

DANIELS '70 WEEK' PROPHECY

Bible Reading: Daniel 9:24-27.

Aim: To understand the Seventy Week Prophecy as a proof of Divine inspiration of the Bible, and as the key to unlocking all Bible prophecies of Christ's Second Coming.

Introduction:

God's program would be finished in seventy heptads, or seventy sevens of years. The KJV calls heptads "weeks".

History interprets this as 70 x 7 prophetic years = 490 years.

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people (Israel) and upon thy holy city (Jerusalem)". (v.24).

Today, people think in terms of tens (e.g. decades). Daniel's people thought in terms of sevens (heptads).

For example:

a) Seven days in one week.

b) Every seventh year was a sabbath rest year (Leviticus 25:1-7).

c) Seven 'sevens' = 7 x 7 = 49 years brought Israel to the year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8-12).

d) 70 x 7 years is a span of 490 years.

After the 490 years have finished for Israel and Jerusalem, God will have completed six things.

(1) WHAT DO EACH OF THESE SIX THINGS MEAN?

1. To finish the transgression, of Israel after 490 years. Israel's sin of disobedience will be brought to an end at Christ's second coming, when she repents and receives Christ as her Saviour and Messiah.

Christ's work on the cross has made possible His future 'finishing' of Israel's transgression.

2. God will make an end of sins.

Christ would be punished for Israel's and the world's sins on the cross. At Christ's second coming He will remove Israel's sins (Ezekiel 37:23; Romans 11:20).

3. God will make reconciliation for iniquity.

Reconciliation = atone = to cover, to expiate. God's final atonement for Israel's sin (iniquity) is when she repents at Christ's second coming, as atonement provision has been made at the cross.

4. God, being satisfied with Christ's death, will bring in everlasting righteousness.

God will establish a 1000 year kingdom characterised by righteousness (Isaiah 60:21; Jeremiah 23:5-6).

5. God will seal up the vision and prophecy.

All God's promises for Israel will come to pass in the millennial kingdom. Until they are fulfilled, prophecies are unsealed. When fulfilled, they are sealed (Hebrew (2856) - closed up, make an end).

6. God will anoint the most Holy.

This refers to the consecration of the millennial Temple that Christ builds (Ezekiel 43:1-5, Zechariah 6:12,13), not by literal oil, but by the presence of the Shekinah glory cloud. The Tabernacle, altar, and all the holy vessels were anointed with oil (Exodus 29:36; 30:26-28).

The anointing of the most holy is not a reference to Christ's anointing. Rather the 'most holy' in the Hebrew are technical words that are always translated in the Old Testament by the phrase 'the Holy of Holies.'

(2) IMPORTANCE OF THE SEVENTY WEEK PROPHECY

The Daniel 9:24-27 prophecy is important because:

1. It proves the truth of the Bible. Because the first 69 weeks finished exactly as predicted to the very day (173,880 days after March 5, 444 BC to March 30, 33 AD), this is an unanswerable argument for the Divine inspiration of the Bible. Only the all-knowing God could predict the very day that Messiah would ride into Jerusalem to present Himself as the Prince of Israel.

2. It shatters the critics' arguments who reject the early date of the book of Daniel of 540 BC and place it about 150 BC, seeking to deny the clear predictions of Daniel 11 that were fulfilled from 330 BC to 167 BC. The critics are troubled by these predictive prophecies in Daniel 11 because this proves the Divine authorship of the Bible.

Question: If Daniel was written in 150 BC as the critics claim, how did it correctly prophecy the date of Christ's entry to Jerusalem as March 30, 33 AD?

3. It disproves the allegorical Amillennial theory of interpreting prophecy, and proves the Premillennial position of Christ returning to earth for literal Israel at the end of a literal seven year tribulation, described in Revelation 6-19. If the first 69 weeks are literally 173,880 days, so the future 7 year tribulation (1 week) will be literally 2520 days (360 x 7).

4. It is the time key to understand all New Testament prophecy. Revelation 11:2-3; 12:6,14; and 13:5 describe a future 3 1/2 year period (1260 days, or 42 weeks) being the last half of the seven year tribulation, which equates to the last half of the 70th week

(Daniel 9:27).

(3) BACKGROUND

While Daniel was captive in Babylon from 605-537 BC, as he was praying for Israel and confessing their sin, the angel Gabriel came to give him the 70 week prophecy. Daniel knew that the 70 year captivity predicted by Jeremiah in Jeremiah 25:11,12 was nearing completion, so he asked about Israel's imminent return to their land. Gabriel's message was that Israel's ultimate return to the land would not be after the 70 year Babylonian captivity, but after the 70 week period stated in Daniel 9:24-27.

(4) MAIN FEATURES OF THE 70 WEEK PROPHECY

1. It deals with Daniel's people (Israel) and city (Jerusalem). 'Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city...' Daniel 9:24.
2. Two different princes are mentioned:
 - a) Messiah the Prince, and
 - b) The prince that shall come (v.26).
3. The time period is 70 weeks, made up of 7 weeks + 62 weeks + 1 week (v.25,27).
4. It starts with 'the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.' (v.25).
5. The end of the 69 weeks will be marked by the appearance of Messiah as the Prince of Israel. (v.25).
6. After the 69 weeks, two predictions are that:
 - a) Messiah the Prince will be 'cut off', and
 - b) Jerusalem will be destroyed by the people of another prince coming in the future. (v.26).
7. The 70th week begins with a covenant being made between the 'prince that shall come' and the Jewish nation for a period of 1 week (v.27).
8. In the midst of this 70th week, the coming prince will (1) break this treaty, (2) cause the Jewish sacrifices to cease, and (3) will greatly persecute the Jews to the end of the 70th week (v.27).
9. Great blessings for Israel will come when the 70 weeks are fully completed (v.24).

