

God's Planned Future

(5) Daniel's 70th week prophecy

Daniel 9:24-27

As we enter Revelation chapter 6, we have noticed that John's attention in chapters 4-5 is fixed on Christ as He begins reclaiming the earth by unsealing the scroll handed to Him by Yahweh. From Revelation 6:1 onwards, there is an increase in Old Testament prophecies being fulfilled as Christ unleashes judgment upon the rebellious world. Into this scene Daniel's prophecies fit into God's prophetic plan, particularly Daniel 9:24-27.

In this lesson we shall briefly give thought to the chronology of events in Daniel's 70 week prophecy and observe how this prophecy fit with the Revelation.

To start with, Daniel tells us that the angel Gabriel appeared to him. Daniel 9:22, *He (Gabriel) made me understand, speaking with me and saying, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding.*

God's intention was for Gabriel to explain the 70 week prophecy in such a way that Daniel would understand it and not be confused by it. The vision Daniel received was to

bring clarity, not confusion. It was to bring security, not fear or doubts. The prophetic vision was to be an affirmation of the sovereign certainty God gives when looking to the future. It's intended to fill God's people with hope, and trust in the trustworthiness of the Almighty who controls the future.

But first, here is the text of Daniel 9:24-27 (ESV):

“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.²⁷ And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the

wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

Understanding Daniel’s prophecy language:

While the English word “week” always means “a period of seven days”, the Hebrew word (שָׁבֻעַ) is less specific, because it only means “a period of seven.” That’s why some modern translations (e.g. NIV) use the word “sevens” instead of “weeks.” The word “weeks” (or “sevens”) used by Daniel speaks of “periods of seven years.”

This seems strange by our modern English way of thinking, but it's not unusual in the biblical context. Israel observed cycles of seven years as well as cycles of seven days throughout the Old Testament (e.g. Gen 29:20; 41:27; Lev 25:8; Deu 15:12; 31:10; Jdg 6:1; 2Ch 36:21).

What’s more, when Daniel speaks of “years,” they are to be understood as *biblical years*, that is, a “year” that has 360 days and NOT our modern 365 days.

This, coupled with the corresponding “*biblical months*” which have 30 days, and NOT our modern floating 28 to 31 days in a month.

So, in our calculations, the 360 day year is preferred in order to be consistent with other related prophecies that refer to a specific number of days, months, or years (Dan 7:25; 12:11; Rev 11:2-3; 12:6, 14).

Daniel's prophecy divides the 490 years into three smaller units: one of 49 years, one of 434 years, and one of 7 years. Daniel was writing in terms of '*weeks of years*' – in other words...

- **Dan 9:24** 70 weeks (70 x seven) = 490 years total.
- **Dan 9: 25b** 7 weeks (7 x seven) = 49 years to rebuild Jerusalem in Daniel's time.
- **Dan 9:25c** 62 weeks (62 x seven) = 434 years until an anointed one is cut off (Christ's death), 49 + 434 = 483 years.
- **Dan 9:26b** "after the 62 weeks" there is a gap, **a non-defined period of time from the death of Jesus to the final week**. We are living in this gap period now, waiting for the final week of 7 years to happen in the future.
- **Dan 9:27b** The final "week" of 7 years is further divided into 2 halves; with 2 lots of 3 ½ years each.
- **The final "seven"** of Daniel is what we call the tribulation period beginning at Revelation 6:1. This period has not happened yet.

Chronology of Events:

Daniel 9:24. In 538 B.C. Daniel receives prophetic revelation concerning six things that will occur as a result of a seventy week program (490-year period). Importantly, these six things are related to *“your people and your holy city”* (Jerusalem). The context demands that this refers to Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

- 1) finish the transgression (Fulfilled)
- 2) put an end to sin (Fulfilled)
- 3) atone for iniquity (Fulfilled)
- 4) bring in everlasting righteousness
- 5) seal both vision and prophet
- 6) anoint a most holy place [i.e. temple]

The starting point for this 490 year period was the decree to restore the city of Jerusalem which occurred around 444 B.C. according to Nehemiah 2:1-8. From this decree to restore the city of Jerusalem until Jesus the Messiah and Prince, there will be a 49 year period followed by a 434 year period which together is a total of 483 years. The 49 year period culminated in the building of the city with plaza and moat despite difficulties caused by those who opposed the project. Then the coming of Jesus official messianic ministry

came, which included His death. This occurred in the early A.D. 30s, 483 years after the Nehemiah 2:1-8 decree.

Daniel 9:25: The first 69 weeks (483 years) expired in the early A.D. 30's with the ministry of Jesus the Messiah.

Daniel 9:26: After the 69th week (483 year period), but before the 70th week, the killing of the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans occurred. The killing of Jesus happened in the early A.D. 30s and the destruction of Jerusalem occurred in 70A.D.

After 483 years (49 + 434 years) Jesus the Messiah will be cut off (killed) and have nothing. He will not establish His kingdom at this time. This killing of Jesus the Messiah on the cross happens **after the 483 years expires**, not at the end of the 483rd year or in the beginning of the 484th year.

Thus, there is a gap between the expiration of the 69th week and the start of the 70th week. Another event that occurs between the 69th and 70th week is the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the Jewish temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. This proves that there is a gap between the end of the 69th week and the beginning of the 70th week since this

event occurred almost forty years after the 69th week expired.

Daniel 9:27: 1 week (seven) = 7 years. This is the final 'seven' in Daniel's prophecy.

In the coming 70th week of Daniel, which is still future for us, the coming evil prince [i.e. Antichrist] will be from the people who destroyed Jerusalem (the Romans, Dan 9:26). He will make a seven year covenant of peace (i.e. one week) with the people of Israel. At the midway point (3 ½ years) he will put a stop to Jewish worship in the temple and bring desolation to the temple (Dan 9:27; 11:31, 36; 12:11; Mt 24:9, 15-21; Lk 21:20; 2Th 2:3-4; Rev 11:2).

Yet he, the Antichrist, will be destroyed in fulfilment of Daniel 9:27b *...until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator*. The desolation of the temple in the 70th week of Daniel is different from the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple predicted in Daniel 9:26, which occurred between the 69th and 70th week. They are two separate events. Now we are ready to step into God's timeline in Revelation 6:1 with the understanding of how Revelation fits into God's prophetic plan.