of years has been fulfilled, but not the 70 th week of years. During this gap Jesus is cut off (crucified) and has nothing (did not receive His Kingdom). The people (Roman) of the prince to come (Antichrist) destroyed Jerusalem (A.D. 70). Wars will continue.
FUTURE ROMAN	Antichrist will be like the Syrian king (Antiochus Epiphanes, the little horn), only much worse.	70 th week of years is the future Tribulation. Antichrist will make a covenant with the Jews for 7 years, but he will break it after 3½ years. Then he will attempt to destroy Israel.
MESSIANIC		Antichrist, the desolator of God's Temple will be desolated. Israel will repent of its sin and receive Jesus as her Messiah and she shall be given 6 blessings – Dan 9:24.