

## Daniel's 70 Weeks: An Introduction

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### I. DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF 70 WEEKS (DAN. 9:24-27)

**(NASB) 24** *"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*

**25** *"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

**26** *"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

**27** *"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

"Only four verses, but what verses!" (Geoffrey R. King, *Daniel*)

- A. The prophecy of 70 weeks is one of the most critically important eschatological passages in the Bible, which the Church of the last days must properly interpret and understand.
- B. Jesus' Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21) is largely an exposition and expansion of the prophecy of the 70 weeks. The two passages are integrally connected.
- C. Discerning believers must also be able to correct those misinterpretations that steal from the intended message and dramatic implications of this passage.
- D. The prophecy of 70 weeks establishes the following realities:
  - 1. A divinely appointed, future, literal, and definable seven year period preceding the return of Jesus.
  - 2. A literal rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem.
  - 3. A defining event whereby the Antichrist desecrates the Temple at the mid-point of the seven years.
  - 4. Which in turn will cause offerings to cease within the Temple.
- B. The future desecration of the Temple is the single greatest defining time marker within all prophecy concerning the final period of the last days. At this time:

1. The Antichrist “is revealed” (2 Thess. 2:4).
  2. The 3.5 year “time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:7) or “the great tribulation” (Mat. 24:21) begins.
- C. Though this sign-event is more pronounced and definitive than the beginning of the 7 years, the commencing sign of the covenant is also a crucial time event that must not be minimized or marginalized in its importance.
- D. The prophecy is integrally tied to the literal Jewish people and the literal city of Jerusalem.
- E. A proper understanding of this passage holistically within the context of the Old Testament prophets, the larger Book of Daniel, the Olivet Discourse, 1 & 2 Thessalonians and Revelation establishes the traditional premillennialist view and refutes the preterist, amillennial and post-millennialist views not simply regarding this particular passage, but entirely as systems of interpretation!
- F. Several critical issues are at stake in the proper interpretation of this passage.
1. At stake is the recognition of the present-tense, ongoing election and calling of the Jewish people.
  2. At stake is the nature of this final future period of tribulation as necessary to accomplish all of the following specifically on behalf of Israel:
    - a. “To finish the transgression”
    - b. “To make an end of sin”
    - c. “To make atonement for iniquity”
    - d. “To bring in everlasting righteousness”
    - e. “To seal up vision and prophecy”
    - f. “To anoint the most holy place”
  3. At stake is the Church’s recognition of the defining timing markers given to us by the Holy Spirit in Daniel and by Jesus personally.
  4. At stake is a proper understanding of the very nature of the Kingdom of God.

## **II. OUR CHALLENGE:**

- A. Daniel 9:24-27 is a deeply controversial passage with a variety of historical interpretations.
- B. Paul J. Tanner says, “The seventy-weeks prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27 has been one of the most notorious interpretive problem passages in Old Testament studies.”
- C. James Montgomery says, “The history of the exegesis of the 70 Weeks is the Dismal Swamp of O.T. criticism.”
- D. The difficulties of the passage however are greatly overstated by non-premillennialists.

- E. While the passage does admittedly pose some interpretive challenges, the majority of difficulties and confusion result from the efforts of non-premillennialists to force the meaning of the passage into their erroneous theological systems.

### III. SURVEY OF THE PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVES:

#### A. The Jewish View

1. "Messiah the Prince" is interpreted in a non-Messianic manner.
2. The *terminus ad quem* (conclusion of the prophecy) is 70 AD.
3. The subject of verse 27 is Vespasian the Roman Caesar or Titus his son.
  - a. Theodotian
  - b. Josephus
  - c. Rashi
  - d. Maimonides
  - e. Japheth Ben Ha-Levi

#### C. The Preterist View

1. "Messiah the Prince" is interpreted as Messianic.
2. The *terminus ad quem* is 70 AD.
3. The subject of verse 27 is either Jesus, Vespasian or Titus.
  - a. Philip Mauro
  - b. James Jordan
  - c. John Evans (a Preterist whose work only actually addresses Daniel 2)
  - d. R.D. Smith
  - e. Dr. Kelly Nelson Birks

#### D. The Amillennialist View

1. The term "Messiah the Prince" is interpreted as Messianic.
2. The weeks are often understood in a non-literal manner. (70 weeks are symbolic)
3. The *terminus ad quem* is either 70 AD. or the return of Jesus.
4. The subject of verse 27 is either Christ or Titus.
  - a. Clement of Alexandria
  - b. Origen
  - c. Augustine:

"All of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks was fulfilled at Christ's first advent; therefore, it is not to be expected that the events will occur again at the second advent."

d. John Calvin:

“Without the slightest doubt, this prophecy was fulfilled when the city was captured and overthrown, and the temple utterly destroyed by Titus the son of Vespasian.”