(5) MEANING OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

'Week' in Hebrew means 'a period of seven' or 'heptad'. It is used 20 times in the Old Testament as follows:

1. 3 times it means 'a unit of seven' days (Ezekiel 45:21, Daniel 10:2,3).
2. 6 times it means 'normal 7-day week' (Genesis 29:27,28; Leviticus 12:5; Deuteronomy 16:9; Jeremiah 5:24).
3. 5 times it means the 'Feast of Weeks' (Exodus 34:22; Numbers 28:26; Deut. 16:10,16; II Chronicles 8:13).
4. 6 times it means a 'unit of seven' without reference to days (Daniel 9:24-27). In Daniel 9:24-27, '1 week' refers to a 'unit of 7 years'. Hence Daniel is discussing 70 'units of seven years' or 490 years.

We know this because:

1. In the context, Daniel had been thinking in years, and in multiples of 70 years. 'The number of years....seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem.' Daniel 9:1,2.
2. Each year of Babylonian captivity represented one 7-year cycle of past history where Israel had not observed the seventh year rest. Thus the context is years, not days. The 70 year captivity was due to Israel violating 70 sabbatical years over a 490 year period in the past. Now Daniel predicted 70 units of seven years decreed for another 490 years into Israel's future.
3. It is impossible to fit the events discussed in 9:24-27 into 490 days, or 490 weeks (regardless of any starting point), only 490 years. Jerusalem could not be rebuilt and destroyed in 490 days (1 yr 3 months) or 490 weeks (9 years).
4. In 9:27, the covenant that will be confirmed for one 'unit of seven' will be broken in the middle. If 'weeks' means 'units of 7 years', this means that the covenant would be broken at the 3 1/2 year point. This fits perfectly well with the 'time, times and half a time' in Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14, the 1260 days (Rev. 12:6; 11:3) and the 42 months (Rev. 11:2).
5. The Hebrew word for 'weeks' means years in the Mishnah (Baba Metziah ix. 10; Sanhedrin v1).

Note: According to the false 'Day-Year' theory used by SDAs and JW's, they would have us believe that the first 69 1/2 weeks equal 486 1/2 years (490 - 3 1/2 years). But the last 1/2 week they claim equals 1260 years. This is contradictory and inconsistent. The last 1/2 week must also be literally 1260 days (Rev. 12:6), if the first 69 weeks were 173,880 days, as proven by history.

Question: If these 70 'weeks' consist of 490 years, what is the length of the year?

Answer: Our year is 365.24219879 days. The prophetic year of scripture is 360 days (12 months of 30 days each), as seen from:

- i) **History:** The Flood lasted from the 17th day of the 2nd month (Genesis 7:11) to the 17th day of the 7th month (Genesis 8:4). This is 5 months. Genesis 7:24 and 8:3 gives this same period as being 150 days. This gives 30 days in each month, or 360 days in each

year.

ii) **Prophecy:**

Daniel 9:27 describes the Roman prince persecuting the Jews for 3 1/2 years.

Daniel 7:25 describes this Roman prince persecuting the Jews for 'a time, and times, and half a time' (3 1/2 years).

Revelation 13:4-7 describes this same ruler persecuting the Jews for 42 months (i.e. 3 1/2 years).

Revelation 12:13,14 describes this persecution as lasting 'a time, and times, and half a time' (i.e. 3 1/2 years).

Revelation 12:6 describes this persecution of the Jews as lasting 1260 days (i.e. 3 1/2 years).

Hence we have 3 1/2 years stated as being 1260 days or 42 months.

Hence the length of the prophetic year in the 70 week prophecy is 360 days (1260 days/3.5 years = 360 days/yr).

(6) WHEN DID THE 70 WEEKS BEGIN?

'Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.' 9:25.

Daniel shows the starting point of the 70 week prophecy to be the issuing of the command to restore and build Jerusalem, where the street and the wall will be built in troublous times.

Notice 3 things about Jerusalem's rebuilding:

- 1) 'Restore and build' means to restore Jerusalem completely to its former state.
- 2) 'Street and wall' mean a complete restoration.
- 3) Rebuilding the city would be in troublesome times. Can we locate this commandment and fix its date accurately?

(7) WHICH COMMAND IS REFERRED TO?

The 70 'sevens' would begin with the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. This decree was the fourth of four decrees issued by Persian rulers to the Jews. The decree we want concerns rebuilding the city of Jerusalem, not the house of God or the Temple.

1. Cyrus' decree on October 29, 539 BC was to rebuild the **temple**, not the city.

'In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia....he made a proclamation....saying... "All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up." II Chron. 36:22,23; Ezra 1:1-4, 5:13,17.

This decree concerned the return of Jewish captives, and rebuilding the temple. It said nothing about a complete restoration of the city.

Keil (p.365), Leupold (p.417-26) and E.J. Young falsely conclude that this decree marks the start of the 70 weeks.

E.J. Young in 'The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary', p202, states:

"This edict [of Cyrus], furthermore, was issued in fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah, and it speaks expressly of going to Jerusalem and building there the temple- the first and most important step in rebuilding the city. In this connection also one should consider the prophecies of Isaiah 44:28 in which Cyrus is described as 'saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid'. Likewise Isaiah 45:13 declares of Cyrus, 'he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives.' Lastly, it should be noted that the book of Ezra pictures Jerusalem as an existing city (c.f. Ezra 4:12, 9:9)".

It cannot be denied that this was the year in which the effects of the going forth of a word began to appear in history.

This may seem convincing, but there are 3 problems with this view:

a) Cyrus' decree in Ezra 1:1-4 refers to the rebuilding of the temple and not to the city. We agree that there were inhabitants, and a city was built in Cyrus' time as predicted in Isaiah 44:28 and 45:13. It was not a city that could defend itself as described in Daniel 9:25. Young quotes two passages to support his view:

Ezra 4:12,13,16 is a letter to the king from Ezra's enemies. They emphasised rebuilding the city, but Ezra was rebuilding the temple in reality.

