

Is the 70th week of Daniel Fulfilled?

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Introduction

At the outset of my attempt to exegete this passage of scripture, I would like to submit that it is a daunting task, one which I believe to be very difficult. Additionally, I do not attempt to state that this writing will contain anything new. Volume after volume has been written concerning this, and I am sure that I have found nothing here that has not already been expounded in some form. It is my opinion that no interpretation will be able to completely stand the test of thorough grammatical criticism. This is due to the fact that there are many different renderings, many translations which contain variations on the wording and words, which are difficult *even though* we can refer back to the original languages. Add to this that within the original languages, the key words have more than one meaning. For example, in English, the word “order” has over 20 meanings. It is the same with the key words in this passage. In many cases, more than one meaning is available. Because of this and other factors, there are several ways in which many have interpreted this passage.

Now you might be wondering, why would someone go to so much trouble to explain a passage in the book of Daniel? That’s a good question.

For the past several years I have believed the dispensational system of scripture interpretation. But in time, I have found myself questioning some of the things presented. It just seemed to raise other questions. One of these questions was; why at the end of this passage is there a gap of an undetermined time that is still not fulfilled? Why was this prophecy talking about the things which Christ would fulfill, and then all of a sudden switch gears and begin talking about Antichrist? Am I missing something here?

Since this prophecy in Daniel is one of the most important passages in the entire Bible, I have been particularly interested in it. It is vitally important to understand because if it indeed does speak of the future recognition of the Antichrist, then I want to be able to fully understand it.

Having said that, it is well founded that the best way to exegete a passage of scripture is to first of all, view it in its context. We must ask the question, what was this intended to mean to those to whom it was written? Second, since this is a difficult passage, we must use the principle of *sola scriptura* (*Scripture alone*), which has come to mean “scripture interprets scripture”. Since we are Christians, we must always view Old Testament passages in the light of New Testament interpretation. It is with these considerations that I submit the following.

A consideration of Daniel 9:24-27

The passage under consideration reads as follows (KJV):

Dan 9:24 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.

Dan 9:25 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.

Dan 9:26 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.

Dan 9:27 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.

We must therefore begin by looking at the first part of the chapter (vs 1-19), wherein we find its context. Daniel is praying a prayer of intercession to God for restoration of Jerusalem and its temple. Afterward, we find the Angel Gabriel sending him a message concerning the exile (vs 20-27). Here, Daniel prays that God, a keeper of covenants, a merciful God to those who love him, would turn his anger away from them. He pleads with God to act without delay for His own sake, and so that the people called by His name could be restored. His prayer is a desperate plea and is given because he realizes that Israel has broken the covenant given to Moses by their repeated disobedience. Gabriel provides a message in response that God would indeed renew this covenant. The details of this he laid out in verses 24-27 as quoted above.

This passage may be properly divided into two parts. First, in 9:24 is a statement of what would occur in the time specified - the seventy weeks. Next, in 9:25 is a statement of the way in which that would be accomplished. Here we see the whole time of the seventy weeks is broken up into three smaller portions of seven, sixty-two, and one. These are given to designate some important periods of time. The last one week is again subdivided to show that something would happen that would take up the entire week, but in the middle of that week a significant event would occur.

It is quite clear that when Daniel knelt for this period for prayer, it was not to inquire into the ultimate events which would occur in Jerusalem, but merely to pray that the purpose of God, as predicted by Jeremiah, (Jeremiah 25:11-14) concerning the captivity of the nation, and the rebuilding of the city and temple, might be accomplished. However, God gave Daniel, not only an implied assurance about the accomplishment of these purposes, but also to state something far more profound. He gave him a remarkable prophecy concerning events that would consume the next 490 years of human history.

Israel had broken the covenant of Leviticus 25:3-10 which stated the language of the judgment concerning the 70 weeks. Beginning in verse 3 (KJV - bold letters mine):

- Lev 25:3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;
- Lev 25:4 But in **the seventh year shall be a sabbath** of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.
- Lev 25:5 That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land.
- Lev 25:6 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,
- Lev 25:7 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.
- Lev 25:8 And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, **seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.**
- Lev 25:9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth *day* of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.
- Lev 25:10 **And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.**

The punishment for disobedience was spelled out in Lev 26: 14-18:

- Lev 26:14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;
- Lev 26:15 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, *but* that ye break my covenant:
- Lev 26:16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.
- Lev 26:17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.
- Lev 26:18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then **I will punish you seven times more for your sins.**

The seventy sevens or seventy weeks of years was the punishment of Daniel 9:24. Verse 24 of Daniel also gives us 6 things that were to be accomplished during this time. Verses 25-27 give us the time frame. So now the question is; what is the meaning of this passage? Is it detailing something which is yet to occur in our future, or is it an event that ended with the time period of the messianic age?

Daniel was looking at the close of the seventy “years” of Hebrew exile. But the angel Gabriel now discloses to him a new period of “seventy times seven,” in which still more important events are to take place, a period spoken of in the Greek as seventy “heptades”, meaning weeks. Thus, Daniel was informed of this new period of seventy weeks of years, or 490 years. We can get a picture of what is meant here by a comparison of Matt 8:21,22 when Jesus spoke to Peter about forgiveness. Jesus told Peter that we should forgive up to

seventy seven times. In such a connection, nothing but seventy “heptades” of years could be reasonably supposed to be meant by the angel Gabriel in this passage. This was important in this revelation to Daniel to bring him consolation, and to assure him about the rebuilding of the city, and the great events that were to occur there. But what consolation would it be for Daniel to find out that the city would indeed be rebuilt, but that it would continue seventy ordinary weeks - that is, a little more than a year, before a new destruction would come upon it?

So the passage begins with “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city”. The Hebrew word for determined is *châthak* *khaw-thak'*; a primitive root; properly, to cut off, i.e. (figuratively) to decree:—determine. American theologian Albert Barnes notes concerning this phrase:

The word used here (*נחתך* *nech^ettak* from *חתך* *châtak*) occurs nowhere else in the Scriptures. It properly means, according to Gesenius, to cut off, to divide; and hence, to determine, to destine, to appoint. Theodotion renders it, *sunetmeethesan* - are cut off, decided, defined. The Vulgate renders it, “abbreviate sunt.” Luther, “Sind bestimmet” - are determined. The meaning would seem to be, that this portion of time - the seventy weeks - was “cut off” from the whole of duration, or cut out of it, as it were, and set by itself for a definite purpose. It does not mean that it was cut off from the time which the city would naturally stand, or that this time was “abbreviated,” but that a portion of time - to wit, four hundred and ninety years - was designated or appointed with reference to the city, to accomplish the great and important object which is immediately specified. A certain, definite period was fixed on, and when this was past, the promised Messiah would come. In regard to the construction here - the singular verb with a plural noun, see Hengstenberg, “Christ. in, loc.” The true meaning seems to be, that the seventy weeks are spoken of “collectively,” as denoting a period of time; that is, a period of seventy weeks is determined. The prophet, in the use of the singular verb, seems to have contemplated the time, not as separate weeks, or as particular portions, but as one period. (underline mine)

Barnes makes some important points here with regard to this period of time. First of all that this was the only time in scripture that this word was used, make it unique. It was a period of time that was to be set by itself for a definite purpose. Thus, it was to be a *continuous period of time with no separation*. This point is crucial to understanding this passage. Daniel was here making special inquiry respecting his people and the holy city which was the capital of the nation. The purpose respecting the seventy weeks is in reference to “thy people and .. thy holy city”. It was a unit of time with no separation to be determined only upon the city and the people.

Now the angel Gabriel tells Daniel that there are 6 things to be accomplished during this period of time:

1. To finish the transgression
2. To make an end of sins
3. To make reconciliation for iniquity
4. To bring in everlasting righteousness
5. To seal up vision and prophecy
6. To anoint the Most Holy

From the previous context, many scholars have pointed out that what is unique about Daniel's prayer is the repeated use of the covenant name of God (YHWH) which is translated as "Yahweh" or "Jehovah" in English. The American Standard Bible translates this name a total of 5 times in these 19 verses. This is covenant language. The entire ninth chapter of Daniel follows the pattern set forth in Leviticus 26. Daniel uses this name because the theme of his prayer was about this covenant between God and Israel. It is about how that Israel had broken the covenant, but that God in His mercy and grace promised to restore the nation to the Holy City. Gabriel comes to Daniel to show him that there is much more to be accomplished with the fulfillment of the seventy years given to the prophet Jeremiah. Israel also had to pay the "seventy sevens" before the complete fulfillment of this prophecy could be reached. During that period of time the six things outlined above would be accomplished.

1. To finish the transgression

The two key words here are "finish" and "transgression". In the Hebrew these words are:

Finish - kâlâ' kaw-law'; a primitive root; to restrict, by act (hold back or in) or word (prohibit):—finish, forbid, keep (back), refrain, restrain, retain, shut up, be stayed, withhold.

Transgression - pasha' peh'-shah; from 6586; a revolt (national, moral or religious):—rebellion, sin, transgression, trespass.

Of this, Barnes notes the following:

The meaning of the other word found in many manuscripts (כָּלָה *kâlâh*) is, to be completed, finished, closed - and in Piel, the form used here, to complete, to finish - as it is translated in the common version. Gesenius ("Lexicon") supposes that the word here is "for" - כָּלָה *kallêh* - meaning to finish or complete. Hengstenberg, who is followed in this view by Lengerke, supposes that the meaning is to "shut up transgression," and that the true reading is that in the text - כָּלָה - though as that word is not used in Piel, and as the Masoretes had some doubts as to the derivation of the word, they gave to it not its appropriate "pointing" in this place - which would have been כָּלָה *k'loh* - but the pointing of the other word (כָּלָה *kalêh*) in the margin. According to Hengstenberg, the sense here of "shutting up" is derived from the general notion of "restraining" or "hindering," belonging to the word; and he supposes that this will best accord with the other words in this member of the verse - "to cover," and "to seal up."

The idea according to him is, that "sin, which hitherto lay naked and open before the eyes of a righteous God, is now by his mercy shut up, sealed, and covered, so that it can no more be regarded as existing - a figurative description of the forgiveness of sin." . . . The effect would be that which occurs when one is shut up in prison, and no longer goes at large. There would be a restraining power and influence which would check the progress of sin. This does not, I apprehend, refer to the particular transgressions for which the Jewish people had suffered in their long captivity, but sin (הַפְּשָׁע *hapesha'*) in general - the sin of the world. (underline mine)

Thus, the meaning can be deduced as “restrain or covering up the sins of the world”. This was what Christ did when he came to the earth. Thus we are led to a much more meaningful interpretation, a work which Christ would do which would ultimately cover up, restrain and hinder sin. Yes, there is indeed victory in Jesus! His work, through the sacrifice made on the cross, is such that it covered up and works to restrain sin altogether!

2. To make an end to sins

The two key words here are “end” and “sins”. The Hebrew words are:

End - châtham khaw-tham'; a primitive root; to close up; especially to seal:—make an end, mark, seal (up), stop.

Sin - chaṭṭâ'âh khat-taw-aw'; or chaṭṭâ'th khat-tawth'; an offence (sometimes habitual sinfulness), and its penalty, occasion, sacrifice, or expiation; also (concretely) an offender:—punishment (of sin), purifying(-fication for sin), sin(-ner, offering).

