

The
SEVENTY SEVENS
Of Gabriel

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DEDICATION:
TO THOSE WHO WANT TO KNOW WHAT GOD SAID,
REGARDLESS OF THE COST, OR THEIR REPUTATION.

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Preface/Introduction

The prophecy of the seventy “weeks” is not from Daniel. The mighty angel Gabriel received this from the Lord, and as a faithful messenger delivered it to the prophet. We have a translation of the angel’s words here, not Daniel’s.

Of course the ultimate Source of true prophecy is Yahweh Himself, but the message of Daniel 9:24-27 is one of the few that is given under the security of an angelic being. It is as though the Lord wants us to understand that there is something more serious in this word than in other words delivered directly to prophets.

Let us listen well.

The Daniel of Daniel 9.

I have devoted space in other volumes to the description of Daniel the man. The popular thinking about him, from the young at least, is that he was “the man in the lion’s den,” and the one who would not subscribe to the king’s diet. The latter incident took place with Daniel the teenager. The former was actually his plight in a much later day, perhaps as a man in his eighties.

So it is with this prophecy. He is old, but still a man strong in spirit and, as always, favored in Heaven.

The chronology of his life would be something like this:

Around 604 B.C. young Daniel and his friends are carried away from Judea to Nebuchadnezzar’s Babylon. Here he is able to befriend the King by demonstrating the power of God in interpreting visions. He

is raised to great honor.

Near 555 B.C., Daniel seems to be in lesser authority in Babylon, but is still receiving visions of his, and our future (Daniel 7-8). He is in his mid sixties.

In 539 B.C., Babylon falls to Medo-Persia, following Daniel's reading of the handwriting on Belshazzar's wall. Darius the Mede is Daniel's new King. He is elevated again, and after the challenge of the lion's den, Daniel is raised to prominence. He is now in his eighties.

Daniel 9

The setting (1-3).

Darius.

Our first interpretive challenge is attempting to pinpoint who this "Darius" is. Verse 1 seems clear enough. He was not Darius the Persian, the one who had taken the supreme leadership of the Empire after the death of Cyrus and his successors. He was not the other Darius mentioned in Scripture, who lived in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. That would have been Darius II.

No, this was, as Scripture says (Daniel 5:31 and here), "Darius the Mede." Our verse even tells of his Median descent, and of the fact that he had been "made" king. Scholars believe that means that the dominant Persian Emperor, Cyrus, gave a serious allotment of the Empire over into the hands of this Median prince.

This was, after all, the *Medo-Persian* Empire.

Daniel's chapters.

So, the numbering of the chapters of Daniel is a bit out of chronological order:

Chapter 5: Belshazzar is reigning in Babylon until the last verse, when Darius takes over.

Chapter 6: Darius (the Mede) and the lion's den.

But, Daniel 7 and 8: Back to the days of Belshazzar, and visions.

Daniel 9: back to Darius the Mede.

Daniel reads Jeremiah.

It was during Darius' reign, then, that an aged Daniel the prophet, a holy man who indeed walked with God, was reading the book of another prophet, Jeremiah, whose life and ministry overlapped Daniel's. Jeremiah is last seen in Egypt with the rebellious Israelites, around 587 B.C. So his written work was relatively new, but was already circulating among God's people.

The particular passages that evidently caused a thrill inside of Daniel are found in what are now the 25th and 29th chapters of Jeremiah:

25:11-12, "This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon *seventy years*. Then it will be when *seventy years* are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation..."

29:10-11 “For thus says the Lord, ‘When *seventy years* have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’”

I must mention in passing just how much modern interpreters have abused that latter verse, attempting to comfort everyone with, unfortunately, a false hope. This Scripture was given to the people Israel, who had just served a seventy-year sentence in a foreign land. It is very specific. And it goes on to talk of how even after the rescue, these people will need to seek the Lord, and when they do so with all their heart, they will find Him.

The dates of the seventy years.

Daniel was concerned about this Jeremiah prophecy after he did a quick mental calculation. The Babylonian captivity is to last for *seventy years*, says Jeremiah. It is believed that Daniel’s own captivity began at the first wave of the disaster, in about 608 B.C. There were others. The culmination was 586 B.C., when Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, Temple and all.

Daniel began counting. His years are different than ours, but ours would go, 608, 598, 588, 578, 568, 558, 548, 538. Seventy years. What happened in 538 B.C.? That was the very year that Cyrus made a proclamation that the Jews could now return to their homeland and serve their God.

There are other calculations that scholars have come up with in this matter, but this one does fit the Biblical narrative. Daniel knew the exact date of the beginning, so he knew that the date of the ending

was coming soon!

Seventy sevens preview.

The assigning of a seventy-year penalty was not arbitrary on God's part (as though anything from the Almighty could be arbitrary!). God had laid down a clear precept to His people through Moses. It is recorded in Leviticus 25. In addition to Israelites resting on the seventh day of every week, they were to give the land a rest every seven years (verses 3 and 4):

“Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crops, but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the Lord; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard...”

There is a pattern in the creation as well as in the human body. People and land need rest. This is the way for that rest to take place, said God. Severe penalties for breaking this and other of God's laws are mentioned in the very next chapter of Leviticus:

26:27, 33-35.

“... if you do not obey Me... I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste...

“Then the land will enjoy its sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe on your sabbaths, while you were living on it.”

Every seven years, take a year off. Imagine now seventy years of “rest”. Do the math. How many actual years of history would be covered if there were a rest year every seven years? Good! 490 years of history. Meaning that for 490 years at least some Israelites, probably many, maybe most, disregarded this law! How could they just “stop” planting after God’s plentiful harvests year after year? We feel the same way at the end of the week. How can I just stop working? I am being productive. Gotta keep going. 24/7 for 365. See where that leads you.

But I digress. The math is what we are after. Hear the numbers? 70? 490? MacArthur calculates that 490 years is the time period from King Saul until the Babylonian captivity! From the time they veered from God’s government to demanding a king, they began making their own rules about sabbaths. God was not pleased.

The penalty was an enforced rest. Those 70 years spread over the 490 years, are now collected into one large unit and used as the time when Israel must be in exile. And that time was about up as Daniel read Jeremiah.

So there is the setting. Elder statesman and prophet, man of God, Daniel, reads the Bible, understands the 70, the 490, the punishment from God, is about over, and realizes it is time to pray! When we read those same numbers *at the end of Daniel 9*, may we be so inclined!

The prayer (3-19). Effectual fervency.

Already we can see a connection between the coming prophecy and the factors that led up to it. The numbers will look familiar when we come to them. Daniel’s prayer now will show us more connections.

We must understand what he prayed to understand the response and the prophecy itself.

Notice the seriousness of Daniel's approach in verse 3. A complete humiliation of self, setting even food aside. But why the desperate prayer if the answer is already on the way? God had promised, after all.

Herein is a lesson for our modern prayers. God has made many precious promises about his provision for our lives, but still demands that we pray to receive them. Shall He not give us food every day? Yes, but nevertheless we are to pray "Give us this day our daily bread." We are not to take God's promises for granted, but rather reach out in confession and praise and petition.

Ezra, a mirror image.

Before we move on, it is instructive for us to read of another historical figure who lived in this same general era. His mission took place shortly after Cyrus's decree to release Jews from Persia. His prayer at that time parallels Daniel's in intensity and content:

Ezra 9:5-15. Ezra the scribe has just learned that Jews who have returned before him are already entering into some of the sinful ways that caused the captivity to begin with!

"... I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the Lord my God;

" ' O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads and our

guilt has grown even to the heavens. Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt and on account of our iniquities we, our kings and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to captivity and plunder and to open shame, as it is this day... We have forsaken Your commandments... after all that has come upon us for our evil deeds and our great guilt... shall we again break Your commandments...? O Lord God of Israel, You are righteous, for we have been left an escaped remnant, as it is this day; behold we are before You in our guilt..."

His confession, crying, prostrating himself, drew a large assembly of people of like mind to weep with him.

Daniel's prayer, only a short time before this one, from Persia, drew a different response. But its content was eerily the same. Confession. Praise.

Now we back up again to the days immediately preceding Cyrus's decree and hear this other man of God pleading on behalf of his people:

Portions of Daniel's prayer, paraphrased.

"You are a great God. You keep Your covenants. But we have sinned and turned aside from them. We have not listened to the prophets.

"You are righteous, we are shameful. You had to drive us away from our land. Our kings, princes, fathers have been put to shame.

"You are compassionate and forgiving, we are rebellious. All Israel has broken Your law, hence the curse is upon us.

“You promised through Moses to bring calamity upon us if we fell away. You said that Jerusalem would have an unequaled disaster, and so it was.

“You brought us out of Egypt with great victory but we still sinned against You.

“Now we ask, please let Your anger turn away from your City. The world around us despises us, but if You forgive us our desolation will end.

“We do not ask any of this because we deserve it, but simply because You are a compassionate God. This City has Your name attached to it. Save Jerusalem for your own sake.”

The “seventy weeks” prophecy thus becomes an answer to Daniel’s prayer, not an isolated miracle at the end of a chapter in Daniel’s book. He’s asking for compassion, mercy, forgiveness, and specifically for Jerusalem. The prophecy deals with those very issues.

The response (20-23). Immediate!

Not all prayers have immediate visible response. This one did. The nature of Daniel’s prayer was in accordance with the will of the Holy Spirit and God’s dealings with Israel. God puts into the hearts of his people the very prayers He wants to answer. When they walk in the Spirit, and not in the flesh, their prayers come immediately before the Throne and are dealt with.

Romans 8:27 confirms this truth, when Paul states that the Spirit “intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.”

Gabriel.

For the momentous word that is about to come forth, God chooses none other than Gabriel, called in verse 21 “the man” Gabriel. He appeared in human form, perhaps to help calm the nerves of an old man, who is overwhelmed by what he is seeing and hearing.

Or perhaps there is more to Daniel’s description. The name Gabriel means in the Hebrew “man of God.” The man, “man of God” appeared to Daniel. As the text says, this same Daniel had appeared in a vision, recorded in Daniel 8:

Gabriel in chapter 8.

“When I, Daniel, had seen the vision... standing before me was one who looked like a man, and I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, ‘Gabriel, give this man understanding...’”