Ezra 9:9 'to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.'

This was written in 457 BC, and refers to Artaxerxes reign (464-423 BC), and not to Cyrus' reign.

Also, the Hebrew word for 'wall' is a fence used to surround a vineyard, and not a military defensive wall. The only other mention of walls in Ezra are the temple walls (Ezra 5:3,8,9), not city walls. Hence, neither of these passages is in the context of Cyrus' decree, nor do they refer to building a defensive wall.

b) We must differentiate between starting to rebuild a city (Cyrus' decree) and restoring a city to its former state (Artaxerxes' decree in Nehemiah). For example, Japan rebuilt itself after WWII, but that is quite different from restoring it to its pre-WWII military state.

c) If we wrongly accept the 70 weeks as beginning with Cyrus' decree (539 BC), then

Messiah the Prince should have arrived in 63 BC (i.e. after 69 weeks = 69 x 7 x {360/365.25} of our years, which is 476 years later.

539 BC plus 476 yrs gives 63 BC.

2. Darius I decree in 512 BC

This decree confirmed Cyrus' decree to rebuild the house of God. Tatnai, Governor of Judah, questioned the Jews' right to rebuild the temple (Ezra 5:3-17). Darius searched out Cyrus' decree, and then issued a decree himself in 512 BC confirming Cyrus' original decree (Ezra 6:1-12).

'Then Darius the king made a decree... "Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God.'" (Ezra 6:1,7).

'This house was finished in the sixth year of Darius.' (6:15).

Hence Darius' decree is not the starting date of the 70 weeks because:

- a) It specifically refers to the temple, and not to the city.
- b) It was not a new decree, but only confirmed Cyrus' decree.

3. Artaxerxes Longimanus' decree to Ezra in 457 BC

This decree concerns finances for animal sacrifices at the temple.

'I (Artaxerxes King of Persia) make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel... which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee... carry the silver and gold... let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven, to beautify the house of the Lord at Jerusalem.' Ezra 7:11, 13, 15, 23 and 27.

Each of these first 3 decrees concerns building the Temple/ House of God at Jerusalem, not the city. Since an unwalled city was no threat to a military power, a temple could be built with no threat to the Persian government.

This decree encouraged more Jews to return to Jerusalem, and it helped the temple worship. Some claim that this decree (457 BC) was the starting point of the 70 week prophecy, and that the end of the 69 weeks was 27 AD (marking the start of Christ's ministry). They claim the middle of the 70th week to be Christ's crucifixion in 30 AD. They claim 33 AD to be the end of the 70th week marked by Stephen's death, and Paul's conversion. (Their calculation is 457 BC + 490 of our years = 33 AD). This is wrong because they have ignored the 360 day prophetic year, and failed to deduct 1 year in going from 1 BC to 1 AD.

This theory is wrong because:

- i) This decree says nothing about rebuilding the city, but only discusses temple worship.
- ii) To have the 69 weeks end at the start of Christ's ministry in 27 AD is wrong, because:
 - The cutting off of the Messiah (Daniel 9:26) cannot describe the descent of the Holy Spirit on Christ at the start of His ministry, and
 - Christ began His ministry in 29 AD, not 27 AD (see H.W. Hoehner, p.29-44).
- iii) What does 'confirming the covenant' mean in Daniel 9:27? If it refers to Christ, what covenant did Christ confirm at the start of His ministry, and how did Christ break the covenant at His crucifixion? It does not fit the facts.
- iv) To say that the middle of the 70th week refers to Christ's crucifixion in 30 AD is wrong because:
 - The sacrifices did not cease at Christ's crucifixion, and
 - 33 AD is the correct date of Christ's crucifixion, not 30 AD.
- v) To say that the 70 weeks ended in 33 AD with Stephen's death and Paul's conversion is pure guesswork. Daniel 9:27 and Acts 8,9 never even imply this.

4. Artaxerxes Longimanus' decree to Nehemiah in March 5, 444 BC in Nehemiah 2:1-8

At this date, Artaxerxes granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem's city walls.

King: 'For what dost thou make request?' Nehemiah 2:4.

Nehemiah: 'That thou would send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.' (Nehemiah 2:5).

'A letter unto Asaph....for the wall of the city....And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.' (Nehemiah 2:8).

This decree is the one prophesied by Daniel (9:25) that starts the 70 week prophecy, for these reasons:

- i) This clearly refers to the restoration of the city (2:3,5) and of the city gates and walls (2:3,8).
- ii) King Artaxerxes wrote a letter to Asaph to supply materials to rebuild the walls (2:3,8).
- iii) No later decrees were given by Persian kings to rebuild Jerusalem.
- iv) The book of Nehemiah and Ezra 4:7-23 teach that the walls were restored in distressing circumstances, as predicted by Daniel (Daniel 9:25).
- v) The walls were broken down (Nehemiah 2:13), and the gates were burned (Nehemiah 2:17) when Nehemiah visited Jerusalem. No earlier decree had restored the city walls and gates.

(8) WHAT DATE WAS THE DECREE?

Nehemiah 1:1 states that Nehemiah heard of Jerusalem's broken walls and burned gates (1:3) in the month of Chisleu (November/December) in Artaxerxes' twentieth year.

Then later in Artaxerxes' 20th year in the month Nisan (March/April), Nehemiah was

granted permission to restore the city and to build its walls (2:1) (Why was March after November in the same year? Because Nehemiah used a year starting at Tishri, which started at September).

Question: What year did Artaxerxes' rule begin?

Answer: Artaxerxes came to the throne when his father died on December 17, 465 BC ('The Fifth Century Jewish Calendar at Elephantine', S.H. Horn and L.H. Weed, Journal of Near Eastern studies, XIII (Jan. 1954), p 4, 20, 9).

Artaxerxes' first year of reign would be Nisan 464 to Nisan 463, since the Persian year started at Nisan (March).