e. C.F. Keil

f. H.C. Leupold

f. Edward J. Young

g. Joyce Baldwin

#### E. Premillennialist View

1. The term “Messiah the Prince” is interpreted as Messianic.

2. The *terminus ad quem* is the future return of Christ.

3. The subject of verse 27 is Antichrist.

a. Irenaeus

b. Hippolytus

c. Gleason Archer Jr.

d. Steven R. Miller

e. Leon Wood

f. John Walvoord

#### IV. THE REVELATION OF THE PROPHECY OF 70 WEEKS (DANIEL 9:1-23)

**NASB 1** *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. 3 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, 5 we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. 6 “Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land... 20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. 22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding.*

A. Today much of the charismatic movement greatly emphasizes *the gift of prophecy*, but almost entirely neglects *the testimony of Biblical Prophecy*.

B. To compound this disconnect, many within the Charismatic Movement now embrace and promote preterism, claiming that:

1. Preterism / Kingdom Now / Realized Eschatology promotes a more active body of Christ, “cultural engagement,” and “the advancement of the kingdom”, etc.
2. An emphasis on Bible prophecy promotes an abandonment mentality, a fearful or pessimistic outlook.
3. This trend within the charismatic movement while largely pastoral in its desire to motivate people is also an over-reaction against what is perceived to be a systemic problem with any futurist emphasis on the return of Jesus.

C. While it is true that Pre-Tribulational Dispensationalism, which dominated much of the Charismatic Movement of the 70s and 80s, can in fact promote an overly pessimistic or abandonment mentality, *pre-tribulational dispensationalism is not the only brand of futurism or premillennialism!*

**D. The early apostolic Church was thoroughly futurist, and thoroughly premillennial, but they were also thoroughly engaged.**

D. It is absolutely imperative that the Charismatic movement today embrace the Danielic model:

- a. Return to and reclaim Apostolic Premillennialism.
- b. Diligently studying the testimony of the Biblical prophets.
- c. Seeking the Lord in prayer and fasting.
- d. Receive personal revelation.

**E. The “gift of prophecy” today must be thoroughly grounded in a proper understanding of the testimony of the Prophets! The two (personal prophecy and biblical prophecy) must function together as one symbiotic, synergistic model.**

**F. The last days Church is called to be a corporate intercessory / prophetic / Daniel in the earth.**

## V. THE 70 WEEKS ARE 490 LITERAL YEARS (DANIEL 9:24)

*“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city.”* (Daniel 9:24a)

- A. The term for "weeks" is the Hebrew word *šābu'îm*, which basically means a "unit of seven."
- B. In this context, it clearly means a period of seven years. Most commentators understand it this way.

- C. Gen. 29:27-28 for example uses the same term to refer to seven years.
- D. Daniel's initial prayer concerned seventy literal years of captivity (Jer 25:11; 29:10), but God revealed to him a message about seventy more periods of seven years (i.e., a total of 490 years).
- E. The last segment of time is specifically referred to in Scripture as "forty-two months" (Rev. 11:2, 13:5), "twelve hundred and sixty days" (11:3), "one thousand, two hundred and sixty days" (Rev. 12:6), and elsewhere by Daniel as "a time, times, and half a time" (12:7). **How could the Lord have made it more clear that He is speaking of a very literal period of time?!**
- F. "Many understand these "seventy sevens" to be a literal period of 490 years. Since seven and seventy are both numbers that of completeness in the Bible, other understand the figures... as representing the ultimate in completeness." (Iain M. Duguid, *Daniel A Reformed Expository Commentary*)
- G. "The seventy sevens more likely represents and indefinite complete fullness of time, perhaps symbolic of the seventy year captivity." (Stanley Paher, *Matthew 24: First Century Fulfillment or End Time Expectation*)
- H. The first fatal flaw of all non-premillennialist interpretations are that they must understand the very literal numbers of this prophecy to be interpreted symbolically. All non-premillennialists espouse some form of spiritualizing, stretching or fudging the numbers in a non-literal way to force it to fit their interpretations. Because of this, they tend to be as vague as impossible when actually stating their position concerning the actual numbers and dates, etc.**
- I. "The angel himself gives a literal explanation and it would be nonsensical to insist on giving a symbolical interpretation of a literal explanation. If the exegetes had always obeyed the angel's interpretation as is evident from practically every word he speaks, then this text would never have been so obscured by all kinds of human conjectures and imagined "deep" insights." (Harry Bultema, *Commentary on Daniel*)

## VI. THE SUBJECT OF THE 70 WEEKS IS BOTH THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND THE CITY OF JERUSALEM. (DANIEL 9:24)

**"Seventy weeks have been decreed"** (Daniel 9:24a)

- A. "The thought is that God had **cut off** these 490 years from the rest of history through which to accomplish the deliverances needed for Israel." (Leon Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel*)
- B. "Decreed means divided or severed off from the whole period of world-empire in the hands of the Gentiles, as to which Daniel was already well informed. It points to a fixed and limited period, of definite duration, forming part of a longer period the duration of which is

not fixed, or at least not declared.” (G. H. Lang, *The Histories and Prophecies of Daniel The Prophecy is Climactic*)