Gabriel at that time gives Daniel an account of what will occur at the “appointed time of the end.” He traces the career of Alexander the Great, and the four-part division of his legacy. He then travels to the very end of history, when one of these divisions will produce the one we know to be antichrist.

The scope of this prophecy caused Daniel to be sick in body and mind “for days.”

But the prophecy to come at the end of chapter 9 is no less astounding in its span. It too begins in Daniel’s day and ends at the climax of human history preceding the coming of Christ, the ruin of antichrist.

Gabriel in chapters 10-12.

Two years have passed since Cyrus and Darius have come to power in Medo-Persia. The decree to return, foretold in chapter 9, has been in effect during that time. But prophetic utterances continue to follow Daniel.

Daniel sees one described in verses 5 and 6, that resembles descriptions of Jesus elsewhere.

But when a hand touches the weakened prophet in verse 10, there is a familiarity that comes to mind. When Daniel turns to see him, he beholds “one who resembled a human being”. This is how Gabriel had earlier been identified. The “man of God” has returned. Verse 18 repeats that the touch comes from “one with human appearance.”

There follows the most incredibly accurate prophecy of all time. And for the third time in a row, Gabriel begins in the Persia where Daniel lives, traces the history of the world through Persia and Greece, and suddenly catapults the wondering prophet into the last days, the days of the Great Tribulation at the end of history.

There’s a pattern here!

Gabriel in the New Testament.

Angels do not seem to be subject to death, as they are not involved in sin. The same Gabriel who knew Daniel centuries before Christ, visits three persons in connection with the birth of Jesus.

In Luke 1:11-20, an “angel of the Lord” appears to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist. You remember the conversation of the two, culminating in the aged man being struck dumb for a season. This was a powerful angel, who demanded to be believed. He identifies himself as “Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God.”

Some have identified this powerful angel as “the angel of the Lord” spoken of often in Scripture.

Later in Luke 1, Gabriel appears to Mary. And in Matthew 1, we can infer, I believe, that the unnamed angel who appeared to Joseph was that same “man of God” Daniel saw.

The connection.

Gabriel is connected thus to a string of very Jewish events. Though Michael is said to be the angel assigned to the headship of the Jewish people, Gabriel’s role is significant. Is he over all the works of the Lord, thus “the angel of the Lord”? He knows so much and is authoritative without measure.

His prophecies tie together the coming of Messiah and all its attendant challenges. He speaks of the antichrist as well as the Christ. A clear picture of the origins, program, intentions, of the man of sin is outlined for us. He tells of the death of Jesus in Daniel but prophesies his birth in the Gospels.

And recall. These prophecies are not the utterings of Daniel or Luke. They are the recorded messages of an angel of God! Perhaps *the* angel of God.

Now it is time to zero in on one of those words from Gabriel.

Commonly called the “seventy weeks” we shall refer to it as the Hebrew does, the “seventy sevens.”

The prophecy.

We have seen that the chapter 9 words of the angel are not unique in their content. This prediction meshes with other prophecies given to Daniel, and to John in Revelation. The wording, moreover, is consistent with the prayer Daniel offered before its delivery to the prophet.

Further, as we saw above in the case of Ezra, prayers of the sort that produced this unusual outcome are not singular in Scripture. There is even another prophet who dealt with the return of Israel to its place.

A parallel passage

It was interesting for me to note in my recent reading of Zechariah that God’s Word provides yet another parallel to the events of Daniel 9. It takes place, closely related to Daniel’s vision, just after the end of the seventy years of Judah’s punishment. Daniel’s chapter 9 prophecy is in the first year of Median King Darius. Zechariah’s is in the second year.

An angel called “the angel of the Lord” [would this not be Gabriel?] speaks with Zechariah concerning God’s jealousy for Jerusalem, and God’s plan to return to that city, comfort it, choose it, bring it back from its scattered disheveled condition.

And so, the *subject* of the final verses of Daniel 9 is indeed a well-

known one, Scripturally. Let us now examine it.

Method of study explained.

Here is my approach to a detailed look at Daniel 9:24-27. I am quoting for your edification, five separate accounts of the prophecy:

1. *Westminster Leningrad Codex interlinear*: In this version, we will go word for word from the actual Hebrew-to-English, in the most trusted of the Hebrew translations.
2. The *King James Version*: Among Bible believers, this “Authorized” translation from the *Textus Receptus* is also a seriously trusted version of the Bible.
3. The *New King James Version*: This translation updates the English into more modern expressions, and corrects minor problems in the KJV.
4. The *New American Standard Bible*: This and the Bible to follow, is a word for word, as opposed to a thought for thought, translation, but is based on more ancient texts than the King James or its update.
5. The *English Standard Version*: A newer, but very accurate text of Scripture.

If we are to discover what God actually said through Gabriel, it is necessary to study these Bibles that have endeavored to give to us the literal words of the text.

Using these texts, and pointing out their similarities and differences, we will proceed one word or phrase at a time. We will make comments as needed. We will make comparisons to other similar prophecies. By the end of this work, with prayer and by the grace of God, we shall know exactly what Heaven wanted us to hear and

believe.

Let us begin. Here are the five translations, to begin with.

Westminster Leningrad Codex interlinear:

24.

Sevens seventy he-is-segregated on people-of-you and-on city-of holiness-of-you to-to-detain-of the-transgression and-to-to-seal-of and-to-to-finish-of sins sin and-to-to-make-propitiatory-shelter-of depravity and-to-to-bring-of righteousness-of eons and-to-to-seal-of vision and-prophet and-to-to-anoint-of holiness-of holinesses.

25.

and-you-shall-know and-you-shall-be-intelligent from faring-forth-of word to-to-return-of and-to-to-build-of Jerusalem until anointed-one governor sevens seven and-sevens sixty and-two. she-shall-return and-she-is-built square and-salient and-in-constraint-of the-eras.

26.

and-after the-sevens sixty and-two he-shall-be-cut-off anointed-one and-there-is-no to-him. and-the-city and-the-sanctuary he-shall-ruin people-of governor the-one-coming. and-end-of-him in-the-overflowing. and-until end war being-decided ones-being-desolate.

27.

and-he-has-mastery covenant to-the-many-ones seven one and-half-of the-seven he-shall-cause-to-cease sacrifice and-present-offering. and-on wing-of abominations one-making-desolate and-until finish and-one-being-decided she-shall-be-poured-forth on one-being-desolate.

King James Version (KJV)

24.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25.

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 threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26.

And after threescore and two 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 the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27.

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, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

New King James Version (NKJV)

24.

“Seventy weeks are determined
For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of sins,
To make reconciliation for iniquity,
To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
And to anoint the Most Holy.

25.

“Know therefore and understand,
That from the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem
Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.

26.

“And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

27.

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes
desolate,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the desolate.”

New American Standard Bible (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.”

English Standard Version (ESV)

24.

“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.”

Now we proceed to variations in the five translations, along with my comments.

Note that the word(s) or phrases of the individual five translations are separated by a slash (/). In many cases, two or more of the translations are in perfect harmony, and there was no need to repeat that rendition. For example, in the first words of verse 24 here, all English translations have rendered the translation as “seventy weeks, ” so one rendering was all that was needed.

Daniel 9:24.

sevens seventy/ Seventy weeks

The Hebrew word that we translate as “weeks” is in reality “sevens.” Not the number seven. But a group of seven items. In terms of time, it could be a period of seven days, that is, what we call a week. But it could also be seven weeks (as we know weeks), seven months, seven years. The context of the passage determines the meaning of the word here. All we know for sure from this label “seventy sevens” is that, whatever the period of seven we are talking about, there are to be seventy of them.

Peter and Jesus refer to such talk when Peter is asking how many times he should forgive someone. Should it be a grouping of seven? One times seven? Jesus responds that it should rather be the impossible – humanly speaking – amount of seventy sevens, the very figure mentioned here in Daniel.

Seventy sevens in both cases equals 490. But 490 what? We don't know yet. Later in the passage, simple calculations will make it clear.

[he is] segregated/[are] determined

490 "somethings" have been determined. Segregated, says the Hebrew. Set apart from all history as being a special time. Those who may have trouble with a God Who decrees the future and demands that it shall be as He decrees, will not want to go much further into the words of Gabriel. But so it is. Before time began the Creator carved out of Time – and we are assuming already that a measure of time is being described here – four hundred ninety units of that time as a special dealing with a special people, a people to be defined in the next phrase.

By extension, God has decreed the nations that shall exist in relationship to this people. He has decreed the weather of that time period and every climate change before and after it. The heart of every person involved in this segregated time will have been perfectly prepared for its advent. Nothing is left to chance in God's world. No one involved will be able to say, I don't really want to be a part of this 490 units. Thanks for the invitation, but I'm busy.

No, when God decrees, and God invites, and God plans, and God calls, everything lines up perfectly. 490 units of time will arrive on the planet right on schedule. The clock will start ticking, and when the 490 are finished, the clock will stop ticking.

Who are the subjects of this curious decree? What people will be singled out for attention for the 490? The next phrase clarifies:

on people of you/ upon thy people/for your people/about your people

“Your people.” There is a context to every verse of Scripture. Modern so-called expositor teachers like to put themselves, their own persons, everywhere in the Bible. May I end that fantasy here? You are not everywhere in the Bible, Sir or Madam. You cannot squeeze your personal history into every favorable passage of Scripture. Daniel 9 is not about you, at least not directly.

Gabriel is talking to Daniel. To Daniel he says that the 490 have been set aside for “your people.” Knowing who Daniel is, we know immediately who Daniel’s people are, according to the flesh. They are the Jews. Israel, the original Israel. The people who, seventy years earlier, had been taken into bondage by the Babylonians.

Seventy years bondage. But now, Daniel’s people are headed, without a break, as you will see, into a 490-unit period that will culminate in the end. But we are ahead of the story.

So far: 490 units of time to be set apart for the Jews. Any more identifiers?

and on city of holiness of you/and upon thy holy city/and for your holy city/and your holy city

Clearly Jerusalem, Israel's forever capital, is in mind here. Though the Jews in general will be dealt with, the fate and future of the Holy City is in view. The "city of holiness" is also the "city of David" in Scripture. David made the city famous, by the leadership of God Almighty. But it was the presence of Jesus in Old Jerusalem that will make it *holy*. Outside this city Jesus will die for the sins of the world. This fact is coming up in the prophecy.

