

Studies 11 and 12

Seventy Weeks of Years

Daniel 9

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Introduction: Daniel 9:24–27 is a difficult portion of Scripture to interpret, as nearly all scholars admit. J. A. Montgomery, a liberal, calls the prophecy “the dismal swamp of Old Testament criticism.”¹ E. J. Young, an amillennialist, stresses that “This passage . . . is one of the most difficult in all the OT, and the interpretations which have been offered are almost legion.”²

Dispensational premillennialist Duncan Culver writes, “The difficulty of the verses that now lie before us is evident. . . . As they stand in the Authorized Version [KJV] they are more than enigmatical. Pick up almost any two commentators from the same school of eschatology and it is not likely that there will be agreement on the meaning of all the details of interpretation.

Premillennial writers of two or three generations ago were very far apart on the details.”³ Driver writes: “Probably no other passage of the Old Testament has been the subject of so much discussion, or has given rise to so many and such varied interpretations, as this.”⁴

For the dispensationalist the “interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27 is of major importance. . . .”⁵ It is the linchpin of the dispensational system, “one of the most important prophecies of the Bible.”⁶

¹J. A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel*, ICC (New York: Scribner’s, 1927), 400.

²E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 191.

³Robert Duncan Culver, *Daniel and the Latter Days* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1954), 135.

⁴S. R. Driver, *The Book of Daniel* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 143.

⁵John F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1957), 24.

⁶John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1971), 201, 216.

Alva C. McClain states that “no single prophetic utterance is more crucial”⁷ to the dispensational system. Dwight Pentecost agrees with McClain’s assessment that Daniel 9 gives us “the indispensable chronological key to all New Testament prophecy.”⁸ One of dispensationalism’s earliest critics is correct when he states that “the importance of the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks in Dispensational teaching can hardly be exaggerated. It is often appealed to as the conspicuous proof that the entire Church age is a parenthesis in the prophetic program which is to be discovered between vss. 26 and 27 of Dan. ix.”⁹

The challenge of the passage is indicated in E. W. Hengstenberg’s highly acclaimed *Christology of the Old Testament*, where he devotes more pages analyzing these four verses than any other Old Testament prophecy, a total of 127 pages.¹⁰

I. Daniel Reads Jeremiah

A. The Terminus a Quo

1. The decree of Cyrus in 538–537 B.C. (Ezra 1). This would make the 70 weeks symbolic.
2. The decree of the seventh year of Artaxerxes I Longimanus in 458/457 BC (Ezra 7:7–26).¹¹
 - a. This decree included permission for “any of the Israelites ... including priests and Levites, who wish to go to Jerusalem with” Ezra, to go (7:14).

⁷Alva C. McClain, *Daniel’s Prophecy of the 70 Weeks* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1940), 9.

⁸Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 19), 240.

⁹Oswald T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1945), 111–112.

¹⁰E. W. Hengstenberg, *The Christology of the Old Testament, and a Commentary on the Predictions of the Messiah by the Prophets* (Washington, D.C.: William M. Morrison, 1839), 2:292–423.

¹¹[26] J. Finegan, *Handbook of Biblical Chronology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964), 213.

- b. Ezra is to take “silver and gold” (7:15–16) “to buy ... offerings ... and sacrifice them on the altar of the temple ... in Jerusalem” (7:17, 21).
- c. Ezra “may then *do whatever seems best with the rest of the silver and gold*, in accordance with the will of ... God” (7:18); “articles ... for worship in the temple” (v. 19); “anything else needed for the temple of ... God ... from the royal treasury” (v. 20); “the treasurers of Trans-Euphrates ... have no authority to impose taxes ... on any of the priests ... or other workers at this house of God” (vv. 21, 24); “Ezra ... [to] appoint magistrates and judges to administer justice ...” (v. 25); with penalties up and including “death, banishment, confiscation of property, or imprisonment.” (v. 26).
- d. This all-embracing decree to “*restore*” (socially and religiously) and “rebuild” (physically) Jerusalem, included rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem: “The king had granted him [Ezra] *everything* he asked” (Ezra 7:6–7) and Nehemiah 13 years later in 445/444 BC was surprised and disappointed to hear that Jerusalem’s wall and gates were still in their broken down and burned state (Neh. 1:1–3).¹² So while Ezra had authority to rebuild the city, it seems he was too busy with social and religious restoration to arrange for it to be done.¹³
1. “Also, if each ‘week’ is seven years, then 69 ‘weeks’ to the coming of the Messiah is 483 years from 458/457 BC, i.e. 26/27 AD.¹⁴ **This is precisely the**