Note the words of Barnes:

The common reading in the text is חָתַם *châthēm* - from חָתַם *châtham* - “to seal, to seal up.” But the Hebrew marginal reading is a different word - חָתַם *hâthēm*, from תָּמַם *tâmam* - “to complete, to perfect, to finish.” The “pointing” in the text in the word חָתַם *châthēm* is not the proper pointing of that word, which would have been חֶטֶם *chetom*, but the Masorettes, as is not unfrequently the case, gave to the word in the text the pointing of another word which they placed in the margin. The marginal reading is found in fifty-five manuscripts (Lengerke), but the weight of authority is decidedly in favor of the common reading in the Hebrew text - “to seal,” and not to “finish,” as it is in our translation.

The marginal reading, “to finish,” was doubtless substituted by some transcribers, or rather “suggested” by the Masorettes, because it seemed to convey a better signification to say that “sin would be finished,” than to say that it would be “sealed.” The Vulgate has followed the reading in the margin - *et finem accipiat peccatum*; Theodotion has followed the other reading, σφραγίσας ἁμαρτίας *sphragisai hamartias*. Luther also has it, “to seal.” Coverdale, “that sin may have an end.” The true rendering is, doubtless, “to seal sin;” and the idea is that of removing it from sight; to remove it from view. (underline mine)

Thus, the idea to be conveyed here is that sin was to be sealed up, or closed, or hidden, so that it will not be seen. It can be compared to a sealed book, or a lock box, the contents of which cannot be seen. It should be pointed up that Daniel had no idea of the meaning of this at the time. But since we have Christ revealed, we can understand how this was to be accomplished. It was accomplished by the blood of the atonement, by which sin is now forgiven. It is as if it were hidden from the view, sealed with a seal that cannot be broken.

3. To make reconciliation for iniquity

The two key words here are “reconciliation” and “iniquity”. In Hebrew these words are:

Reconciliation - kâphar kaw-far'; a primitive root; to cover (specifically with bitumen); figuratively, to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel:—appease, make (an atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile(-liation).

Iniquity - 'âvôwn aw-vone'; (2 Kings 7:9; Psalm 51:5 (7)), from 5753; perversity, i.e. (moral) evil:—fault, iniquity, mischief, punishment (of iniquity), sin.

Notice here that this is different from the second purpose in that reconciliation is the word which is commonly used with reference to atonement. As Luther understood it, it meant “to reconcile for transgression.” Its bearing would be on human iniquity; on the way by which it might be pardoned and removed.

4. To bring in everlasting righteousness

Again we have two key words, everlasting and righteousness. In Hebrew these words are:

Everlasting - 'ôlâm o-lawm'; properly, concealed, i.e. the vanishing point; generally, time out of mind (past or future), i.e. (practically) eternity; frequentatively, adverbial (especially with prepositional prefix) always:—always(-s), ancient (time), any more, continuance, eternal, (for, (n-)) ever(-lasting, -more, of old), lasting, long (time), (of) old (time), perpetual, at any time, (beginning of the) world ([phrase] without end).

Righteousness - tsedeq tseh'-dek; the right (natural, moral or legal); also (abstractly) equity or (figuratively) prosperity:—[idiom] even, ([idiom] that which is altogether) just(-ice), (un-)right(-eous) (cause, -ly, -ness).

The phrase “to bring in” - refers to the truth spoken of here by Gabriel that there would be some way in which righteousness would be brought into the world. Again, Daniel was not given the meaning of this, but today, through “Christ revealed” we understand that it is has been brought in by the Messiah. As Barnes notes in his commentary:

The word “righteousness” here also (קִדְשׁ *tsedeq*) is of a general character. The fair meaning would be, that some method would be introduced by which men would become “righteous.” In the former part of the verse, the reference was to “sin” - to the fact of its existence - to the manner in which it would be disposed of - to the truth that it would be coerced, sealed up, covered over. Here the statement is, that, in contradistinction from that, a method would be introduced by which man would become, in fact, righteous and holy. But the “word” implies nothing as to the method by which this would be done. Whether it would be by a new mode of justification, or by an influence that would make men personally holy - whether this was to be as the result of example, or instruction, or an atoning sacrifice - is not necessarily implied in

the use of this word. That, as in the cases already referred to, could be learned only by subsequent developments.

It would be, doubtless, understood that there was a reference to the Messiah - for that is specified in the next verse; and it would be inferred from this word that, under him, righteousness would reign, or that men would be righteous, but nothing could be argued from it as to the methods by which it would be done. It is hardly necessary to add, that, in the prophets, it is constantly said that righteousness would characterize the Messiah and his times; that he would come to make men righteous, and to set up a kingdom of righteousness in the earth. Yet the exact mode in which it was to be done would be, of course, more fully explained when the Messiah should himself actually appear. The word “everlasting” is used here to denote that the righteousness would be permanent and perpetual. In reference to the method of becoming righteous, it would be unchanging - the standing method ever onward by which men would become holy; in reference to the individuals who should become righteous under this system, it would be a righteousness which would continue forever. (underline mine).

And later concerning the word righteousness he notes:

The fair and proper meaning of the term is, that it would be “eternal” - what would “endure forever” - צדק עלמים *tsedeq 'olâmîym*. It would place righteousness on a permanent and enduring foundation; introduce that which would endure through all changes, and exist when the heavens would be no more. In the plan itself there would be no change; in the righteousness which anyone would possess under that system there would be perpetual duration - it would exist forever and ever. This is the nature of that righteousness by which men are now justified; this is what all who are interested in the scheme of redemption actually possess. The “way” in which this “everlasting righteousness” would be introduced is not stated here, but is reserved for future revelations. Probably all that the words would convey to Daniel would be, that there would be some method disclosed by which men would become righteous, and that this would not be temporary or changing, but would be permanent and eternal. It is not improper that “we” should understand it, as it is explained by the subsequent revelations in the New Testament, as to the method by which sinners are justified before God. (italics mine)

What a glorious promise we have as revealed in Christ. It is a permanent and enduring foundation on which we can base our faith. If we believe in Christ, we are a new creation, justified and declared righteous forever!

5. To seal up vision and prophecy

Here we have one key phrase “seal up”, and two key words, “vision” and “prophecy”. In the Hebrew these words are:

Seal up - châtham khaw-tham'; a primitive root; to close up; especially to seal:—make an end, mark, seal (up), stop.

Vision - châzôwn khaw-zone'; from 2372; a sight (mentally), i.e. a dream, revelation, or oracle:—vision.

Prophecy - nâbîy' naw-bee'; from 5012; a prophet or (generally) inspired man:—prophecy, that prophesy, prophet.

Here we focus on the word “oracle” which is defined in the dictionary as “a divine announcement” and the word “prophecy”, which means “to prepare or predict by divine guidance.” Thus we see this phrase as meaning “divine announcement predicted by divine guidance.” This vision is to be thought of in the same way as it was in Isaiah 1:1 which says: “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, *and* Hezekiah, kings of Judah.”

It should be understood as “prophecy” or “prophet” here, in a general sense - as denoting all the visions seen by the prophets - the series of visions relating to the future, which had been made known to the prophets. The idea seems to be that they would at that time be all “sealed,” in the sense that they would be closed or shut up - no longer open matters - but that the fulfillment would, as it were, closed up. Also, we see the meaning as to “mark” or in this case “authenticate. Thus, we could rightly interpret this to mean “To authenticate or close up vision and prophecy” Once a scroll was sealed, It would be marked with a seal mark. The purpose was that it would be authentic until it was opened. If opened, it would need to be sealed again and authenticated again by the mark.

Concerning this, note what Barnes says:

To seal, says he, has also the idea of confirming, since the contents of a writing are secured or made fast by a seal. After all, perhaps, the very idea here is, that of “making fast,” as a lock or seal does - for, as is well known, a seal was often used by the ancients where a lock is with us; and the sense may be, that, as a seal or lock made fast and secure the contents of a writing or a book, so the event, when the prophecy was fulfilled, would make it “fast” and “secure.” It would be, as it were, locking it up, or sealing it, forever. It would determine all that seemed to be undetermined about it; settle all that seemed to be indefinite, and leave it no longer uncertain what was meant. According to this interpretation the meaning would be, that the prophecies would be sealed up or settled by the coming of the Messiah.(underline mine).

Christ would settle this matter once and for all. Only Christ could authenticate this prophecy, for only Christ could provide the answers to the other parts of this prophecy.

6. To anoint the Most Holy

Here we have one key word, and one key phrase:

Anoint - mâshach maw-shakh'; a primitive root; to rub with oil, i.e. to anoint; by implication, to consecrate; also to paint:—anoint, paint.

Most Holy - qôdesh ko'-desh; from 6942; a sacred place or thing; rarely abstract, sanctity:—consecrated (thing), dedicated (thing), hallowed (thing), holiness, ([idiom] most) holy ([idiom] day, portion, thing), saint, sanctuary. **(It must be noted here that in the Hebrew, the word ko'-desh is repeated twice as in (קדש קדשים) qôdesh qādāshîym) to indicate the phrase “most holy”)**

As has already been noted, the entire chapter of Daniel chapter 9 is covenant language. The entire ninth chapter of Daniel follows the pattern set forth in Leviticus 26. Although the term “most holy” does not appear in Leviticus 26, it is important to point out something *quite profound* with regard to the phrase “most holy”. The term “most

holy” appears in 44 times in the Bible. Of these 44 times it appears in Leviticus *only* in reference to a sacrifice. In most of the other instances it refers to the “Most Holy Place” or the Holy of Holies in the temple. Please notice again; in *every instance* in which this term is found in the book of Leviticus, it is in reference to *a sacrifice*. And in Leviticus we find a reference to the lamb as follows:

Lev 14:13 And he shall *slay the lamb* in the place where he shall kill the sin offering and the burnt offering, in the holy place: for as the sin offering *is* the priest's, *so is* the trespass offering: *it is most holy*: (underline italic mine)

This ties all of the verses together as one unit referring to the Christ! For He is the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Regarding this passage Barnes notes:

The word rendered “anoint” - מִשָּׁח *m^eshocha* - infinitive from מָשַׁח *māshach* (from the word Messiah, [Dan 9:25](#)), means, properly, to strike or draw the hand over anything; to spread over with anything, to smear, to paint, to anoint. It is commonly used with reference to a sacred rite, to anoint, or consecrate by unction, or anointing to any office or use; as, e. g., a priest, [Exo 28:41](#); [Exo 40:15](#); a prophet, [1Ki 19:16](#); [Isa 61:1](#); a king, [1Sa 10:1](#); [1Sa 15:1](#); [2Sa 2:4](#); [1Ki 1:34](#). So it is used to denote the consecration of a stone or column as a future sacred place, [Gen 31:13](#); or vases and vessels as consecrated to God, [Exo 40:9](#), [Exo 40:11](#); [Lev 8:11](#); [Num 7:1](#). The word would then denote a setting apart to a sacred use, or consecrating a person or place as holy. Oil, or an unguent, prepared according to a specified rule, was commonly employed for this purpose, but the word may be used in a figurative sense - as denoting to set apart or consecrate in any way “without” the use of oil - as in the case of the Messiah. So far as this word, therefore, is concerned, what is here referred to may have occurred without the literal use of oil, by any act of consecration or dedication to a holy use.

It must be pointed out here that there is much controversy surrounding the interpretation of this last phrase in Daniel 9:24. The phrase, “the Most Holy” (קֹדֶשׁ קְדוֹשִׁים *qôdesh qādāshîym*) has been interpreted many different ways. By the dispensationalist it has been understood to apply literally to the most holy place - the holy of holies, in the temple. Some have referred to it as the whole temple, which is regarded as holy. Some have even referred to it as Jerusalem or the Christian Church.