This is the City that will be renewed by God Himself one day, with a totally new structure sent down from heaven. We are part of that building program. But we still must maintain that this prophecy is given to the Jews, about old Jerusalem.

As Daniel heard these words from Gabriel, he was well aware that the city, in his day, was lying in ruins. Soon thereafter Ezra and Nehemiah and others would return and rebuild. But that also is included in this prophecy, an amazing action-packed four verses of information if ever there was one.

490 somethings to be cut out of time for the Jewish people. What will happen during that time? Oh, many things! By the time the 490 are finished, first,

to detain of the transgression/to finish the transgression

Somehow there is a difference between "the transgression" and "sins" in the next clause. It is not clear, and various commentators have tackled the problem differently. But with the singular and the definite article here ("the" transgression), and the plural and no article there ("sins"), it is quite possible that the following explanation fits the sense:

"The" transgression is the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. Adam's sin was the beginning of all that is evil in the world. But

an end is in sight. The transgression will be “detained”, “restrained”, “held back”, in the various renderings of the Hebrew. One thinks of a viral epidemic that is finally put in check and can spread no more.

Is this not what happened at the death of our Savior? Was not sin defeated? Yet we still see sin in our day. One day we will not see it. At all.

So in still attempting to put a time boundary on this prophecy, we are asked here to choose. The prophecy either looks to the beginning of the first century when Christ died, or to a time in our future when Christ will personally come and put a personal end to the transgression begun by Adam. We will see that both are possible.

and to seal of and to finish of sins/and to make an end of sins/to put an end to sin

“Sins” plural is indicated in the Hebrew, though not all translations followed this lead. This idea is linked to the former, but indicates all the details resulting from the original transgression. Not only will the virus be suddenly stopped from spreading, but every individual affected by it will have its awful effects removed. Forgiveness will flow. On those who would not accept forgiveness, judgment will fall. No sins will be left when Jesus comes and reigns.

Again we must question as to whether the prophecy extends to that final extinguishing, or is completed when the virtual cure was put in place at the Cross. Or if both are meant to be intended.

and to make propitiatory shelter of depravity/and to make reconciliation for iniquity/ to make atonement for iniquity/ and to atone for iniquity

Sin is gone. But how so? Here the prophecy is clear to students of salvation combined with the demands of Moses. The terms “propitiation”, “atonement” and iniquity all have a familiar ring to them.

Never did God overlook sin. Even though animal sacrifice was not ultimately effective, God ordained that His people perform these rituals to point ahead to One Who would come and fill the meaning of them to the full.

Sin must be covered. Sin must be dealt a death blow. Man is separated from God by sin. Something must happen to make man “at one” with God again. At one = atone. Man is depraved. Iniquitous. Corrupt. How shall he be made clean again before a holy God?

Of course, the answer is Jesus’ sacrifice. Here the prophet clearly sees a time when this will happen. Within the 490 units of time, Jesus will atone for sins.

and to bring of righteousness of eons/ and to bring in everlasting righteousness

Not only will the evils of this world – all sin and iniquity and injustice – be taken out, but something wonderful will be brought in, presumably at the same time.

Tsehdek. “The right”. You may be thinking, “I’ve heard that before. *Tsehdek.* Oh yes, Melchizedek. The King of

Righteousness in whose priesthood serves the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself.

“Justice” is involved with this word, but only in the shadow of the basic meaning: the right. What is right and true as opposed to what is wrong and false. Righteousness cannot be blurred into justice as the world thinks it desires. The world will speak of equality for all. Justice for all.

But justice that is not based on “the right”, the truth, will fail. The founders of Communism and Socialism were after justice, they said. But they founded it upon wrong notions. And every time it pops up in history it is godless and man-based. That sort of justice will never prevail for long.

There is coming a time, says Gabriel to Daniel and to us, when *tsehdek*, God’s *tsehdek*, will be brought in, and when it comes it will be here forever.

But the question returns. Did not Jesus bring in everlasting righteousness when He conquered sin and death on the cross? Did not Paul say that *now* the righteousness of God has been revealed through faith in Jesus? Is not the righteousness of God within us when we receive Christ and eternal life?

Can we not count these 490 units as years and wind up in the early part of the first century, counting from Daniel?

But wait. Righteousness may be here in theory, but the practice is still far from *tsehdek* in our corrupt world. The Jews themselves for whom this prophecy was made, still live in unrighteousness by rejecting their Messiah. The ultimate salvation of the remnant Jews is still in our future.

490 years have long since passed, if we use Daniel and the decree he will mention, as the starting point.

Still no definite clue as to what the unit of time is. Could the angel be pointing both to Calvary *and* to the return of Christ, when Jesus will bring in His Kingdom, His Kingdom of *tsehdek*, righteousness, Godly justice, the right?

and to seal of vision and prophet/ and to seal up the vision and prophecy/ to seal up vision and prophecy/to seal both vision and prophet

All the translators agree that all visions and prophecies (prophets) are to be “sealed” in the 490 time units. But what signifies the word “seal”?

The word is used elsewhere in Scripture, and Daniel himself will employ it, or rather, Gabriel will use it, as it is Gabriel who seems to be the instrument of the final prophecy in the book. In chapter 12, verse 4, Daniel is told by the angel to “seal up” the book that he is putting together *until the end of time*.

Now that is a tall order. How does a mere human seal something heavenly for such a duration of time? Or does Daniel seal and angelic forces keep it sealed until it is time for its revealing?

The word, *chawtam*, has no mysterious meaning attached to it. It merely means to close, as one would expect from its cousin “to seal” that is universally used in the passage.

What has Gabriel told us? After 490 units of time, vision will be closed. There will be no more visions. Prophecy will end. No more prophecy.

Is it safe to add also that, therefore, all prophecies and visions that have taken place up to that time will be fulfilled? I believe so. But that puts a heavy burden on these words. The Old Covenant prophets, of whom Daniel was one, predicted a variety of events to come upon Israel, not the least of which was what we call today the Millennial Kingdom, a theme picked up by John in the end time Revelation.

For example, Isaiah saw a time when the entire government of the world would be on the shoulders of the coming Son, the Messiah. Prophets saw a time of peace, a time when even wild animals would enter into a serenity with one another. The prophets looked beyond where we are now, into a history, very Jewish, but very unlike the present day. Jewish apostles picked up the messages from Heaven and confirmed them.

Once more we are being asked to believe that after a period of 490 units of time dating from the days of Daniel, we will be in an end time scenario. And all of the things promised to be dealt with will be dealt with. We are not told that this will be the end of Jewish history or any history, just that these things will be accomplished. What could this unit of time be? No definite answer yet.

and to anoint of holiness of holinesses/ and to anoint the most Holy/ and to anoint the most holy *place*/ and to anoint a most holy place

One more thing will happen during that time period, yet to be identified. First, all translations agree that an *anointing* must take place. Let's go a little deeper.

To anoint is to rub or smear, according to the Hebrew. Though the word is not specific as to the liquid involved, it is almost exclusively oil that is being referenced. Oil, rubbed or smeared or poured on the head.

The ceremony that came from this was performed on priests, on kings, on holy places, on the altar of sacrifice, on the other furniture of the tabernacle, on unleavened bread.

Persons that were ministered to with this oil were known as the anointed. Israel was the anointed people of God. Kings were the anointed. Two prophets yet to visit or re-visit Earth are known as the "anointed ones."

And of course, Jesus Himself is known as the Anointed One. That is, Christ. Christos. The anointed.

The question then remains, Who or what is to receive this special smearing of oil within the coming 490 units of time? In searching for our answer, we care not about English opinions expressed in English translations. We go back to the Hebrew to see what clues are there.

You will note that the King James simply gives us the *Most Holy* as the recipient of the anointing, whereas later translations add the idea of place. We need to know why "place" is a possibility, as opposed to the possibility of a Person being spoken of.

The Place

The Mosaic Tabernacle, as the Temple, divided the holy places within, into two separate rooms. There was a holy place, and a “most holy place.” The NASB and others refer to the most holy place as the “holy of holies.” This seems to be in keeping with the Hebrew, as you will see above, translated “holiness of holinesses.”

Following this train of thought, that the term *holy of holies* refers to the special room of the House of God, one can readily see why translators added the idea of *place* to *most holy* and concluded that a new temple is in the mind of Gabriel.

But what of the other recipient of an anointing, mentioned in the next verse? This one is clearly referring to Jesus. Is Jesus not the Most Holy also? And does not the flow of the next verse indicate that the history we are following by prophetic word naturally leads, not to a building, but to a person?

Nevertheless, there are other passages that refer to Temples in the last days. Ezekiel’s description of such a place could qualify. Antichrist sits in the Temple of God, says Paul. There is a Temple seen by John in his Revelation.

The Temple of Ezra and Zerubbabel was also in Daniel’s future. But this one, enhanced for many years by Edomite King Herod, was fated to be destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70.

So what have we here? An anointing of a holy of holies, or of the Man Christ (anointed) Jesus? Notice that a holy place, and holy furniture and altars, an entire structure, is not mentioned here. Only the inner sanctum, the most holy place. The sacred

place where God appeared to His people, opened up to all on that day when Jesus died, and the veil was torn in two from top to bottom.

The Person

The anointing oil, of course, was symbolic of the Holy Spirit. We have in the Gospel accounts the incident at the Jordan River where that Spirit descended on the Son of God, crowning Him as the one anointed, chosen, approved, of God the Father.

We also know that Jesus referred to His body as the Temple, telling Jewish leaders they could destroy this temple and he would raise it up in three days.

Could it not be that this is what the angel saw and passed on to Daniel? We cannot be dogmatic here, and there are good commentators who argue for this being a reference to a Millennial Temple.

Perhaps both anointings are in view. But at least one of them must take place in the 490 unit period.

But now we must shed the idea of a time unit, and be specific as to what that unit is. The next verse leaves no doubt about the schedule in God's mind. Now we start counting...

Daniel 9:25.

and you shall know and you shall be intelligent/ know therefore and understand/ so you are to know and discern

Commands and statements of fact in the second person, you, are often interchangeable in Scripture. It is so in the Greek. Where we have read “Search the Scriptures” as a command all these years, the preferred translation, in context, is “You search the Scriptures.” Jesus is talking to the Jewish elite, who knew their Bibles quite well, and is telling them, “You search the Scriptures, for you think that you will have eternal life in them. But they are the very Words that testify of Me. And Me you do not want.”

