

Daniel

The Seventy Weeks

Perhaps no other portion of Scripture is of more importance to the student of prophecy than these verses. We consider them to be of major importance

The **first reason** is this: How we interpret other portions of prophetic Scripture will, to a great degree, be determined by how we interpret these verses.

Secondly, how we interpret these verses will influence how we will interpret such words as "Israel" and "Jerusalem".

Thirdly, our consideration of these verses will determine in part, how we will interpret the Scriptures that have to do with the Anti-Christ and a future Tribulation.

Fourthly, the interpretation and understanding of this passage will bear on what we believe about the time of the Rapture and the time of the return of Christ.

Fifthly, these verses will help determine the kind of hope the Church has. And that in itself is extremely important, because our hope determines our conduct. 1 John 3:2,3 .The more real and literal our hope becomes to us, the more spiritually minded we will become. And of course, the more spiritually minded we become the more real and literal our hope will become. And to be spiritually minded brings "life and peace". Rom.8:6

When we are truly "spiritually minded", our minds will be set on things above, not on things on the earth. Col.3:2. And only then will we become concerned about "mortifying the things of the flesh".Col.3:5

Confusion regarding the subject of prophecy, and of these verses in Daniel, will rob saints of their blessed hope and therefore of their rewards. And Paul writes: "let no man beguile you of your reward" Col.2:18. So as you read these lines, judge every word.

The Background:

The Old Testament primarily, has to do with Israel. When interpreting it therefore, this fact should always be kept in mind. Furthermore, in the Old Testament, there is no suggestion, not a hint whatsoever that "Israel" is to mean "Church" or that it ever will become the Church.

Here I quote Douglas Young: "For 2000 years, awful bloody years, the Jews never forsook their Bibles, and never came to believe that the word "Israel" in the Bible meant "The Church". To them "Israel" has always been "Israel". (end quote)

What is written about Israel is written for our learning, Rom.15:4, but because we learn from these Old Testament Scriptures, does not change the facts or literal meaning of the facts stated therein. Israel, not the Church, was captive in Egypt. Israel, not the Church, was miraculously delivered from Egypt by the power of God.

Israel, not the Church, was super-naturally sustained in the barren wilderness for forty years.

Israel, not the Church, was literally led by Joshua in to possess the Land of Canaan.

These are well known Biblical facts. Concerning these same people, Jeremiah had prophesied that they would be taken captive by Babylon for seventy years. Jeremiah 25:11. This became actual history. Among the captives was a young prince, known by his Hebrew name, Daniel. Daniel 1:1-6. But Jeremiah had also prophesied that after the seventy years, God would visit His people Israel, and bring them up out of the land of Babylon as He had brought them out of their Egyptian bondage.

And when we begin to read Daniel 9:1-2, observe these facts. The Babylonians have been replaced by the Medes and Persians as the world power. Daniel, now a captive under the Medes, had been reading and studying the book of Jeremiah and he understood from that book, that God had promised to visit the captives after the seventy years were fulfilled.

So in verse 3, Daniel set his face to pray and seek the Lord. What were the subjects of his prayer? What were the reasons for his prayer? Daniel 9:16,17 answers the questions. Jerusalem was still a desolation. The Jews were still in reproach and captivity. So Daniel begins to pray for "thy city Jerusalem" and "thy people Israel" His prayer is repeated in verse 19. "O Lord, hear, O Lord forgive. O Lord hearken and do. defer not for thine own sake. O my God, for THY city and THY people are called by Thy name."

Daniel had read the promise in Jeremiah 29:10 that after seventy years God would visit His people, and Daniel sets himself to pray about that particular positive promise. And it was at this time, further revelation of God's PLAN FOR ISRAEL was revealed to Daniel, in Daniel 9:24-27.

We believe it important to observe and keep in mind that Daniel had been praying about Jerusalem and the Jews. As a direct result of Daniel's prayer-request, the revelation of the Seventy Weeks was given.

And this answer, as found in Daniel 9:24-27, had to do with God's future plans for Israel. All that is contained in these verses, were future events at the time of their revelation. The wonder of this prophecy never ceases to fill my heart with great gratitude to God. The details are spelled out in such a way that no one should be left wondering as to what is meant. God indeed does have a future plan for Israel. We learn this from this portion.

We must never over-look the first facts in these verses. "Seventy weeks are determined upon THY people and upon THY Holy city." ALL the weeks have to do with Daniel's people the Jews, and Daniel's city, Jerusalem. These weeks have no more to do with the Church than did the Seventy years in Babylon or the four-hundred years in Egypt. All those events pertained only to the Jews. All Seventy weeks are upon Israel. Not Sixty, or Sixty nine or sixty nine and a half. SEVENTY weeks are upon thy people. Any interpretation that ignores this basic fact can never be correct. And the basic fact to which we make reference is that, THY PEOPLE in the context can ever and only mean Israel. Israel after the flesh. Literal Israel. The same Nation taken captive into Babylon, the Jewish people.