The Dispensationalist View

Dispensationalists state that this refers to the consecration of the Most Holy place after the rebuilding of the temple in the distant future. For this they use the fact that in the writings Ezekiel in chapters 42-48. In these verses the term is used 5 times. In all of these references it is to the literal “Most Holy” of Ezekiel’s Temple.

Note what Thomas Ice says concerning this:

To Anoint the most Holy

The sixth and final prophetic clause begins with the Hebrew verb usually translated as “anoint” means to pour oil on something or someone. BDB says

that it is used specifically in Daniel 9:24 to "anoint or consecrate to religious service."

This much debated phrase usually translated in English as "most holy" is a dual use of the same Hebrew word. This is a common occurrence in Hebrew when the superlative of a noun is intended and such is the case here. The first use of the word is singular, while the second one is plural and can literally be rendered "most holy," or "a most holy *place*." The German commentator C. F. Keil notes that the same exact phrase is used in Ezekiel 45:3 of a future temple and concludes that "the reference is to the anointing of a new sanctuary, temple, or most holy place." Specific reasons for this interpretation of the sixth clause is stated well by Leon Wood.

The phrase "holy of holies" (qodesh qadashim) occurs, either with or without the article, thirty-nine times in the Old Testament, always in reference to the Tabernacle or Temple or to the holy articles used in them. When referring to the most holy place, where the Ark was kept, the article is regularly used (e.g., Ex. 26:33), but it is not when referring to the holy articles (e.g., Ex. 29:37) or to the whole Temple complex (e.g., Ezek. 43:12). In view of these matters, it is highly likely that the phrase refers to the Temple also here, which, in view of the context, must be a future Temple; and, since the phrase is used without the article, reference must be to a complex of that Temple, rather than its most holy place.

Without exegeting any of the details of Daniel 9:24, Ken Gentry, like many non-literal interpreters, simply declares that this clause refers to Jesus, "at His baptismal anointing that the Spirit came upon Him (Mark 1:9-11)." As Leon Wood documented above, this expression is never used of a person, only of things. "So it is not a reference to the Messiah. Nor to the church, for the church is nowhere mentioned or found in the whole prophecy of Daniel," declares Harry Bultema. "It refers to Daniel's people Israel. . . . It refers to the state of bliss and holiness of all Israel after the Savior has come to Zion and has turned away the ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26)." Thus, we see that this final prophetic purpose clause also awaits a future fulfillment. (underline mine)

First of all it must be said that Ice is wrong about the term "most holy". As has already been pointed out, the references in Leviticus *always* point to a sacrifice, and one time *specifically to the lamb*. And as we see, though it appears that he is looking at this as a reference to the temple, he is led to a *completely different interpretation of the passage*. It is based on the idea that this can only refer to a future time when all prophecy will be fulfilled relating to national Israel. This is the basis of the dispensational hermeneutic.

Instead of interpreting the scriptures through the lens of the New Testament, the dispensational hermeneutic is to view the New Testament in terms of the old especially with respect to national Israel. I believe that since we are Christians, we interpret the Old Testament through the lens of the New Testament. This is because the New Testament writers give us the proper interpretation of many Old Testament passages. Thus, as Christians we let "Scripture interpret scripture" in this manner.

Having looked at the dispensationalist view, now let's look at what other commentators say about the phrase "to anoint the Most Holy". Barnes notes his idea that it is a reference to the Temple:

It seems to me, therefore, that the obvious and fair interpretation is, to refer it to the temple - as the holy place of God; his peculiar abode on earth. Strictly and properly speaking, the phrase would apply to the inner room of the temple - the sanctuary properly so called (see the notes at [Heb 9:2](#)); but it might be applied to the whole temple as consecrated to the service of God. If it be asked, then, what anointing or consecration is referred to here, the reply, as it seems to me, is, not that it was then to be set apart anew, or to be dedicated; not that it was literally to be anointed with the consecrating oil, but that it was to be consecrated in the highest and best sense by the presence of the Messiah - that by his coming there was to be a higher and more solemn consecration of the temple to the real purpose for which it was erected than had occurred at any time. It was reared as a holy place; it would become eminently holy by the presence of him who would come as the anointed of God, and his coming to it would accomplish the purpose for which it was erected, and with reference to which all the rites observed there had been ordained, and then, this work having been accomplished, the temple, and all the rites pertaining to it, would pass away.

Later Barnes notes:

. . . In this sense, the temple which was to be reared again, and about which Daniel felt so solicitous, would receive its highest, its truest consecration, as connected with an event which was to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and the prophecy.

So even with the interpretation of this being in reference to the temple, it still comes back to Christ who is the true temple. (Matt 12:6).

Adam Clarke, in his commentary makes this comment regarding the "anointing of the Most Holy" in Daniel 9:24:

And to anoint the Most Holy, קדש קדשים kodesh kodashim, "the Holy of holies." משיח mashach, to anoint, (from which comes משיח mashiach, the Messiah, the anointed one), signifies in general, to consecrate or appoint to some special office. Here it means the consecration or appointment of our blessed Lord, the Holy One of Israel, to be the Prophet, Priest, and King of mankind. (underline mine)

Once again, it is Christ. This agrees with the context of Daniel 9.

John Gill has a similar view in His commentary:

and to anoint the most Holy; not literally the most holy place in the temple; figuratively, either heaven itself, anointed, and prepared for his people by the Messiah's ascension thither, and entrance into it; or rather most holy persons, the church and people of God, typified by the sanctuary, the temple of God; and in a comparative sense are most holy, and absolutely so, as washed in the blood of Christ, clothed with his righteousness, and sanctified by his Spirit; and by whom they are anointed, some in an extraordinary and others in an

ordinary way, and all by the grace of Christ: or it may be best of all to understand this of the Messiah, as Aben Ezra and others do; who is holy in his person, in both his natures, human and divine; sanctified and set apart to his office, and holy in the execution of it; equal in holiness to the Father and the Spirit; superior in it to angels and men, who have all their holiness from him, and by whom they are sanctified; and of whom the sanctuary or temple was a type; and who was anointed with the Holy Ghost as man, at his incarnation, baptism, and ascension to heaven; and Abarbinel owns it may be interpreted of the Messiah, who may be called the Holy of holies, because he is holier than all other Israelites. (underline mine)

Once again, though the explained very poetically, the point is clear – It is Christ.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary also expounds this point:

anoint the Most Holy — primarily, to “anoint,” or to *consecrate* after its pollution “the Most Holy” *place* but mainly *Messiah*, the antitype to the Most Holy place ([Joh 2:19-22](#)). The propitiatory in the temple (the same *Greek* word expresses *the mercy seat* and *propitiation*, [Rom 3:25](#)), which the Jews looked for at the restoration from Babylon, shall have its true realization only in Messiah. For it is only when sin is “made an end of” that God’s presence can be perfectly manifested. As to “anoint,” compare [Exo 40:9](#), [Exo 40:34](#). Messiah was *anointed* with the Holy Ghost ([Act 4:27](#); [Act 10:38](#)). So hereafter, God-Messiah will “anoint” or consecrate with His presence the holy place at Jerusalem ([Jer 3:16](#), [Jer 3:17](#); [Eze 37:27](#), [Eze 37:28](#)), after its pollution by Antichrist, of which the feast of dedication after the pollution by Antiochus was a type.

Once again we see the same theme, though worded differently, it comes back to Christ. With these facts present, I have been led to the conclusion that this passage refers to Christ, however it may get there as expounded upon by most of these commentators. This is the only explanation which remains within the context of Daniel 9 and the theme which the angel Gabriel is pointing out to Daniel. While I realize that I have spent a considerable amount of time on Daniel 9:24, I believe that it was necessary because this is one of the most important prophecies of the entire Bible. Now lets move on to verse 25.

Dan 9:25 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.

So now Gabriel lays out the timeframe of the prophecy. It appears that Gabriel is giving Daniel the assurance that the promise of the walls and streets of Jerusalem, now desolate, would be built again. His mind was particularly anxious respecting the desolate condition of the city, and the declaration is here made that it would be restored. But when does it start? One of the key words here is “commandment” In Hebrew this word is: דָּבָר *dābār*.

The expression “gone forth” (מֵצֵא *môtsâ*) would therefore indicate the “issuing” of an order or decree. The problem is - which decree is being spoken of here?

A study of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah show that there were 4 decrees that went forth. The first was the decree in 538 BC. But upon examination of that decree, it was only to rebuild *only* the temple. The prophecy was clear that it was to be a decree to rebuild the *city* of Jerusalem. This is what is indicated by the term “the street and the wall” in the verse. The subsequent decrees of Darius and Artaxerxes I were issued because of all of the trouble that was encountered by opposers of this rebuilding plan.

It wasn't until the 20th year of the reign of Artaxerxes that a different decree was issued and delivered by the hand of Nehemiah that also outlined the rebuilding of the city wall of Jerusalem. Therefore the issuing of the decree in 445BC would be the correct one to be used in the dating of this seventy weeks of years.

Let's look back at Daniel 9:25. We see that we have two periods mentioned. First there is a period of seven weeks, and then a period of 62 weeks, equaling 69 weeks. Therefore, we see the first seven weeks as a 49-year period. The scripture tells us that it would be in troublous times. If you study the book of Nehemiah, you see that they had a lot of trouble building the city, due to the opposing efforts of Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite. So calculating from 445 BC we see that 49 years later puts us at about 396 B.C. We must remember that the Jewish year was 360 days, not 365. This makes calculations more difficult. But about that time the city was complete, and prophecy stopped for a period of over 400 years.

Now if we add another 62 weeks of years, it comes out to 434 more years. Taking into account the difference of the Jewish calendar being 5 days shorter per year, and leap years, this would bring us to somewhere around 33 AD. Of course these calculations may vary slightly, but it gives us valid assurance that this prophecy is referring to Messiah the Prince spoken of in Daniel 9:25.

Dan 9:26 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.

One of the key words here is:

After - אַחֲרַי 'achar akh-ar'; from 309; properly, the hind part; generally used as an adverb or conjunction, after (in various senses):—after (that, -ward), again, at, away from, back (from, -side), behind, beside, by, *follow* (after, -ing), forasmuch, from, hereafter, hinder end, [phrase] out (over) live, [phrase] persecute, posterity, pursuing, remnant, seeing, since, thence(-forth), when, with.

Spoken of here is the period of four hundred and thirty-four years. Gabriel has shown in the previous verse that during the first period of “seven weeks” the wall and the street would be built, in essence, the city. This would be during turbulent times. In this period

of time the particular characteristic would be that the Messiah would be cut off, and that a series of events would commence which would be completed in the destruction of the city and the temple. He does not say that this would happen immediately, but it would be an event which would *follow* the close of that period. The word does not mean necessarily immediately, but it denotes what is to succeed - to follow. So with this it is referring to the “next event” in the order of events to occur.

As Albert Barnes notes in his commentary:

There are two circumstances in the prophecy itself which go to show that it is not meant that this would immediately follow:

(a) One is, that in the previous verse it is said that the “sixty-two weeks” would extend “unto the Messiah;” that is, either to his birth or to his manifestation as such; and it is not implied anywhere that he would be “cut off” at once on his appearing, nor is such a supposition reasonable, or one that would have been embraced by an ancient student of the prophecies;

(b) the other is, that, in the subsequent verse, it is expressly said that what he would accomplish in causing the oblation to cease would occur “in the midst of the week;” that is, of the remaining one week that would complete the seventy. This could not occur if he were to be “cut off” immediately at the close of the sixty-two weeks.