In English we say that the subject of a command is “You, understood.” That is, we understand that you is the subject even if the word *you* is not there.

So, in the Hebrew or English here, what is being said? You know? You will know? Know? Perhaps the combination that has it, “you are to know...”

Daniel is told to zero in on the words that follow. Know what I am saying. Listen carefully. Understand it. And what the angel says to Daniel, he says to us. And who has obeyed the angel’s word? Do you know and understand this passage? God wants you to understand it. Did Daniel? We aren’t told his reaction to this word, but in so much of the prophecy to him, he is left abashed and confounded, dizzy and weak.

Peter (1 Peter 1:10-12) suggests that not only Daniel, but all the prophets “who prophesied of the grace that would come” had to do some seeking to know what the Voice within them was saying. God would speak and they would write, and they didn’t always figure out the timing of their prophecies. But they eventually learned, as will Daniel in the end of this book, that “they were not serving themselves, but you [first century

Christians who witnessed the fulfillment] in these things which now have been announced [death, burial, resurrection etc.] .

So much of what Gabriel is about to say has been fulfilled. But not all. Let us hear the word of Gabriel speaking to us: "Know. Understand." First, know this:

from faring-forth of word/ *that* from the going forth of the commandment/ that from the going forth of the command/ *that* from the issuing of a decree/ that from the going out of the word

A word is going out. A decree is about to be made. Decrees are made by important people. This proclamation is to be given in Daniel's day. If we can figure out what the decree is, and the year when it was given, we know where to start counting, and we can finally figure out what is the unit in which we are counting. This is ground zero of the prophecy. Like on those maps in the forest preserve that say, "You are here."

Gabriel tells us now what the decree is. We're left to figure out the date of that decree.

to return of and to build of Jerusalem/ to restore and to build Jerusalem/to restore and rebuild Jerusalem

The decree is to be given by someone who has the authority to give such a decree. The content of the decree: Jews, go back and rebuild Jerusalem.

538 B.C.

Those looking for easily understood fulfillments to this prophecy will immediately jump to the last verses of 2 Chronicles, and the first verses of Ezra. Identical words on two succeeding pages of your Bible. There it is! A decree, from a Persian King who has jurisdiction over the Jewish people.

And the content involves Jerusalem! This must be it. No, this must not be it. Look at that content again, in Chronicles or Ezra, whichever you please:

“The Lord, the God of heaven... has appointed me to *build Him a house* in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.”

We’ve got to read carefully. The prophecy says that the decree is to rebuild *Jerusalem*. This decree, in 538 B.C., by Cyrus, covers only *the “House.” The Temple*.

Hmmm. Are there other decrees? Oh yes. Two more, in the Scriptures alone.

518 B.C.

In 518 B.C., Persian King Darius issues a decree found in Ezra 6. It too disappoints us in that it is merely a renewal of Cyrus’s decree to build the Temple.

457/458 B.C.

The third decree comes along in about 458 B.C. We know the different dates because we are given the very year of the

presiding and decreeing Ruler. Artaxerxes is now the King in Persia.

The decree of Artaxerxes is recorded in Ezra 7. Mention is made of the house of God, to be sure, but more is mentioned. Priest and Levites are dispatched to serve the religious needs of the people. Money is provided for sacrifices. Ezra is to appoint “magistrates and judges that they may judge all the people who are in the province... and you may teach anyone who is ignorant of them.” Capital punishment is enjoined on breakers of the law of Moses.

Jerusalem, the city, not just the Temple, is in mind in this third decree.

This is Artaxerxes’ seventh year in power.

Thirteen years later he will further decide that Nehemiah is allowed to come to Jerusalem and build a wall around it (Nehemiah 2:1ff). Some see here a fourth “decree”. That year is 445.

I believe we can safely say that the year 457/458 is the year we can begin counting. And yes, let’s use *years* as our long-sought-after unit of time , and see where it leads us.

We enter into a labyrinth of possibilities now, as some commentators talk of lunar years. Some remind us of the changes of the calendar in the first century. I shall use the year system that God knew would be in effect when people needed to count, as they would need in these last days. Taking all of that into consideration, I believe the Lord will lead us to dates

that are so incredibly close to what we know of history, that we will be satisfied that God has spoken.

458 B.C. The starting point. Agreed? Then listen carefully:

until anointed-one governor/ unto the Messiah the Prince/ to the coming of an anointed one, a prince

So, from 458 B.C. until the coming of the long-awaited Messiah. Here we must pause again. Are we saying, start at 458 B.C., and count until the *birth* of Messiah? Or until His anointing, so to speak, in the Jordan, thirty years later? Or until His “cutting off” or death, three years later still?

I think we can agree that Gabriel has Jesus in mind. That much is settled. From 458 B.C. until *something* about Jesus is the time period being announced. Let’s count.

From 458 to 0 is obviously 458. But scholars tell us Jesus was not born at “0” but in 4 to 6 B.C. That number is based on the known years of Herod’s life, the reign of Tiberius, and the mention of “about thirty years” in reference to Jesus’ ministry beginning, among other things.

The use of “about” by a Gospel writer lets me know that God was not interested in His people knowing some of these trivial matters. But a fulfillment of prophecy is far beyond trivial. We can have a general idea of the amount of time involved by a simple calculation.

If Jesus was born “6 B.C.” and lived 33 years (about), then the date of his death was A.D. 27.

All these numbers together mean that we should add *about* twenty-seven years to the 458 we already have from the decree. That's *about* 485 years.

Hold that number. From the decree until Messiah is cut off, crucified, about 485 years. About. Or from the decree until Messiah's "anointing", three years earlier, 482 years. Will that work? Let's see what Gabriel says the number should be...

sevens seven / shall be seven weeks /there shall be seven weeks.

We're back to the word translated "weeks" which we know now is "sevens". We start with seven sevens. Forty-nine. Forty-nine years. Gabriel divides up the time from the decree to the end into three sections. And this is section number one.

Forty-nine years. What happened from 458 B.C. to 409 B.C. ? Why this division? Why not go directly to the Messiah? The answer seems to be at the end of the verse. The original decree we are following, remember, had to do with the restoration of Jerusalem, not just the rebuilding of the Temple. Streets and walls and the entire resurrection of a city, take time. He was able to rebuild the wall in a mere 52 days! But that was only the beginning of the process.

Recall that it was thirteen years from the decree of Artaxerxes when Nehemiah appeared on the scene with a burden for going beyond the Temple restoration to the restoration of a city.

According to Nehemiah 5:14, this city-builder remained governor of Judah for 12 more years. He returned to Babylon,

then after some time had passed he came back to Jerusalem, only to find that God's people needed correction already. Tradition tells us that he remained with the Jews well into the time predicted by Gabriel.

The "troubulous times" mentioned by the angel at the end of this verse could well be what is recorded for us by Nehemiah himself in his book. Trouble from wicked men who tried to kill him. Trouble from backsliding Jews who threatened to bring God's wrath on the people early on.

Division one, then, is the reorganizing of Israel into a worshipping entity with a temple and sacrifices and a holy city. Forty-nine years of renewal, all of which is probably dealt with in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah.

But let us move on to division two:

and sixty and two/ and threescore and two weeks/ and sixty-two weeks/ Then for sixty-two weeks

Gabriel adds the second section here, though without comment. What follows in this verse seems to be a comment only on the first section, as described above.

The second division of the prophecy is to be added to the first. Sixty-two more sevens added to the seven sevens. That is, 434 years added to 49, for a total of 483 years.

483 is not 490. 490 was the first announced time period for the completion of dealings with Israel. Seven years are missing. One week. One seven. Keep that in mind, for the missing seven will appear shortly.

As to the 483, it becomes obvious, looking at the numbers calculated above, that we have come in history to the time of Jesus Christ. From the time of the decree of Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem (458 B.C.) until the anointing (or is it the cutting off?) of the Messiah of Israel, will be four hundred eighty-three years, says Gabriel. Says the Lord.

You will recall that we estimated about 485 years above. Now Gabriel tells us it will be 483 exactly. Allowing for calendar differences, we know that we have come upon an amazingly accurate prophecy.

she shall return and she is built square and salient/ the street shall be built again, and the wall/ it will be built again, with plaza and moat/ it shall be built again with squares and moat

Gabriel returns to the seven sevens, the forty-nine years of the first division. There are Hebrew words used that seem to have given the translators a wide variety of choices. What exactly is being built?

Rechobe in Hebrew is merely a “width” of many possible descriptions. By extension, an “avenue” or street is understood here and in several other Old Testament passages. I see no reason why this Daniel passage should cause the word to be translated any other way. “Plaza” is definitely a width, and the decorative “squares” likewise. But street will suffice, it seems to me.

Khawroots is something else. How the translators decided on “wall” is beyond me. The word is a participle, and can be used as an adjective. For that matter, so can *rechobe*. In the Hebrew interlinear, notice that both words are so used. “Square and salient” is the description of the rebuilt city.

Khawroots comes from a word that means to cut or dig. Hence the “moat” idea mentioned in modern translations.

The exact wording is probably not important here. A city came back to life. It was built with design. Streets were made. A wall came up. Trenches or moats surrounded it. It was safe and beautiful when all was completed.

and in constraint of the eras/ even in troublous times/ even in times of distress/ but in a troubled time

We referred to this item above. Whenever possible, I believe it is necessary to use the Scripture to interpret the Scripture. That the city rose up during a time of trouble is clear in the records given us by Ezra the scribe and the appointed governor Nehemiah. We can trace some of the troubles in their books.

Chapter 4 of Ezra documents a persecution headed up by one Rehum, a commander, and Shimshai, a scribe. Together they sent a letter to King Artaxerxes, complaining of these rebellious Jews building their city. They suggest that to allow the building project to continue would be dangerous to the reign of Artaxerxes in that region.

The king listens. The work is stopped.

Macarthur suggests that it is this very condition of things that comes to the ears of Nehemiah, servant to Artaxerxes in Babylon. Nehemiah 1:3 talks of the reproach under which the Jews are now viewed by surrounding enemies. He wins the king’s favor anew, for it is this Artaxerxes who had commissioned the building to begin with.

There is a great turnaround. Nehemiah is favored, and sent to Jerusalem by the king. But the troubled times continue. An Ammonite official, representative of a people long at odds with the people of God, along with others, opposes Nehemiah.