“Seventy weeks have been decreed **for your people and your holy city.**” (Daniel 9:24a)

- C. Because the subject matter of the prophecy is both Daniel’s people (the Jewish people) and “*your holy city*” (Jerusalem) the non-premillennialist views, which do not see any future relevance to the Jewish people or the city of Jerusalem, is required to place the *terminus ad quem* in 70 AD.
- D. The premillennialist view both maintains and trumpets the fact that the climax of redemptive history will conclude specifically in the city of Jerusalem and the land of Israel, with the Jewish people.
- E. Because the redemption of all creation is actually the outworking of the Abrahamic Covenant (the everlasting covenant), by necessity, *it must conclude in the specific land which that covenant promised.*

**F. The second fatal flaw of all non-premillennial positions are that they interpret this passage as concerning the Church and global salvation as opposed to the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem.**

G. Examples:

1. “Here, as so often in prophecy, terms like God’s “people” and God’s “holy city” broaden out to the point where they assume a breadth of meaning like that found in the New Testament (cf. Gal. 6:16).” (H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of Daniel*)
2. “It is true that the primary reference is to Israel after the flesh, and the historical Jerusalem, but since this very verse describes the Messianic work, it also refers to the true people of God, those who will benefit because of the things herein described.” (Edward J. Young, *A Commentary on Daniel*)

H. Premillennialist responses:

1. “[A]llegorizers appeal to reasons that are outside of the text. They just believe that it refers to individuals beyond Israel because that’s what they believe. Therefore, the text must have in mind some beyond what it actually does say. This is a clear example of reading meaning into the text from one’s own belief system” (Dr. Thomas Ice, *Daniel’s Seventy Weeks*)
2. “The endeavour to apply this prophecy, in general or in detail, to others than Daniel’s people, Israel, and Daniel’s city, Jerusalem, is an outrage upon exegesis, being forbidden in advance by the express terms used.” (G.H. Lang, *The Histories and Prophecies of Daniel*)

3. "Let the postmillennial and amillennial commentators look long and steadily at this fact. This prophecy is a prophecy for Daniel's people and Daniel's city. No alchemy of Origenistic spiritualizing interpretation can change that." (Robert Culver, *Daniel and the Latter Days*)

## VII. THE PROPHECY IS CLIMACTIC & CONCLUSIVE (FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND JERUSALEM) (DANIEL 9:24)

**24b to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.**

A. Six purposes are specified:

1. *to finish the transgression,*
2. *to make an end of sin,*
3. *to make atonement for iniquity,*
4. *to bring in everlasting righteousness,*
5. *to seal up vision and prophecy*
6. *to anoint the most holy place.*

B. The negative judicial purposes of the desolation of the temple and the destruction of the city and these six positive redemptive-salvific purposes are symbiotic and integrally connected. The Scriptures declare that redemption will not come to national Israel without the aforementioned crushing, breaking and death.

**C. While these purposes were provided for at the cross, they have not yet been realized or effected in Israel and the Jewish people. This will not take place until after they have been broken, repent and acknowledge Jesus as Messiah.**

*"[A]s soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed."* (Daniel 12:7c)

*"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. (Zechariah 12:10)*

**D. Non-premillennialist views that claim the fulfillment of these events in the past or that seek to apply the purpose of this week to anyone and anything other than the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem, rob from the very glory and vindication of God!**

E. Ezekiel 36 tells us these things are yet to come, when the Lord says:

**“I will vindicate the holiness of My great name... when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God. Ezekiel 36:23-38**

F. Paul also tells us these things are yet to come:

*“For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel **until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in**; and so **all Israel will be saved**; just as it is written, ‘THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE **WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.**’ ‘**THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.**”*  
(Romans 11:25-27)

G. Non-premillennialist interpretations seek to argue that through the cross, not only have these six purposes been provided for, but actually fulfilled historically.

**H. Because the Jewish people are not now 100% corporately serving Messiah and fully holy as a people, and because Jerusalem is not now the Messianic capital of the globe, it is impossible to say that these six purposes have already been fulfilled or have been fully realized in the cross.**

I. Example of non-premillennialist interpretation: “The fifth result [to seal up vision and prophecy] . . . has to do with the ministry of Christ on earth, which is introduced at His baptism: He comes ‘to seal up vision and prophecy.’ By this is meant that Christ fulfills (and thereby confirms) the prophecy.” Kenneth L. Gentry, Jr., *He Shall Have Dominion: A Postmillennial Eschatology*

J. Despite being an amillennialist, Keil acknowledges what should be obvious: “From the contents of these six statements it thus appears that the termination of the seventy weeks **coincides with the end of the present course of the world.**” C. F. Keil, *Commentary on the Old Testament: Daniel*

