

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel

by David Guzik

The 70 weeks of Daniel refer to a period of 490 years, determined for the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem, during which certain events will be accomplished, including the completion of transgressions, the making of an end of sins, and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness.

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Scripture: Daniel 9:24-26, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Seventy Weeks"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the prophecy given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel. The prophecy states that there will be a period of four hundred ninety years that concerns the Jewish people and Jerusalem. During this time, six significant events will occur, including the end of transgression and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness. The speaker emphasizes that God is not finished with Israel and that Christians should love and pray for the Jewish people.

Transcript

This evening we're going to consider what I consider to be one of the most important keys to biblical prophecy, and that's the 70 weeks of Daniel. If you understand this passage from Daniel chapter 9, and if you know how to understand how it relates both to the past and the present, and especially to the future, you really have a good grid work for understanding the rest of biblical prophecy. You see, we need to understand that this period of time that Daniel will make reference to in Daniel chapter 9 is repeatedly referred to by Jesus, by Paul, by the book of Revelation, and as I said before, I believe it to be a key to biblical prophecy.

So we'll get into Daniel chapter 9 in just a moment. I'd like to begin by opening up to Romans chapter 11. There's just sort of a foundational thing that I want to get across to you here before we get into Daniel chapter 9. Romans chapter 11 verse 25 reads, For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion.

Please notice the way that Paul starts that verse. He doesn't want us to be ignorant of something. There are three different occasions in the New Testament where Paul tells us to not be ignorant, and this is one of them, and it's surprising that at the very principle that Paul is going to detail in Romans 11 verse 25, many Christians, both in the past and in the present, are ignorant about.

You notice here, he says, I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion. Now what's the thing that he doesn't want them to be ignorant about? Here he goes. That hardening in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Please understand that Paul tells us that right now there is a hardening that has come upon Israel, the Jewish people, both ethnically and nationally. This hardness has come upon them. Now, notice again, Paul's very careful to say that it's hardening in part.

It's not a complete hardening. There are still Jews today who see their Messiah and come to trust in Jesus Christ. But you certainly can't deny that a hardening in part has come to Israel.

And Paul says that this hardening in part will last until something happens or actually until something ends. He says until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in now in verse 26. And so all Israel will be saved.

Paul looks forward to a day when Israel will be saved, not saved by perfecting their Jewishness, so to speak, but actually by completing their Jewishness, entrusting in the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In other words, they will be saved by coming to trust in their Messiah. Now, it's important to point out that when Paul says in verse 26 of Romans, chapter 11, that all Israel will be saved, that doesn't necessarily mean that every last Jewish person on the face of the earth at this given time that Paul speaks about will be saved.

But it means that the Jewish people as a whole will be identified as a Messiah trusting people, the Messiah being Jesus Christ, of course. As a Jesus trusting people instead of a Jesus rejecting people. Now, I want you to understand that Paul looks forward to this time when Israel will be saved.

That shows very plainly that Romans chapter 11, verses 25 and 26. Paul makes it clear that in his mind, Israel is not saved at the present time. But this hardening in part has come unto them.

And the reason why I make this clear is because I need to lay just a little bit of groundwork before we turn over to Daniel, chapter nine and speak about something that is very important for us to understand. There's a erroneous teaching that has existed in the church for many centuries. It's very important that we recognize it as being a wrong teaching.

You may know it by this name. It's often called replacement theology. And what replacement theology says is that God is forever done with Israel as Israel.

Of course, God may deal with individual Jewish people just like he may deal with individual Gentile people. But in the thinking of replacement theology, God is forever done with the Jewish people, with Israel as a group. This statement in Romans chapter 11 tells us right off the bat that that is not true.

It's absolutely impossible to say that God is finished with Israel as Israel because there's going to come a time when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and then God will turn his redemptive focus back upon the Jewish people. And as a result of that, all Israel will be saved. Now, again, that's not to imply that there's going to come a day when Gentiles cannot be saved.

Of course not. We would say right now in the present day that any Jewish person who trusts in Jesus Christ will be saved, even though a hardening in part has come upon them. But there's going to come a time when the outworking of God's eternal plan will once again focus upon the Jewish people.

It'll focus on Israel. And this passage states clearly for us that God is not finished with Israel, either as a nation or as a distinct ethnic group. Though God has turned the focus of his saving mercies away from Israel onto the Gentiles, he will turn it back again.

This simple passage strongly refutes replacement theology. It strongly refutes those who insist that God is forever done with Israel as Israel and that the church is now the new Israel and that the church inherits every promise that was ever made to national and ethnic Israel in the Old Testament. You see, we're reminded that when God made those promises to Abraham, when he made them to Isaac and to Jacob, he made them as enduring promises, as everlasting promises.