¹²Gleason L. Archer, *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1982), 290.

¹³Gleason L. Archer, “Daniel,” *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 7:114.

¹⁴-458/457 BC +1+483 = 26/27 AD. The +1 is to adjust for there being no year zero between 1 BC and 1 AD (Newman, R.C., 1988, “The Time of the Messiah,” in Newman R.C., ed., “The Evidence of Prophecy: Fulfilled

years of Jesus' baptism in 26 AD and the commencement of His public ministry in 27 AD ([Mt 3:13–4:17](#); [Mk 1:14–15](#))!¹⁵ A starting point of 457/458 BC would also fit the first seven 'weeks' or 49 years to 408 BC, being the period of the rebuilding and restoring of Jerusalem covered in the books of Ezra-Nehemiah."¹⁶

I. Various solutions

A. The Continuous views (no break between the 69th and 70th weeks).

1. Antiochus Epiphanes (1 Macc. 1:54 in 168 B.C.). The prophecy is divided, for example, as follows: The seven years are from the destruction of Jerusalem (588 B.C.) to Cyrus (538); the sixty-two sevens from Cyrus to Seleucus (176), and the last seven to Antiochus.¹⁷ The weeks are symbolic. They are not meant to be reconfigured to net 490 years.
2. "Weeks" are of an unspecified duration. The sevens are not to be taken as designating weeks of years, but are symbolical. "After the expiration of the 70 years of exile [Dan. 9:2], there is to follow a period of indefinite length during which the people of God will be brought to salvation, a period which will endure as long as the world and time, indeed,

Prediction as a Testimony to the Truth of Christianity," Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute: Hatfield PA, Fourth Printing, 1998, p.117; Archer, G.L., "Daniel," in Gaebelien F.E., ed., "The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets," Zondervan: Grand Rapids MI, 1985, Vol. 7, p.114)

¹⁵Finegan, 1964, 298; Pusey E.B., "Daniel the Prophet. Nine Lectures, of the University of Oxford. With Copious Notes." Funk & Wagnalls: New York NY, 1885, 189; Archer, 1964, p.387; Archer, 1982, p.291.

¹⁶Lindsell, H., ed., 1964, "Harper Study Bible," Revised Standard Version, Zondervan: Grand Rapids MI, p.1313; Davis, J.D., 1966, "A Dictionary of the Bible," [1898], Baker: Grand Rapids MI, Fourth Edition, p.163; Boice, J.M., 1989, "Daniel: An Expository Commentary," Baker: Grand Rapids MI, p.100, 1989, "Daniel: An Expository Commentary," Baker: Grand Rapids MI, p.100.

¹⁷Young, *Daniel*, 192. See Driver, *Daniel*, 146 (ii).

until the very consummation.”¹⁸

3. “Weeks” are seven years in duration. The *terminus ad quem* (end) can be determined with pin-point accuracy. Disagreement exists on the *terminus a quo*, that is, when the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25) was given (e.g., 606, 586, 538,¹⁹ 458,²⁰ 455,²¹ 445 B.C.²²). The calendar is probably a problem since it is dependent upon secular chronologies. What all those who hold to a messianic fulfillment agree on is that Jesus’ first coming and earthly ministry are in view.