K. “[R]ead in the light of the various predictions of the prophets, **is obviously a forecast of the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth in all its glory.**” David Cooper, *Messiah: His First Coming Scheduled*

L. “We have now before us an outline of the whole prophecy. And, after considering the statement of results which are to follow God disciplinary dealings, we cannot but conclude that the close of the Seventy Sevens must coincide with **the end of the present order of**

things and the beginning of the Coming or Millennial Age.” G.H. Lang, *The Histories and Prophecies of Daniel*

### VIII. THE PROPHECY IS MESSIANIC (DANIEL 9:25)

25 “So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. 26 “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing.

- A. Only the Messiah could effect and accomplish the six defined purposes.
- B. Any effort to interpret vv 25 and 26a in a non-Messianic manner is an exercise in the willful obfuscation of the obvious.

### IX. THE PROPHECY TESTIFIES SPECIFICALLY TO JESUS AS THE MESSIAH (DANIEL 9:26)

26 “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

- A. The Messiah was “cut off” prior to the destruction of the city and the sanctuary.
- C. As such, this is among the most powerful and relevant passages for the purpose of revealing the truth concerning the Jesus as the Messiah to the Jewish people.**

### X. WHAT DECREE? (DAN. 9:25)

25 “So you are to know and discern that **from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince** there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

- A. The only position that literally fulfills the requirements of the passage seems to be the decree from Artaxerxes as recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-8, 17-18 given on March 5, 444 B.C.
- B. 483 sabbatical years (the first 69 weeks) were fulfilled to the day on March 30, A.D. 33, the date of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem. (This is 476 years according to the Julian Calendar). Jesus was crucified four days later on April 3, A.D. 33.
- C. Various “decrees” that have been set forth as the terminus a quo:

King	Date	Passage	Decree
Cyrus	538	2 Chron. 36:22-23;Ezra 1:1-4;5:13	Rebuild the Temple
Darius I	512	Ezra 6:1,6-12	Rebuild the Temple
Ahasuerus (Artaxerxes I)	482	Ezra 4:1-21	Stop building the City
Artaxerxes Longimanus	457	Ezra 7:11-26	Rebuild the Temple
Artaxerxes Longimanus	444	Nehemiah 2:1-8,17-18	Rebuild the City

**D. Only one decree matches or fulfills the Scriptural criterion of a decree issued specifically to rebuild the city.**

E. The best explanation of the literal chronology seems to be by Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, who generally sticks to the chronology given by Sir Robert Anderson, but makes several corrections and modification of Anderson's system.

**XI. THERE IS A GAP BETWEEN THE 69TH AND 70TH WEEK (DAN. 9:26)**

**26** *"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

- A. At the close of the 69th week, "Messiah the prince" comes to Jerusalem. At the Triumphal Entry, Jesus came as Messiah riding on a donkey and received to jubilant shouts of "Hosanna!"
- B. But "after the close of the 69 weeks, the Messiah is "cut off" and will "have nothing". After His entry into Jerusalem, four days later, Jesus was crucified and died. BUt his death was not in the 70th week. The passage simply says that it was "after the [sixty-ninth] week".
- C. "If the cutting off of the Messiah occurred in the middle of the seventieth week, it is very strange that the cutting off is said to be "after" the sixty-nine weeks. Much more naturally the text would have read "during" or "in the midst of the seventieth week, as it does in verse twenty-seven concerning the stoppage of the sacrifices. The only adequate explanation for this unusual turn of expression is that the seventieth week did not follow on the heels of the sixty-ninth, but that an interval separates the two. The crucifixion then comes "after" the

sixty-ninth but not within the seventieth because of the intervening gap. The possibility of a gap between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth weeks is established by the well-accepted OT phenomenon of prophetic perspective, in which gaps such as that between the first and second advents were not perceived.” (Robert Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation*)

- D. Non-premillennialists often argue against the premillennialist view that there is a roughly 2000 gap between the close of the 69th week and the final 70th week. Yet these same non-premillennialists who see 70 AD as the fulfillment of the prophecy also must insert a gap. Either that or they must interpret the numbers in an extremely non-literal manner. *Those are their only two choices.*
- E. “[T]here was no doubt in the minds of those who read and understood Jesus’ words in Matthew 24:15 that the abomination of desolation prophecy was fulfilled in events leading up to the temple’s destruction in A.D. 70.” (Gary Demar, *Last Days Madness*)
- F. But according to the prophecy, the coming of the Messiah to Jerusalem and his subsequent death (cutting off) marks the end of the first 69 weeks. Only one week remains after the coming and death of the Messiah. Yet Demar somehow manages to stretch the final seven years into forty years! Either that, or he must insert a gap in between the 69th and 70th week. We are not told. In order for Demar’s position to work, he must render the Bible’s use of very straightforward, simple, literal numbers in a fluid and vague manner whereby they come to essentially mean nothing. Such is the result of the non-premillennial interpretation of this passage.