God is not finished with Israel and Israel is not spiritualized as the church. Let me say as well that we do rejoice in and we see clearly a continuity of God's work throughout all his people, throughout all generations. Even though we see a distinction between Israel and the church, we still are gloriously aware that there's a common connectedness between all of God's people throughout all centuries.

We also understand that seeing the 70 weeks of Daniel chapter nine is an important key to understanding God's future plan for Israel and the fulfillment of his eternal plan for the ages. So with all of that in mind, I'd like you to turn in your Bible to Daniel chapter nine. As you're turning there, let me simply explain to you that this is one of the most spectacular chapters in the entire Bible.

It's spectacular for two reasons. First of all, the first part of the chapter, which takes up the majority of Daniel chapter nine, concerns Daniel's prayer on behalf of his people. Daniel was carried away in the Babylonian exile.

The nation of Judah and the city of Jerusalem and the temple itself had been conquered by the Babylonian empire, by King Nebuchadnezzar, and they did a forced deportation of the population of Judah. They left behind some of the very lowest of the low among the classes and categories of people, and the rest of them, they took away and they took them to Babylon. It was a forced relocation.

Well, Daniel was one of those relocated. And let's pick it up here in Daniel chapter nine, verse one. He says in the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans in the first year of his reign.

I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord given through Jeremiah, the prophet, that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Please understand, it's very simple. What Daniel is speaking about here, Daniel was a student of prophecy, and one day he was reading through the prophet Jeremiah, and he noticed in the prophet Jeremiah that there was a year limit given to the time of exile.

Probably the passage that Daniel was reading was Jeremiah chapter 25, verse 11, which begins, And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years. Then it will come to pass when 70 years are completed that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans for their iniquity, says the Lord, and I will make it a perpetual desolation.

So I will bring on that land all my words which I have pronounced against it. All that is written in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied concerning all the nations. You see the point here.

In Jeremiah chapter 25, verses 11 through 13, Jeremiah, the prophet, says very clearly that the length of the captivity would be 70 years. And after that period of 70 years, God would bring the exiles home. It's also interesting to notice that Jeremiah chapter 29 also intimates for us that the letters and the prophecy of Jeremiah were in the hands of Daniel and the other captives in Babylon.

So we know Daniel had access to the book of Jeremiah in any regard. I want you to notice something that when Daniel saw this prophecy in the book of Jeremiah, he took it literally. When Jeremiah said 70 years, Daniel took that to mean 70 years.

He didn't think it meant 70 months or 70 days or 70 times seven or 70,000 years, because a day with the Lord is a thousand years or some convoluted kind of thinking like that, though it's certainly it's a biblical truth that a day of the Lord is as a thousand years. That doesn't mean that you can exchange a thousand years for every day that you find in prophetic writings. No, instead, Daniel read this.

He saw it. He believed it. And he said, I'm going to go into action to ask God to make good on his promise.

Look at it here in verse three of Daniel chapter nine. He says, Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications with fasting sackcloth and ashes. And I prayed to the Lord, my God, and made confession and said, Oh, Lord, great and awesome God who keeps his covenant and mercy with those who love him and with those who keep his commandments.

We have sinned and committed iniquity. We've done wickedly and rebelled even by departing from your precepts and your judgments. And so goes an extended passage in Daniel chapter nine, where Daniel confesses the sin of the nation of Israel.

It comes to a glorious culmination here in verse 16, where Daniel says, Oh, Lord, according to all your righteousness, I pray, let your anger and your fury be turned away from your city, Jerusalem, your holy mountain, because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a reproach to all who are around us. Now, therefore, our God hear the prayer of your servant in his supplications and for the Lord's sake, cause your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. Daniel here takes the promise of God in Jeremiah, chapter twenty five, and he takes it to prayer, confessing his sin and the sin of his people.

He holds up the promise before God and says, Lord God, please make good on your promise right now. I think that there's two things that strike me very strongly from this prayer of Daniel. The first thing is Daniel's whole manner of confessing the sin of his people before God.

We know from the book of Daniel that Daniel was a remarkably godly man. Most every major character in the Bible has some flaw pointed out to us. We never find a flaw in Daniel.

We never find a sin recorded. Now, I don't mean to imply for a moment that Daniel was sinlessly perfect, but we can say that he was a remarkably godly man. Well, even though Daniel was a remarkably godly man, when it comes time to confess the sin of the nation of Israel, it would have almost been appropriate for Daniel to confess their sin.

But he doesn't confess their sin. He confesses our sin. Do you see the difference? Daniel identified himself with his sinful people, even though his personal walk and life of integrity before the Lord was far different and far, far greater in its stand of integrity before the Lord.