Ridicule ensues. But so does the building of the wall. It is completed in a mere seven weeks.

More ridicule, which turns to anger, and a desire to fight against the Jews. The people are cowed. Nehemiah prays and encourages them. He tells them to have a trowel in one hand, and a weapon in the other, as they continue the work.

As the city continues to rise out of the ashes, Nehemiah's enemies resort to more subtle and devious ways of thwarting progress, even though the wall is near completion. Five times they invite Nehemiah to a secret meeting, to work out some plan of cooperation. He rejects the offer. He is busy with more important things, he tells them.

A "friend" then comes to Nehemiah to warn him to flee to the Temple to hide. They are coming to kill him! But his friend is an enemy, hired to lure him to his death in the Temple!

All fails. The enemy from without is silenced. But another enemy surfaces within. The returning Jews become part of the problem that Ezra and Nehemiah must face.

Jews who got there first are offering loans to Jews who come later... at exorbitant interest rates! Nehemiah is outraged.

Many of the returnees find that the population of the land is mixed. Many foreign women, women outside the covenant of

God, attract the attention of Israel's men. And without thinking of how they got into the seventy-year exile to begin with, marriages take place. Many of them! Ezra and Nehemiah both decry this offense, but eventually correct it.

That's not all. Food is being sold on the Sabbath. A clear violation of the commandment of God to honor Him on that day. Nehemiah is forced to shut the newly-erected gates on the Sabbath to keep merchants from entering the city.

Troubles without. Troubles within. Troubles from foreigners. Troubles from citizens. Threats and ridicule and intervention by a king. Could all of this not be what Gabriel was announcing to Daniel? For forty-nine years, Jerusalem and the surrounding areas would come back to life, but not without opposition?

Daniel 9:26.

and after the sevens sixty and two/ and after threescore and two weeks/[and, then] after the sixty-two weeks/

Back to counting. Of the 490 years, one/tenth are now accounted for. There were seven sevens, or forty-nine years. Now we are to add sixty-two sevens, or 434 years. $434 + 49 = 483$.

Remember this. 483. Not 490. A "week" is missing in the calculation. Seven years not accounted for. Yet.

So, what happens 434 years after the city is restored, or 483 years after Artaxerxes' decree in 457 B.C.?

**he shall be cut off anointed one/ shall Messiah be cut off/
Messiah shall be cut off/ an anointed one shall be cut off**

In a united voice the translators talk of One Who will be *cut off*. This is a harsh term. It translates *kawrath* in Hebrew. Cut. Cut off. Cut down. Destroyed. It is used a multitude of times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

In Noah's day, all flesh was to be cut off.

In the books of law, repeated references are made to disobedient Jews who will be cut off from their people, if they break this or that commandment.

The Jordan River was cut off so as to allow Israel to pass into the Promised land with Joshua.

David's enemies were all cut off.

Descendants of wicked kings were to be cut off.

In Psalm 37:22, 28, the cursed and wicked are to be cut off.

Messiah cut off

The prophets are very vocal with this word, but one in particular catches our attention. Isaiah. Though he uses a different word, *gawzar*, Strong tells us it means the very same thing. Cut off.

This “Gospel” prophet, in speaking of the suffering servant who is to come, in his most famous of all chapters, 53, tells us “... He was cut off from the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due.”

In every instance of the use of this word that I have provided, notice the unnaturalness of the cutting. This is not about mere death. Everyone must experience death. There is nothing remarkable about saying that people die.

Those living in Noah’s day had their normal lives interrupted. They died horrible deaths long before their time would normally have been up.

The Jordan River normally flows from sea to sea with no interruptions. But one day God said, “Stop, Jordan, stay right there. You are to be cut into two rivers until I say otherwise.” Unnatural.

And cursed people? Wicked people? While good people, God’s people, get to live forever (the meek shall inherit the earth), the wicked will be turned into hell, eternal death and separation from God. The second death is a *cutting off* from God.

What a horrible thought.

So how does Jesus figure into all of this? Messiah, cut off? Cursed? An unnatural death? That’s what Isaiah said.

The death, the separation, began while He was dying: “My God, why have You forsaken Me?” That was a real prayer. He

wasn't just quoting David in the Psalms. He felt cut off from the Father.

There was a separation that took place that day. "It pleased the Lord to crush Him..." Not the sadistic pleasure of a madman, but the fatherly pleasure of one who must do the unthinkable to love sinners, the unlovable. Us. This is Abraham offering up Isaac. Pleased to do God's will. Broken inside to lose his son.

This was the cutting off of Jesus. The cutting off of a branch of a tree to save the tree. The cutting off of a limb from a human to save the diseased man. The slaughter of a lamb to provide for the necessities of the lamb's owner. Unnatural, untimely death of a young healthy holy Person to save the unholy people who would be called to His side later.

And nearly 500 years before the fact, Daniel, and the rest of us, all were given a view of this cutting off by Gabriel.

After.

Before we move on, we have to examine another word here: "After."

Aren't we getting a bit detailed here? Why in the world do we need to look closely at "after"? There's no problem in the text, Hebrew or English or different versions. But consider:

Daniel is not told that we are now entering the seventieth seven. That comes in the final verse of the prophecy. There's a lot of material in between week (seven) sixty-nine and week seventy. So how can Gabriel say that all will be accomplished in 490 years, if suddenly there is a list of items, many years apart,

that have to be squeezed in between week sixty-nine and week seventy?

To understand the answer to this riddle is to value this prophecy even more than you may value it already. You see, those 490 years are not consecutive, one after the other. Let me introduce you to the concept of the “gap” in Biblical prophecy.

The gap.

I used to introduce the gap as a theory. No longer. A huge space appearing in Old Testament prophecies is established fact. It is a fact we need to understand in order for prophecies like this one to come to life.

I do not like the term “dispensationalist”. But when I find periods of time marked out in Scripture, I cannot, will not, ignore them. There is a 1,000 year literal reign of Jesus. There was a covenant with Abraham, the Jewish people, and a New Covenant with us. God does different things in different times without changing Who He is.

A gap, you say? Prove it. Okay. Let’s look at Isaiah again. 9:6. “A child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders.”

Armed with words like these, Jews looked for a man who would appear and take over. Jesus’ disciples looked for such a man and believed they had found Him. Can you imagine their disappointment when Jesus was crucified, then left them altogether at the ascension? Hear their cry: “Will you now restore the Kingdom to us?”

It was still in their mind. The son born to us must be in charge of the government. They didn't understand the gap. So far, there has been 2000 years between the "son" and the "government". How much longer we do not know.

Now look in Isaiah's 53rd chapter once more. Jesus' utter anguish is spelled out in the first eleven verses. But suddenly in verse 12, "I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong..."

Yes the Father will do these things. Not in first century Palestine. At a time yet in our future. Do you begin to see the gap?

Zechariah.

A well-known scenario is foretold in Zechariah 9:9. "Behold your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

The humble Jesus. The Lord Himself said, when He was here, "I am meek and lowly of heart." He lived that description every day. I do not see a shouting preacher, a dramatic performer. Gently, gently, His Word could penetrate a heart and turn it around for eternity.

But wait. There's more in Zechariah. The very next verse. "He will speak peace to the nations; and His dominion will be from sea to sea..." How does He go from sitting on a colt to ruling the world? Two different scenes from Jesus' future are glimpsed by the prophet. They seem to him and to readers of

him, that the scenes are back to back. But there is a huge gap in between.

Jesus.

One more for now. Isaiah yet again. Rather, Luke 4, where Jesus is seen quoting the great prophet in a Sabbath service. The scroll of Isaiah is handed to Him and he unrolls it to what we would call chapter 61. He reads of how the Spirit of the Lord is upon Him. How He has been anointed to bring good news to poor people. To set captives free. To announce a day of favor.

He tells the people that this passage of Isaiah has been fulfilled. Today. That day. And it was. But if He had read only a little more, He could not have talked of fulfillment. The next line talks of a day of vengeance. That day has not yet come. Jesus understood the gap. There was a time for favor and a time for vengeance, separated by a huge ocean of years.

The gap is real.

Daniel in his book takes us deeper into the gap than any other prophet. David saw Jesus' resurrection. Joel saw Pentecost. But in this verse we are expositing now, Daniel sees the destruction of Jerusalem, that came forty years after the Old Covenant was broken at Calvary. And perhaps more.

Let me go over this again from another perspective. What comes *after* sixty-nine? In Biblical counting, it is not seventy. Seventy sevens are allotted to Jewish Covenants. Jewish history. God's dealings with Jews. But in between the ending of the Old Covenant, that is, the cutting off of Messiah, the veil

of the Temple being torn in two, the cry “It is finished”, in between that series of events, and the final covenant mentioned in verse 27, there is again that huge gap.

It is the same gap implied by Isaiah, and Zechariah, and Jesus. A time *after* the sixty-nine but *before* the seventy.

The Gentile “interruption” to Jewish history.

It is the time of the church. God is dealing with individual Jews in this and every hour. Many are coming to Christ. But His dealings with old Israel, which is still an entity, are on hold until the signal given in verse 27. There is an Israel in today’s “Israel,” but it is not what it shall be one day. Both before and after His coming, a remnant, 144,000 is yet to appear.

You notice that in the book of Revelation there are saints of God being slaughtered, not raptured, into Heaven, yet 144,000 Jews are being sealed. There is a time when God will deal with Israel again. And the church? They are given into the hands of the antichrist. He will conquer them, say Daniel and John. While church history is being wrapped up by an all-out assault on the church, Jewish history enters its final seven years.

Perhaps this helps us to understand why the “clock” of Jewish history stops when Jesus dies. Not only a “church age” is envisioned next, but the reaching out of God through this church to every non-Jewish nation on earth. When the last Gentile person to be saved comes into the fold, God will begin to transition back to Israel as His focus. Seven years later, He will return to set up His Kingdom, now completely filled with the people He saw, Jew and Gentile, from before the creation.

Back to the text:

and there is no to him/but not for himself/ and [shall] have nothing

Commentators agree on the difficulty of this passage, one going so far as to say that the Authorized Version's translation ("but not for Himself") is impossible from the standpoint of the Hebrew.

The modern translations therefore agreed on the word for word rendering as the Hebrew has it: "and He has not...", even though the reader is left to fill in the blank as to what it is Messiah does not have.