Daniel 9:24 "Seventy weeks are determined upon THY Holy City...." In the light of the context of the chapter, "Thy Holy City" must surely refer to Jerusalem, Israel. (See Daniel 9:16,19) In the Bible, the only city on earth that is ever designated as "holy" is Jerusalem in the land of Israel. Seventy years prior, the Babylonians had destroyed Jerusalem and the temple which had been built by Solomon. 1 Kings 6:1-38. The destruction was an act of God's judgment upon the Nation of Israel, as surely as the captivity was an act of judgment. When Daniel began to pray at the opening of this chapter, both the City and the Temple were in ruins. And in answer to Daniel's prayer, the Angel Gabriel announces that there will be Seventy more weeks of judgment upon the same people.

The Living Bible translation reads: " The Lord has commanded 490 years of further punishment upon Jerusalem and your people." The word "determined" in verse 24 had been translated "decreed" and "divided". In the light of the context, the word "divided" seems to be the best. For if you will notice verse 25, seven weeks, then three score and two weeks, then in verse 27, one week. Thus: 7, 62, and 1. So by reading we understand, although in total they are seventy weeks or sevens of years, because they are not a consecutive whole but divided into three groupings, it will take more than the 490 years of time to see them all fulfilled.

The remainder of the predictions in verse 24 have to do with the time AFTER the end of the seventy weeks. These predictions have not to do with the time of the weeks. After the seventy weeks are completed, the Living Bible says: "Then at last they (Israel) will learn to stay away from sin and their guilt will be cleansed, then the kingdom of everlasting righteousness will begin, and the Holy Place (in the temple) will be re- dedicated, as the prophets have declared."

So let us look in more detail at verse 24. WHAT takes place AFTER the time of the 70 weeks? Once again we think it of utmost importance to see that none of these things take place DURING the weeks.

First: "To finish the transgression". In his prayer Daniel had confessed, "yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law" Verse 11. And now he is being told that the day will come when Israel's transgression will come to and end...AFTER THESE WEEKS.

Secondly, "make and end of sins." We observe the word is not "sin" but "sins". Sin is the root, sins the fruit. And this statement like the first, concerns Israel.

The testimony of other Scriptures must be brought to our notice at this point. In Romans 11:25-27, Paul writes: "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their SINS." This passage is the Holy Spirit's commentary on what is written in the Old Testament regarding Jacob-Israel. The salvation of Jacob-Israel is an Old Testament doctrine. And we would emphasize," so all Israel SHALL be saved AS IT IS WRITTEN. We must not omit or over-look those

words. If we would understand the doctrine of Israel's future salvation of which the Apostle is speaking, we must know what is written in the Old Testament.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 When God fulfills the new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah..."they shall all know me....I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." This is but one example of that which is written.

Thirdly Daniel 9:24 continues: After the seventy weeks, " make reconciliation for iniquity". Again, if context means anything, these words concern Israel. Israel's iniquity will have been fully dealt with, and according to prophecy, after they have come through the fires of tribulation, which they will endure because of their iniquities, those who remain shall all be saved. See Zechariah 13:8,9 ; Jeremiah.30:7; Daniel 12:1.

Fourthly Daniel 9:24 After the seventy weeks: " Bring in everlasting righteousness." Again, we insist, the promise is to Israel. Christ, by His death provided everlasting righteousness by His First Coming. He will bring it to Israel by His Second Coming, which will be immediately after the Seventy weeks are fulfilled. Romans 11:26 "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." This He will do by bringing in righteousness. The only way to break off sins is by righteousness. See Daniel 5:27 and also Jeremiah 23:5-6.

Fifthly Daniel 9:24, after the weeks, "to seal up the vision and prophecy." The prophecies of Daniel and all the other prophets will be fulfilled because Christ will return after the weeks and His Coming will fulfill and settle all arguments regarding the meaning of Bible predictions. Isaiah 52:8 "...for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

Sixthly Daniel 9:24 "To anoint the Most Holy" The New Catholic translation reads: "And the Saint of saints may be anointed" The N.A.S. "To anoint the Most Holy place" with "place" being in italics. We believe the statement has to do with anointing David's Greater Son to be King over all the earth. See Jeremiah23:5, Zechariah14:9, Daniel 7:14 etc.

So to this point we have tried to establish two major points regarding verse 24. These weeks have to do with Israel and Jerusalem and the listed blessings are to take place AFTER and not during the time of the weeks.

Verses 25-27 have to do with the time of the weeks. After stating the glorious future of Israel that follows the weeks, these verses outline the key events connected with the weeks.

Daniel 9:25 states prophetic facts relative to the seven and sixty two weeks. Daniel 9:26 states prophetic facts after the seven and sixty two weeks. Daniel 9:27 has to do ONLY with the last or seventieth week. one week.