I have a personal sort of opinion and conviction on this. I think that when we pray for revival. Their prayers don't really go anywhere with God.

When the attitude in our heart is Lord, revive them, Lord, get them on fire with you, get them walking right with you, all the while sort of smugly assuming that we're on fire and that we're right with God. I don't think those prayers go very far at all. I think God wants us to pray a lot of Lord, it's us.

Lord, revive me. Lord, forgive our sin, not just their sin. The second thing that strikes me very strongly about this prayer of Daniel is that Daniel in a remarkable way challenges God to fulfill his promise.

Sometimes we allow the promises of God to make us sort of fatalistic, as if Daniel were to read that promise in Jeremiah chapter 25 and to say, well, look, the Lord promised it here, didn't he? God promised us that after 70 years, the captives would be released. But Daniel didn't just take the promise of God in a fatalistic or in a passive way. He took the promise of God and in reverence before God, he brought it before the Lord.

And he said, Lord, you promised this. Now, please, in your mercy, fulfill it. I wonder how many glorious promises of God go unclaimed by his people because we refuse to do just that.

We sort of fatalistically take the promise and say, well, whatever, instead of acknowledging that God wants us to seize his promise and in a godly, reverent way, come before the Lord and say, Lord God, won't you please now fulfill this promise unto your people? Well, God did fulfill the promise and he allowed the captives to go free after this 70 year period. And the answer that Daniel received in reply to his prayer was actually much more than he bargained for, because God did more than just send an angel with an answer to Daniel. That would have been enough.

It's remarkable to get an angelic reply in answer to prayer. It would have been enough if the angel would have just come and said, well, Daniel, the Lord heard your prayer and God's going to do it. But the angel that God sent, the angel Gabriel revealed much more to the prophet Daniel, and that's what we want to concern ourselves with, particularly with tonight.

Let's take it in at verse 20 of Daniel, chapter nine. Now, while I was speaking, praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, Israel and presenting my supplication before the Lord, my God, for the holy mountain of my God. Yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering and he informed me and I talked with him and talked with me, I should say, and said, oh, Daniel, I have now come forward to give you skill to understand at the beginning of your supplications, the command went out and I've come to tell you for your greatly beloved.

Therefore, consider the matter and understand the vision. And now beginning at Daniel, chapter nine, verse 24, is this famous section known as the 70 weeks of Daniel, chapter nine. Let me read the entire passage to you.

Verse 24 through verse 27, and then we'll go back and spend the remainder of our time together this evening, taking a close look at this remarkable prophecy. Here it is beginning at verse 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.

No, 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 62 weeks. The street shall be built again and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the 62 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 until the end of the war. Desolations are determined.

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.

When we consider this passage beginning back at the beginning of verse 24, we see, first of all, that God promises Daniel and all of his people, the whole world, that certain things will be accomplished within a certain period of time. That's essentially the makeup of verse 24. First, we have the period of time.

The period of time says 70 weeks are determined. So this is a period of time, 70 weeks. And you might be saying, well, 70 weeks, how many? Much time is that? You say, well, that's easy to figure out.

A week is seven days. 70 weeks would be 490 days. You're talking about something in the span of a year and a half.

Well, no, that's not what it's speaking about at all. And we know this, again, from the study of the ancient Hebrew language, the ancient Hebrew culture. We know from examining ancient documents and the writings of the rabbis on this, really isn't open to controversy.

This next point that I'm going to make to you, we'll get into some controversy before we're finished tonight. But this first point is really relatively free from controversy. 70 weeks are determined for the Jewish people and for Jerusalem, for your people and for your holy city.

And that period of 70 weeks, it's almost universally agreed that this refers to 70 sets of seven years or weeks of years. Let me explain it to you this way. In our vocabulary, when we say a week, you think of seven, but you think of seven days.

That's just the way we use the word week in our English language. Nevertheless, if I were to say the word dozen, if I were to say a dozen, 70 dozens are determined for your people and for your holy city. You would rightly ask a dozen what? A dozen days, a dozen weeks, a dozen months, a dozen years.

Well, the Hebrew word that's translated for us weeks at that point in Daniel chapter nine is actually very much like our English word for dozen. It simply means a unit of seven. And as I mentioned before, it's almost universally agreed that the unit of seven that it's speaking about here is a unit of seven years.

So that Daniel speaks of 490 years, 70 times seven. So God is simply telling Daniel that there is a unit of 490 years. 70 times seven.

And then he also tells us whom this 490 years concerns. He says very plainly in verse 24, for your people and for your holy city. Well, to simply ask yourself the question, who were Daniel's people? They were the Jewish people.