I offer the following as a possibility, and am backed up by some of the scholarship:

We must enter into the moment of the "cutting off" and try to divorce ourselves from the future. In the moment Jesus the promised Messiah died, He had nothing visible on this earth.

Oh, we know he went and spoke to spirits in prison when His own Spirit was detached from His body. We know he will soon rise from the dead. We know the Law is "finished." Nailed to His cross. A mighty victory in the Spirit world.

But visit the scene on that Friday. From the disciples' viewpoint, and the women who wept at the cross, the man is dead. He has left no children behind, no successor. He must be buried in a borrowed tomb. Abject poverty.

The only provision He is able to make for those left behind is to ask His friend and follower John to care for His mother.

His Messiahship claims seem dead in the water. A king? A deliverer? He's dead. Humiliated before His world. A naked tragedy on a Roman cross. Decent people could not even look at the sight.

He has nothing.

Hear the depressed talk of two disciples walking to Emmaus on Resurrection Day. They had been hoping that this Jesus was the Redeemer long promised to Israel. But He's been dead three days. Oh, some women said they saw an empty tomb. But we didn't see Him. It's over. So sad.

Jesus does not even have the trust of His disciples at that moment. They had forsaken Him on the night of the trial. And they were forsaking Him mentally three days later.

Jesus has nothing.

Now this idea being put into Daniel's thinking was difficult. Isaiah had spoken of a suffering servant, to be sure, but the other prophets spoke of a victorious Savior of Israel, a conquering King who would make everything right in Israel.

Gabriel says He's going to be cut off. And have nothing. And that's not all, Daniel...

and the city and the sanctuary he shall ruin people of governor the one coming/ and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary

All that is prophesied to be rebuilt in verse 25 is now prophesied to be destroyed, one verse later! Such bad news! A Messiah is coming, but He's going to be cut off. The Temple will be rebuilt, in fact the whole city, but they are both coming down again after 483 years!

Notice again the wording. Not "in 483 years" but "after 483 years." In the gap. In 483 years, Messiah begins the new thing with His death, then the gap continues with a major catastrophe in the city. The knife is stuck into Judaism when Jesus dies, but it takes forty years for the symbols of that religion to fall. The Temple with all its sacrificial rituals, gone. The city in all its beauty and memories, gone. One tragedy after another.

Now we must deal with the perpetrator of these calamities, the *people* of a coming prince. We are helped in our search by history, some of the most well-known of the historical facts regarding Rome.

It was the Roman Empire that held sway in the days of Jesus and thereafter. It was a directive of Rome that sent Titus to Jerusalem to quell the constant rebellion of the Jewish people. Enough was enough. Jerusalem must fall and fall decisively.

In his *Wars of the Jews*, Flavius Josephus tells the awful story. Two future rulers of the Empire would be involved in this cataclysmic event: Vespasian, and his son Titus. The gradual subduing. The siege. The burning. The utter destruction of the Temple and nearly every building in the vicinity. Only the

Western Wall remained and remains to this day, a token that Rome often left to remind the conquered that the Empire had been there in all its iron efficiency.

The year was A.D. 70. The people, decidedly Roman. Jerusalem and its holy sanctuary are rubble, just as Gabriel had predicted 523 years before.

But the wording here is strange. Why is a “prince” mentioned here in this obscure way? And when is he to come? It would seem from the flow of this text that the people come in one generation and the prince in another.

The Roman people are thus the identifiers of the prince. The people are Roman. So when he does come, this prince, he must be Roman too. But who was or is or will be that prince? Many say, Here is the antichrist! No doubt, a Roman Pope!

I say, Not so fast...

Let’s take a long look at some verses in what we might call the companion book to Daniel, namely John’s Revelation. We will be in chapter 17.

It will be necessary to agree that the visions John sees refer to the end times, just as Daniel’s do. John sees a great city ruling over the kings of the earth, in the last days. He sees a “beast” which most have agreed is the final world ruler of those days, antichrist. He sees the interaction between these two entities.

But he sees more in that chapter. Calling us to seek wisdom in verse 9, he tells us about seven mountains, and then seven

kings or kingdoms. He then declares that they are traceable through history.

Five indeed have already come and gone in John's day. One is in existence as he writes these words. And another is to come in John's future.

Some have put names to these numbers. Five have fallen: Moving backwards through time, Greece with its Alexander or perhaps its Antiochus Epiphanes, an antichrist-type. Then Medo-Persia and Xerxes. Before him, Neo-Babylonia and Nebuchadnezzar. Assyria would be next, and Sennacherib the great ruler. Before him old Babylonia, going back to Nimrod himself.

One is: Of course, this is Rome, and perhaps Trajan who ruled during John's day.

Six Empires, six antichrist-like Emperors, all gone as we tell the tale today. Number seven is coming. A revived Roman Empire, it would seem.

Rome rises.

Some thought the Common Market was going to develop into that final amalgamation. But there is a Mediterranean association that more perfectly duplicates the old Empire by circling the great Sea and including African nations in the process. It's called the Union for the Mediterranean and presently includes forty-three nations. Oh, and it includes Israel. A little nation that needs a lot of big help.

I found this article some time back. It had been posted in 2008. I do hope you will look it up and read it all. [It's still there, September, 2020, ed.]

The New Mediterranean Union Seeds of a New Roman Empire?
Posted on **Oct 9, 2008** by Tom Robinson

A media circus was in full swing as U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama was greeted in the Middle east and Europe as a political superstar in late July, 2008. But a potentially far more important development in that part of the world the week before garnered little attention...

On July 13, leaders of 43 countries surrounding the Mediterranean (from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East) joined together in Paris, France, to launch a new regional union—the Mediterranean Union or, as it's now officially called, the Union for the Mediterranean.

Another article that will help you understand what is happening around the Mediterranean was written in 2018. It begins like this:

Welcome to Club Med. Not since the days of the Roman Empire have all the lands touching the Mediterranean fallen under the aegis of a single government or organisation. There's the United Nations, of course, but July (2008) saw the establishment, on the initiative of French President Nicolas Sarkozy, of the "Euromediterranean Partnership" linking the European Union (EU) to every Mediterranean nation except (at least for now) Libya.

The rest of that article is at
<http://www.bestofsicily.com/mag/art279.htm>

So... China is not the coming world power. Not Russia either. Or Islam. I suggest we follow this story of the Mediterranean as the future headlines of the planet.

And have you seen the miracle of this age regarding Israel making peace with an Arabic country? If that continues, and this alliance solidifies, all we need is a leader and the Roman Empire is alive and well.

Number seven.

Precious little is told us about this coming Empire in Scripture. But it is crucial that we know it is coming. Rome shall be the center of it all eventually, and perhaps a Pope will preside, though that is not necessary. What is necessary to understand is that this seventh Empire, when it develops, *is not the antichrist Kingdom*, though it will soon evolve into it.

I say soon, because John says soon. "When he (number seven) comes, he must remain a little while." Three and one-half years, perhaps? More on that later.

Where does antichrist come in? The next verse. "The beast which was and is not, is himself also *an eighth*, and is one of the seven, and he goes to destruction."

He was: The one who is to be the antichrist and come after number seven, already lived in history. He "is not": in John's day. That means he lived before John. Maybe Antiochus himself, or Sennacherib. One of these former rulers lives today,

but not on earth. He comes up out of the abyss: preserved as an Elijah or an Enoch or a Moses, to finish the work he started centuries before: the annihilation of Israel and all of God's people. The final solution.

Emperor number seven appears in this 26th verse of Daniel because he lives, to begin with, during the "gap." This is before the clock starts ticking. Israel is without a covenant of any kind. No temple worship. No security.

We are very close to the end of time here, but before we enter that seventieth seven, a further description of the condition of Israel after Rome invades its territory and demolishes all that is holy to it.

So let's deal now with "the end," "the flood," "the war," and "desolations."

and end of him in the overflowing/ and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood/ the end of it shall be with a flood/ and its end *will come* with a flood

The first thing we must determine is what is ending in this statement. Is it the end of "him" or the end of "it"? "Him" would mean the Roman prince that shall come. "It" would mean the war. A flood is going to come and end something or someone. I believe we have more information about war than the seventh Emperor in Rome. I will assume that the war ends this way.

A literal flood.

I've always tried to interpret the Bible literally. It is always the safest way to go, in my opinion. Literal six days of creation. Literal crossing of the Red Sea. Literal chariot that took Elijah to Heaven. Literal resurrection of Jesus.

As to floods, there was a literal flood that wiped out the civilized and uncivilized world. Why have scholars wanted to make this flood a non-literal one? The problem is, they say, Jerusalem is on a hill. Cities on a hill don't flood. If we are talking about the destruction of Jerusalem, we cannot talk about a literal flood.

First, history tells us that, indeed, there was *no flood* that ended the Jewish War with Rome. That must mean, if we are to go literal, this flood is still in our future, but before the seventieth seven begins.

But what about science and common sense? Hilled cities can't be inundated! Sorry scholars, but Jerusalem can indeed flood. And did. Check this 2019 headline and some of the story that followed:

Unusual Flood Hits Jerusalem Breaks Wall—Biblical Changes Coming
What Israeli new media is reporting as an unusual flood has hit Jerusalem sweeping away the wall of Jerusalem separating East Jerusalem.

They report that in a single day, Jerusalem received 1/4 of the rainfall it receives in a year causing a flood that was strong enough to knock down the wall of partition separating the Jewish and Palestinian sections of Jerusalem.

...

The unusual precipitation caused flooding in several areas across the city with many people trapped by floodwaters inside buildings in neighborhoods, requiring separate rescue operations.

*Also roads were turned into rushing rivers of water causing traffic disruptions and requiring dramatic rescues of people from their cars. One man clung to the roof of his car that was immersed in flood waters as he was rescued **by emergency crews** north of Jerusalem...*

(Reported by Signsofthelastdays.org)

Jerusalem can flood. The question is, when will this take place? We are helped a little by Daniel himself and John in Revelation. Do the prophecies of verses 26 and 27 melt together into one series of end-time events? If they are to be taken literally, there seems to be no other choice.

Many do not want to see this passage literally because they can't comprehend a flooded Jerusalem. So they speak of a flood of lies spoken by antichrist etc. Perhaps. I prefer to just believe the word as it is written. But let's look at the greater context of this verse.

Again, the "gap."