Therefore, Artaxerxes' 20th year would be 445 BC. The report to Nehemiah (1:1) occurred in Chisleu (Nov./Dec.) 445 BC. The decree of Artaxerxes (2:1) occurred in Nisan (March/April) 444 BC. See the following chart.

Nehemiah 2:1 does not specify which day of Nisan the decree was given. The crescent of the new moon would have appeared at about 10pm on Nisan 1, 444 BC (March 4), late enough to be missed. On March 5, 444 BC the new moon crescent would have been visible early to all. Since no day is given in Nisan in the Bible, Jewish custom would understand the day to be the first day of a visible new moon crescent, March 5, 444 BC, which was the date of the decree.

(9) WHEN DID THE 69 WEEKS END?

The 7 weeks and the 62 weeks are continuous, making a total of 69 weeks between Artaxerxes' decree to restore Jerusalem, and the coming of Messiah the Prince. (See 'Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ' by H.W. Hoehner, p129-131).

'After 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself...' Daniel 9:26.

In Christ's first coming, He would not receive His kingdom promised in the Old Testament.

Therefore the 69 weeks (7+62) would end with Christ's entry to Jerusalem on Monday March 30, 33 AD, then Christ would be killed.

Christ died on Friday, Nisan 14 in 33 AD (Friday April 3, 33 AD in a Julian Calendar), according to H.W. Hoehner, in his excellent book 'Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ'.

A prophetic year is 360 days in length, because:

i) Ancient countries of India, Persia, Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, South America and China, all had 12 months of 30 days each, thus giving a 360 day year.

ii) The 70th week of 7 years (Daniel 9:27) will be broken in the middle, making 1260 days, or 42 months, or 3 1/2 years (Revelation 11,12). This gives a 30 day month, or a 360 day year.

iii) The 5 months of Flood waters (Genesis 7:11 and 8:4) are equated to 150 days (Genesis 7:24 and 8:3). This gives a 30 day month or 360 day year.

Having found that 1) The 'weeks' are years,

2) The length of the prophetic year is 360 days, and

3) The 70 weeks began on March 5, 444 BC, we may calculate the date of Christ's triumphal entry.

4) Number of days in 69 weeks = 69 x 7yrs x 360 days = 173,880 days.

5) Number of years from March 5, 444 BC to March 30, 33 AD = 444 + 33 - 1 = 476 years.

(Note: subtract 1 year, because only 1 year expired from 1 BC to 1 AD).

Number of days from March 5 (Artaxerxes' decree) to March 30 (Christ entering Jerusalem on donkey) = 25 days.

Question: How many days from March 5, 444 BC (Artaxerxes' decree) to March 30, 33 AD (the day Christ entered Jerusalem on a donkey to proclaim Himself king)?

Answer: Number of days in 476 years = 476 years x 365.24219879 days/yr = 173,855.28662404 days = 173,855 days, 6 hours, 52 minutes, 44 seconds.

Number of days from March 5 to March 30 = 25 days.

Therefore, the total number of days = 173,855 + 25 = 173,880 days.

This proves that the 173,880 days predicted in the 69 weeks between Artaxerxes' decree and the Coming of Messiah the Prince, equals the same number of days that actually elapsed from March 5, 444 BC to March 30, 33 AD, the day of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

The 483 Years in the Jewish and Gregorian Calendars.

Jewish Calendar Gregorian Calendar

(360 days per year) (365 days a year)

$(7 \times 7) + (62 \times 7)$ years = 483 years 444 B.C. to A.D. 33 = 476 years*

483 years 476 years

x 360 days x 365 days

173,880 days 173,740 days

+ 116 days in leap years**

+ 24 days (March 5- 30)

173,880 days

* Since only one year expired between 1 B.C. and A.D. 1, the total is 476 years, not 477

years.

** A total of 476 years divided by four (a leap year every four years) gives 119 additional days. But three days must be subtracted from 119 because centennial years are not leap years, though every 400th year is a leap year.

(10) NEW TESTAMENT VERIFICATION OF THIS DAY

March 30, 33 AD is therefore definitely fixed as the end of the 69 weeks, and the date of Christ's triumphal entry to Jerusalem on a 'foal of an ass' to offer Himself as Messiah the Prince and King of Israel.

Christ knew that this was the day predicted in Daniel 9:25, from His words in Luke 19:28-44, especially verse 42 'this thy day' and verse 44 'because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.'

'And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, 'If thou had known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes... they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.' Luke 19:41,42,44.

Notice these details taking place on Monday, March 30, 33 AD:

1. Jesus, knowing that this was the last day of the 69th week, sends his disciples to find a 'colt the foal of an ass' upon which He would ride as King into Jerusalem. This fulfilled the prophecy in Zechariah 9:9 given in 487 BC:

'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.'

2. The whole multitude of the disciples, understanding the meaning, shouted 'Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the LORD.' (Psalm 118:22-26).

3. Jesus now commends the disciples' shouts, and rebukes the Pharisees' protest, saying: 'If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.' v.40.

4. Because Jesus foreknew that the Pharisees and Jerusalem would reject Him as King and Messiah, Jesus wept over the city, saying:

'If thou had known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!' Luke 19:42.

Question: What day was Jesus referring to?

Answer: Israel's day on which their Messiah the Prince would present himself as King to Israel, 173,880 days exactly after March 5, 444 BC.

Question: What were 'the things which belong unto thy peace'?

Answer: The same 6 things mentioned in Daniel 9:24. But now for a time these things are to be hid from Israel's eyes, their enemies the Romans will conquer them, destroying their city Jerusalem and Temple. This happened in 70 AD. Why? 'Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.' Luke 19:44.

The exact fulfilment of this prophecy proves the accuracy of Daniel, the inspiration of the Bible, and the truth of Jesus Christ as Saviour. Only God can predict to the very day 'things that are not yet done.' Isaiah 46:10.