B. Gap (parenthesis) views.

1. A gap of unknown duration exists between the 69th and 70th weeks (dispensationalism):
 “Between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth weeks we have a Great Parenthesis which has now lasted over nineteen hundred years. The seventieth week has been postponed by God Himself, who changes the times and the seasons because of the transgression of the people. As I have put it elsewhere, though some have objected to the expression, the moment the Messiah died on the cross, the prophetic clock stopped. There has not been a tick upon that clock for nineteen centuries. It will not begin to go again until the entire

¹⁸Young, *Daniel*, 193.

¹⁹The decree of Cyrus which is mentioned in 2 Chronicles 36:22–23 and in Ezra 1:1–4; 5:13, 16; 6:3 (cf. Isa. 44:28). Daniel, however, speaks of a command “to restore and rebuild *Jerusalem*,” not just the temple. See Hengstenberg, *Christology*, 2:884ff.

²⁰J. Barton Payne points to the endeavor under Ezra in Ezra 7:11–26 as the starting point. Payne, *Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 387 and *The Imminent Appearing of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 148–149.

²¹Hengstenberg points to the decree of Artaxerxes I in Nehemiah 2:1 as the beginning point. *Christology of the Old Testament*, 2:884–911.

²²Harry Ironside, Arno C. Gaebelin, Sir Robert Anderson, and many others take the year 445 B.C. as the time when the word went forth. This is the 20th year of Artaxerxes (Neh. 2). The calculation is made by computing with 360-day years. See Sir Robert Anderson, *Daniel in the Critics’ Den* as cited in Gaebelin, *The Prophet Daniel*, 140.

present age has come to an end, and Israel will once more be taken up by God.”²³

- a. God makes no mention of a postponement.
 - b. When God “changes the times and the seasons,” He tells us (Numbers 13-14 and Jonah 3:4, 10).
 - c. Since the prophetic time clock has stopped, then there is nothing of prophetic significance until it starts back up again. If this is the case, then how can the reconstitution of Israel and the events of Matthew 24 be of any prophetic significance since they happen prior to the “pretribulational” rapture? The prophetic clock, according to this view, has stopped.
2. A gap of *forty years* exists after the 69th week (Max King).
 3. A gap of *unknown duration* exists after the mid-point (3.5 years) of the 70th week. Similar to dispensationalism (Harold Camping and Kevin J. Conner).

²³H. A. Ironside, *Lectures on Daniel the Prophet*. Quoted in Young, *Daniel*, 194.

C. Support for the continuous or traditional view (no gap)

1. Because Israel refused to honor the Jubilee years—seventy in all—God sent the nation into captivity for seventy years so the land could enjoy its long overdue Sabbath rest (Leviticus 25:1–13, 18–22): “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 Sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe on your Sabbaths, while you were living in it” (Leviticus 26:34–35; see v. 43; 2 Chronicles 36:21–23; Jeremiah 25:12; 29:10).
 - a. Is there *any* indication of a gap in this seventy-year period? No! *It is the near termination point of this seventy-year period that provokes Daniel to ask of the Lord when the “calamity”—seventy years of captivity—will come to an end* (Daniel 9:2).
 - b. What justification did Daniel have for asking God about the end of the judgment period? Was it presumption on his part? No. He took God at His word: seventy years meant seventy years.
 - c. The seventy-year period of captivity is a *pattern* for the “seventy weeks” in Daniel 9:24. From this alone we can conclude that since the seventy years of captivity were consecutive *with no gaps or parentheses*, the “seventy weeks” must also be consecutive seeing that there is nothing in the text to make us think otherwise. Daniel bases his prayer for restoration to the land on the certainty of the reestablishment promised by God when the seventy years were completed (Jeremiah 29:10).
 - d. God made a covenant. What right do we have to conclude that God would somehow change the way time is ordinary kept when we come to the use of seventy in the same