## **XII. THE PREMILLENNIAL VERSUS NON-PREMILLENNIAL INTERPRETATION (DANIEL 9:27)**

### A. Premillennial interpretation:

**26** *“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come (**Antichrist**) will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

**27** *“And he (**Antichrist**) will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he (**Antichrist**) will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one (**Antichrist**) who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one (**Antichrist**) who makes desolate.*

### B. The non-Premillennial interpretation:

**26** *“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come (**Antiochus, Titus, or Antichrist**) will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war;*

desolations are determined.

**27** “And he (**Christ**) will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he (**Christ**) will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one (**Titus**) who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one (**Titus**) who makes desolate.”

- C. The premillennialist view adheres to the proper rules of grammar here while the non-Premillennial view violates the normal rules of Hebrew grammar to impose its view onto the text.

### **XIII. CONTEXTUAL ARGUMENT #1: THE ABOMINATION THAT CAUSES DESOLATION (DANIEL 9:27)**

- A. By considering the greater context of the various references to “the abomination that causes desolation” in Daniel and the Olivet Discourse, it becomes clear that the subject of Daniel 9:27 is the Antichrist.

9 Out of one of them came forth a rather **small horn** which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Beautiful Land. 10 It grew up to the host of heaven **and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth**, and it trampled them down. 11 It even magnified itself to be equal with the Commander of the host; and **it removed the regular sacrifice from Him**, and **the place of His sanctuary was thrown down**. 12 And on account of transgression **the host will be given over to the horn along with the regular sacrifice; and it will fling truth to the ground and perform its will and prosper**. 13 Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to that particular one who was speaking, “How long will the vision about the regular sacrifice apply, while **the transgression causes horror**, so as to allow both the holy place and the host to be trampled?” 14 He said to me, “For 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the holy place will be properly restored.” (Daniel 8:9-12 NASB)

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week **he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering**; and on the wing of **abominations** will come **one who makes desolate**, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.” (Daniel 9:27 NASB)

“Forces from him will arise, **desecrate the sanctuary fortress**, and **do away with the regular sacrifice**. **And they will set up the abomination of desolation**. (Daniel 11:31 NASB)

“From the time that **the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up**, there will be 1,290 days. (Daniel 12:11 NASB)

- B. Each passage features two elements:

1. The abominating, desecration, or “throwing down” of the sanctuary or temple by the Antichrist or an antichristic figure.
  2. The ceasing of offerings and sacrifice.
- C. The non-premillennialist views see these two elements being carried out by the Antichrist (or an antichristic figure) in three of these four passages, and by Christ in one (Dan. 9:27).
- D. The premillennialist view consistently sees these two elements being carried out in all four passages by the Antichrist (or an antichristic figure).

**E. Premillennialist View:**

Verse (NIV)	Abomination or Horror	Ceasing of offerings	Responsible Party
Daniel 8:9-14	“transgression causes horror”	“removed the regular sacrifice”	Antiochus / Antichrist
Daniel 9:27	“the overspreading of abominations”	“put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering”	Antichrist
Daniel 11:31	“the abomination of desolation”	“do away with the regular sacrifice”	Antiochus / Antichrist
Daniel 12:11	“the abominations of desolation”	“the regular sacrifice is abolished”	Antichrist

**F. Non-Premillennialist Views:**

Verse (NIV)	Abomination or Horror	Ceasing of offerings	Responsible Party
Daniel 8:9-14	“transgression causes horror”	“removed the regular sacrifice”	Antiochus / Antichrist
Daniel 9:27	“the overspreading of abominations”	“put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering”	Christ
Daniel 11:31	“the abomination of desolation”	“do away with the regular sacrifice”	Antiochus / Antichrist
Daniel 12:11	“the abominations of desolation”	“the regular sacrifice is abolished”	Antichrist

G. The Premillennialist view acknowledges surrounding context and is consistent. The non-Premillennial view ignores Daniel 9:27 relationship to the other Abomination of Desolation references and thus inconsistently interprets Daniel 9:27.

H. Jesus' words "The Abomination that Causes Desolation" directly quotes the phrase as it is used in the Septuagint Dan. 9:27 and 12:11.