That's absolutely without controversy. There's nothing more to say about that. Daniel was a Jewish man.

This wasn't talking about the Egyptians or the Babylonians or the Greeks or the Romans. It's speaking about the Jewish people. God has appointed a 490 year period of time for the Jewish people, but not only for the people.

Look again at verse 24. It says, and for your holy city, Daniel's holy city. It was not Babylon.

It was not Assyria or Nineveh. It was, of course, Jerusalem. This tells us that these 490 years deal with not only a people, but a place.

And that's important to understand. Because this means that this speaks of not only ethnic Israel. That would be the people.

But it also speaks of national Israel. That would be the place. I want you to notice that the most plain reading we can take from this so far is that this is not a reference to the church.

Daniel was not a Gentile member of the church. Daniel was a Jewish man. The church is not in view in these 490 years.

And so these 490 years, these 70 units of seven years each, are determined for the Jewish people and for the city of Jerusalem. Well, what's going to happen during those 490 years? Well, Gabriel was good enough to tell Daniel. And that's in the remainder of verse 24.

He says, first of all, to finish transgression. Secondly, to put an end to sins. Thirdly, to make reconciliation for iniquity.

Fourth, to bring in everlasting righteousness. Fifth, to seal up vision and prophecy. Sixth, to anoint the most holy.

Now, it's very plain here. It's not difficult to understand what's being said here. It may be difficult to see how it works out in history.

But the words themselves are plain enough. The angel Gabriel came to Daniel and said, here's a period of 490 years. This period of 490 years concerns your people, the Jewish people, and your holy city, Jerusalem.

And I would say by implication, national Israel. And what's going to happen in this period of time? Well, these six things. First of all, transgression will be finished.

Secondly, an end of sins will happen. Third, reconciliation for iniquity will be made. Fourth, everlasting righteousness will be brought in.

Fifth, vision and prophecy will be sealed. And then sixth, the most holy. That means the most holy place will be anointed.

Well, friends, let me ask you a simple question here this evening. Have these six things been fulfilled? As we stand right here in December of the year 2001, and we look back over the last 2,000 or 3,000 years, Daniel was writing, oh, about 2,500 years ago. As we look back over that period, would we say that in the last 2,500 years that all of these things have been completed? Well, has transgression been finished? I don't think so.

I think that this speaks literally of the establishment of an entirely new order on Earth. The ending of man's rebellion against God. Transgression has not finished.

Secondly, it says that there will be an end to sins. Well, can we say that there is an end to sins? We can certainly say that because of the work of Jesus on the cross, there's an end to the guilt of sin and the power of sins. But this seems to look towards sin itself.

It looks forward to a glorious new world. The third thing mentioned is to make reconciliation for iniquity. Clearly, we could say that the third point here, reconciliation for iniquity, was fulfilled at the cross.

There's no doubt about it, that at the cross, Jesus Christ made reconciliation for iniquity. The fourth thing that he mentions is bringing in everlasting righteousness. Well, it sort of depends on how you want to define bringing in.

If you mean the entrance of everlasting righteousness into the world, then you might be able to say that this was fulfilled by Jesus through the new covenant. If you want to say that bringing in means the establishment of everlasting righteousness all over the globe, then you would have to say that that has not been performed yet. The next point, the fifth point, it says to seal up vision and prophecy.

Most commentators believe that this means to conclude the final stage of human history. When the Son of Man rules to include God's plan of the ages in the end of it. At the very least, we can say the day when vision and prophecy will be over.

When there will be no more vision and prophecy, it'll be sealed up, done with forever. By the way, I can make a very persuasive case for you, I believe this evening. To tell you that the six items here in Daniel chapter nine, that not all of them have been fulfilled just on the basis of this one promise that within these 490 years, vision and prophecy would be sealed up.

Because we see that vision and prophecy continue. Not only would we say that they continue in our own day, and though I believe that very strongly, other people may debate it. But I think we know very persuasively from the book of Revelation that there will come on the earth in the very last days two witnesses who will clearly prophesy and clearly have visions.

I mean, right there in the book of Revelation, we have a concrete example of vision and prophecy that is yet to happen. And so, it means that it has not yet been sealed up. And finally, the point here in verse 24 is to anoint the most holy.

Literally, this refers to a place, not a person. Most likely, I would say that it refers to the millennial temple of Jesus' enthronement that's mentioned for us in several Old Testament books, in particular, Ezekiel chapter 40 through chapter 44. Now, clearly, all of these things are promised to happen in the period of the 70 weeks.