- chapter (Daniel 9:2, 24)?
- e. Could God have placed a “gap” between the 69th and 70th years of Israel’s captivity, adding, say, an additional one-hundred years and still maintain that He had kept His word? There is no way He could have done it and remained a God of His word. But what if God came back and said, “I didn’t actually *add* any years, I just *postponed* the final year by means of a ‘gap’ of one-hundred years. The ‘gap’ consisting of one-hundred years, of what you assume to be additional years, should not be calculated in the overall accounting.”
2. Some maintain that the passage in Daniel lends itself to inserting a gap because of the division of weeks: seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. Since there is no gap between the seven and sixty-two weeks, what justification is there in inserting a gap between the 69th week (7 weeks + 62 weeks = 69 weeks) and the 70th week? Moses’ life is divided up into three forty-year periods (Acts 7:23; 7:30; Deuteronomy 8:2). Should we look for and expect gaps in the one-hundred and twenty years of Moses’ life?
3. Countering an objection: Interpreters “stumble and fall on the simple language of the text itself. There is but one natural interpretation — and that is the one which regards the events of verse 26 as belonging to a period between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, when God has sovereignly set aside His people Israel, awaiting a time of resumption of covenant relationship in the future, after Israel has been restored to the land.”²⁴
- a. There can be no “period between” any time period, whether they be seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, or years, unless a period of time is expressly given. It is impossible

²⁴Culver, *Daniel and the Latter Days*, 150.

- to insert time between the end of one year and the beginning of another. Culver, therefore, begs the question. He first must demonstrate that a gap exists before he can assert that there is a “period between” the 69th and 70th weeks.
- b. The “simple language of the text” specifies no gap. It does not say, as LaRondelle points out, after the sixty-two weeks “but not in the seventieth.”²⁵
 - c. The text says nothing about the restoration of Israel to her land.
 - d. “After the sixty-two weeks” (+ the first 7 weeks = 69) means in the 70th week since the 70th week follows the 69th week.
 - e. The 70 weeks are a unit. This is stressed by the use of a singular verb with a masculine plural noun: **“The student of the Hebrew text will note that the masculine plural is here construed with a verb in the singular (*is decreed*). The seventy heptades are conceived as a unit, a round number, and are most naturally understood as so many sevens of years.”**²⁶
 - f. “The period of 70 hebdomads, or 490 years, is here predicted as one that will continue uninterruptedly from its commencement to its close . . . what can be more evident than this? Exactly 70 weeks in all are to elapse; and how can anyone imagine that there is an interval between the 69 and the 1, when these together make up the 70?”²⁷
4. If there is a gap, then the most natural time span is forty years. This would take us down to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. All the elements that the dispensationalists claim

²⁵Hans K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1983), 173.

²⁶Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Apocalypics: A Study of the Most Notable Revelations of God and of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, [1898] 1988), 201.

²⁷Hengstenberg, *Christology of the Old Testament*, 3:143.

will happen in the future occurred in A.D. 70.

II. Interpreting Daniel 9:24–27:

A. Six things to be accomplished within the seventy weeks.

1. “To finish the transgression” (9:24).

a. The transgression relates to Israel’s sin: “Indeed all Israel has transgressed thy law” (9:5–11; see v. 11).

b. This finishing the transgression has to do with Israel’s finishing, i.e., completing her transgression against God.

c. The finishing of the transgression occurs in the ministry of Christ when Israel completes her resistance to God by rejecting His Son and having Him crucified (Matt. 21:33–45; Acts 7:51–52). “Fill up then the measure of the guilt of your fathers” (23:32).

2. “Make an end of sin” or “seal up sins.”

a. Having finished the transgression against God in the rejection of the Messiah, now the “sins are sealed up.”

b. The idea here, as J. Barton Payne observes, is to seal or to “reserve sins for punishment.”²⁸

c. The sealing or reserving of the sins indicates that *within* the seventy weeks Israel will complete her transgression and so God will with that occurrence act to reserve (beyond the seventy weeks) their sins for judgment.

d. This parallels the chronology of the Olivet Discourse. Prior to the crucifixion Jesus says, “Your house *is left* to you desolate” (Matt. 23:38). Jesus then reserves His

²⁸J. Barton Payne, “The Goal of Daniel’s Seventy Weeks,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21:2

judgment for one generation (24:2, 34).