Verse	English (NIV)	Greek (NT or LXX)
Daniel 9:27	He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will <b>put an end to sacrifice and offering.</b> And at the temple he will set up <b>an abomination that causes desolation</b> , until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."	βδέλυγμα - <i>bdelygma</i> - abomination ἐρημώσεως - <i>erēmōsis</i> - of desolation
Daniel 11:31	His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will <b>abolish the daily sacrifice.</b> Then they will set up <b>the abomination that causes desolation.</b>	βδέλυγμα - <i>bdelygma</i> - abomination ηφανισμένον - <i>aphanizō</i> - an obliterating
Daniel 12:11	From the time that <b>the daily sacrifice is abolished</b> and <b>the abomination that causes desolation</b> is set up, there will be 1,290 days.	βδέλυγμα - <i>bdelygma</i> - abomination ἐρημώσεως - <i>erēmōsis</i> - of desolation
Matthew 24:15	"So when you see standing in the holy place <b>the abomination that causes desolation</b> , 'a spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand"	βδέλυγμα - <i>bdelygma</i> - abomination ἐρημώσεως - <i>erēmōsis</i> - of desolation

I. The fact that Jesus directly quoted Daniel 9:27 and placed its fulfillment in the future as integrally connected to the "great Tribulation" rules out any suggestion that Daniel 9:27 (the abominating of the Temple and the subsequent ceasing of offerings) was fulfilled by Jesus.

#### XIV. CONTEXTUAL ARGUMENT #2: THE RESURRECTION, THE BEGINNING OF BIRTH

## **PAINS AND THREE AND A HALF WEEKS (DANIEL 9:27)**

A. Isaiah used the motif of labor pains to speak of the sufferings that would immediately precede the resurrection of the dead:

***“As a pregnant woman about to give birth writhes and cries out in her pain, so were we in your presence, LORD. We were with child, we writhed in labor, but we gave birth to wind. We have not brought salvation to the earth, and the people of the world have not come to life. But your dead will live, LORD; their bodies will rise— let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy— your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.”*** (Isaiah 26:17-19)

B. Gabriel actually cites Isaiah’s words in connection with the great tribulation:

*“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. **And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time;** and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. **Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life,** but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. (Daniel 12:1-2)*

C. The great tribulation is repeatedly referred to as half of seven years:

*I heard the man dressed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, as he raised his right hand and his left toward heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever that it would be for **a time, times, and half a time;** and as soon as they finish shattering the power of the holy people, all these events will be completed. (Daniel 12:7)*

*“Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for **forty-two months**”.* (Revelation 11:2)

*“And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for **twelve hundred and sixty days,** clothed in sackcloth.”* (Revelation 11:3)

*Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for **one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*** (Revelation 12:6)

*There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for **forty-two months** was given to him.* (Revelation 13:5)

D. Jesus divided up the last days into two periods: “The beginning of birth pains” and “the great tribulation” which would be divided by “the Abomination of Desolation”.

*“But all these things are **merely the beginning of birth pangs.**”* (Matthew 24:8)

*“Therefore when you see **the Abomination of Desolation which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet**, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. (Matthew 24:15-16)*

*“For then there will be **a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.** (Matthew 24:21)*

E. Jesus obviously interpreted Daniel 9:27 as speaking of a final seven year period. The first half is defined by “the beginning of birth pains”. This period is followed by the sign of “the Abomination of Desolation” that begins “the Great Tribulation”, or to use Isaiah’s language, the actual labor pains.

D. Paul also makes the same connection:

*“While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly **like labor pains upon a woman with child**, and they will not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief. (1 Thessalonians 5:3-4)*

E. By recognizing and identifying the various references made by Isaiah, Gabriel, Jesus, and Paul we may properly interpret and understand the prophecy of 70 weeks. We will recognize the signs and be ready. Therefore, we will not be overtaken as by a thief in the night.

F. The non-premillennialist misses the forest for the trees. It seeks to exegete Daniel 9 in isolation, while ignoring the rich mosaic of interrelated passages and even the expansion of this prophecy by Jesus and Paul.

G. Because the non-premillennialist interpretation of Daniel 9:27 fails to recognize the signs given to us, it potentially sets up its adherents to be those who are deceived by the false “peace and safety” of the Antichrist.

## **XV. CONTEXTUAL ARGUMENT #3: THE COVENANT WITH DECEPTION AND DEATH**

A. Some claim that the notion of a covenant with the Antichrist is only mentioned or alluded to in this one verse (Daniel 9:27) and nowhere else. Such claims are false.

B. The notion of Israel entering into a deceptive covenant with the Antichrist in the last days is also referred to by Isaiah:

*Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers, who rule this people who are in Jerusalem, because you have said, “**We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have made a pact. The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by, for we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception.** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone,*

*A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed.' ... **Your covenant with death will be canceled, and your pact with Sheol will not stand; When the overwhelming scourge passes through, then you become its trampling place.** (Isaiah 28:14-16, 18)*

C. The “covenant of death,” “Pact with Sheol”:

1. Made by the rulers of Israel.
2. Made with “death”.
3. Instead of trusting in the Jesus, the “tested stone” they instead rely on the covenant.
4. They enter into the covenant for the purpose of avoiding “the overwhelming (flooding) scourge”.
5. However, the covenant with “will be cancelled” or broken.
6. Instead of providing them with deliverance from the flooding scourge, they will be scourged by the flood.