The careful student of this prophecy, therefore, would anticipate that the Messiah would appear at the close of the sixty-two weeks, and that he would continue during a part, at least, of the remaining one week before he would be cut off. This point could have been clearly made out from the prophecy before the Messiah came.

But not for himself – Our Lord Jesus the Messiah did not die for himself. His life was given as a ransom for others. The meaning of the Hebrew word **אֵין** *'ēyn* is, undoubtedly, “nothing, emptiness” - in the sense of there being nothing after he was cut off, or in consequence of his being cut off, what he before possessed would cease. His human life would cease and from a human standpoint his dominion would cease. What the passage says after this is that “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.” Thus, the Messiah would come as a “Prince.” Most everyone who knew Him expected that he would come to rule - to set up a kingdom. But he would be suddenly cut off by a violent death. The anticipated Kingdom of David would not be set up on earth as expected with the Messiah on the throne. He would have no successor; and soon the people of a foreign prince would come and would sweep all away. This is not to say that the real object of his coming would be thwarted, or that he would not set up a kingdom in accordance with the prediction properly explained, but that such a kingdom as would be expected by the people would not be set up. Thus, there would be nothing from a human perspective.

Putting it all together, Adam Clarke notes in his commentary of this verse:

And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary - By the “prince” Titus, the son of Vespasian, is plainly intended; and “the people of that prince” are no other than the Romans, who, according to the prophecy, destroyed the sanctuary, **הַקֹּדֶשׁ** *hakkodesh*, the holy place or temple, and, as a flood, swept away all, till the total destruction of that obstinate people finished the war.

Note what Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary says regarding this verse:

after threescore and two weeks — rather, *the* threescore and two weeks. In this verse, and in [Dan 9:27](#), Messiah is made the prominent subject, while the fate of the city and sanctuary are secondary, being mentioned only in the second halves of the verses. Messiah appears in a twofold aspect, salvation to believers, judgment on unbelievers ([Luk 2:34](#); compare [Mal 3:1-6](#); [Mal 4:1-3](#)). He repeatedly, in Passion week, connects His being “cut off” with *the destruction of the city*, as cause and effect ([Mat 21:37-41](#); [Mat 23:37](#), [Mat 23:38](#); [Luk 21:20-24](#); [Luk 23:28-31](#)). Israel might naturally expect Messiah’s kingdom of glory, if not after the seventy years’ captivity, at least at the end of the sixty-two weeks; but, instead of that, shall be His death, and the consequent destruction of Jerusalem.

not for himself — rather, “there shall be nothing to Him” [Hengstenberg]; not that the real object of His first coming (His *spiritual* kingdom) should be frustrated; but the *earthly* kingdom anticipated by the Jews should, for the present, *come to naught*, and not *then* be realized. Tregelles refers the title, “the Prince” ([Dan 9:25](#)), to the time of His entering Jerusalem on an ass’s colt, His only appearance as a king, and six days afterwards put to death as “King of the Jews.”

the people of the prince — the Romans, led by Titus, the representative of the world power, ultimately to be transferred to Messiah, and so called by Messiah’s title, “the Prince”; as also because sent by Him, as His instrument of judgment ([Mat 22:7](#)).

end thereof — of the sanctuary. Tregelles takes it, “the end of the Prince,” the last head of the Roman power, Antichrist.

with a flood — namely, of war ([Psa 90:5](#); [Isa 8:7](#), [Isa 8:8](#); [Isa 28:18](#)). Implying the completeness of the catastrophe, “not one stone left on another.”

unto the end of the war — rather, “unto the end *there* is war.”

determined — by God’s decree ([Isa 10:23](#); [Isa 28:22](#)).

Thus we see that *after* the 62 weeks there would be a prince who would destroy the city and the sanctuary. This rightly refers to the Roman prince Titus who destroyed the city and fulfilled the prophecy given by Jesus concerning the temple in Matt 24:2: “And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” This prophecy would have been thought impossible 40 years prior. The temple was amazing. It was the pride of the Jewish nation. Under the command of Titus, 70 AD there was complete destruction. Everything was reduced to rubble. The account of the siege and destruction of the city is left us by Josephus, a historian who later became known as Flavius Josephus, being named such by Roman Emperor Vespasian.

In Book 7 Chapter 1 of Josephus’ Wars of the Jews we note:

1. NOW as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done,) Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as

enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind. (1)

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/war-7.htm>

The Dispensationalist View of Daniel 9:26

Now we come to the explanation offered by dispensationalist Thomas Ice concerning Daniel 9:26:

We now enter the area of the greatest controversy concerning the seventy weeks prophecy. The debate is focused upon whether the seventieth week follows consecutively the first sixty-nine. I believe that the seventieth week is postponed until a future time we know as the tribulation. Defense of a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks will be the topic of most of the material that I will cover in the rest of this series.

I believe that there are textual reasons for a gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week! First of all, the text says, "Then after the sixty-two weeks . . ." In other words, after the seven plus sixty-two weeks, which equals sixty-nine weeks of years (483 years). The Hebrew text uses a conjunction, combined with a preposition, usually translated "and after," or better "then after." "It is the only indication given regarding the chronological relation between these sixty-two weeks and the cutting off of the Anointed One. This event will occur 'after' their close, but nothing is said as to how long after." Robert Culver clearly states the implication of what this text says:

"There can be no honest difference of opinion about that: the cutting off of *Messiah* is 'after' the sixty-two weeks. It is not the concluding event of the series of sixty-two weeks. Neither is it said to be the opening event of the seventieth. It is simply after the seven plus sixty-two weeks."

There is no real debate among conservative interpreters as to who is spoken of by the phrase "the Messiah will be cut off," as a referral to the crucifixion of Christ. Thus, it means that Jesus would be crucified after completion of the seven and sixty-second week, but before the beginning of the seventieth week. For this to happen it requires a gap of time between the two time periods.

As regards the phrase "But not for himself" (also translated "and will have nothing") futurist Thomas Ice notes that this also has future connotations:

The next phrase "and have nothing," literally means "and shall have nothing." To what does this refer? Certainly Christ gained what was intended through His atoning death on the cross as far as paying for the sins of the world. What was it that He came for but did not receive, especially in relationship to Israel

and Jerusalem, which is the larger context of this overall passage? It was His Messianic Kingdom! Indeed, it will come, but not at the time in which He was cut off. Dr. Charles Feinberg declares, "it can only mean that He did not receive the Messianic kingdom at that time. When His own people rejected him (John 1:11), He did not receive what rightly belonged to Him." It is because of Daniel's people (the Jews) rejection of Jesus as their Messiah that the Kingdom could come in. The coming of the Kingdom requires acceptance of Jesus as Messiah in order for it to be established in Jerusalem. The Kingdom will arrive by the time the final week is brought to fruition. Since Israel's kingdom has not yet arrived, this means it is future to our day. Therefore, we have just seen another reason why the final week of years is also future to our day.

Regarding the Prince Who is to come, Ice argues as follows:

Identity of the prince who is to come is a matter of considerable debate and discussion. The full statement says, "the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary." Perhaps the best way to determine the identity of this prince is to first look at what he is prophesied to do at his arrival upon the stage of history. The people of this coming prince will destroy the city, clearly a reference to Jerusalem because of the overall context, and also the sanctuary. What sanctuary was there in Jerusalem? It could be nothing else other than the Jewish temple. Has the city and the temple been destroyed? Yes! Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in a. d. 70 by the Romans. This cannot be a reference to a future time, since, as Dr. Walvoord notes, "there is no complete destruction of Jerusalem at the end of the age as Zechariah 14:1-3 indicates that the city is in existence although overtaken by war at the very moment that Christ comes back in power and glory. Accordingly, it is probably better to consider all of verse 26 fulfilled historically."

The subject of this sentence is "the people," not "the prince who is to come." Thus, it is the *people* of the prince who is to come that destroys the city and the sanctuary. We have already identified the people as the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in a.d. 70 under the leadership of Titus. Yet, I believe that the prince who is to come is a reference to the yet to come Antichrist. Dr. J. Dwight Pentecost explains,

The ruler who will come is that final head of the Roman Empire, the little horn of 7:8. It is significant that the *people* of the ruler, not the ruler himself, will destroy Jerusalem. Since he will be the final Roman ruler, the people of that ruler must be the Romans themselves.

The coming prince cannot be a reference to Christ, since He is said to be "cut off" in the prior sentence. This prince has to be someone who comes after Christ. The only two viable possibilities is that it could either refer to a Roman prince who destroyed Jerusalem in a.d. 70 or a future Antichrist.

Why should we not see the prince who is to come as a reference to Titus who led the Roman conquest in a.d. 70? Because the emphasis of this verse is upon "the people," not the subordinate clause "the prince who is to come." This passage is apparently stated this way so that this prophecy would link the Roman destruction with the a.d. 70 event, but at the same time setting up the Antichrist to be linked to the final week of years to the first "he" in verse 27.

He is not described as the prince coming with the people, but instead a detached and distant description, as one who is coming. This suggests that the people and the prince will not arrive in history together. Dr. Steven Miller adds, "but v. 27 makes clear that this 'ruler' will be the future persecutor of Israel during the seventieth seven. 'The people of the rule' does not mean that the people 'belong to' the ruler but rather that the ruler will come from these people."

So while Ice admits that this is a reference to Titus, he argues that it is also futurist due to the idea of "the people of the prince" should be interpreted as setting up a future Antichrist. Now Ice continues with the last part of the verse:

Its End Will Come With A Flood

This final sentence of verse 26 also occurs during the interval between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. However, the first part, "its end will come with a flood," refers back to the destruction of Jerusalem in a.d. 70, while the final phrase, "even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined," is being fulfilled throughout the entire period (2,000 years thus far) of the interval.

"The antecedent of 'it' is obviously Jerusalem," explains Leon Wood. "'Flood' or 'overflowing' can refer only to the degree of destruction meted out. History records that the destruction of Jerusalem was very extensive." The war and desolations that began with the destruction of Jerusalem in a.d. 70 would continue throughout the interval leading up to the seventieth week. In fact, this language appears to parallel that of Luke 21:24, which says, "and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Charles Feinberg agrees:

The final words of verse 26 sum up the history of Israel since a.d. 70: "desolations are determined." Surely the determined wars and desolations have come upon them (cf. Luke 21:24). Such has been the lot of Israel and the city of Jerusalem, and such will be the portion, until the "time of the Gentiles" have been fulfilled.

Dr. Pentecost adds the following:

But that invasion, awesome as it was, did not end the nation's sufferings, for war, Gabriel said, would continue until the end. Even though Israel was to be set aside, she would continue to suffer until the prophecies of the 70 "sevens" were completely fulfilled. Her sufferings span the entire period from the destruction of Jerusalem in a.d. 70 to Jerusalem's deliverance from Gentile dominion at the Second Advent of Christ.

Conclusion

Once again we see that a plain, straightforward reading of the text of the Bible provides a clear and convincing understanding that there is a biblical basis for halting God's clock between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. Robert Culver summarizes our findings as follows:

All attempts to place the events of verse 26 (the cutting off of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem) in either the period of the sixty-two weeks (Keil and Leupold) or in the seventieth week (Young and a host of writers in the past) stumble and fall on the simple language of the text itself. It seems that a more natural interpretation is the one that 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.