It's very difficult to take this literally and to say that these things have happened already. Now, you should know that there is a whole group of people who interpret this passage in Daniel chapter 9, and their main point in the passage is to prove that all 490 years have been completed. Obviously, for them to do that, they have to do some pretty heavy spiritualizing when it comes to verse 24.

They have to spiritualize an end to sins. They have to spiritualize finishing transgression. They have to spiritualize sealing up vision and prophecy.

They have to spiritualize anointing the most holy. I will confess that some of them clearly seem to have been done. Reconciliation for iniquity has clearly happened.

And perhaps everlasting righteousness has been brought in in just an introductory sense. Not in a complete sense, of course, but in an introductory sense by what Jesus did at the New Covenant. I think that any fair, plain, literal reading of this would have to say, though, that these things have not yet been accomplished.

Well, if you're talking about 490 years, then, then you have to say, let's just find out when the 490 years begin. And then we know how much time is till the very end, because the things that Daniel seems to describe here in this vision are things that concern the enthronement, the glory, the total domination of Jesus Christ in a glorious sense over this earth. And we all want that to happen, don't we? So we say, well, let's just count back from the 490 years when it began, and then we'll know when it finished.

He gives us the beginning point, actually, in verse 25. Look carefully here. It says, 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. Now, did you notice here? This is a definite starting point for the 490-year calendar. It begins when there is a command given to restore and build Jerusalem.

Now, there are many different people who have different theories on this and try to give different commands mentioned. I'll give you the consensus opinion and the one that I believe is correct that we find in, I guess it would be in Nehemiah chapter 2, verses 1 through 8, when King Artaxerxes over the Persians, not very long after the time of Daniel, when King Artaxerxes of the Medo-Persian Empire decreed in the year 445 BC that Nehemiah, his appointed governor, could go back and was authorized to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. And so, we have it really pretty clearly in front of us.

We're given an exact date. We're given an exact year. It was in 445 BC.

As a matter of fact, according to our calendar, we would probably call it March 1st, 445 BC. So, what I want you to understand here is that even though there are other decrees that perhaps people think qualify for this, this is the consensus opinion and it seems to be the one that is correct. Well, so we have a very definite beginning point.

On our calendar, it would be March 14th, 445 BC, the first day of the month Nisan in the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes. And so, that's the beginning point for the 490 years. Well, here's your problem, of course.

From March 14th, 445 BC, if you were to count off 490 years later, it would leave you somewhere in the neighborhood of the year 40 AD. And you would ask, well, wait a minute here. All these things mentioned in verse 24 did not happen by the year 40 AD.

What's wrong with this? Well, as we're going to see that the text itself tells us what's wrong with this, or actually how to explain it. I shouldn't say that it's wrong, it's absolutely correct. If you look carefully at verse 25, you'll notice that it only deals with 69 of the weeks.

It actually groups them into seven weeks, that would be 49 years, and then a remaining period adding all up to 483 years. 69 weeks, seven, and then 62. Now, he makes it very plain there.

Here's the opening unit that I want you to think of. Here's seven weeks, and here's 62 weeks. If you add them together, that's 69 of the 70 weeks.

And all of these together, you'll see these things happen. You'll see Jerusalem rebuilt. And he says very plainly there in verse 25, know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there should be seven weeks and 62 weeks.

In other words, Daniel's telling us very plainly here. When the proper decree is given, you can start a stopwatch, so to speak. If you had a stopwatch that could encompass years instead of just seconds and minutes, you could start that calendar stopwatch and you could count off 483 years later, the Messiah will come.

That's what he says, until Messiah the Prince. Again, if you look at it carefully in verse 25, this isn't hard to understand. It may be difficult to apprehend, but it's not hard to understand.

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 62 weeks. Then he goes on to speak about the rebuilding part. Now, what happens after that second unit of 62 weeks? Actually, after the 483 years, he says in verse 26, And after the 62 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 till the end of the war. Desolations are determined.

So you see what happens after this initial period of 69 weeks, 7 plus 62, adding up to 69, meaning 483 years from the time beginning, March 14th, 445 B.C., Messiah will come to Israel, but he'll be cut off. That phrase cut off is a Old Testament phrase that most of the time means execution. You'll find a few places where it doesn't mean execution, but most of the time it means to be executed.

Wasn't that interesting? Daniel here is telling us that the Messiah will be executed, but notice what he says in verse 26, But not for himself. It won't be for his own sin. It won't be for his own crime.

It won't be for his own sake. But it'll be for others. Do you notice this here? Here we have the Messiah coming, and then after the 483 years, he's cut off.

You know, when did this happen? When did this occur? Well, of course it occurred during the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, our Messiah. When you take a look at when the 69 weeks, that 483 year period, when it began and when it ended, you'll find different beliefs among biblical scholars and commentators. Some people say that the completion of the 62 weeks came at Jesus's birth, which most people believe to be 4 or 5 BC.

