

Dissecting The 70 Weeks: Daniel 9:24-27

When you study the 70 weeks and look at the history of the Jews from Daniel's time until now, these periods become pretty clear, except for the last week, the 70th week.

The starting point for this process of restoring the Jews and Jerusalem and Israel seems to be around 445 BC, when the command to restore and build Jerusalem was given by King Artaxerxes to Nehemiah, which is close to 100 years after Daniel has received this vision.

Thus, the first seven weeks is 49 years and the next period will be 62 weeks. Remember the Jewish year was only 360 days compared to our 365 days, so an adjustment must be made.

Thus we go from 445 to 396 in the first period of years, which encompasses the decree of the king to Nehemiah to go rebuild Jerusalem to the covenant renewal celebration in Jerusalem in 396 BC.

Nehemiah and Ezra record these times in their books contained in the Bible. Jerusalem is rebuilt and people begin to "return from the nations" to Israel. It is not a full restoration nor a complete return. This happens to prepare the way for the Messiah, the Prince.

During these 62 weeks, the street shall be built again and the wall. This happens both in Nehemiah's day and leading up to Jesus' birth.

Thus, the second week period begins, which is 62 weeks of seven or 434 years when the adjustment is made, which brings us to 32 AD. This is the time of Jesus as He is the Messiah who is promised by Gabriel to Daniel to come.

Gabriel says that these will be troublesome times, I believe, referring to both Nehemiah and Jesus as recorded in the Bible. Nehemiah faced overwhelming opposition as did the Jews of Jesus' day under the rule of the Romans.

After 62 weeks, the Messiah is cut off. Thus, in 33 AD, Jesus is put to death. This sacrifice is part of finishing the transgressions we have been talking about to end the desolation of the Jews and Jerusalem, which will continue in stages. None of this happens all at once.

Gabriel says the Messiah is killed not for Himself, which means He died for us and the forgiveness of our sins, which is the second determination back in verse 24, "to make an end of sins." This too is a process we will discuss.

After the 69 weeks have now been completed, Gabriel says the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. This we know happened in 70 AD, as prophesied by Jesus in Matthew 24 and recorded in history by Josephus.

There is much discussion of who the prince is. I take it to mean the Roman Caesar, who represents the antichrist of that day. "The end of it will be with a flood." I take this to mean the flood of blood that ran through the streets of Jerusalem, as recorded by historians back then that it was ankle deep. This is a slaughter of unheard-of proportions!

"And till the end of the war desolations are determined." Jerusalem is laid waste once more. The Jews will continue to be persecuted and scattered throughout the world now, not just the Middle East, Africa and Roman Europe.

Now, we come to the final week 70, which for us is still cloaked in mystery, although there are numerous theories on the meaning of this last week. Remember this concerns directly the Jews and Jerusalem, and indirectly all of us who follow Jesus and the rest of the Gentile world as we see on the daily news.

We are at the time of the reestablishment of Israel as a nation, 1948, and Jerusalem as their capital, 1967. Aliyah is in full swing as hundreds of thousands of Jews have come and are coming from the nations of the world to live in Israel. God is fulfilling His promises to His people and it is shaking the world. For us, they are the signs of Jesus' return as given by Gabriel and by Jesus in Matthew 24 and 25.

At the end of the 70th week, the transgression of the sins of the Jews will be complete. At some point, Jesus will return and begin to make all things new. First His 1000-year reign and then the final rebellion and after that all will be made new.

Making an End of Sins

Daniel 9:24

There are six major action steps that are determined or ordained by God that He will do concerning the Jewish people and Jerusalem in this vision. They all center on the coming of the Messiah and what God will do through His anointed King, the most Holy One.

The first determination is that the Messiah will finish the transgression of the Jews who broke God's covenant with them. They will suffer the judgment given in the Law of Moses for their sins, through the Messiah God who will forgive them and bring them back home to Israel. The desolation they have suffered will end in the giving of life through Jesus.

"To make an end of sins": This is the second determination given to Daniel by Gabriel concerning the people of God and their holy city.

At the time of this prophecy, there was no end of sin but daily sacrifices in accordance with the Law of Moses. These sacrifices were to make atonement for their sins and that the Jews could receive forgiveness for their sins but it was a

temporary fix. The sacrifices had to take place over and over and over again. The shedding of blood happened daily to cover and wash away their sins.

Moses wrote that there is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood. So this was necessary for the Jews to know God's forgiveness, but only until the Messiah came, the Suffering Servant and anointed King, as foretold by Isaiah, Daniel and Jeremiah.

One interesting side note: Daniel 9 and the prophecy of the 70 weeks make it quite clear that the Messiah has already come at the end of the 69th week. Jesus is not coming for the first time but coming again after week 70 is finished or perhaps concludes week 70?

In the sacrificial system, the temple was the central focus of these rituals. However, it had been made desolate by the Babylonians, burned down and destroyed. The Romans would do the same to the second temple in 70 AD as Jesus prophesied and Daniel 9:26 also tells.

God resided in the temple in the Holy of Holies. Ezekiel, the prophet, tells us His presence left the temple and Jerusalem. The Jews had to recreate another way to sacrifice for their sins. They desperately wanted the temple to be rebuilt.

God gave them their cry as He miraculously had King Artaxerxes order Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and the temple, which he did. The ritual sacrifices were restored after over 100 years of not taking place.

Then nearly 500 years later, Jesus, one greater than the temple, arrives on the scene and tells the Jews He will destroy the temple and see it rise in three days. He is the literal temple of God. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

He will shed His blood for the forgiveness of our sins. "He

will make an end to sin" by His death on the cross. He will put an end to the need for daily sacrifice. He replaced the covenant of Moses with the new covenant, as promised in Jeremiah 31. This covenant will deal with the end of sin and the establishment of righteousness forever as told by Gabriel to Daniel.

Remember, desolation is the absence of life; it is spiritual death and separation from God. Jesus said He came to bring life, abundant life. He declared Himself to be the way, the truth and the life. In Him, we receive life from death.

Daniel records that after the second period of weeks, which is 62 weeks, "Messiah will be cut off, but not for Himself." Thus, Jesus gives His life to put an end to sin for us. He dies in our place so we can be raised from the dead both spiritually and then physically with new resurrected bodies as Jesus has.

This is all promised in the new covenant, which Jesus gave to His disciples and to all who would believe in Him, as prophesied in Jeremiah 31.

How striking and accurate these prophecies are and confirm for us that Jesus is the one, true Messiah. Know that when you are in Christ, He has taken care of all of your sins. No more guilt or condemnation before God. Rejoice that precious free gift has been given to you by God through Jesus!

In Greater Love, author Blake Lorenz shares a captivating story of one man's journey through time after God has chosen him to prepare Israel and the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. All the proceeds will go to our mission and evangelism work around the world and in Central Florida. {eoa}

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