D. After being scourged however, the misplaced trust of Israel will be rectified. No longer will they trust or rely on the Antichrist (Assyrian) for a false sense of security. INstead they will rely on the Lord:

*Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, **will never again rely on the one who struck them**, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. (Isaiah 10:20)*

D. Revelation also alludes to the scourging flood of Satan / the Antichrist:

*And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with **the flood**. (Revelation 12:15)*

E. The angel Gabriel also alludes to the scourging flood of Isaiah 28 when he describes the destruction of Jerusalem by the prince to come:

*“[T]he people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. **And its end will come with a flood**; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.” (Daniel 9:26b-c)*

F. Paul refers to the misplaced trust Israel will place in the covenant with the Antichrist just before the time of Jacob’s Trouble (labor pains):

*While they are saying, “**Peace and safety!**” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. (1 Thessalonians 5:3)*

G. Elsewhere, Daniel also speaks of the Antichrist’s use of deceptive peace promises to attain power:

*“And through his shrewdness **he will cause deceit to succeed** by his influence; and he will magnify himself in his heart, and **he will destroy many while they are at ease (or feel secure)**. (Daniel 8:25)*

H. Daniel even specifically mentions the deceptive alliance of the Antichrist:

*“**After an alliance is made with him he will practice deception**, and he will go up and gain power with a small force of people. (Daniel 11:23)*

## **XVI. CONCLUSION**

- A. Despite some variations in opinion concerning the *terminus a quo*, the traditional premillennialist / futurist interpretation of Daniel’s 70 weeks, and most particularly the final week and its eschatological *terminus ad quem* is best supported by the grammar and context of the passage.
- B. The non-premillennialist interpretation utilizes an inconsistent interpretation ignoring the context of Daniel’s other references to “Abomination of Desolations” as well as Jesus’ commentary on this issue.
- C. The amillennialist interpretation also ignores and distorts the clear meaning of Jesus’ allusions to the “beginning of birth pangs” and “the great tribulation” that precedes the resurrection of the righteous.
- D. Only the premillennialist view offers a reasonable interpretation and satisfactorily explains the meaning of the prophecy.
- E. While the prophecy as a whole is Messianic, we should understand the Antichrist to be the subject of v. 27.
- F. There yet remains a literal seven year period, a false covenant including the false promise of peace and security, a literal Temple, and the Abominating Desolation of that Temple.

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## **XVII. APPENDIX I: SOME COMMENTS FROM REGGIE KELLY (THE.MYSTERYOFISRAEL.ORG)**

**Question:** What is at stake in the proper interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27?

**Reggie:** There is so much that is bound up with this question that one hardly knows where to begin. I'm sure that even after I mention a few things, there will be many more that will come to mind. It is essentially what I call, "the framework of the future", and virtually everything, more or less directly depends on the right interpretation of Dan 9:24-27.

Tonight when a close Jewish friend, Gary Bergman happened to call, I mentioned to him your question concerning what I see to be "at stake" in a right interpretation of Daniel's seventieth week. The first thing out of his mouth was, "JEWISH LIVES!"

Immediately my mind went to what we have stated many times, that this is one time when the eternal salvation of the surviving remnant will depend on their physical survival, since it is only the surviving remnant that are transformed at the revelation of Jesus. It will be through the instrumentality of the predominantly gentile church, which through the lens of Daniel's seventy week prophecy, will have seen and anticipated what's about to break upon the Jewish people world wide. A prophetic church is God's servant witness that will have the key of interpretation for Israel in the day of their national calamity and flight into the wilderness from the face of the Antichrist. Needless to say, the church's readiness for this will be greatly decided by what they believe about the Daniel's seventieth week, particularly the last half.

But the first half of the week will be no less crucial preparation for the last half. Even if one does not agree with our view that Dan 11:23-30 is speaking of the first half of the week, with the second half starting in Dan 11:31, instructed believers will know well enough that they have entered the final week of Daniel. This will be clear to them because of the false peace and the presence of the daily sacrifice. This peace delusion will be of such a kind as to relax Israel's vigilance. In that way, it is unlike any other kind of provisional peace arrangement. Scriptures that indicate this are, Isa 28:15, 18 with Dan 11:23-24; Eze 38:8, 11, 14; 1Thes 5:3. These things will not be done in a corner, magnifying accountability and calculated to expose the disposition of the heart.

That this false security, unprecedented in Israel's history, prevails all throughout the first half of the week is further indicated in light of the invasion that comes so unexpectedly upon

Israel, as depicted in Mt 24:15-16; Rev 12:6,12-15. It is a church that has expected this, chiefly from Daniel's prophecy, that will be prepared to receive and escort Jews to places of refuge and provision.

