

A Study of the Seventy Weeks of Daniel

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The Starting Point of the Seventy Weeks

In the interpretation of this important and well - known prophecy, Gabriel gave Daniel not only the starting point, but the stopping place as well. The starting point dates from the giving of the commandment to *restore and build Jerusalem*, and from then unto "Messiah the Prince" shall be 69 sevens - or, 69 *weeks* - divided in the twenty - fourth verse as 7 *weeks and 62 weeks*. Bible scholars have not agreed as to the date that marks the starting point of the "seventy weeks."

There were four decrees given concerning the restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple, and all four decrees were issued after the Babylonian captivity.

The First Decree:

This was given by King Cyrus in 536 B.C. (Ezra 1:1 - 4). 2 Chronicles 36:22,23 is another passage which confirms this proclamation: "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD [spoken] by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and [put it] also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the LORD God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which [is] in Judah. Who [is there] among you of all his people? The LORD his God [be] with him, and let him go up."

In these passages, not one word is said about restoring and rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. All that is mentioned in this proclamation is the house of the Lord - the temple.

Cyrus was a heathen king and we might well ask what prompted him to make his decree. Could it be that Daniel had read Jeremiah 25:11 - 14 to him? Or perhaps Isaiah 44:28: "That saith of Cyrus, [He is] my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." Did Daniel ASK Cyrus to free his people, or remind him that the 70 years of their prophesied captivity were almost ended? Could it be that the Holy Spirit used this tremendous prophecy to soften the heart of the king and lead him to grant freedom to the Jews and allow them to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple? He even allowed them to carry back to their temple the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had confiscated when he overran Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit did not see fit to reveal to us just what prompted Cyrus to issue his decree; but we know that as a result of that decree, approximately 50,000 Israelite captives returned to Jerusalem:

"The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore, beside their servants and their maids, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and there were among them two hundred singing men and singing women" (Ezra 2:64,65). They set up an altar; they renewed their offerings, their feasts, their sacrifices - and they began to rebuild their temple; but the work dragged because of many, many adversaries.

The Second Decree:

In 519 B.C., after the Jews appealed to King Darius, he issued a decree to make a search in the king's treasure house in Babylon. The search was made - and revealed the decree that had been given by Cyrus. The decree given by Darius was therefore simply a renewing of that issued by Cyrus - but penalties were attached. Notice in the Scripture that nothing is said of the city - just the temple:

"Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them. Then rose up Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son Jozadak, and began to *build the house of God* which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.

"At the same time came to them Tatnai, governor on this side the river, and Shetharboznai, and their companions, and said thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this house, and to make up this wall? Then said we unto them after this manner, What are the names of the men that make this building? But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease, till the matter came to Darius: and then they returned answer by letter concerning the matter.

"The copy of the letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the king, all peace. Be it known unto the king, that we went into the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which is builded with great stones, and timber is laid in the walls, and this work goeth fast on, and prospereth in their hands. Then asked we those elders, [and] said unto them thus, Who commanded you to build this house, and to make up these walls? We asked their names also, to certify thee, that we might write the names of the men that [were] the chief of them. And thus they returned us answer, saying, We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon. "But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon [the same] king Cyrus made a decree to build this house of God. And the vessels also of gold and silver of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple that [was] in

Jerusalem, and brought them into the temple of Babylon, those did Cyrus the king take out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto [one], whose name [was] Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor; And said unto him, Take these vessels, go, carry them into the temple that [is] in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be builded in his place. Then came the same Sheshbazzar, [and] laid the foundation of the house of God which [is] in Jerusalem: and since that time even until now hath it been in building, and [yet] it is not finished. Now therefore, if [it seem] good to the king, let there be search made in the king's treasure house, which [is] there at Babylon, whether it be [so], that a decree was made of Cyrus the king to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

"Then Darius the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the rolls, where the treasures were laid up in Babylon. And there was found at Achmetha, in the palace that [is] in the province of the Medes, a roll, and therein [was] a record thus written:

"In the first year of Cyrus the king [the same] Cyrus the king made a decree [concerning] the house of God at Jerusalem, Let the house be builded, the place where they offered sacrifices, and let the foundations thereof be strongly laid; the height thereof threescore cubits, [and] the breadth thereof threescore cubits; [With] three rows of great stones, and a row of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house: And also let the golden and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the temple which [is] at Jerusalem, and brought unto Babylon, be restored, and brought again unto the temple which [is] at Jerusalem, [every one] to his place, and place [them] in the house of God.