So the 173,880 days finished the very day that Christ entered Jerusalem on a colt to offer Himself as Messiah the Prince to Israel, which was Monday, Nisan 10 (March 30), 33 AD.

Only 4 days later on Friday, Nisan 14 (April 3), 33 AD, Jesus was cut off, or crucified.

March 5, What day and year was 173,880 days after March 5, 444 B.C.?

444 BC

BC 444 443 442 441 440 430 425

19 years

425 415 405 400 25 years

400 390 380 375 25 years

375 365 355 350 25 years

350 340 330 325 25 years

325 315 305 300 25 years

300 290 280 275 25 years

275 265 255 250 25 years

250 240 230 225 25 years

225 215 205 200 25 years

200 190 180 175 25 years

175 165 155 150 25 years

150 140 130 125 25 years

125 115 105 100 25 years

100 90 80 75 25 years

75 65 55 50 25 years

50 40 30 25 25 years

25 15 5 4 3 2 1 1 AD 25 years

1 A.D 11 A.D 21 A.D 26 AD 25 years

26 27 28 29 30 31 32 **33** 7 years

Messiah came March 30, 33AD 476 years

469 470 471 472 473 474 475 **476**

- Artaxerxes' command to restore and build Jerusalem March 5, 444 B.C.
- Coming of Messiah the Prince after 69 weeks = $69 \times 7 \times 360$ days = 173,880 days
- Number of Gregorian ("our") years = 173,880 days or 476.06766 our years 365.2422 days/yr
- 476 years after March 5, 444 B.C. = 33 A.D according to chart above
- Number of days from March 5 to Messiah the Prince's coming = 0.06766 of a year \times 365.2422 days/year = 24.7 days, approximately 25 days
- Therefore Messiah came on March 5 + 25 days = March 30, 33A.D.

(11) WHY THE GAP BETWEEN THE 69TH AND 70TH WEEK?

March 5, 444 B.C. March 30, A.D. 33

Nisan 1 of Artaxerxes' 20th Year Triumphal Entry on Nisan 10, A.D. 33

Nehemiah 2:1-8 Luke 19:28-40

69 WEEKS CHURCH 70th WEEK

AGE*

$69 \times 7 \times 360 = 173,880$ days 1/2 Week 1/2 Week

March 5, 444 B.C. + 173,880 days = March 30, A.D. 33

Verification Rationale for 360-Day Years:

444 B.C. to A.D. 33 = 476 years 1/2 week Daniel 9:27

Time, times and 1/2 time Dan. 7:25, 12:7.

$476 \text{ years} \times 365.24219879 \text{ days} = 173,855 \text{ days}$ Rev. 12:14.

+ days between March 5 & 30 ___ 25 days 1,260 days Rev. 12:6, 11:3.

173,880 days 42 months Rev. 11:2, 13:5.

Thus 42 months = 1,260 days = time, times and

1/2 a time = 1/2 week = 3.5 years.

* Messiah cut off *after* 69 weeks April 3, A.D. 33 Therefore, 1 month = 30 days, 1 Year = 360 days.

a) Some people hold to the Continuous view, that the 69th week continues immediately onto the 70th week without any gap or break. Obviously, if this view is correct, the 70th week is past, having ended early in the book of Acts. They believe that Christ appeared as Messiah the Prince at John's Baptism, and that Christ died in the middle of the 70th week, after 3 1/2 years of ministry.

JW's, SDAs, Christadelphians etc. change the 1260 days of the second half of the 70th week into 1260 years. This view is clearly false because the first 69 weeks amounted to 483 years, yet how can 1 week be 1260 years?

b) The Gap view includes a great parenthesis of time after the 69th week. This gap is the church age. Then later, after the rapture of the church, the 70th week commences. Hence the 70th week of 7 years is still future.

'What right do we have to break the 70th week off the 69th week?' ask Amillennialists.

Amillennialists teach that:

a) Christ's First Coming ministry was in the 70th week,

b) There was no interval between the 69th and 70th week,

c) The 6 actions predicted in Daniel 9:24 are being fulfilled today in the church.

This amillennial view is false because it ignores the facts that:

a) v.26 says that Christ is cut off after the '7 and 62 sevens', not in the 70th 'seven'.

b) Christ's earthly ministry was 3 1/2 years in length, not 7 years.

c) God's 6 actions in Daniel 9:24 pertain to Daniel's people (Israel), and His 'Holy City' (Jerusalem), not the church.

Consider these reasons for a gap between the 69th and 70th week:

1. To view the 6 actions in Daniel 9:24 as being fulfilled at Christ's first coming is impossible. Was everlasting righteousness brought in then? Not at all.

These only refer to Israel, as the context states, and none of these have happened to Israel as yet.

Paul sees Israel's conversion as in the future, as seen by these statements in Romans 11:25-27.

a) Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. Romans 11:25,

b) The Deliverer shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob v26,

c) This is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. v27.

The 'most holy' to be anointed is always the 'Holy of Holies' in Hebrew, never does it refer to Christ.

2. The Messiah was 'cut off' or crucified AFTER the 69th week, and not during the 70th week as the passage would have stated had it been the case. See v.27 where the sacrifices are to be stopped 'in the midst of the week'.

3. An unseen time gap is common in Old Testament prophecy, such as:

a) Isaiah 9:6 'Unto us a child is born... and the government shall be upon his shoulder..'

Between these 2 events are at least 2000 years of time.

b) Zechariah 9:9,10 'Thy King cometh upon a colt, he shall speak peace unto the heathen, his dominion shall be from sea to sea.'

Between these 2 predictions are at least 2000 years of time.

c) Isaiah 61:1,2 is an example approved by Christ: 'To proclaim the acceptable year of the

Lord (first coming) and the day of vengeance of our God (Second coming)'.

Jesus in Luke 4:16-21 read this in a Nazareth synagogue, stopping at the comma after 'acceptable year of the Lord', stating that 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears'. Why did Jesus stop in the middle of a sentence? Because the next part, 'the day of vengeance of our God' has not yet been fulfilled after 1970 years. Therefore Jesus laid down the principle of the 'Gap interpretation.'