There's very little chronological support for that date. Some people say that the completion of the 62 weeks came at the baptism of Jesus. Well, you have to really kind of mess around and be sort of tricky with the figures to make the end of that 483 year period begin at Jesus's baptism.

I would take the opinion of a great scholar named Sir Robert Anderson, who has since gone on to be with the Lord, but he lived and wrote and ministered in the late part of the last century and in the early part of

this century, where Sir Robert Anderson's argument on this, in his great work, *The Coming Prince*, lays out this scenario in great detail. Anderson, first of all, says, well, how long of a period of time are we dealing with? Well, it's obviously 483 years, but Anderson notes that when Daniel wrote this, a year was considered to be 360 days, not 365 days. And so, Anderson takes this very literally, and he says, okay, let's take 483 years, and we will multiply that by 360 days, and that gives you a figure of 173,880 days.

And then Anderson, through some brilliant calculations, shows how actually, when you take the day that this 483 year period began, March 14th, 445 B.C., if you count out 173,880 days later, you come to the exact day of Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the day when he publicly and openly and deliberately presented himself to Israel as Messiah the Prince. It's a remarkable testimony to the literal way that prophecy is fulfilled. Again, let me sort of summarize it for you.

According to Anderson's calculations, which I should say, whenever you start dealing with chronology in the Bible, and precise chronology of days and years and months, there's always a bit of controversy about it. And there are people who are very controversial about the idea that Anderson puts forth that Jesus was crucified in the year 32 A.D. Many chronologists favor either the year 30 A.D. or 33 A.D. But there's been some wonderful recent research that has given even more credence to Sir Robert Anderson's year of 32 A.D. I guess I would just put it this way. John Walvoord, the great commentator on the Book of Daniel, says that no one today is able to dogmatically declare that Sir Robert Anderson's computations are impossible.

In any regard, I want you to see that when Jesus presented himself to Israel on this day as Messiah the Prince, I believe that he did it 483 years after that decree was given to the day. It shows the exactness and the precision with which God often fulfills his word. And so, friends, I want you to see that the text is very clear in verse 26, that after Messiah the Prince is presented to Israel, then Messiah shall be cut off.

And it happened a week after Jesus was presented to Israel. By the way, if you're interested in these calculations of Sir Robert Anderson, you can go to our church website at calvarychapel.com slash Simi Valley. Simi Valley being put together into one word.

If you go to our website there, you're able to find the calculations there. Just look through it and you should be able to see it pretty plainly by looking at the main index page. If you're interested in seeing how Robert Anderson's calculations work out on paper.

In any regard, let's take a look here at what he says in verse 26. After the 62 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. Here, Daniel tells us that not only after the Messiah is cut off after this period of 483 years, that two things will happen. First of all, it will happen that the Messiah is executed, but then also it will happen that the city shall be destroyed and the temple, the sanctuary mentioned in verse 26 will be destroyed.

So Jerusalem will be destroyed. The temple will be destroyed. And it's all going to come with a flood, with an amazing outpouring of destruction and calamity upon Jerusalem.

Almost everybody that I know believes that this was fulfilled, in fact, by the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, by the Roman destruction of the temple around the year 70 AD. And if you notice here, he

mentioned somebody in verse 26 that's very interesting. He says, and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

In other words, it's not going to be the prince who is to come. It will be the people of the prince who is to come who destroy Jerusalem and the temple. Well, we know very plainly from history that the people who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple were the Romans.

It was the Roman legions who did it. That's just a simple historical fact. But what I want you to understand here is very plainly that Daniel points out that there is a prince who will come from the Roman people, some inheritance from the greater Roman Empire.

That is a man who is a coming prince. And he speaks more of this coming prince in verse 27, where he says, 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. There's a few things I want you to notice. First of all, in verse 27, the he where it says, then he shall confirm a covenant with the many.

The he that it's speaking of there is the prince who shall come. So there's this important figure, this important person noted for us here in Daniel chapter 9, known as the coming prince or the prince who shall come. This man is known popularly by the title, the Antichrist.

And we'll talk much more about the Antichrist in coming weeks as we continue. This is series on topics regarding prophecy. But what I want you to understand here is this prince who shall come will confirm a covenant with somebody.

Who does he confirm it with? It says there in verse 27 with with many. Now, actually, it's a poor translation there, because in the ancient Hebrew, it doesn't say with many. It says with the many and the many.

There is a reference to Israel. It's speaking about this prince who is to come. We'll make a covenant with Israel for how long? Well, it says right there in verse 27 for one week.