"Now [therefore], Tatnai, governor beyond the river, Shetharboznai, and your companions the Apharsachites, which [are] beyond the river, be ye far from thence: Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place. Moreover I make a decree what ye shall do to the elders of these Jews for the building of this house of God: that of the king's goods, [even] of the tribute beyond the river, forthwith expenses be given unto these men, that they be not hindered. And that which they have need of, both young bullocks, and rams, and lambs, for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the appointment of the priests which [are] at Jerusalem, let it be given them day by day without fail: That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons.

"Also I have made a decree, that whosoever shall alter this word, let timber be pulled down from his house, and being set up, let him be hanged thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this. And the God that hath caused his name to dwell there destroy all kings and people, that shall put to their hand to alter [and] to destroy this house of God which [is] at Jerusalem. I Darius have made a decree; let it be done with speed" (Ezra 5:1 - 6:12).

The Third Decree:

In 458 B.C. Artaxerxes king of Persia gave Ezra a letter granting him permission to go to Jerusalem and take priests and Levites with him. Ezra was given authority to collect gold and silver, purchase bullocks, rams, and lambs for offerings in the temple; and, should it become necessary, draw on the king's treasury for "whatsoever more shall be needful" for the house of God:

"Now this [is] the copy of the letter that the king Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the priest, the scribe, [even] a scribe of the words of the commandments of the LORD, and of his statutes to Israel. Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect [peace], and at such a time. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and [of] his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee. Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king, and of his seven counsellors, to enquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem, according to the law of thy God which [is] in thine hand; And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation [is] in Jerusalem, And all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon, with the freewill offering of the people, and of the priests, offering willingly for the house of their God which [is] in Jerusalem: That thou mayest buy speedily with this money bullocks, rams, lambs, with their meat offerings and their drink offerings, and offer them upon the altar of the house of your God which [is] in Jerusalem. And whatsoever shall seem good to thee, and to thy brethren, to do with the rest of the silver and the gold, that do after the will of your God. The vessels also that are given thee for the service of the house of thy God, [those] deliver thou before the God of Jerusalem. And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God, which thou shalt have occasion to bestow, bestow [it] out of the king's treasure house. And I, [even] I Artaxerxes the king, do make a decree to all the treasurers which [are] beyond the river, that whatsoever Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, it be done speedily, Unto an hundred talents of silver, and to an hundred measures of wheat, and to an hundred baths of wine, and to an hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing [how much]" (Ezra 7:11 - 22).

There is nothing in this decree concerning the restoration of the Holy City Jerusalem.

The Fourth Decree:

In 445 B.C. in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus, Nehemiah appeared before the king with a sad heart. His countenance told the king that something was drastically wrong and that Nehemiah was a man under a heavy burden and much sorrow. The king asked him, "Wherefore the king said unto me, Why [is] thy countenance sad, seeing thou [art] not sick? this [is] nothing [else] but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid" (Nehemiah 2:2). Nehemiah made his request known to the king and asked permission to return to Jerusalem to rebuild it. He said to the king, "...Why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?" (Neh. 2:3).

When Nehemiah made this statement to the king, he inquired how long the prophet desired to be away, and just what he wanted the king to do concerning the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was allowed to return to the Holy City, and his mission was not only religious; it was also political in the eyes of the enemies of the Jews, because such outsiders as Sanballat and Tobiah opposed the mission, saying that the building of the walls and restoration of the city would be an act of rebellion and a danger to the king's empire.

Nehemiah and the group who returned with him repaired the walls in 52 days (Neh. 6:15), but it took 12 years to complete the rebuilding and restoration of the city of Jerusalem, reestablish the law and ordinance of worship in the temple. Nehemiah's rebuilding of the wall and the city is definitely a fulfillment of the prophecy in Daniel 9:25: "...The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."