4. Time gaps are quite acceptable to the Oriental mind, which are little concerned with a continuous chronology. Orientals are more interested in the next important event, not in the time which might intervene. The Bible is an Oriental book, humanly speaking. Old Testament prophets often saw events predicted as mountain tops, without knowing the ground between them. We Anglo-Saxons have a passion for a continuous chronology that the Orientals do not possess.

5. The person who confirms the covenant in Daniel 9:27 cannot refer to Christ because:

a) The nearest antecedent is 'the prince that shall come' v26.

b) At no time in Christ's earthly ministry did He confirm an already existing covenant.

c) If Christ did confirm a covenant at His first coming, when did He break it? Would Christ break a covenant that He has made? Therefore the covenant-confirmer is not Christ, but the 'prince that shall come'. (Antichrist).

6. Christ's death did not cause the animal sacrifices and oblation to cease immediately, as v.27 demands. The Jews continued to sacrifice animals until Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD, which was 37 years later, well after the Amillennials 3 1/2 years expired.

7. The person in Daniel 9:27 correlates very well with the wicked person in 7:25, and the Antichrist in Rev. 12,13. The Antichrist has not yet appeared and been judged as described in Daniel 9:27 and Revelation 19.

8. The events of Daniel 9:27b refer to the last half of the 70th week. These fit well into the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation described in Revelation 6-19, which is yet future.

9. The abomination of desolation has not yet happened. In Matthew 24:15, Jesus said that it would occur after His earthly ministry. It would start the great tribulation (the last 3 1/2 years), which would be followed immediately by Christ's second coming in glory. Christ did not return in 70 AD. The book of Revelation (written in 96AD) speaks of Jerusalem's destruction as yet future (Rev.11:1,2 and 16:19),and not as something fulfilled in the past in 70AD.

10. A time gap is demanded by the historical fulfilment of Messiah being cut off and Jerusalem being destroyed in v.26, which take place after the 69th week and before the 70th week in v.27. This was 37 years after Christ's death in 33 AD. By the Amillennials' theory, the 70 weeks should have finished 3 1/2 years later, by 37 AD.

The historical fulfilment of Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD demands a gap of at least 37 years.

11. If the 70 weeks are continuous, as Amillennials believe, then the 70th week must have ended by 7 years after Christ's crucifixion, or sometime early in the book of Acts.

Why does the history of the book of Acts contain nothing that corresponds with Daniel 9:27.

Where in Acts are the Jewish transgressions finished, or the end made of the Jews' sins? Nowhere! Instead, Israel's sins increase to Acts 28 where Paul turns to the Gentiles.

12. A time gap after the 69th week is the most natural reading of the passage. It also fits well with all other Bible passages on prophecy. Christ's future second coming is in the 70th week.

(12) FOUR DANGERS THAT RECOGNISING THIS GAP PROTECTS US FROM.

1. The efforts to connect the 69th week with the 70th week has led many scholars to confusion, despair and frustration in their attempts to find a historical fulfilment of Daniel 9:27. Their great error was their failure to see the great time interval between the 69th and 70th weeks.

2. This gap principle of Bible interpretation explains the whole of our present church age. It is passed over by the prophets with comparative silence.

3. By understanding that the 70th week is future, we will be saved from the Amillennial error that God is finished with Israel. '70 weeks are determined upon thy people' (9:24), said the angel to Daniel, and if the last week is yet future, there is still a place for national Israel in God's plan.

4. This unknown time gap before the 70th week makes it utterly impossible to set a date for Christ's second coming. Every date setting scheme for Christ's return requires a continuous prophetic chronology covering the present age. Without this, date-setters are helpless. Hence no man knows which day Christ will return.

(13) WHAT THIS PROPHECY TEACHES US OF THIS PRESENT AGE.

i) 'The end thereof shall be with a flood (of trouble).' (9:26). This trouble will come on all the world like a flood in the future 7 year tribulation.

ii) 'Unto the end of this church age, war and desolations are determined' is a literal translation of Daniel 9:26b. True, the last 2000 years have been characterised by continuous wars all over earth.

iii) God is in control over the events of this sinful age.

(14) TWO PRINCES: MESSIAH THE JEWISH PRINCE and ANTICHRIST THE ROMAN PRINCE. 26,27

a) Christ: 'From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks.' (v.26).

b) Antichrist: 'After 62 weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation (end of 7 year tribulation), and that determined (Antichrist's punishment) shall be poured upon the desolate (or desolator, Antichrist).' Daniel 9:26,27.

1. Messiah the Prince was cut off on April 3, 33 AD.

2. Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD.

3. Church Age from Pentecost to the rapture.

4. Christ returns at rapture for the saved.

5. The prince that shall come (antichrist) confirms a 7 year covenant with Israel.

6. Antichrist breaks this covenant after 3 1/2 years or 1260 days, by causing Jewish sacrifices to cease. He then persecutes Israel.

7. Christ returns in person at the end of 70th week to destroy the European Antichrist and to rescue and save Israel.

8. Christ sets up His 1000 year Kingdom of peace on earth. This present church age is the interval between the 69th and 70th week. This was predicted by Christ in Matthew 16:18 'I will build my church.' In this gap, Israel was set aside temporarily, which Christ prophesied in Matthew 21:43,

'The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.'

Note: 2 different princes are 'Messiah the Prince' and 'the prince that shall come.' They cannot both be Christ because it is 'the people of the prince that shall come' who destroy Jerusalem after Christ's crucifixion in 33 AD.

Jerusalem was destroyed by Roman people, not by Jewish people. Hence the 'prince that shall come' cannot be the Jewish Messiah, but must be a future leader of the Roman Empire.

This future Roman prince is:

1. The little horn- Daniel 7:8.

(Daniel 7:20.