Remember that we are in the "gap" between "week" sixty-nine and "week" seventy. While I am mentioning that gap again, let Daniel help us understand it even more. The greatest example of a gap in Bible prophecy/history is in Daniel 10-12.

Daniel 10-12 is a piece by piece detailed look at the future of Israel, covering much of the same ground that we are covering in Daniel 9. The future of Persia's Emperors comes first, then Persia's clash with Alexander and the Grecian Empire. The prophecy reaches into the early days of the Roman Empire and then jumps to the end times.

11:35 is talking clearly about the days of the Maccabees, a history told in two books by that name, found in the apocryphal collection still available in Catholic Bibles.

But 11:36 has jumped over centuries, and eventually links up with chapter 12 where a vivid description of the final resurrection is given! The man who is described in these latter verses is not the same as the one described earlier... unless he has been resurrected, as we indicated earlier.

In between 11:35 and 11:36 is the same period of time alluded to in the prophecy we study, namely, somewhere in the earlier days of the Roman period until somewhere in the final days of Rome. Much can happen in a period that long. These are the preparations for the final dealings with Israel.

It is a period like this that Jesus is referring to, I believe, in Matthew 24. Wars. Rumors of wars. Nations rising against nation. Kingdom against kingdom (note that we have both sorts of government in our day).

With that backdrop in mind hear Gabriel's next words:

and until end war being decided / and unto the end of the war / and till the end of the war / even to the end there will be war; / and to the end there shall be war.

Critical here is the different approach the earlier translators have taken. The former scholars believed there was a particular war being discussed. The latter, that there would be war from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem until the end.

It would seem that in so doing, the later translators have lined up with the words of Jesus. Unending war, not just for Judea, but for all men.

Read carefully the Hebrew to English wording of this phrase: “and until end war being decided.” Does it not sound like Gabriel is saying that God has determined that there will be war until the very end?

The very end? Of what? History? The seventy sevens? The sixty-nine sevens? I believe knowing the answer to this is not critical. What is important to see is that the “gap” that is the Gentile time is filled with nothing but human conflict, and conflict regarding the Jews.

Consider these atrocities against Jews, since that initial war in the first century, a list which is not exhaustive:

1. A.D. 70. The Roman general Titus destroys Jerusalem, kills one million Jews.
2. 115. Emperor Hadrian kills half a million Jews.
3. 380. Emperor Theodosius, making Christians the favorite of the Empire, declares Jews to be an inferior race.
4. For two centuries, Jews are oppressed by the Byzantine [eastern] branch of the Roman Empire.
5. 628. Emperor Heroclitus banishes Jews from Jerusalem and tried to exterminate them.
6. 1096. the “church”- sponsored Crusades slaughter thousands of Jews on the way to Jerusalem, trampling them to death under their horses hooves. In the name of Jesus.
7. 1254. All Jews are banished from France.
8. 1492. All Jews are expelled from Spain.

9. 1496. All Jews are expelled from Portugal.
10. 1818. Thousands of Jews are massacred in the Ukraine.
11. 1940s. Six million Jews exterminated by Hitler's Germany.

Wikipedia lists hundreds of other attacks on Jewish person and property over the centuries.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_antisemitism

A simple reading of this list and the daily newspaper will confirm that Jews are to be at war to the end. And the next piece of the prophecy will add to that idea, also,

**ones being desolate/ desolations are determined/
desolations are determined/ desolations are determined/
Desolations are decreed.**

Desolation is mentioned nine times in Daniel. Scores of times by the other prophets. When God judges, entire areas are void of inhabitants. Towns are deserted. Separation from loved ones. No warmth, no comfort. No joy.

Knowing the meaning and the occasions of these desolations is key to understanding Gabriel, and Jesus who referred to him and the prophecy.

We first hear from Daniel of the desolation as it relates to an abominable act by one we believe is antichrist, in 8:13. The abomination that makes desolate.

No less than six more references to desolation are found in chapter 9, the very chapter we are studying. Jerusalem had just suffered seventy years of desolation because of its

abominations against the Lord. Idolatry, false worship, are at the heart of abominable practices that bring this sort of judgment.

Daniel prays about these desolations.

Desolations are then decreed for a future time in Israel, following their rejection of Messiah and the destruction of the Temple, A.D. 70. This is where we are now. Desolations that have been a part of Israel's history since those awful first century days.

Wandering from nation to nation. Their own land a wasted piece of geography overrun by Gentiles of various sorts. Their land desolate, their lives desolate. No peace. Until recently, no home. And even in their new home, the constant persecution and hatred by all their neighbors.

Desolations were decreed. Desolations have come to pass. But another beginning is ahead. And another twist in history that will bring Jewish – and world – history to a fiery halt. Unfortunately, the worst is yet to come.

Daniel 9:27.

and he has mastery covenant to the many ones/ and he shall confirm the covenant with many/ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many/and he will make a [firm, strong] covenant with the many

First, then, who is "he"? We have not far to look for an antecedent. The last man mentioned is a prince that is to come. We have concluded that that prince is emperor number seven of a revived Empire headquartered in Rome. Perhaps it is

a powerful Pope. Little is told of him in Scripture, and his reign is short-lived, as this verse will suggest, as well as Revelation 17 that we pointed out earlier.

I believe that the word “covenant” here is the signal for the long-stopped Jewish clock to start ticking again. The Old Jewish Covenant died at Calvary. The death blow to sin, the covering needed for all iniquities, the total fulfilling of the Law, came about when Jesus cried, “It is finished.”

For those who might object to a latter day covenant being in any way effective from Heaven’s standpoint, it is important to point out that the first covenant, though ordained of God, was not effective for the taking away of sins either. The sacrifice of bulls and goats and doves and whatever did not atone for iniquity then, and it will not now. Nevertheless, both covenants establish a place and therefore a mode of worship for the Jewish people.

From A.D. 30 to this day, the Jews have been without a valid covenant. Israel has been hardened, literally put on ice, while a flood of Gentiles has come into the Kingdom. Other Gentiles sealed – it was supposed – the fate of Israel by ripping the Temple to shreds, ending the possibility for the constant animal sacrifices. All of this demanded what looked like the end of Israel and Israel’s worship. But not so. Another covenant looms.

The validity of this covenant in heaven I can only surmise has something to do with the Temple worship. When Temple worship ended at Jesus’ death, the clock stopped ticking for Israel. No necessity for sacrifices. No necessity for a priesthood. That was all finished.

But true Israel time begins again when a Temple is erected, sacrifices are again permitted, the priesthood is renewed. The Jews do not believe “it is finished” and will raise up their final statement against the sufficiency of what Christ did. God allows this “blip” on the screen of history as a testimony to the world that Israel, non-elect Israel, is anti-Christ.

The real antichrist will intercept their plans however, steal their Temple, sit in their Most Holy Place, usurp the authority of their God, and the clash of the ages will ensue.

The Jews in their version of the new covenant will be pointing back to Christ unwittingly, but worshiping in vain. The Father seeks those who will worship Him from the inside, the spirit, and in the truth as revealed in the great Sacrifice, the Lamb of God. But I am ahead again...

Confirm.

There are so many words and phrases in this four-verse series that lend themselves to both surface interpretation and one based on a more serious inquiry. In the text before us now, should we accept “confirm” or “make firm”?

“Confirm” suggests a covenant is already in place. Whoever is responsible for *confirming* is placing a stamp of approval on the original Jewish worship?

But “make firm” is something new. A new start for Israel. Finally, the Jews will be settled and the “Jewish problem” solved. Somehow the Arabs will agree to remove themselves from the Temple Mount which they now possess with force of

arms. They will be given something even more valuable to them, though it is unnamed in Scripture.

All we know for sure is that the world leader of those final years wants to secure peace. And Israel wants to return to the God of her fathers. The old days. The City of David revived. The daily sacrifices restored. A final confirmation that God is with Israel after all. This is when many Jews will come back to their land and rejoice in Yahweh's provision.

But what about "confirm" or "make firm". *Gabar* in Hebrew has to do with prevailing, conquering, taking over, winning. It is translated many ways, but only in Daniel is it rendered "confirm." That leads me to think it is not the favored idea. Note again the interlinear: "And he has mastery..."

Is the Emperor demanding this treaty with Israel? Is he the Constantine of Jewry? That is, wanting peace so much in his realm he demands that the Jews have what they want, and is able by equal – political – force, to make similar demands for the Muslim world?

Whether forced or voluntary, old covenant or new deal for Israel, life is good. The world seems to be at peace, though perhaps the Pax Romana. But not for long.

seven one/ for one week

Here are the missing seven years to be added to the 483 already totaled. The Emperor in his wisdom and backed up by his people, the new Roman "Republic", has set a limit to this treaty. It is to last only seven years, then re-written.

That is one way to look at it. Or, God has ordained that in seven years, all the things mentioned in verse 24 above will have come to pass. There will be a reversal of the agreement, the abomination of desolation, conflict, Emperor number 8.

The clock is ticking now, rapidly.

and half of the seven/ [and, but] in the [midst, middle] of the week/ and for half of the week

When in doubt, we must go to the Hebrew. Half of seven. Now we are into first grade math. Half of seven is three and one half.

“Three and one half” surely is familiar to every student of the book of Revelation. Nowhere in that book is there a mention of a seven-year tribulation. Nowhere does it say that the coming prophets prophesy for seven years. Nowhere is elect Israel “nourished” in the wilderness for seven years. Nowhere is the holy city trodden by Gentiles for seven years. Neither is authority given to antichrist for seven years. In Daniel itself, chapter 12, telling of the same abomination of desolation and counting down to the end, seven years is not mentioned.

In every one of those instances recorded by John and Daniel, a period of approximately three and one-half years is written. This is the Tribulation.

The translators have varied from “in the middle of the week,” which would note the beginning of the trouble, to “for half of the week” which would entail the entire Tribulation period. Either way, it is obvious here what Gabriel is telling Daniel and us.

Next, the reversal.

he shall cause to cease sacrifice and present offering/ he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease/ he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering/ he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering/ he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering

“He”? Who is this he? Again we look for an antecedent, the last person mentioned in the text. And again we are forced to believe that it is this end-time Roman Emperor. Nothing has changed in the reign, but something is about to change, radically.

We are forced to speculation, since no facts are given for our enlightenment here. The one who forced the law into place just three and one-half years earlier is now reversing himself. Why?