Dan 9:24-27 also gives the covenantal and Judeo-centricity of the end times (Dan 9:24; 10:14; 12:1), as particularly built around God's controversy with His people and no less with all nations through them (Lev 26:25; Mic 6:2; Isa 34:8). It underscores the chronological determinism by which the heavenly war is waged that ends with nothing short of the return of the natural branches to their divinely appointed place as the theocratic head of the nations.

Another crucial divine objective that is bound up with a prophetic church's sure and certain knowledge of the times and the divine purpose underlying the events circumscribed by Daniel's prophecy is God's intention to bring the body into fullness of power and perfection in love (Dan 11:32-35; 12:3, 10; Jn 17:21; Eph 4:13; Rev 12:10-11). This is where God is taking the church. I call it "the final straightening of the church," in analogy to Jesus' word to Peter that when he would become old another would take him where he would not have gone.

When the time is certain, and it is obvious that the church's greatest trial is at hand, there will be great urgency and corporate travail. Because God's apocalyptic determinism does not operate independently of the priestly function of the intercessor, it is my strong assurance that the godly remnant of those days will function as a kind of corporate Daniel that will be instrumental in Michael's victory over Satan at the middle of the week, in significant analogy to the way that Michael came to Daniel's aid and dislodged the restraining prince of Persia.

The sure and certain progress of the first half of the week will therefore function as a kind of constraint, emptying the true remnant of the last residue of confidence in the flesh, the power of the veil, which holds back the power and anointing that we see, not only in the two witnesses, but in the entire company of the *maskilim* who wax mighty in the Spirit. This will also be crucial in how the body of Christ, armed with the most astonishing evidence of fulfilled prophecy and miraculous anointing will, through their witness, turn a multitude to righteousness that will be greater than human ability to count (Rev 7:9,14).

So for more reasons than time permits me to develop, I see the first half of the week as a kind of birthing canal of the church's great launch into its final fulness of power and anointing for the martyr witness of the last 3 1/2 years (Dan 11:32-33; 12:3; Rev 11:3; 12:10-11).

Another crucial issue at stake is how the covenant lens of Dan 9:24-27 sets the context. Taking into account the whole background of the covenant eschatology of Moses and the prophets that resolves into the transition of the great tribulation and day of the Lord, the seventy week prophecy shows the nature of the divine contention that puts Israel into the forefront as a source of ultimate provocation of the nations. Through Israel, God will test the hearts of the nations that will ultimately bring them into the valley of decision, both literally and symbolically.

As an aside: The question of Jewish divine right to the Land of Israel would be decided

beyond dispute if the "holy covenant" of Dan 11:28, 30 were not relegated to antiquity and completely dissociated from the covenant of Dan 9:27 that the Antichrist confirms with many (not necessarily "many" Jews, but more likely many nations or heads of state).

The crisis of Jerusalem will be at the heart of the controversy that plunges the world into the unequalled tribulation. We can imagine how God will use this to speak to Israel concerning the nature of the only righteousness that can avoid the abiding curse of the covenant, i.e., the righteousness of Messiah. This is because Daniel's last week should be seen as the last stage of the discipline of the covenant that must continue until all that falls short of the perfect standard of the law is answered in the coming in of the 'everlasting righteousness.' Through the crisis of Zion, God will plead with the nations concerning the unchangeable authority of His covenant word that cannot be frustrated, even through the perennial faithlessness of the larger part of the nation.

Through the controversy of Zion, all nations will be confronted with God's covenant Word for which all are accountable to know and honor, regardless of the passage of time. The polarization that these issues will provoke will be the occasion for the stumbling and final apostasy of the many that will not receive the love of the truth, but continue to resist and oppose in the face of the most prolific evidence of miracle and prophecy since apostolic times.

In short, Dan 9:24-27 represents the covenant centrality of the divine purpose in Christ and the great eschatological provocation by which God will contend with all flesh over the great vexation of election, the nature of the only righteousness that counts, the authority of His Word and His rule. All of these things are bound up with how God will use the revelation contained in this text to conclude the age and vindicate His covenant kingdom purposes in the sight of angels and nations. It is the 'crux interpretum' by which the whole vista of the end time drama unfolds. I used to say that the Downfall of the Devil is in the Details of Daniel. God has invested His own strategy for His return and the finishing of the mystery of God in the details of this great prophecy, as the chronological key to the entire eschatology of the end. These are just a few of the things that come immediately to mind. I'm sure there are many more I will think of later.

You'd agree that hardly more could be at stake, particularly when the time comes. I leave with this precious quote from G.H. Lang's, "The Histories and Prophecies of Daniel":

"When this agreement shall have been confirmed, the wise will know that the final seven years has commenced, that the end of days are present, that the consummation of the age has arrived. They will expect the violation of the covenant after three years and an half, and will not be overwhelmed with surprise, having been told beforehand by THIS prophecy. Then will it be seen in fullness that the knowledge of prophetic scripture is simply priceless." (pg. 140).

Your friend in the fray, Reggie