Now, it's been a long time since we've talked about the 70 weeks. But did you remember that we've only dealt with 69 of the 70 weeks? You had the seven week unit in the beginning mentioned in verse 25. Then you had the 62 week unit mentioned, telling us that at the end of that 483 years, Messiah would be cut off and Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed.

But that only deals with 69 of the 70 weeks. And the angel Gabriel very plainly told Daniel that 70 weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city. What I want you to see is in verse 26.

Here's our missing week. Here is the 70th week of Daniel. And it's this final seven year period, this final week.

That is absolutely critical for our understanding of what God will do in the future. There is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week. Now, you should know very plainly that many people argue that there is no gap between the 69th and the 70th weeks.

And they insist that all that there is to be fulfilled in Daniel chapter nine was fulfilled in the first century, especially in the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. Now, I understand this teaching. I've researched it

carefully myself.

There are some Bible teachers that I admire who hold to it. But I disagree with it very strongly. I do not believe that everything in Daniel chapter nine was fulfilled in the first century.

I think any fair reading of verse 24, when we went very carefully through that list of things that said would be accomplished during this 70 week period during that 490 years. I don't think you can say in any time that this was fulfilled during the first century AD. I think you can also see very plainly, as you read the New Testament, that there is a specifically designated time of the Gentiles that Jesus mentioned in Luke chapter 21.

You see, in Luke chapter 21, verse 24, Jesus declared that Jerusalem will be Gentile territory until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Well, if there's a time of the Gentiles, what does it mean when the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled? It means then that it's the time of the Jews. It means then you're in the 70th week of Daniel.

You see, if there is a specifically designated time of the Gentiles, then there also means that there's a specifically designated time of the Jews. And that's exactly what Daniel nine is about. It's about 490 years that are appointed for your people and for your holy city, Jerusalem.

And 483 years of the 490 are well accounted for. But seven years are not. And this shows us that this last week of Daniel chapter nine, this last seven year period has yet to be fulfilled.

You see, it's as if God has a stopwatch for Israel and it has 490 years on the stopwatch. And when Artaxerxes made that decree on March 14th, 445 BC, God clicked on the stopwatch and exactly 173,880 days later, at exactly 483 years later, Jesus entered in triumph in Jerusalem. But he was rejected by the Jewish people as a whole.

Oh, yes, there were people shouting Hosanna. But the main part, the Jewish people, especially the leaders of the nation, rejected Jesus and God stopped the stopwatch. Messiah was cut off.

Jerusalem was destroyed. And God is still waiting with seven final years on the stopwatch for Israel. And he's waiting for the time of the Gentiles to be fulfilled.

He's waiting for the fullness of the Gentiles to come in, as Paul says in Romans 11, 25. And then God will hit the stopwatch again. And the last seven year period of human history on this earth, as mankind knows it, will take place.

Now, you may say that Jesus spoke about the time of the Gentiles. He said that Jerusalem will be Gentile territory until the time of the Gentiles are fulfilled. You may say, listen, I've looked at the political map of the Middle East and I see, unless, of course, you're looking at a Palestinian map, you see that Israel is in control.

The Jewish people are in control of Israel and Jerusalem. Well, are they really in control of Jerusalem? It's true that political control of the city of Jerusalem is in the hands of the Jewish people. But the most important piece of real estate in Jerusalem, the Temple Mount, it's still ruled by Gentiles.

Muslims, in fact. And it can still be said that Jerusalem, the most important part of that city, the Temple Mount, it's still trampled by the Gentiles. If you've ever had the experience to travel to Israel, never had the

privilege of walking up on that Temple Mount and seeing that place where Jesus would have walked, where Jesus would have come to the temple, where the magnificent Temple of Herod stood in Jesus's day and was subsequently destroyed by the Romans.

If you were up there, you would know that you're shepherded and guarded and moved along and bothered and annoyed, not by Jewish security forces, but by Muslim security forces. I think that when God looks down from heaven, he sees the most important part of real estate in Jerusalem still under Gentile control. And that's going to happen that way until the times of the Gentiles are over.

You see, Romans chapter 11, verse 25 tells us that God is waiting for the full number of Gentiles to be saved. And why is God waiting? What happens after that number is saved? Then all Israel will be saved. God will turn his redemptive focus again upon Israel.

Now, the prince who is to come is not specifically revealed to us here in this passage. The Bible has much more to say about him, but we do know what he does here in verse 27. This prince who is to come will confirm a covenant with the many, with Israel for one week.

That's our missing seven-year period. 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.