3. “To make atonement for iniquity.”

a. The Hebrew word *kaphar* is the word for “atonement,” i.e., a covering of sin. It clearly speaks of Christ’s atoning death which is the ultimate atonement to which all temple rituals pointed (Heb. 9:26).

b. John F. Walvoord admits that this result “seems to be a rather clear picture of the cross of Christ,” but that “the actual application of it is again associated with the second advent as far as Israel is concerned.”²⁹ With this position Walvoord concedes that an event can be described as happening within the span of the seventy weeks but apply beyond the seventy weeks. See below.

4. “To bring in everlasting righteousness.”

a. Everlasting righteousness is the *result* of the atonement. A final—“once for all”—atonement establishes righteousness (Heb. 9:12; 10:10; 1 Peter 3:18).

b. “But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God *has been manifested*. . .” (Rom. 3:21).

5. “To seal up vision and prophecy.”

a. By this is meant that Christ fulfills (and thereby confirms) all the prophecies which spoke of Him (Luke 18:31; 24:44; Acts 3:18).

b. “The particular description herein chosen very clearly refers to the OT period. Vision was a technical name for revelation given to the OT prophets (cf. Isa. 1:1; Amos 1:1,

(June 1978), 111. Payne was a premillennialist, although he was not a dispensationalist.

²⁹John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1971), 221, 222.

etc.). The *prophet* was the one through whom this vision was revealed to the people.

The two words, vision and prophet, therefore, serve to designate the prophetic revelation of the OT period. This revelation was of a temporary, preparatory, typical nature. It pointed forward to the coming of him who was the great Prophet (Deut. 18:15). When Christ came, there was no further need of prophetic revelation in the OT sense.”³⁰

6. “To anoint the most holy [one or place].”

a. “This phrase, ‘holy of holies,’ is used thirty-nine times in the Old Testament, always in reference to the Tabernacle or Temple or to the holy articles used in them. It should certainly be understood in the same way here [Dan. 9:24], then, and not as a reference to Christ (as held by some who follow an amillennial interpretation of the passage).”³¹ The passage is *messianic*. It is not looking backward but forward.

b. In the following verses, the Messiah, the “anointed one,” is specifically named twice (vv. 25, 26).

c. It was at the time of Jesus’ baptism, when He was anointed by John, that John said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). The Holy Spirit is the One who anoints. Was this the time when the seventieth week began since “the time is fulfilled”?

d. Jesus could be the one who anoints the Holy of Holies because He is said to have entered it with His blood rather than the blood of “goats and calves” (Heb. 9:1; especially vv. 11–14).

³⁰E. J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 200.

³¹Leon J. Wood, *Daniel: A Study Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1975), 117.

B. The Destruction of Jerusalem is one of the things not to be fulfilled within the time frame of the seventy weeks; its destruction is only “determined.”

1. “Daniel is seeing this in the sixth century B.C., but it did not happen until A.D. 70, when Titus and his Roman legions fulfilled this prophecy exactly. The destruction of Jerusalem did not immediately follow Calvary, but it was an event which was determined by the fact that the Jews rejected Christ. It did not happen in the seventieth ‘week’, but was determined in the seventieth ‘week’. Our Lord made it clear, both in His Olivet discourse and as He walked to the cross, that His rejection by the Jews would mean the destruction of their city and temple (Matthew 23:34–24:38; Luke 23:27–31).”³²

2. As the result of the Jews’ rejection of Jesus, the Jews would lose their inheritance, but this would not occur for another forty years (Matt. 21).