2. That horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows-

3. The king of fierce countenance- Daniel 8:23.

4. The wilful king- Daniel 11:36.

5. The man of sin- II Thessalonians 2:3.

6. The beast out of the sea- Revelation 13:1.

7. The antichrist- I John 2:18.

Question: In Dan. 9:27 who does the 'he' refer back to? ("He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week").

Answer: 'He' refers back to the 'prince that shall come' because:

1. This is the antecedent.

2. 'He' will make a covenant with the Jews for 7 years. There is absolutely nothing recorded in Christ's earthly ministry that remotely resembles a 7 year covenant. Produce evidence from history to show where it begun and when it ended. Such evidence cannot be found.

3. The theory that 'Christ made this covenant when He started His earthly ministry, and that by His death He caused the Jewish sacrifices to cease', breaks down because:

a) There is no reference in the Gospels to such a covenant.

b) The death of Christ did not stop Jewish sacrifices. They continued until Jerusalem's destruction in 70 AD.

c) According to this theory, Christ died 'in the midst of the week', the sacrifices should have ceased then immediately. But they did not.

4. To insist that Messiah made the 7 year covenant, puts the 70th week in the past (from 30-37 AD) immediately following the 69th week. This is wrong because Christ in Matthew 24:15 states that the 70th week is still future.

5. The maker of this 7 year covenant cannot be Christ, because His covenants with Jews and Christians are everlasting (Psalm 89:30-37), not limited to 7 years.

Therefore the Roman prince, or antichrist, makes the 7 year covenant with the Jews. Christ foretold this in John 5:43. 'If another (antichrist) shall come in his own name, him ye will receive' (as your Messiah) John 5:43.

Question: What does it mean 'Messiah shall be cut off; but not for himself'?

Answer:i) 'Cut off' means executing the death penalty on a criminal. This is a prediction of Christ's crucifixion.

ii) 'But not for himself' means that He would at this time have nothing for Himself, since Israel rejected Christ, the kingdom that He offered could not be

instituted at that time. Hence Christ did not receive the royal glory as King on David's throne over Israel. This prophecy predicted:

- Christ's offer of Himself to Israel as her Messiah,
- Israel as a nation rejecting Christ as her Messiah, and
- Christ's crucifixion.

9:26b. Four events that will happen in the gap period of the church age are mentioned:

- 1) Messiah would be cut off. This happened on April 3, 33 AD.
- 2) The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city & the sanctuary (Temple). This happened in 70 AD.
- 3) The end of the gap period will be followed by a flood of trouble.
- 4) Wars and desolations are determined to happen all through the gap period of the church age.

The generation that rejected the Messiah would be judged by the people of the ruler to come, destroying the city (Jerusalem) which contained the sanctuary (Temple). The ruler to come is that final head of the Roman Empire, the little horn of Daniel 7:8.

It is important to understand that the PEOPLE of the ruler, NOT the RULER HIMSELF, will destroy Jerusalem. This proves 2 points:

- 1) The future Antichrist prince will come from a last days Roman empire, since his people are the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD, and
- 2) The future prince is not Messiah the prince, because Christ's people are the Jews. Antichrist's people are Romans.

When Israel's leaders rejected Christ by attributing His power to Beelzebub, the prince of demons (Matt. 12:24), Christ said that this sin if persisted in would find no forgiveness (Matthew 12:31-32). Jesus also warned that the Gentiles would destroy Jerusalem (Luke 21:24), that Jerusalem would be desolate (Matthew 23:38), and that its destruction would be so complete that not one stone would be left on another (Matt. 24:2). This destruction came in 70 AD at the hands of Titus who killed, according to Josephus, about 1 million Jews and took about 100,000 Jews captive as slaves. Israel's sufferings would continue until the end of the 70 weeks at Christ's second coming.

(15) EVENTS OF THE 70TH WEEK

1. The 70th week lasts from the rapture of the church to the return of Christ in glory.

The 70th week is future because Christ places the abomination of desolation of the 70th week just before His glorious return (Matthew 24:15-30).

The true church must first be caught up to heaven, then the 70th week can start. In II Thessalonians 2:1-9, esp. v.6-8, 'And now ye know what withholdeth (Holy Spirit in the church) that he (antichrist) might be revealed in his time... only he (Holy Spirit in believers) who now letteth (restrains) will let (restrain), until he (Holy Spirit in the church) be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked (antichrist) be revealed...'

Since the restraining power is the true church indwelt by the Holy Spirit, it is clear that the coming Roman prince cannot be revealed as long as the true church remains on earth. Once the church is caught away to heaven, the Roman prince is revealed when he confirms his 7 year covenant with the Jewish people. This starts the 70th week.

The 70th week will end at Christ's glorious return because:

- i) The Messiah brings to Israel the blessings of Daniel 9:24.
- ii) Christ, on returning, destroys the Antichrist's great power.

2. The 70th week provides the exact time framework for the events of Revelation 6-19.

The only time information given in Revelation 6-19 is:

- i) 42 months (11:2; 13:3),
- ii) 1260 days (11:3; 12:6),
- iii) A time, and times, and half a time (12:14).

Each of these specify 3 1/2 prophetic years of 360 days each. These passages have three schools of interpretation:

- i) Some regard all prophetic numbers as symbolic, and therefore meaningless for chronology.
- ii) Some hold the unbiblical 'year-day' theory. These regard the 69 weeks as 173,880 literal days, but then change their interpretation so that the last 1260 days become 1260 years. Let us be consistent. If the first 173,880 days are days, so the last 1260 days must also be days.
- iii) Some, correctly, have understood that the 3 1/2 years are exactly one-half of 7 years.

The 70th week is divided into 2 halves.

This is the key to the interpretation of the books of Revelation and Daniel.

The **key passage** is **Revelation 11:2,3** thus:

'But the court which is without (outside) the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city (Jerusalem) shall they tread under foot 42 months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy 1260 days, clothed in sackcloth.'