So here we see that the view of the dispensationalist is grounded in the fact that the text demands that there is some kind of gap. If it is to be argued that the events of verse 26 ended with the destruction of Jerusalem, then there had to be at least a small gap of time. Since the Jews have suffered at the hands of persecutors for centuries since this time, the argument here is that the “end of desolations” has not occurred, therefore, there is a much larger gap of time. I will present more on this in my conclusion.

Having examined the dispensationalist view of verse 26, now lets look at the last verse of this prophecy:

Dan 9:27 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.

The first key word is confirm, literally in Hebrew means:

Confirm - a form of the word *gâbar gaw-bar'*; a primitive root; to be strong; by implication, to prevail, act insolently:—exceed, confirm, be great, be mighty, prevail, put to more (strength), strengthen, be stronger, be valiant.

And he shall confirm the covenant - literally, “he shall make strong” - והגביר *v^ehîg^ebîyr*. The idea is that of strengthening, or giving stability; of making firm and sure. This is a reference to the “covenant” which God established with his people. It denotes promises and laws in a relationship between God and man. According to this, he would confirm that which was understood. There has been some controversy, however, as to the proper nominative to the verb “confirm” whether it is a reference to the Messiah, or to the foreign prince, or to the “one week” here mentioned.

Concerning this Barnes notes:

The meaning of the expression here cannot be mistaken, that during the time specified, “he” (whoever may be referred to) would, for “one week” - pursue such a course as would tend to establish the true religion; to render it more stable and firm; to give it higher sanctions in the approbation of the “many,” and to bring it to bear more decidedly and powerfully on the heart. Whether this would be by some law enacted in its favor; or by protection

extended over the nation; or by present example; or by instruction; or by some work of a new kind, and new influences which he would set forth, is not mentioned, and beforehand perhaps it could not have been well anticipated in what way this would be. There has been a difference of opinion, however, as to the proper nominative to the verb “confirm” - הגביר *hig^ebîyr* - whether it is the Messiah, or the foreign prince, or the “one week.” Hengstenberg prefers the latter, and renders it, “And one week shall confirm the covenant; with many.”

These two agents are the “Messiah,” and the “prince that should come.”

But it is not reasonable to suppose that the latter is referred to, because it is said [Dan 9:26](#) that the effect and the purpose of his coming would be to “destroy the city and the sanctuary.” He was to come “with a flood,” and the effect of his coming would be only desolation. The more correct interpretation, therefore, is to refer it to the Messiah, who is the principal subject of the prophecy; and the work which, according to this, he was to perform was, during that “one week,” to exert such an influence as would tend to establish a covenant between the people and God. The effect of his work during that one week would be to secure their adhesion to the “true religion;” to confirm to them the Divine promises, and to establish the principles of that religion which would lead them to God. Nothing is said of the mode by which that would be done; and anything, therefore, which would secure this would be a fulfillment of the prophecy. As a matter of fact, if it refers to the Lord Jesus, this was done by his personal instructions, his example, his sufferings and death, and the arrangements which he made to secure the proper effect of his work on the minds of the people - all designed to procure for them the friendship and favor of God, and to unite them to him in the bonds of an enduring covenant. (underline mine).

Adam Clarke appears to refuse to comment on the meaning behind the passage, although he comments that this profaning of the temple did indeed take place. As he notes in his commentary of this verse:

And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate -

This clause is remarkably obscure. כנף שקוצים משמים *kenaph shikkutsim meshomem*, “And upon the wing of abominations causing amazement.” This is a literal translation of the place; but still there is no determinate sense. A Hebrews MS., written in the thirteenth century, has preserved a very remarkable reading here, which frees the place from all embarrassment. Instead of the above reading, this valuable MS. has ובהיכל יהיה שיקוך *ubeheychal yihyey shikkuts*; that is, “And in the temple (of the Lord) there shall be abomination.” This makes the passage plain, and is strictly conformable to the facts themselves, for the temple was profaned; and it agrees with the prediction of our Lord, who said that the abomination that maketh desolate should stand in the holy place, [Mat 24:15](#), and quotes the words as spoken *δια Δανιηλ του προφητου*, by Daniel the prophet. That the above reading gives the true sense, there can be little doubt, because it is countenanced by the most eminent ancient versions.

And later on he notes the following:

I have thus set down almost all the variations mentioned by Kennicott and De Rossi, and those furnished by three ancient MSS. of my own, that the learned reader may avail himself of every help to examine thoroughly this important prophecy. Upwards of thirty various readings in the compass of four verses, and several of them of great moment. (underline mine)

As he notes here, this important prophecy has upwards of 30 various readings. Is it any wonder there is so much trouble in the interpretation among the scholars?

As stated above by Clarke, this profanation of the temple did take place during the Jewish war wherein the city and temple were destroyed. This is a matter of historical record.

Josephus states:

1. AND now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple ([24](#)) and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there did they make Titus imperator ([25](#)) with the greatest acclamations of joy.

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/war-6.htm>

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown notes the following regarding this phrase:

he shall confirm the covenant — Christ. The confirmation of the covenant is assigned to Him also elsewhere. [Isa 42:6](#), “I will give thee for a *covenant* of the people” (that is, He in whom the covenant between Israel and God is personally expressed); compare [Luk 22:20](#), “The new testament in My blood”; [Mal 3:1](#), “the angel of the covenant”; [Jer 31:31-34](#), describes the Messianic covenant in full. Contrast [Dan 11:30](#), [Dan 11:32](#), “forsake the covenant,” “do wickedly against the covenant.” The prophecy as to Messiah’s *confirming the covenant with many* would comfort the faithful in Antiochus’ times, who suffered partly from persecuting enemies, partly from false friends ([Dan 11:33-35](#)). Hence arises the similarity of the language here and in [Dan 11:30](#), [Dan 11:32](#), referring to Antiochus, the type of Antichrist.

Thus it is stated here that it is a reference to Christ and that it would comfort those suffering later on in Daniel when similar language referred to Antiochus and his profanation of the earlier temple.

Continuing verse 27, it says:

With many - לרבים *lârabîym*. – once again, Barnes notes it refers to Christ:

He would perform a work which would pertain to many, or which would bear on many, leading them to God. There is nothing in the word here which would indicate who they were, whether his own immediate followers, or those who already were in the covenant. The simple idea is, that this would pertain to “many” persons, and it would be fulfilled if the effect of his work were to confirm “many” who were already in the covenant, or if he should bring “many” others into a covenant relation with God. Nothing could be determined from the meaning of the word used here as to which of these things was designed, and consequently a fair fulfillment would be found if either of them occurred. If it refers to the Messiah, it would be fulfilled if in fact the effect of his coming should be either by statute or by instructions to confirm and establish those who already sustained this relation to God, or if he gathered other followers, and confirmed them in their allegiance to God.

From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown we only have references to the following scriptures, all of which refer to Christ:

with many — ([Isa 53:11](#); [Mat 20:28](#); [Mat 26:28](#); [Rom 5:15](#), [Rom 5:19](#); [Heb 9:28](#)).

Now we continue:

For one week – Simply within the space of seven years. But what would occur within this period that would confirm the covenant? This raises two questions. 1. What is the meaning of the week? And what occurred during that week? Barnes comments at length regarding the week. Some of this is quoted below:

(a) that the “one week,” would comprise seven years, immediately succeeding the appearance of the Messiah, or the sixty-two weeks, and that there was something which he would do in “confirming the covenant,” . . .

(b) That in the middle of that period of seven years, another important event would occur, serving to divide that time into two portions, and especially to be known as causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease; in some way affecting the public offering of sacrifice, so that from that time there would be in fact a cessation.

(c) And that this would be succeeded by the consummation of the whole matter expressed in the words, “and for the overspreading of abomination he shall make it desolate,” etc. It is not said, however, that this latter would immediately occur, but this would be one of the events that would pertain to the fulfillment of the prophecy. There is nothing, indeed, in the prediction to forbid the expectation that this would occur at once, nor is there anything in the words which makes it imperative that we should so understand it. . . . When the Messiah should have come, and should have made an atonement for sin, the great design of rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple would have been accomplished, and both might pass away. Whether that would occur immediately or not might be in itself a matter of indifference; but it was important to state here that it would occur, for that was properly a completion of the design of rebuilding the city, and of the purpose for which it had ever been set apart as a holy city.

(2) The other inquiry is whether there was that in what is regarded as the fulfillment of this, which fairly corresponds with the prediction. I have attempted above (on [Dan 9:25](#)) to show that this refers to the Messiah properly so called - the Lord Jesus Christ. (underline mine)

Barnes establishes many points for his reference to Christ here. For Barnes complete comment with regard to this, please consult his commentary.

Continuing on it says: **And in the midst of the week** –

The key word here is חצי chêtsîy khay-tsee'; from 2673; the half or middle:—half, middle, mid(-night), midst, part, two parts.

Once again we note that Barnes refers to the work of Christ in the midst of the week:

The meaning of the passage is fully met by the supposition that it refers to the Lord Jesus and his work, and that the exact thing that was intended by the prophecy was his death, or his being “cut off,” and thus causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease.

Whatever difficulties there may be about the “precise” time of our Lord’s ministry, and whether he celebrated three passovers or four after he entered on his public work, it is agreed on all hands that it lasted about three years and a half - the time referred to here. Though a few have supposed that a longer

period was occupied, yet the general belief of the church has coincided in that, and there are few points in history better settled. On the supposition that this pertains to the death of the Lord Jesus, and that it was the design of the prophecy here to refer to the effects of that death, this is the very language which would have been used. If the period of “a week” were for any purpose mentioned, then it would be indispensable to suppose that there would be an allusion to the important event - in fact, the great event which was to occur in the middle of that period, when the ends of the types and ceremonies of the Hebrew people would be accomplished, and a sacrifice made for the sins of the whole world.

From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown:

in ... midst of ... week — The seventy weeks extend to a.d. 33. Israel was not actually destroyed till a.d. 79, but it was so virtually, a.d. 33, about three or four years after Christ’s death, during which the Gospel was preached exclusively to the Jews. When the Jews persecuted the Church and stoned Stephen ([Act 7:54-60](#)), the respite of grace granted to them was at an end ([Luk 13:7-9](#)). Israel, having rejected Christ, was rejected by Christ, and henceforth is counted dead (compare [Gen 2:17](#) with [Gen 5:5](#); [Hos 13:1](#), [Hos 13:2](#)), its actual destruction by Titus being the consummation of the removal of the kingdom of God from Israel to the Gentiles ([Mat 21:43](#)), which is not to be restored until Christ’s second coming, when Israel shall be at the head of humanity ([Mat 23:39](#); [Act 1:6](#), [Act 1:7](#); [Rom 11:25-31](#); [Rom 15:1-32](#)). The interval forms for the covenant-people a great parenthesis.

In addition to the work of Christ on earth, this comment points to the persecution by Israel toward the Church. This eventually culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70.