We go to Daniel 8 for some possible explanation. This is the vision of the ram and the goat. The ram is Medo-Persia. The goat is Greece, specifically Alexander and his four successors. This much is revealed by Gabriel later in the chapter.

In the final days of history, one of the descendants of one of the successors of Alexander will exalt himself over all. One thing he will be responsible for is the ending of the regular sacrifices (burnt or meal) being offered daily in the end-time Temple.

Putting Daniel 8 and Daniel 9 together we can only surmise that the rising power of this man of sin (number 8) clashes with the Emperor of the period (“number seven”) and forces

him to reverse his promise to Israel. Thus, it is the work of the antichrist, but from an actual decree by the soon-to-be-replaced Emperor.

The transfer of power seems to be indicated in 8:12. "And on account of transgression the host [the military] will be given over to the horn [antichrist] along with the regular sacrifice [the religion]."

2,300 days (8:13-14) are then allotted for this whole process: the slow transfer of power, the rise of antichrist from within the ranks of the Empire, the desecration of the holy place, the restoration of God's order.

So it could be said that number seven and number eight rule together for a while. Then the man of sin is in charge by himself.

The clear difference between these two men is verified in the next two sections of the prophecy. Yet I leave open the possibility that number seven is executed and rises again as number eight. Many have said this through the years, though it seems to me not as safe an assumption as the resurrection of one of the older antichrist-types.

and on wing of abominations/ and for the overspreading of abominations/ and on the wing of abominations

The wing. Dare we stay literal and take the angel at his word? "Wing" does not appear in the KJV, but rather in the later translations. The older Bibles characterize the word by the *nature* of a wing, an overspreading. But the Hebrew could point easily to a literal wing. It is *kawnauf*. The basic meaning

is “edge” or “extremity.” When speaking of a bird, that means wing. When speaking of a garment, it would be “flap.” A building’s extremity would be a pinnacle.

In no way is an “overspreading” an extremity or edge. Better go back to wing. But how? Where is there a wing spoken of in connection with sacrifices and offerings and worship? The answer is Exodus.

A wing on the Ark.

Exodus 25 describes the making of the ark of the covenant, in which are to be placed the tablets of stone. The law. But on the top of that same box is to be a lid, a *kapporeth*, a covering, where God’s *mercy* was to be manifest. It is referred to throughout Scripture as the *mercy seat*.

Here God’s presence was to be manifested. Here God would meet with His holy people. God would speak to Moses here.

Two golden cherubim were to be placed on this lid, their wings outspread, covering the seat.

Is it possible that the original ark of the covenant will be found in these last days, a treasure unimaginable to a religious Jew? And if that does not happen, is it possible that the Jews, after constructing their new Temple, will construct a new ark?

But this wing, this cherub wing, is called a wing of abomination by Gabriel. How could such a holy image be defiled?

For a possible answer to this, we look at the next words in the verse, and visit the apostle Paul, speaking of a man of sin who shows up at this very moment in history.

one making desolate/ he shall make *it* desolate/ shall be one who makes desolate/ will [shall] come one who makes desolate

The translations match here. On this wing is one who makes desolate. This is not the Emperor we have been speaking of. A new person has been introduced. He is about to do something that will bring unheard of desolations to the world and to himself.

Abomination of desolation.

Before we visit Paul, a look at the term “abomination of desolation” needs examining. Jesus used it in a last-days message to His disciples as the sign they were asking for. “What shall be the sign of your coming and the end of the world?” Good question.

And not so long of an answer as many would have us believe. Matthew 24, one place where this message is recorded, has Jesus giving a long list of non-signs. That is, things that must happen in history before the end comes. No one of these signs is to be construed as heralding the very end.

But this one can. This is the sign He told His disciples to look for. Surely the wisdom of God knew that these men would not be alive to see this sign, but descendant disciples would have to know. The sign is the abomination that makes desolate, “spoken of by the prophet Daniel.”

Ah, such a help! Daniel did indeed speak of it, and via Gabriel is speaking of it in our chapter 9 prophecy. He speaks of it in chapter 8 also. And in 11. And in 12.

And, as though Jesus never mentioned it, interpreters of Daniel uniformly tell us that this abomination of desolation took place in the life of Antiochus Epiphanes.

True, but not the whole truth. Then, in the life and work of Titus, in A.D. 70? Again, only partially true. Both these military men did indeed defile the temple of God with ungodly placements. And desolations followed.

But neither of those times can fulfill what Jesus was talking about. He was answering the disciples' question *about the end of the world and His return to earth*. The world did not end in A.D. 70, or in Antiochus' day either. The abomination of desolation is still in our future, and Daniel is hearing from Gabriel even in this passage some of the details of that coming awful event.

Paul and Daniel.

How did Paul read the book of Daniel? Here is what he found: (II Thessalonians 2:3ff)

“... the apostasy comes first [before the coming of Jesus] and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he *takes his seat in the temple* of God, displaying himself as being God.”

Did you catch it? He *takes his seat*. Where in the Temple of God is a seat? Where would be the most holy place of holy places in God's House, from a Jewish standpoint?

There is the outer court, then the holy place, then the holy of holies. Holier still, the ark, the top of the ark, the cherubim pointing to the center of the *mercy seat*.

Is it possible that this vile creature will sit where God Himself promised to meet His people?

By this time in history, God the Holy Spirit will have been meeting with His people for thousands of years in the inner sanctum of their own hearts. But hard-hearted Jews of that last hour will still not know that. In the eyes of Jews, and perhaps in his own eyes, antichrist will have committed the sacrilege of all sacrileges. And he will announce from that holy place, that He is the God of the universe.

After all, does it not say in the Psalms (99:1) that God sits between the cherubim? "Here I am," says the wicked one. "sitting between the cherubim. Deal with it. I am your God!"

Quitting time. Abomination! Let the bombs fall. Let the earth be ready for a bloodbath from Heaven. You've gone too far, Satan. It is over for you and all who follow you.

Here we can place the rest of that Matthew 24 warning. Here is where desolation sets in. Judeans must flee to the mountains. Don't look back. Don't go into the house to collect any valuables. Run. Sad for the pregnant. Sad if it happens to be winter. Then will be totally unprecedented Trouble (aka the Tribulation).

Zechariah joins in the telling of that day. Chapter 14, in part:

“... I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled...” If you think this is the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, read on... “Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations... His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives and the Mount of Olives will be split... you will flee by the valley [this formed] then the Lord, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!... and the Lord will be king over all the earth...”

Here is the final day of the Lord. The desolations, the fleeing, the judging of Israel, and His immediate coming after all that, just as in Matthew 24.

Even during that time, says Jesus, that three and one-half years, false prophets will arise to draw many away. People will appear out of the woodwork claiming to be the returned Christ. But His return will be as a lightning strike. One second not here, the next second here.

and until finish/ even until the consummation/ even until a complete destruction/ until the (decreed) end

Following, immediately, after the Tribulation will be the return of Jesus. During that period between Satan’s power play and the final chapter, will fit all the outpourings of evil found in the book of Revelation.

and one being decided she shall be poured forth on one being desolate/ and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate/ ...which is determined, is poured out on the

desolate/ ... one that is decreed is poured out on the one who makes desolate/ and the decreed end is poured out on the desolator

The final question has to do with who is being poured upon in this last section of the prophecy. The Hebrew seems to point to one person. Translators have picked up on the "one" idea and concluded that it is the originator of the evil who himself is the victim of his own evil at the end.

To this the book of Revelation gives its full assent adding two other culprits that formed an unholy trinity in this end-time saga. Satan, antichrist, false prophet, all destroyed. Desolate.

(19:19-21) "And I saw the beast [antichrist] and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet... these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone..."

Of course it is Satan who is behind it all. He is bound for 1000 years only two verses later (20:2) And then in 20:2, he is unbound and himself thrown into that same lake of fire. The desolator is desolate for eternity: "they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

Summary/Conclusions

Can you now predict the future foretold in these four verses in an un-coded recitation of facts? Let me try:

Daniel 9:24-27, the interpreted version.

24. 490 years have been set aside for the Jews and Jerusalem. During that time, sin will be conquered, judged and covered by Jesus' death on the cross. Righteousness will begin to rule the planet. All the prophecies of all God's true prophets will have been fulfilled. Jesus will be King and Priest over the whole earth.

25. So know this: From the time that Artaxerxes delivers his decree to rebuild, in 458 B.C. until Jesus dies on Calvary will be 49 years plus 434 years, or 483 years. Jerusalem will be fully restored in that 49 first years, even though there will be many problems involved in the restoration.

26. After the 49 years, 434 years of waiting will follow and end at the crucifixion of Jesus. He will be left, it would seem, with nothing. Later the Romans will come and totally devastate the rebuilt city and Temple. There will be wars and rumors of wars, and constant desolation for the Jews until the very end, when a flood will wipe out the city.

27. The final seven years of Israel will begin with a renewed covenant for Israel. The Emperor of revived Rome will sue for world peace by trying to resolve the Jewish problem. The contract only lasts for three and one half years, however, as the Emperor is pressured by a quickly rising power within his government. The one we have come to know as antichrist will

push him to end his covenant with Israel. Antichrist will eventually take over the kingdom and try to take over for God Himself by sitting on the mercy seat in the newly-constructed Temple. This act will bring judgment on the antichrist and God Himself will destroy the destroyer.

You can see how difficult it was for me to create a compact grouping of words, especially in that last verse. There is a lot of information in these four verses.

Happy ending.

Sadly, this chapter ends on a sour note, to say the least. That's why Daniel 10-12 are there. Those chapters are one last prophecy of Daniel. They too contain negative information, some of which we have already covered in the seventy weeks prophecy. But there's more. A happy ending for sure:

Daniel 12:2 ff, in part: "...many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake... to everlasting life. Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever...how blessed is he who keeps waiting..."

Difficult times are ahead for the planet. Unrepentant Jews will be judged, and unrepentant Gentiles, too. But there will be a remnant in each of those categories that will rise and live with Jesus forever.

Let us not be distracted with plagues or riots or rumors of wars or attempts of nations to rise against each other. All of it was predicted. Let us seek earnestly to live for God and search His Word for the true signs He gives to His people in the end times.

There is no time for being immersed in the media any longer. The media is always wrong and depressing. Read the Scriptures. Everything you need to know about the future and this present time is in there.