In Daniel 9:25, two events are named. The command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, and the coming of Messiah the Prince. Both at the time of writing were prophetic events, which now have been literally fulfilled. A command to rebuild Jerusalem was given in 444 B.C. see Isaiah 44:28 and Nehemiah 2:8,9. and it was at that time these weeks of prophetic years began to be fulfilled.

Daniel was also told that the street and the walls would be built again, in troublous times. See the fulfillment in Nehemiah 4:17 and Nehemiah 6:15. They built the wall with a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other. And throughout the work there was trouble from without and within.

The other great event of the prophecy of verse 25 is the Coming of Messiah the Prince. All agree that this is a definite prophecy of the time in which Christ was to come. He had to come AFTER the Jews returned from Babylon to rebuild Jerusalem. We believe He came during the period of time predicted by the prophet, during the time of the weeks. John 1:40.

Verse 26 begins: "and AFTER 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off." Most agree that this "cutting off" of Messiah is a prophecy of the Cross. see Isaiah 53:8. So however we interpret the weeks, the cross did not take place during the sixty two or the seven week period, but AFTER these weeks. A simple fact therefore stands.

The sixty nine weeks of Daniel's prophecy became history before the cross. The sixty two weeks included the four-hundred silent years between the writing of Malachi and the announcement of the birth of John the Baptist. They also included the 34 years of the life and ministry of John and Jesus. And it becomes an interesting point of history that the 69th week of Daniel's prophecy was the time of the public ministry of both John and Jesus. John for the first three and a half years, Jesus for the last three and a half. Years.

Daniel 9:26 goes on to predict that PEOPLE shall (again) destroy the city and the sanctuary (the temple). It is interesting to observe that the prophecy in verse 25 foretold the rebuilding of the city, but did not name the rebuilding of the temple. But verse 26 implies the rebuilding of the temple, and we know from the Book of Ezra that the temple indeed was rebuilt, and also we know that when Messiah came, and before His death, the temple was standing in the city of Jerusalem. Matthew 24:1-3.

Daniel's prophecy not only foretold the cross, but the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple AGAIN. There is only one time in history, since the cross, that both the city and sanctuary were destroyed. It was in 70 A.D. So another prophecy of the text has become history.

But verse 26 has another prediction. A prince (small letter "p") of the people who destroyed Jerusalem, SHALL COME.

For the sake of clarification, look back over the predictions.

Verse 25 foretold the coming of Messiah. A coming that would take place after the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

Verse 26 foretells that He will be cut-off BEFORE the same city and its sanctuary are destroyed again. We remind you that the Babylonians had destroyed the city and the sanctuary. Both were still in ruins when this prophecy was given. But the prophecy foretells the rebuilding of the city in verse 25 and in verse 26 that the city would be destroyed again with the temple also being destroyed. And that between the rebuilding and the destruction, Messiah would be cut-off.

The events of the life and death of Christ certainly fit into this time-period of history. All the events of the first Coming of Christ took place before 70 A.D.

The later part of verse 26 is more easily understood by reading the Living Bible. "They will be overwhelmed as with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that time to the very end." The miseries of Jerusalem did not end in 70 A.D. We have heard that Jerusalem has been plundered 18 times since then. And her troubles are not finished as yet.

Daniel 9:27 is, evidently, about the last or 70th week of the prophecy. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week". In verse 26 we have been told that a prince of the people who destroyed the city and sanctuary, since the time of the cross, WILL come.

First, we observe that the prince of verse 26 cannot be the Prince of verse 25. The Prince of verse 25 is definitely identified as Messiah. The prince of verse 26 is a Roman, for it was the Romans ,not the Jews, who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple. To equate these two as one and the same is to contradict history. The Jews did not destroy their city.

Therefore the "he" of verse 27 must refer to the "prince that shall come", as stated in verse 26. And here we are told definitely when he will come, in Daniel's 70th week. And furthermore, if he is to confirm a covenant for the week, it is evident that he must appear, not in the midst, but at the beginning of the week.

The K.J.V. says he confirms a covenant. The Living Bible says he makes a covenant. We cannot be dogmatic here, but if he confirms the covenant, that would indicate that before the 70th week begins, the covenant will already have been made. If he makes the covenant, then that event will begin the 70th week. In any event the language is clear, this prince will be present for the entire week. Furthermore, the covenant will have to do with the Jewish people, the city and the temple. For these three are part of the entire prophecy.

Then we are told ,in the midst of the week he causes the sacrifices to cease. Indicating that another temple will have been built at Jerusalem. And the week being seven years, the middle indicates a period of three and a half years. It is at this time, in the middle of the week, this prince sets up the abomination of desolation.