He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease –

As Barnes notes:

The word “he,” in this place, refers to the Messiah, if the interpretation of the former part of the verse is correct, for there can be no doubt that it is the same person who is mentioned in the phrase “he shall confirm the covenant with many.” The words “sacrifice” and “oblation” refer to the offerings made in the temple. The former word more properly denotes “bloody” offerings; the latter “offerings” of any kind - whether of flour, fruits, grain, etc. See these words explained in the notes at [Isa 1:11](#), [Isa 1:13](#). The word rendered “cease” ([ישבית](#) *yash‘bîyt*) means, properly, to rest (from the word Sabbath), and then in Hiphil, to cause to rest, or to cause to cease. It conveys the idea of “putting an end to” - as, for example, “war,” [Psa 46:9](#); “contention,” [Pro 18:18](#); “exultation,” [Isa 16:10](#). - Gesenius. The literal signification here would be met by the supposition that an end would be made of these sacrifices, and this would occur either by their being made wholly to cease to be offered at that time, or by the fact that the object of their appointment was accomplished, and that henceforward they would be useless and would die away.

From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown:

he shall cause the sacrifice ... oblation to cease — distinct from the temporary “*taking away*” of “the daily” (sacrifice) by Antiochus ([Dan 8:11](#); [Dan 11:31](#)). Messiah was to cause all sacrifices and oblations in general to

“*cease*” utterly. There is here an *allusion* only to Antiochus’ act; to comfort God’s people when sacrificial worship was to be trodden down, by pointing them to the Messianic time when salvation would fully come and yet temple sacrifices cease. This is the same consolation as Jeremiah and Ezekiel gave under like circumstances, when the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar was impending ([Jer 3:16](#); [Jer 31:31](#); [Eze 11:19](#)). Jesus died in the middle of the last week, a.d. 30. His prophetic life lasted three and a half years; the very time in which “the saints are given into the hand” of Antichrist ([Dan 7:25](#)). Three and a half does not, like ten, designate the power of the world in its fullness, but (while opposed to the divine, expressed by *seven*) broken and defeated in its seeming triumph; for immediately after the three and a half times, judgment falls on the victorious world powers ([Dan 7:25](#), [Dan 7:26](#)). So Jesus’ death seemed the triumph of the world, but was really its defeat ([Joh 12:31](#)). The rending of the veil marked the cessation of sacrifices through Christ’s death ([Lev 4:6](#), [Lev 4:17](#); [Lev 16:2](#), [Lev 16:15](#); [Heb 10:14-18](#)). There cannot be a covenant without sacrifice ([Gen 8:20](#); [Gen 9:17](#); [Gen 15:9](#), etc.; [Heb 9:15](#)). Here the old covenant is to be confirmed, but in a way peculiar to the New Testament, namely, by the one sacrifice, which would terminate all sacrifices ([Psa 40:6](#), [Psa 40:11](#)). Thus as the Levitical rites approached their end, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, with ever increasing clearness, oppose the spiritual new covenant to the transient earthly elements of the old.

Thus we see that both of these commentators agree that it was a reference to Christ. Later on we shall see that this passage is by no means universally agreed upon, but for now we continue.

And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate –

There are many renderings of this. As Barnes notes:

There is great variety, also, in the ancient versions in rendering this passage. The Latin Vulgate is, “And there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation.” The Greek, “And upon the temple shall be an abomination of desolations.” The Syriac, “And upon the extremities of the abomination shall rest desolation.” The Arabic, “And over the sanctuary shall there be the abomination of ruin.” Luther renders it, “And upon the wings shall stand the abomination of desolation.” Lengerke and Hengstenberg render it, “And upon the summit of abomination comes the destroyer.” Prof. Stuart, “And the water shall be over a winged fowl of abominations.” These different translations show that there is great obscurity in the original, and perhaps exclude the hope of being able entirely to free the passage from all difficulties. An examination of the words, however, may perhaps enable us to form a judgment of its meaning. The “literal” and “obvious” sense of the original, as I understand it, is, “And upon the wing of the abominations one causing desolation” - משמם ועל כנף שקיציים *v^e al kenap shîqqytsîym m^e shomēm*. The word rendered “overspreading” (כנף *kânâp*) means, properly, a “wing;” so called as “covering,” or because it “covers” - from כנף *kânâp*), to cover, to hide. . . . Nothing certain can be determined about the allusion here from the use of this word, but the connection would lead us to suppose that the reference was to something pertaining to the city or temple, for the whole prophecy has a reference to the city and temple, and it is natural to suppose that in its close there would be an allusion to it.

Note the underlined sentence here. Earlier Adam Clarke pointed out the difficulty in the rendering of this entire passage. Here Barnes shows agreement by pointing out that it will likely be impossible to obtain a rendering free of all difficulties. Nonetheless, there is agreement that this is most likely a reference to some part of the temple. The NIV simply renders it: “And at the temple, he will set up an abomination that causes desolation”.

Barnes continues:

The Masoretic pointing, also, may be disregarded, and then the real idea would be better expressed by some such translation as the following: “He shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease. And - upon the wing - the porch of the temple - abominations! And a desolator!” That is, after the ceasing of the sacrifice and the oblation, the mind is fixed upon the temple where they had been offered. The first thing that arrests the eye is some portion of the temple, here denoted by the word “wing.” The next is something abominable or detestable - an object to be hated and loathed in the very temple itself. The next is a desolator - one who had come to carry desolation to that very temple. Whether the “abomination” is connected with the “desolator” or not is not intimated by the language. It might or might not be. The angel uses language as these objects strike the eye, and he expresses himself in this abrupt manner as the eye rests on one or the other. The question then arises, What does this mean? Or what is to be regarded as the proper fulfillment? It seems to me that there can be no doubt that there is a reference to the Roman standard or banners planted on some part of the temple, or to the Roman army, or to some idols set up by the Romans - objects of abomination to the Jews - as attracting the eye of the angel in the distant future, and as indicating the close of the series of events here referred to in the prophecy. . . . The language of the Saviour in his reference to this would seem to demand such an interpretation, [Mat 24:15](#) : “When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place,” etc. There can be no reasonable doubt. that the Saviour refers to this passage in Daniel (see the notes at [Mat 24:15](#)), or that events occurred in the attack on Jerusalem and the temple that would fully correspond with the language used here.

As already mentioned, this did occur as a matter of historical record from the writings of Josephus. (see my quote from “The Wars of the Jews” Book 6:6:1 above)

From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown:

for the overspreading of abominations — *On account of the abominations* committed by the unholy people against the Holy One, He shall not only destroy the city and sanctuary ([Dan 9:25](#)), but shall continue its desolation until the time of the consummation “determined” by God (the phrase is quoted from [Isa 10:22](#), [Isa 10:23](#)), when at last the world power shall be judged and dominion be given to the saints of the Most High ([Dan 7:26](#), [Dan 7:27](#)). Auberlen translates, “On account of the desolating *summit* of abominations (compare [Dan 11:31](#); [Dan 12:11](#); thus the repetition of the same thing as in [Dan 9:26](#) is avoided), and till the consummation which is determined, it (the curse, [Dan 9:11](#), foretold by Moses) will pour on the desolated.” Israel reached the summit of abominations, which drew down desolation ([Mat 24:28](#)), nay, which is the desolation itself, when, after murdering Messiah, they offered sacrifices, Mosaic indeed in form, but heathenish in spirit (compare [Isa 1:13](#); [Eze 5:11](#)). Christ refers to this passage ([Mat 24:15](#)), “When ye see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,

stand *in the holy place*” (the latter words being *tacitly implied* in “abominations” as being such as are committed *against the sanctuary*). Tregelles translates, “upon the *wing* of abominations shall be that which causeth desolation”; namely, an idol set up on a wing or pinnacle of the temple (compare [Mat 4:5](#)) by Antichrist, who makes a covenant with the restored Jews for the last of the seventy weeks of years (fulfilling Jesus’ words, “If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive”), and for the first three and a half years keeps it, then in the midst of the week breaks it, causing the daily sacrifices to cease. Tregelles thus identifies the last half week with the time, times, and a half of the persecuting little horn ([Dan 7:25](#)). But thus there is a gap of at least 1830 years put between the sixty-nine weeks and the seventieth week. Sir Isaac Newton explains the wing (“overspreading”) of abominations to be the Roman ensigns (eagles) brought to the east gate of the temple, and there sacrificed to by the soldiers; the war, ending in the destruction of Jerusalem, lasted from spring a.d. 67 to autumn a.d. 70, that is, just three and a half years, or the last half week of years [Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 6.6].

The comment here introduces the idea that this could have a meaning outside of something that happen inside the span of that generation. He notes that if this is in reference to Daniel 7:25, there would be a gap of at least 1830 years. This is the same as the 2000+ years which would be the case at this time if this is true. This was shown earlier in the dispensationalists view.

Finally, we come to the end of the passage which reads as follows:

even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown:

poured upon the desolate — Tregelles translates, “the *causer* of desolation,” namely, Antichrist. Compare “abomination *that maketh* desolate” ([Dan 12:11](#)). Perhaps *both* interpretations of the whole passage may be in part true; the Roman desolator, Titus, being a type of Antichrist, the final desolator of Jerusalem. Bacon [*The Advancement of Learning*, 2.3] says, “Prophecies are of the nature of the Author, with whom a thousand years are as one day; and therefore are not fulfilled punctually at once, but have a springing and germinant accomplishment through many years, though the height and fullness of them may refer to one age.”

Here the author states that in understanding this to be fulfilled by the Antichrist, there is the possibility that it could refer to both the Roman desolator and the final Antichrist.

Barnes notes here:

Even until the consummation - Until the completion - ועד-כלה *y' ad-kâlâh*. That is, the series of events in the prophecy shall in fact reach to the completion of everything pertaining to the city and temple. The whole purpose in regard to that shall be completed. The design for which it is robe rebuilt shall be consummated; the sacrifices to be offered there shall be finished, and

they shall be no longer efficacious or proper; the whole civil and religious polity connected with the city and temple shall pass away.

And that determined - וְנִחְרְצָה *v^enechĕrĕtsĕh*. See this word explained in the notes at [Dan 9:24](#), [Dan 9:26](#). See also the notes at [Isa 10:23](#). There seems to be an allusion in the word here to its former use, as denoting that this is the fulfillment of the determination in regard to the city and temple. The idea is, that what was determined, or decided on, to wit, with reference to the closing scenes of the city and temple, would be accomplished.

Shall be poured - תִּטֹּק *tĭttak*. The word used here means to pour, to pour out, to overflow - as rain, water, curses, anger, etc. It may be properly applied to calamity or desolation, as these things may be represented as “poured down” upon a people, in the manner of a storm. Compare [2Sa 21:10](#); [Exo 9:33](#); [Psa 11:6](#); [Eze 38:22](#); [2Ch 34:21](#); [2Ch 12:7](#); [Jer 7:20](#); [Jer 42:18](#); [Jer 44:6](#).

Upon the desolate - Margin, desolator. The Hebrew word (שׂוֹמֵם *shōmēm*) is the same, though in another form (כָּל *kal* instead of פֶּל *pēl*) which is used in the previous part of the verse, and rendered “he shall make it desolate,” but which is proposed above to be rendered “desolator.” The verb שָׂמַם *shāmēm* is an intransitive verb, and means, in “Kal,” the form used here, to be astonished or amazed; then “to be laid waste, to be made desolate” (Gesenius); and the meaning in this place, therefore, is that which is desolate or laid waste - the wasted, the perishing, the solitary. The reference is to Jerusalem viewed as desolate or reduced to ruins. The angel perhaps contemplates it, as he is speaking, in ruins or as desolate, and he sees this also as the termination of the entire series of predictions, and, in view of the whole, speaks of Jerusalem appropriately as “the desolate.”