Nehemiah's mission was not only to re-establish Jerusalem as a city of worship (the city of the temple) but as a political capital also - the capital of the Jewish nation:

"And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, [that] wine [was] before him: and I took up the wine, and gave [it] unto the king. Now I had not been [beforetime] sad in his presence. Wherefore the king said unto me, Why [is] thy countenance sad, seeing thou [art] not sick? this [is] nothing [else] but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid, And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, [lieth] waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

"And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah; And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which [appertained] to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

"Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard [of it], it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel. So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

"And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I [any] man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither [was there any] beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before

the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

"Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but [there was] no place for the beast [that was] under me to pass. Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and [so] returned. And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told [it] to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

"Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we [are] in, how Jerusalem [lieth] waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for [this] good [work]. But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard [it], they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What [is] this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem" (Neh. 2:1 - 20).

In the second chapter of Nehemiah, there is no decree in words, but the king undoubtedly gave the prophet some form of document or letters giving him the authority to *repair the walls and rebuild the city* - for had not Nehemiah had some form of legal document, the enemies of the restoration of the Holy City would certainly have stopped him from repairing the walls. The decree given to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes is the only one which has to do with rebuilding the city; therefore, it must be the same decree referred to by Gabriel as having to do with the beginning of the seventy weeks of prophecy.

By using literal arithmetic, it will be found that the yearstick of 483 years (7 weeks and 62 weeks...69 weeks) will not fit into any of these spaces. We can see that the decree of Cyrus in 536 B.C. could not have been the starting point of the seventy weeks, because according to the scale of *a day representing a year*, counting from the time Cyrus issued his decree until "Messiah the Prince," the time would have run out in 53 B.C. - 49 years before the birth of Christ (which Bible authorities agree was 4 B.C.).

Then, if we should take the second decree (given by King Darius in 519 B.C.) the 483 years of the 69 weeks would have run out in 36 B.C., 32 years before the birth of Christ.

If we should take the third decree (given by Artaxerxes in 458 B.C.) the 69 weeks of years - 483 years would run *over* to the year 25 A.D. - 29 years AFTER the birth of Christ.

If we take the fourth decree (given by Artaxerxes in 445 B.C.) the 483 years would carry us to 38 A.D., which would be *after the crucifixion of Christ*.

We have seen four suggested beginning points of the 69 weeks. Now let us consider points of ending for those weeks. Certainly we know that "Messiah the Prince" (Dan. 9:25) refers to the Lord Jesus Christ; it could mean none other; but what particular period or event in the life of the Lord Jesus does the prophecy point out? Does it refer to His birth? His baptism? His triumphal entry? or to some other incident?

According to authorities, the life of Jesus on earth was 33 years. Was the birth of Christ the point where the 69 weeks climaxed? Many Bible scholars teach that the birth of Christ was the termination of the 69 weeks of prophecy. Remember, it was Gabriel who announced the 69 weeks to Daniel, and it was the same Gabriel who announced to Mary that she would be the mother of *Messiah the Prince*: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name *Jesus*. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:30 - 33).

It is true that Gabriel did not, in so many words, tell Mary that Jesus was *Messiah the Prince*, but he did announce to her that Jesus would have the throne of David - and He was born a prince of the house of David. The wise men in Matthew 2:1,2 referred to Jesus as King, in John 18:33 - 37 Pilate asked Him if He were a king, and He was crucified "King of the Jews." Yet He was never crowned king, He never occupied the throne of David; but He was a *Prince*, a prince is a king in the making - and a king must be a prince in the house of his father before he is crowned king. To date Jesus has not been crowned king, He has not received His kingdom; but *He will be crowned King*, He will sit on the throne of His father David in Jerusalem and reign over this earth during the thousand years. Jesus is now our High Priest; He is at the right hand of God making intercession for believers (Heb. 1:1 - 3; 1 Tim. 2:5).

In the fulness of time Jesus came, born of a virgin, born Jesus the Saviour - born to die on the cross to satisfy the holiness of God and make possible the salvation of sinners in that His death made it possible for God the Father to be just, and yet justify the ungodly on the merit of the shed blood of His Son. Jesus was not king while here upon this earth - He was *Saviour*. He came, born of a woman, born under the law - not to reign, but to *redeem* those who were under the law (Gal. 4:4).

After the custom of the law, Jesus went with His parents to the temple at the age of twelve; but with that one exception, His first public appearance was at the age of thirty when He came to John to be baptized in Jordan. John knew who He was and refused to baptize Him, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" But Jesus said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:13 - 17 in part). John baptized Jesus, "and, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him." Jesus was anointed by the Holy Ghost. ("Messiah" means "anointed one.")