3. Jesus pronounced the temple desolate when He walked out of it. In principle, it was a done deal. The temple’s destruction was a *consequence*, a result, of their rejection of Him.

4. “We might be helped at this point by thinking back to Adam. He was told that He would die on the very day that he ate the forbidden fruit. But he did not literally drop down dead. That day he died spiritually, and his physical death followed as a certain result. In the same way, Jerusalem’s destruction was made certain by the Jewish rejection of their Messiah, but it was some little time before the certain event occurred. It did not take place in the seventieth ‘week’, but was most surely part and parcel of the events of that week.”³³

5. Nebuchadnezzar saw *one* statue depicting *four* kingdoms. The entire statue was seen “all

³²Stuart Olyott, *Dare to Stand Alone* (Welwyn, Hertfordshire, England: Evangelical Press, 1982), 125.

³³Olyott, *Dare to Stand Alone*, 125.

at the same time,” but we know that the kingdoms followed one another in time. Each kingdom was overthrown by the next kingdom. The kingdoms were not contemporaneous even though they were shown together and destroyed with a single strike from the stone (Daniel 2:34–35). In similar fashion, we are told that Jerusalem would be destroyed prior to its actual destruction.

C. The Seventieth Week: The following events are to occur after the sixty-ninth week (7 + 669). Since we know by the text that a seventieth week is to follow, it seems that the events are to take place within the seventieth week. See above for a rehearsal of the continuous and gap solutions.

1. “The Messiah will be cut off and have nothing” (v. 26a).
 - a. The Hebrew word translated “cut off” (*karath*) “is used of the death penalty, Lev. 7:20; and refers to a violent death.”³⁴ The Messiah is said to be “cut off from the land of the living” (Isa. 53:8).
 - b. Verse 26 is an expansion of the theological descriptions of verse 24, that is, Israel’s completing her transgression and bringing it to a culmination result in the death of Christ.
 - c. At His death, Jesus had nothing. He was stripped of all possessions and was buried in a borrowed tomb. His disciples deserted Him (see marginal reading in NASB: “have no one”). Even the Father had forsaken Him.
2. “And the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and sanctuary” (v. 26b).

³⁴Young, *Daniel*, 206.

- a. Who is the “prince who is to come”? Christ, antichrist, or Titus? Since “Messiah the Prince” is mentioned in verse 25, it would seem rather strange to make the “prince” of verse 26 into another person since the same Hebrew word is used (see Acts 3:15; 5:31; cf. Eph. 2:2).
 - b. Who are “the people of the prince”? Both futurists and preterists generally agree that they are agents, either of Christ, antichrist, or Titus.
 - c. “But the king was enraged and sent *his armies*, and destroyed those murderers, and set their city on fire” (Matthew 22:7). The “king” is God, His “armies” refer to Rome, and “their city” is a reference to Jerusalem.
3. “And its end its [or his] end will come with a flood; even to the end [of the city and sanctuary] there will be war” (v. 26c).
 - a. In Matthew 24:6 Jesus told His disciples, “And you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars, . . . but that is not yet the end.”
 - b. “A flood” refers to the outpouring of divine wrath (see Nahum 1:8).
 4. “Desolations are determined” (Matt. 23:38).
 5. “And he will make a firm covenant [cause the existing covenant to prevail] with the many for one week (v. 27a). Who is the “he/He”?:
 - a. Antichrist: “The use of the term ‘prince’ for this one [‘the prince who is to come’] (the exact same Hebrew term used for Christ in verse 25) identifies him as one who will be in some sense parallel with Christ in his role, and this will be uniquely true of the Antichrist, who will be Satan’s counterfeit Christ.”³⁵

³⁵Wood, *Daniel*, 120.

i. There is nothing in the text that would have us understand this “prince who is to come” to be a different person from “Messiah the Prince.” Wood tells us that “the exact same Hebrew term” is used for both verses (see below).