This is the first mention of such in the book of Daniel. To it Jesus makes reference in Matthew 24:15. We quote Matt.24:15 "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation

spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the Holy place..." Now a careful student will have noticed that an abomination is also mentioned in Daniel 11:31 and Daniel 12:11 as well as Daniel 9:27. So when Jesus spoke about the abomination spoken of by Daniel, to which verse was he making reference? It would seem logical to believe that he was making reference to all three.

In Daniel 9:27, the reference is to a specific person. "He" causes the sacrifices to cease. "He" sets up the abomination. In Daniel 11:31, and "they" shall pollute the sanctuary and "they" shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. It is evident that these two events, that is verse 31 of ch.11 and verse 27 of ch.9, are not identical. In Daniel 9:27 it is specific. This abomination has to do with the 70th week. In Daniel 11:31, there is no reference to seven or three and one half years. In Daniel 9:27 We have the first prophecy of the abomination. And as with most prophecy, there seems often to be a prefillment in type before the actual fulfillment in time. Daniel 11:31, as most agree, has reference to the Syrians led by Antiochus, who offered a sow on the altar in the Jewish temple. Certainly an abomination, but only foreshadowing things to come.

However, the words of Jesus make us know that whatever took place prior to the time of Jesus words in Matt.24:15, had not fulfilled Daniel's prophecy ,because Jesus said that that abomination was still future. The other passage speaking about the abomination is in Daniel 12:11. It gives the exact time period, the number of days, between the causing of the sacrifice to cease and the time the abomination is set up. In every case, the abomination is set up by the enemies of Israel, not by their friends.

To fit into a scheme of interpretation of those who are not pre- millennial in doctrine, (if we understand what has been written) of Daniel 9:27, is somewhat as follows: The "he" in the verse is Christ. He, Christ, confirms a covenant He has made. In the midst of the week He causes the sacrifices to cease. This He did by His cross and the events of 70 A.D. What the abomination means, we have not discovered.

We can only ask, how can verse 27 have any reference to Christ? Where are we told in Scripture that Christ has ever made a covenant that is for seven years? Where can such fit into history? To make this ceasing of the sacrifice to refer to the cross or Titus' destruction of the temple, may be a suggestion, but how can it fit the time element of seven years? Or any historic period of three and a half years? Furthermore, if the Prince is Christ, and He is the one who causes the sacrifices to cease, He is also the one who sets up the abomination. How can anyone charge Christ with having done such a thing?

It seems to me that the context of Matthew 24 should help us with the interpretation of Daniel 9:27. In Matthew. 24:2, ,Jesus was asked about the signs of His coming. And it is in this context He makes reference to Daniel, (Matthew.24:15) Therefore it seems to be folly to make the events to which He made reference to have been fulfilled by His first Coming, when in the passage He is making reference to His Second Coming. In Matthew

24:15 Jesus said: "when ye shall see the abomination spoken of by Daniel", and if language means anything He was making reference to Daniel 9:27, and there, that abomination appears in the 70th week. Jesus continues by saying in Matthew 24:21-22 "THEN shall be GREAT TRIBULATION. Thus He connected Daniel's prophecy of the 70th week with a tribulation period yet to come. A tribulation that will be segregated from all other periods of history. When it comes, nothing prior will have been like it and there shall never be anything like it afterwards. It will stand alone as a period of history, just as the 70th week stands alone in Daniel's prophecy.

Someone says, "this abomination came in 70 A.D." But read on in Matthew.24: 29-30. "Immediately AFTER the tribulation of those days...the Son of Man comes in power and great glory." Surely this is the Second Advent. Therefore, we must conclude that if these verses teach anything, they teach that the tribulation, will be the time of the abomination of Daniel 9:27, which will have become a part of history, immediately before Christ returns to earth.

Thus we argue:

The tribulation cannot as yet be history, nor can the 70th week of Daniel be part of history, for when these events do become history Christ will then have returned

TO SUM UP. The sixty nine weeks of Daniel were fulfilled before the cross. Israel had trouble during those weeks of years. Those weeks being before the cross, the Church had no place nor part in them at all. The 70th week, like the 69 weeks is also to be upon Israel. It will be Israel's greatest time of trouble out of which a godly remnant of Israel will be saved. Now, if the Church had no part in any of the 69 weeks, why, should it have part in any portion of the 70th week?

In the plan of God, He was dealing with Israel in the 69 weeks before the cross. and since the resurrection He has been dealing with the Church. When His plan for the Church is complete, it will be removed from the earth by the Rapture. Then His plan for Israel will be resumed in the 70th week of Daniel. The period of time, which will bring about events which will cause Israel to call on the Lord for His salvation.

.And at the end of the 70th week, He will return, fight for Israel Zechariah 14:1-5. He will destroy the prince, the antichrist, 2 Thessalonians 2:8,9 And then He will reign as King over all the earth Zechariah 14:9