Though it would be rebuilt, yet it would be again reduced to desolation, for the purpose of the rebuilding - the coming of the Messiah - would be accomplished. As the prophecy finds Jerusalem a scene of ruins, so it leaves it, and the last word in the prophecy, therefore, is appropriately the word “desolate.” The intermediate state indeed between the condition of the city as seen at first and at the close is glorious - for it embraces the whole work of the Messiah; but the beginning is a scene of ruins, and so is the close. The sum of the whole in the latter part of the verse may be expressed in a free paraphrase: “He, the Messiah, shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,” by having fulfilled in his own death the design of the ancient offerings, thus rendering them now useless, and upon the outspreading - upon the temple regarded as spread out, or some wing or portico, there are seen abominable things - idolatrous ensigns, and the worship of foreigners. A desolator is there, also, come to spread destruction - a foreign army or leader. And this shall continue even to the end of the whole matter - the end of the events contemplated by the prophecy - the end of the city and the temple. And what is determined on - the destruction decreed - shall be poured out like a tempest on the city doomed to desolation - desolate as surveyed at the beginning of the prophecy - desolate at the close, and therefore appropriately called “the desolate.”

Barnes concludes his case here by paraphrasing the end of Daniel 9:27. Here he emphasizes that this prophecy was fulfilled as prophesied, and as we have seen by the words of Josephus, history confirms it. In what amounts to a closing series of questions below, Barnes in effect makes a powerful argument with respect to this prophecy. When compiled together, these questions having been answered by the fulfillment of this prophecy compose a great truth. Note Barnes closing words:

After this protracted examination of the meaning of this prophecy, all the remark which it seems proper to make is, that this prediction could have been the result only of inspiration. There is the clearest evidence that the prophecy was recorded long before the time of the Messiah, and it is manifest that it could not have been the result of any natural sagacity. There is not the slightest proof that it was uttered as late as the coming of Christ, and there is nothing better determined in relation to any ancient matter than that it was recorded long before the birth of the Lord Jesus. But it is equally clear that it could have been the result of no mere natural sagacity. How could such events have been foreseen except by Him who knows all things? How could the order have been determined? How could the time have been fixed? How could it have been anticipated that the Messiah, the Prince, would be cut off? How could it have been known that he would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease? How could it have been ascertained that the period during which he would be engaged in this would be one week - or about seven years? How could it be predicted that a remarkable event would occur in the middle of that period that would in fact cause the sacrifice and oblation ultimately to cease? And how could it be conjectured that a foreign prince would come, and plant the standard of abomination in the holy city, and sweep all away - laying the city and the temple in ruins, and bringing the whole polity to an end? These things lie beyond the range of natural sagacity, and if they are fairly implied in this prophecy, they demonstrate that this portion of the book is from God.

What a powerful argument in favor of the truth of God's word and the prophecies fulfilled. The sum of these questions makes it impossible that this prophecy could have been contrived, but attest to the power of God's Word. Barnes comes down on this prophecy as being fulfilled entirely in Christ, who through His own death made abominable the offerings made in the temple after His death. These offerings would be abominable, idolatrous offerings as in the worship of foreigners. This later would be exemplified in Roman General Titus bringing the Roman ensigns into the temple and making sacrifices to them, as recorded by Jewish historian Josephus. Finally, Jesus uses this desolator (Roman General Titus) to make desolate the city of Jerusalem.

The Dispensationalist View of Daniel 9:27

Thomas Ice gives the dispensational view of Daniel 9:27 below. Also included is the reasoning behind a gap of over 2000 years between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel's fulfillment. In the beginning of his argument, he gives the reason for his view that verse 27 is speaking of Antichrist and not Christ. I have left out of Mr. Ice's discussion the points relative to the other commentators on this passage. For a full view of this discussion go to: <http://www.raptureme.com/featured/70-weeks-9.html>.

Ice begins by a discussion of the subject of verse 27:

Antichrist or Christ?

Right off the bat, the first question that arises in verse 27 is to whom does the pronoun "he" refer to? I believe that "he" must refer to "the prince who is to come" in verse 26.

In Hebrew grammar, as with most languages, a pronoun would refer to the nearest antecedent, unless there was a contextual reason to think otherwise. In this instance, the nearest antecedent in agreement with "he" is "the prince who is to come" in verse 26. This is recognized by a majority of scholars, including a number of amillennialists such as Kiel and Leupold. Only a priori theological bias could lead a trained interpreter of Scripture to any other conclusion.

I believe Ice's point that "only a priori theological bias could lead a trained interpreter of Scripture to any other conclusion" is not fair and is in itself biased. Adam Clarke thought this verse so difficult that *he even refused to give an opinion*, but instead noted:

I have thus set down almost all the variations mentioned by Kennicott and De Rossi, and those furnished by three ancient MSS. of my own, that the learned reader may avail himself of every help to examine thoroughly this important prophecy. Upwards of thirty various readings in the compass of four verses, and several of them of great moment.

In fact, it should be pointed out that the argument *in favor* of the "he" in this verse referring to Christ and not the Antichrist is precisely that the mention of "the prince who is to come" is *not* the subject of the prophecy. The mention of "the people of the prince who is to come" in verse 26 is a side note to the passage. The subject of this passage is Christ. Therefore, the "he" refers back to Christ *who is* the subject of this prophecy.

Continuing his reasoning, Ice notes:

Second, as noted above, the unusual manner of mention in verse twenty-six regarding that prince calls for just such a further reference as this. There is no reason for the earlier notice unless something further is to be said regarding him, for he does nothing nor plays any part in activities there described. Third, several matters show that what is now said regarding the one in reference does not suit if that reference is to Christ. (a) This person makes a "firm covenant" with people, but Christ made no covenant. God made a Covenant of Grace with people, and Christ fulfilled requirements under it, but this is quite different from Christ's making a covenant. (b) Even if Christ had made a covenant with people during His lifetime, the idea of mentioning it only here in the overall thought of the passage would be unusual, when the subjects of His death and even the destruction of Jerusalem have already been set forth.

Once again, I believe that Ice makes an errant statement. The scripture does not say that Christ made a covenant, but it says "he shall confirm a covenant". The Hebrew word here has already been explained and conveys the idea of that of giving strength, or stability; of making firm and sure. This Hebrew word here evidently refers to the "covenant" which God is said to establish with his people - so often referred to in the Scriptures as expressing the relation between Him and them. It is pointed out specifically in Isaiah 42:6. Yahweh makes the covenant, Messiah confirms it.

Ice continues as follows:

(c) The idea of the seventieth week, here closely associated with this one, does not fit the life or ministry of Christ, as will be shown presently. (d) The idea that this one causes "sacrifice and offering to cease" does not fit in reference to Christ in this context. The amillennial view holds that these words refer to Christ's supreme sacrifice in death, which made all other sacrifices and offerings of no further use, thus making them to cease in principle. But, if so, what would be the reason for such a statement (true as it is) in view of the purpose of the overall prediction? One could understand a direct statement concerning Christ's providing atonement for sin—though its placing at this point in the general thought order the passage would be strange—because that would be important to sin-bondaged Israelites. But why, if that is the basic thought, should it be expressed so indirectly, in terms of sacrificing and offering being made to cease?

It is safe to conclude that the immediate context of this passage and the book as a whole supports our understanding of this matter. This interpretation would also support a futurist understanding of verse 27.

The Making of a Covenant

What is it that "he" will do? The antichrist will "make a firm covenant with the many for one week," that is seven years. . . . If this is supposed to be a reference to the covenant of grace, then "it may be observed first that this would be a strange way to express such a thought," notes Dr. Wood. Christ's salvation covenant is not limited to seven years rather it is an eternal covenant. Daniel 9:27 says the covenant is to be made with "the many." This term always refers in some way to Israel throughout the book of Daniel (Daniel 11:33, 39; 12:3). Thus it is a narrow term, used in a specific context. It is not a broad term, synonymous with the language of global salvation. Further, "it is evident that the covenant is subsequent to the cutting off of Messiah and the destruction of the City and the Sanctuary, in the twenty-sixth verse; therefore, it could not have been confirmed at the First Advent," says G. H. Pember. Such an interpretation does not fit this text and it does not account for the seven years that Gabriel says this covenant will be in place. Dr. Wood further explains:

Since the word for "covenant" . . . does not carry the article (contrary to the kjv translation), this covenant likely is made at this time for the first time (not a reaffirmation of an old one, then) and probably will concern some type of nonaggression treaty, recognizing mutual rights. Israel's interest in such a treaty is easy to understand in the light of her desire today for allies to help withstand foes such as Russia and the Arab bloc of nations.

Since a covenant as described in verse 27 has not yet taken place in reference to the nation of Israel, it must therefore follow that this will be a yet to occur future event. This then, demands a postponement of the seventieth week with a gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks of years.

For One Week

This passage clearly says that the length of the covenant that "he" will make will be for one week or seven years. I suppose that this could mean either that the covenant will be predetermined to last seven years or that it does not specify a length of time when made, but as it turns out, is only in existence for

seven years. Many of those who believe that the entire prophecy of the seventy weeks has already been fulfilled around the time of Christ's first coming teach that the first half of the seventieth week was fulfilled by Christ's ministry.

Conclusion

Once again we have seen in this installment on the seventy weeks that the text of this passage supports a gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the seventieth week is still future to the time in which we now live. "Israel has now been reestablished as a nation (1948), suggesting that the seventieth seven may soon begin."
Maranatha!

Once again, notice how Ice continually refers to the "making of a covenant". There was *no covenant made, only one confirmed*. As previously mentioned, The Hebrew root word here is והגביר *v^ehig^ebîyr*. The idea to be conveyed is that of strengthening, or giving stability; of making firm and sure. There is however great significance in the fact that Israel has once again been established as a nation on the earth. The apostle Paul makes it clear in the book of Romans that the rejection of Israel was not final. Israel does have a prophetic future.

Conclusion

As I stated in the beginning, the exposition of this passage is indeed a daunting task. I must refer once again to the words of Adam Clarke in his commentary:

I have thus set down almost all the variations mentioned by Kennicott and De Rossi, and those furnished by three ancient MSS. of my own, that the learned reader may avail himself of every help to examine thoroughly this important prophecy. Upwards of thirty various readings in the compass of four verses, and several of them of great moment.

Thirty readings on this passage is a huge group of writings here. The complete exposition of this passage could, without question, be something which could fill the pages of a large book. I have only made reference to a few commentaries available, all of which add light to the discussion. The purpose of this thesis is to determine the context and background information of the passage and use this along with an analogy of the original language used to exegete the passage. The fact that there are so many different interpretations of it by the commentators is a testimony to the fact that *it is* a difficult passage. Despite the use of the various tools mentioned above to make a competent exegesis of the passage, I do not presume to say that my conclusions are to be taken as being beyond all reasonable doubt. I freely admit that I did not undertake to look at the "upwards of thirty various passages" mentioned by Adam Clarke. Nonetheless, I believe that it is possible to arrive at some valid conclusions regarding this text from the information presented above.

Once again, it is important to note that within the original languages, the key words have more than one meaning. For example, the word "reconciliation" used in verse 24 has several meanings:

Reconciliation - kâphar kaw-far'; a primitive root; to cover (specifically with bitumen); figuratively, to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel:—appease, make (an atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile(-liation).

It is the same with the many key words in this passage. Because of this and other factors as mentioned above, there are several ways in which many have interpreted this passage.