You see, when the book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John somewhere in the time of 90 AD, most scholars estimate that, the book of Revelation sees this seven-year period that Daniel spoke about as not fulfilled yet. Paul saw it as not fulfilled yet. You see, this covenant that this political leader, this prince who will come, will make with Israel.

God will use that covenant to usher in the last seven-year period of human history. And at the end of that seven-year period of human history, we can be assured, my friends, that Jesus Christ will return in glory for his people. As if God has appointed 490 years of special focus upon Israel in his redemptive plan.

The years were paused, so to speak. God hit the pause button with Israel's rejection of Jesus. Now there's no special focus on Israel in God's redemptive plan.

It's the time of the church. And God has a universal focus upon the world. But there will be a time when the church is taken away, at the rapture of the church.

God will return his special focus on Israel again for the last seven years of man's rule on this earth. Now, you may be troubled by the idea that there is a gap in this prophecy. A gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.

You should know that these are somewhat typical. Repeatedly in the Bible, you find passages that speak both of the first coming of Jesus and of the second coming of Jesus. All in the same passage.

All in the same context. Why? Because the Bible oftentimes, prophetically, will comprehend gaps. It's as if it's looking at a mountaintop and looking across at another distant mountaintop and it looks so close, but there's a great valley between, actually.

But it's looking, so to speak, mountaintop to mountaintop. And again, we know that in this final seven year period, in the very middle of it, that this prince who will come, that many people popularly call the

Antichrist, that he will bring an end to sacrifice at the temple by setting up an abomination. An abomination that brings great desolation.

And friends, if you don't think that this event is important for understanding biblical prophecy and God's plan for the end times, you should understand that Jesus made reference to this abomination, desolation. Paul made reference to this abomination, desolation. And of course, the book of Revelation also makes reference to this abomination of desolation.

It's very important for us to understand that God has a consummation of all things which will make his enemies desolate. And when he takes his finger off the pause button in regard to Israel, that last seven year period will begin. Well, what of us? What of the church? Well, I believe very strongly that the church will be taken up out of the earth.

Taken out of the way. The term that's commonly called is raptured. That the church will be raptured before this final seven year period ever begins.

That when the fullness of the Gentile comes in and the time of the Gentiles is over, God will remove his church, put his redemptive focus back upon Israel and begin this last seven year period of human history on this earth as we know it. Ushering in the great millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ where he personally rules and reigns over this earth. Now, you ask me, why do I believe that this catching away of the church happens before this final seven year period? Commonly called before the great tribulation.

We'll talk more about that. Friends, I want you to understand simply this. We've got weeks ahead where we'll discuss more topics and prophecy and time escapes us this evening.

So we'll talk in great measure, in great detail as to why we can believe that this great catching away of the church happens before this final seven year period begins. But that's for another evening. Can I make some final observations here before we conclude in prayer? Let's remember some of the main points of things that we've discussed here this evening.

First of all, God isn't finished with Israel. Please remember that, my friends. And that's why Christians should love the Jewish people and pray for the Jewish people because they still have an important place in God's redemptive plan for all his plan of the ages.

There are still seven years left on the stopwatch, so to speak, for Israel. We also saw this evening that God will work out his plan for the end times during this final seven year period. You know, and it brings to my mind the fact that the restoration and the renewal of national Israel, it's an amazing step for the fulfillment of this prophecy.

You know, clearly the Daniel prophecy, because he speaks of both the people and a place, it speaks of national Israel, not just ethnic Israel. And for thousands, well more than a thousand years, hundreds and hundreds of years, there was no national Israel. No, there was only ethnic Israel scattered across the world.

But 1948, world shaking events, world shaking, not just politically, but spiritually happened when Israel became a nation again. You know, I like to read older commentators and I'll read commentators from 100 or 200 years ago. And they'll say, we know Israel has to become a nation again, but we don't have any idea how it could ever happen.

Well, it has happened. That's an amazing step in the fulfillment of prophecy. And in regard, we'll deal in greater depth with these things in coming weeks.

But please understand, friends, God is not finished with Israel. There's still Daniel's 70th week to fulfill and all of what we consider in coming weeks about prophecy. Great tribulation, the Antichrist, the rapture, the abomination, desolation, the outpouring of God's wrath upon this earth, all of these things can only be understood properly if we understand how they relate to this final seven year period.

And this period that we know is Daniel's 70th week. Let's pray together. Lord, it encourages us to know that you're not done with Israel because it reminds us, God, that you're not done with us either.

So continue on your great work, Lord, in us and through us. Give us a correct understanding of these things and build in our hearts an even greater anticipation for the soon return of Jesus Christ. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

Make us ready for your return. Lord, God, give us a great sense of readiness for this return. We love you, Lord, and we praise you together this evening.

In Jesus name. Amen.

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