ii. In verse 26 “prince” is a subordinate noun; “the people” is the dominant noun. Thus, the “he” of verse 27 refers back to the last dominant individual mentioned: “Messiah the Prince” (v. 26a). “Messiah the Prince” is the leading figure for the whole prophecy.

iii. The people who destroy the Temple are providentially “His armies” (Matthew 22:2-7). Who is “the king” in Matthew 22:7? Christ or antichrist?

b. Christ: The “he” of verse 27 is said to “make a firm covenant.” God makes covenants, not antichrist. “The sense of the passage, as given in the Septuagint version,³⁶ which our Lord quoted in Matthew 24:15, is that the ‘one week’ (the last of the 70, of which 69 had been previously accounted for) would witness the confirming of the new covenant with many (see Matt. 26:28, noting the words ‘covenant’ and ‘many’), whereby the sacrifices and oblation of the old covenant were caused to cease (see Heb. 10:9), and the things predicted in verse 24 were fulfilled.”³⁷ As Philip Mauro, a former dispensationalist affirms, using Scripture to interpret Scripture, it is Jesus who “will make a firm covenant with the many,” not the antichrist. This language is used by Jesus, not the antichrist, in Matthew 26:28 in addressing His *Jewish disciples* in the first century as a fulfillment of the 70th week: “For this is My blood of the *covenant* which is

³⁶The Septuagint (LXX) is a Greek translation of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament text that was used during the New Testament era.

³⁷Philip Mauro, *The Wonders of Bible Chronology* (Swengel, PA: Reiner Publications, 1970), 97.

to be shed on behalf of *many* for forgiveness of sins.” This covenant is “the new covenant in” His own blood (Luke 22:20). There is nothing in the Book of Revelation, a period of time that is supposedly a description of the seven-year “Great Tribulation” period (supposedly Daniel’s postponed 70th week), where there is any mention of the antichrist making a covenant with the Jews and then breaking it. The New Testament commentary on and fulfillment of the 70th week of Daniel 9:27 are found in the redemptive work of the cross. Scripture could not be any more clear on the subject.

c. Titus: If the “he” is Titus, then the events still only take us to A.D. 70.

6. “But in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering” (v. 27b).

a. Christ does this by His death: “Verses 26 and 27 then describe how, in the midst of the final week (that is, of the last seven-year period, and therefore in the spring of A.D.

30), He would bring to an end the Old Testament economy by His death. There could hardly have been a more miraculously accurate prediction than was this! The 490 years then conclude with the three and a half years that remained, during which period the testament was to be confirmed to Israel (cf. Acts 2:38). It terminated in A.D. 33, which

is the probable date for the conversion of Paul. At this point the Jews, by their stoning of Stephen, in effect cut themselves off from the eternal blessings of inheritance under the newer testament (cf. Rev. 12:6, 14); and shortly thereafter, within that generation, the Romans destroyed Jerusalem, A.D. 70.³⁸

b. Antichrist does this by his broken covenant with the Jews in the future great

tribulation: This interpretation is highly speculative and is dependent on a series of

³⁸Payne, *The Imminent Appearing of Christ*, 148–149.

unproven assumptions about the text (e.g., the existence of a gap, a futurized fulfillment for Matthew 24, a faulty view of antichrist, etc.).

c. Titus puts a stop to sacrifice and grain offering when he destroys the temple, making it impossible for the sacrificial system to continue.

7. “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” (v. 27c).

a. This section of verse 27 is an explanation of verse 26 (“desolations are determined”) in the same way verse 26 says that the Messiah will be sacrificed and verse 27 explains that this ends the sacrificial system.

b. The language of this section of verse 27 is difficult to interpret, especially the language “on the wing of abominations.”³⁹

³⁹See James B. Jordan, “The Abomination of Desolation: An Alternative Hypothesis,” in Gary DeMar, *The Debate over Christian Reconstruction* (Tyler, TX: Dominion Press, 1988), 237–243.