Despite this, I believe it is possible to arrive at a solid conclusion. First we must ask the question, what was this intended to mean to those to whom it was written? What is the background of the passage? In this case, why was Daniel praying? He prayed knowing that the 70 years of exile was nearing an end. But the angel Gabriel now discloses to him new information, information that is intended to encourage Daniel that Yahweh is a God who keeps His promises. He presents a unit of time, a new period of “seventy times seven,” in which still more important events are to take place, a period spoken of in the Greek as seventy “heptades”, meaning weeks. This was important in this revelation to Daniel to bring him consolation, and to assure him about the rebuilding of the city, and the great events that were to occur there. The angel Gabriel is bringing him a message that the coming of the Messiah will accomplish 6 things. These are as follows:

- **To finish the transgression** - the coming of the Messiah was to restrain or cover up the sin of the world. His work, through the sacrifice made on the cross, is such that it now covers up the sin of the elect, and will eventually succeed in restraining sin altogether! This does not refer to the particular transgressions for which the Jewish people had suffered in their long captivity, but sin (הפֿשֶׁע *hapesha`*) in general - the sin of the world.
- **To make an end of sins** – This is normally understood as חָתַם *châthēm* - from חָתַם *châtham* - “to seal, to seal up.” the idea to be conveyed here is that sin was to be sealed up, or closed, or hidden, so that they will not be seen. It can be compared to a sealed book, or a lock box, the contents of which cannot be seen. And although Daniel had no idea of the meaning of this at the time, we can. Since we have Christ revealed, we can understand how this was to be accomplished. It was accomplished by the blood of the atonement, by which sin is now forgiven. It is as if it were hidden from the view, sealed with a seal that cannot be broken.
- **To make reconciliation for iniquity** – This He did by the once offering up of himself. This is different from the second purpose in that reconciliation is the word which is commonly used with reference to atonement. As Luther understood it, it meant “to reconcile for transgression.” Its bearing would be on human iniquity; on the way by which it might be pardoned and removed.
- **To bring in everlasting righteousness** - Everlasting used here denotes that the righteousness would be permanent and perpetual. In reference to the method of becoming righteous, it would become the only method by which men would become holy; in this way, it would be a righteousness which would continue forever.
- **To seal up vision and prophecy** - The idea seems to sealed in the sense that they would be closed or shut up - no longer open matters. Also, sealing up can carry

the meaning of authentication. Thus, we could rightly interpret this to mean “To authenticate or close up vision and prophecy” Once a scroll was sealed, It would be marked with a seal mark. The purpose was that it would be authentic until it was opened. If opened, it would need to be sealed again and authenticated again by the mark. Christ would settle this matter once and for all. Only Christ could authenticate this prophecy, for only Christ could provide the answers to the other parts of this prophecy.

- **To anoint the Most Holy** – This is the most important point. The entire ninth chapter of Daniel follows the pattern set forth in Leviticus 26. Although the term “most holy” does not appear in Leviticus 26, it is important to point out that it appears in Leviticus *only* in reference to a sacrifice. In *every instance* in which this term is found in the book of Leviticus, it is in reference to *a sacrifice*. And in Leviticus we find a reference to the lamb in Leviticus 14:13. Here the slain lamb is referred to as *most holy*.

This ties this time frame together as one unit of time in which the coming of the Messiah will accomplish these 6 things! As the scripture says, He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). The angel Gabriel was giving Daniel a message showing that within the 490 years, these 6 items would lead to and be fulfilled in the promised Messiah.

Next the angel Gabriel gives the time frame. He gives it in 3 periods of time. The three periods are:

1. Seven weeks, that is, forty-nine years. **2.** Sixty-two weeks, that is, four hundred and thirty-four years. **3.** One week, that is, seven years.

The first period of time refers to the rebuilding of Jerusalem. As previously mentioned, this was from the 2nd decree given king Artaxerxes. It had to be this decree because it was the first of the four decrees that included rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem. There is considerable debate among historians regarding this date, and this is tied into the calendar corrections made by historians. However, Sir Isaac Newton established the Julian date of 4257 which corresponds to 457 BC. (This was added as a footnote in the 1701 KJV).

Seventy weeks are cut out upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, &c. Here, by putting a week for seven years, are reckoned 490 years from the time that the dispersed Jews should be re-incorporated into ^[7] a people and a holy city, until the death and resurrection of Christ; whereby transgression should be finished, and sins ended, iniquity be expiated, and everlasting righteousness brought in, and this Vision be accomplished, and the Prophet consummated, that Prophet whom the Jews expected; and whereby the most Holy should be anointed, he who is therefore in the next words called the Anointed, that is, the Messiah, or the Christ. For by joining the accomplishment of the vision with the expiation of sins, the 490 years are ended with the death of Christ. Now the dispersed Jews became a people and city when they first returned into a polity or body politick; and this was in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, when Ezra returned with a body of Jews from captivity, and revived the Jewish worship; and by the King's commission created Magistrates in all the land, to judge and govern the people according to the laws of God and the King, Ezra vii. 25. There were but two returns from

captivity, *Zerubbabel's* and *Ezra's*; in *Zerubbabel's* they had only commission to build the Temple, in *Ezra's* they first became a polity or city by a government of their own. Now the years of this *Artaxerxes* began about two or three months after the summer solstice, and his seventh year fell in with the third year of the eightieth *Olympiad*; and the latter part thereof, wherein *Ezra* went up to *Jerusalem*, was in the year of the *Julian Period* 4257. Count the time from thence to the death of *Christ*, and you will find it just 490 years. If you count in *Judaic* years commencing in autumn, and date the reckoning from the first autumn after *Ezra's* coming to *Jerusalem*, when he put the King's decree in execution; the death of *Christ* will fall on the year of the *Julian Period* 4747, *Anno Domini* 34; and the weeks will be *Judaic* weeks, ending with sabbatical years; and this I take to be the truth: but if you had rather place the death of *Christ* in the year before, as is commonly done, you may take the year of *Ezra's* journey into the reckoning. (from "Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John (Chapter 10), by Sir Isaac Newton)

Using this date, and subtracting the first 7 weeks of years or 49 years, we come to 408 BC.

Now if we add another 62 weeks of years (434 years), this would bring us to somewhere around 27 AD. This was the actual Crucifixion of Christ. Adding the final week we come to 34 AD for the end of Daniel's 70 weeks of years. Of course these calculations may vary slightly, but it gives us valid assurance that this prophecy is referring to Messiah the Prince spoken of in Daniel 9:25. The scripture tells us that it would be in troublous times. If you study the book of Nehemiah, you see that they had a lot of trouble building the city, due to the opposing efforts of Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite.

Next we see that *after* the 62 weeks there would be a prince who would destroy the city and the sanctuary. The Roman prince Titus destroyed the city and fulfilled the prophecy given by Jesus concerning the temple in Matt 24:2: "And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." This prophecy would have been thought impossible 40 years prior. The temple was an amazing architectural structure. It was the pride of the Jewish nation. Under the command of Titus, 70 AD there was complete destruction. Everything was reduced to rubble.

The biggest controversy of this entire passage is contained in the 27th verse. Is this the Christ, or is it the Antichrist? I believe the preponderance of evidence is in favor of this being the Christ. This is for the following reasons:

1. It says "he shall confirm a covenant" not *make* a covenant. Christ, the Messiah, *confirmed* the covenant which *Yahweh* made. The confirmation of the covenant is assigned to Him by the prophet Isaiah. This is from Isaiah 42: 1-9. In *Isa 42:6*, "I will give thee for a *covenant* of the people" (that is, He in whom the covenant between Israel and God is personally expressed). The Messiah confirmed it by His death on the cross and the subsequent work of the apostles in evangelizing the Jews. There was no covenant to confirm with the Antichrist.

2. In the middle of the last week, that is 3 ½ years after the start of His ministry, he was cut off. At that time, the veil of the temple was torn in two. Thus the seventy weeks extend to 33 AD, and although Jerusalem was not actually destroyed till 70 AD, it was rendered invalid symbolized by the tearing of the veil and by the preaching of the Gospel which for the next 3 ½ years was preached exclusively to the Jews. When the Jews continued persecuting the Church and stoned Stephen, it was over for them. Israel, having rejected Christ, was now under judgment. Its actual destruction by Titus and the “people of the prince” was now set in stone.
3. At this point, the 490 years of the prophecy are now complete. When Titus came to the temple to destroy it, they brought their religious artifacts into the temple, and made sacrifices to them.
4. Jerusalem was destroyed completely after the end of the prophecy, confirming the judgment which was represented by the tearing of the veil of the Most Holy. Thus, as shown by the Hebrew word “shaw-mame” (ruined, desolate), it was ruined or desolate. The reference is to Jerusalem which was completely destroyed and reduced to rubble by Titus and his armies. The angel Gabriel could have been indicating this outcome and therefore spoke of Jerusalem as “the desolate.”

Likewise, I would like to note that I believe the dispensationalist view of this passage does not make sense for the following reasons:

1. The angel Gabriel was delivering an answer to Daniel’s prayer, one which would give him comfort about the future of God keeping His promise. That promise was that after 490 years the coming of the Messiah would accomplish 6 things. The 490 year time frame is crucial. The angel was not proclaiming a time frame of over a period of in excess of 2,490 years, but 490 years. The adding of a 2000+ year gap between week 69 and 70 would nullify God’s promise of 490 years and would be of no comfort to Daniel.
2. The dispensationalist argument that the Antichrist is the “he” of verse 27 is errant because the verse says “he shall confirm a covenant”. It does not say “he shall make a covenant”. The one who makes the covenant is Yahweh as already noted.
3. The dispensationalist argument that the Antichrist is the “he” of verse 27 ruins the continuity of the message to Daniel, and does not fit in with the promise of the Messiah to come given to Daniel. Also, to say that the “he” of verse 27 refers back to the prince who would destroy the city and the sanctuary is errant because the subject of this prophecy is Christ (the Messiah), not Antichrist.
4. By use of the Hebrew word kârath kaw-rath'; (a primitive root; to cut (off, down or asunder); by implication, to destroy or consume; specifically, to covenant) the angel Gabriel ties the covenant given by Yahweh in Isaiah 42 (mentioned above) with the covenant being “made strong” in verse 27.

5. It is not a coincidence In the middle of the 70th week, Christ was cut off and the veil of the temple was torn in two. This is symbolic of the fact that the temple was no longer needed. Now Christ was the atoning sacrifice. Future animal sacrifices would therefore be an abomination to God.
6. There are 13 instances of the term “most holy” in Leviticus. The covenant language of Leviticus to which Daniel referred in his prayer always spoke of the “most holy” as a sacrifice. In Leviticus 14:13 “most holy” is a reference to the lamb. This fits in with Daniels prayer.
7. The subject of this prophecy is not national Israel, but Christ. By viewing this prophecy through the lens of national Israel instead of Christ, the point of the fulfillment of the covenant is missed.

This wonderful prophecy of Daniel was a promise to the nation of Israel. There would be a Messiah who would come in whom six wonderful things would be fulfilled. The writer of Hebrews notes in chapter 9 that Christ came as High Priest with a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, to offer the perfect sacrifice and mediate a new covenant. (Heb 9:11-16). Later we read of Gods final answer for sin in Hebrews 9:24-28. This time quoting from the English Standard Version:

“For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”

Praise God that He allowed his Son to fulfill Daniel 9:27, to be “cut off” after 3 ½ years on earth, “to bring an end to sacrifice and offering”. For He has given us such a precious promise of this, we can be eternally grateful, and that we should serve him with all of our hearts.

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