Notice 2 important things here:

- i) Since the 42 months of verse 2 is a 3 1/2 year period during which Gentile powers tread under foot Jerusalem, this must refer to the **LAST HALF** of the 70th week, because it is

in the middle of the 70th week that the Roman prince stops the Jewish sacrifices and becomes their persecutor (Daniel 9:27).

ii) It is also clear that the 1260 days of verse 3 is a 3 1/2 year period that must refer to the FIRST HALF of the 70th week, because the 2 witnesses testify during this period, and they cannot be killed until the Roman prince reaches the height of his power in the middle of the week, when it is 'given to him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them.' (Revelation 11:7 and 13:7).

Therefore we have the entire 70th week events as:

1. 70th week begins in Revelation 6:1,2 with the revelation of the Roman prince. (Day 1).
2. Rising power of the Roman prince. } (Days
3. Testimony of the 2 witnesses. } 1-1260).
4. Killing of the 2 witnesses, and } (Day
5. 7th angel sounding (Rev. 11:1-15). } 1260).
6. Roman prince's absolute world control. } (Days
7. Roman prince terribly persecutes Israel. } 1260- 2520).
8. 70th week ends in Rev. 19:11-21 with the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Day 2520).

3. The 70th week begins with the Roman prince making a firm covenant with Israel.

Daniel 9:27.

One thing involved in this covenant will be the re-establishing of the Jewish sacrifices in a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. The Moslem mosque of Omar stands where Solomon's and Herod's temple stood. The present Middle-east peace talks may lead to an agreement for Europe to guarantee Israel's protection and a Temple in return for peace.

4. In the middle of the 70th week, the Roman prince will reverse his friendly attitude to the Jews and 'cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.' Daniel 9:27.

Today's world involves 'power politics', where force has taken the place of morality, where treaties are made and often broken. The Roman prince will only honor a 'god of forces.'

Daniel 11:38.

Why will the Roman prince break his treaty with Israel?

- i) Being the devil's man, he will hate Israel.
- ii) After using Israel's wealth and influence to reach the top of world power, having no further need for them, he will persecute them. As the Jew will pay dearly for her treaty with the Roman beast, so will the great harlot (apostate church) pay dearly for her ride (Rev. 17:16) in seeking to advance her cause along with Antichrist.
- iii) From II Thessalonians 2:4 and Revelation 13:8-15, he will take his seat in the temple of God in Jerusalem, and demand to be worshipped as God. To the Jew, this will be the 'abomination of desolation' (Matthew 24:13), and many will refuse to worship him. This refusal will be the antichrist's pretext for breaking the treaty and causing the Jewish temple sacrifices to cease. His treaty with the 'many' (9:27) means that some Jews will reject the treaty. The 2 witnesses will denounce this treaty throughout their ministry.

5. The breaking of the covenant will start great desolations for the Jewish people.

This trouble lasts from the middle to the end of the 70th week (3 1/2 years). This is exactly the time specified in:

- i) Daniel 7:25, during which the antichrist 'shall wear out the saints of the most high' for a 'time, times and dividing of a time'.
- ii) Rev. 13:5-7, when the antichrist 'shall make war with the saints....and overcome them', for 42 months.
- iii) Rev. 11:2, during which the Gentiles shall tread down Jerusalem for 42 months.
- iv) Rev. 12:6,14, where the woman (Israel) will be protected by God for 1260 days (v.6) and 'a time, times and half a time.' (v.14).

Hence all these prophecies fit together perfectly: the same persecutor, the same nation being persecuted, and exactly the same length of time of persecution. This refutes converting the 1260 days into 1260 years. This is the 'time of Jacob's trouble.' (Jeremiah 30:7).

6. The end of this 7 years will conclude the 70 week prophecy and usher in the blessing of Daniel 9:24.

Remember, all these blessings refer to the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem. This is the context.

1,2. It is Jewish transgression and sin that is brought to an end (1,2). No more after the 70th week will Israel rebel against God and her Messiah.

3. To 'make reconciliation for iniquity' does not refer to Christ's death, but refers to God reconciling Israel unto Himself at Christ's glorious appearing on the basis of His sacrifice on Calvary.

4. To 'seal up the vision and prophecy', means not that all prophecies will be fulfilled, but that the fountain of prophecy will be sealed because, with Christ personally on earth, His word will go forth directly, and no longer through prophets.

5. To 'anoint the most holy' refers to consecrating the millennial temple as a place of worship and prayer for all nations at the start of the Millennium, by the personal presence of Christ there.

Conclusion:

The covenant in Daniel 9:27 could not have been made or confirmed by Christ at His first coming, as Amillennials teach, because:

- a) Christ's ministry did not last 7 years,
- b) Christ's death did not stop the Jewish sacrifices and offerings,
- c) Christ did not set up the abomination that causes desolation (Matthew 24:15).

Amillennials suggest that Christ confirmed (in the sense of fulfilling) the Abrahamic covenant, but the Gospels nowhere indicate Christ did that at His first coming.

Since the events in the 69 weeks were fulfilled literally in 173,880 days (v.24-26), the 70th week must likewise be fulfilled literally in 2520 days. A correct understanding of this 70 week prophecy will refute the false ideas of:

- a) Amillennials, who spiritualise prophecy, reject any future for national Israel, and reject a literal future 7 year tribulation and future 1000 year rule of Christ on earth.
- b) Seventh Day Adventists, who accept a literal 173,880 days for the first 69 weeks, but falsely think that 2520 years make up the last 1 week.
- c) Jehovah's Witnesses, who mistakenly use the 70th week prophecy to predict the date of Christ's second coming.

The 70th week prophecy, correctly understood, forms the basis of the pre-millennial, literal interpretation of prophecy based on mathematically accurately fulfilled prophecies. Let us staunchly uphold the pre-millennial faith in a time of apostasy and unbelief in churches today.