When Jesus was baptized, God the Father announced, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He did not announce, "This is my King who shall reign over all the earth." God the Father - sovereign God - knows the end in the beginning; He knows all that will occur *between* the beginning and the ending. Jesus was to wear the crown of thorns before He was to wear a crown as King of kings and reign over the earth. The baptism of Jesus announced His entrance into His public ministry, which ministry announced the kingdom; but the Jews rejected the kingdom. They cried out, "We will not have this man to reign over us! Give us Barabbas! Crucify the Christ! Let His blood be upon us, and upon our children!"

The third outstanding event in the life of Jesus here on earth was His *triumphal entry* into the Holy City. Christ was omniscient, knowing all things. He knew who He was, He knew why He came into the world. He said, "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give my life a ransom for many. No man taketh my life from me - I lay it down of myself. I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly."

Jesus knew that His crucifixion was near, and that He was soon to be "cut off" (Dan. 9:26). His Messiahship must be publicly declared and publicly recognized before He was nailed to the cross. He therefore set the stage and took the proper steps toward the public declaration of His Messiahship:

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he [is] just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zechariah 9:9).

At the time of the yearly Passover, people flocked to the city by the hundreds. On that memorable day Jesus descended the Mount of Olives, riding upon an ass, "the foal of an ass" (As was prophesied centuries before). The people shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Since Jesus was omniscient (He was God in flesh), why did He permit the people to refer to Him as King of Israel when He knew that in a few days He would be nailed to a cross, to die the most shameful death any criminal could die in His day? The answer is simple: *to fulfill the Word of God*. Jesus not only allowed it - He encouraged it and set the stage for it. He instructed His disciples to bring a donkey which they would find tied at the entrance to the city (Matt. 21:1 - 3; Luke 19:28 - 40). He even told them what to say if the owners of the donkey asked why they were taking him. They were to answer, "The Master hath need of him."

As the people shouted, "Hosanna! Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord!" the Pharisees said to Jesus, "Master, rebuke thy disciples." Jesus answered, "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out!" (Luke 19:40).

Earlier in the ministry of Jesus this same crowd had attempted to force Him to become their King - they would have crowned Him by force; but He rejected their attempt. Now

He is consenting and contributing to it. He accepted their calling Him King and gave aid in bringing it about, thus proving that the triumphal entry certainly had prophetic significance. The people spread their garments in His path, strewed His way with palm branches and cried, "Hosanna!" Jesus did not allow this just in order to put Himself in the limelight, to put on a "dress parade" or to make the headlines. This was definitely a fulfillment of prophecy.

Many Bible scholars agree (and so does this author) that the triumphal entry is the end of Daniel's 69th week and marks the point of the coming of Messiah the Prince. It was the only time in His earthly ministry when Jesus assumed the attitude of a king. Those who accepted Jesus as King accepted Him as MESSIAH THE PRINCE, and there is no reason why the prophecies recorded in Zechariah 9:9 and Daniel 9:25 should not refer to this event.

The first time Jesus rode into Jerusalem, He was riding on an humble little donkey as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. When He comes to Jerusalem a second time, He will be riding on a magnificent white stallion and He will be followed by the armies of heaven riding on white horses (Rev. 19:11 - 16). When He rides into Jerusalem from the air, followed by His armies on white horses, that will mark the end of the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy - the end of the reign of Antichrist, the time when Jesus will *destroy the armies of antichrist* and annihilate the enemies of God's chosen people, Israel.

It seems reasonable that when Jesus rode into Jerusalem upon a little colt, His humble entry into the Holy City should mark the ending of the 69 weeks of trouble - some times; and when He comes with the armies of heaven as recorded in Revelation 19, this tremendous event will mark the climax of the reign of the false messiah, Antichrist.

Scripture's Calendar

How many days are in a year according to the Scriptures? The answer is found in Genesis 7:11 - 24 and 8:3,4. "In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (Gen. 7:11).

"And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days" (Gen. 7:24).

"And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat" (Gen. 8:4).

Here is what we have in these verses: The waters were upon the earth for 150 days. According to Genesis 7:11 the flood began in the second month, the seventeenth day of that month; and according to Genesis 8:4 the ark rested the seventh month, the seventeenth day. From the seventeenth day of the second month to the seventeenth day of the seventh month is exactly five months; and five months of 30 days each add up to 150 days. According to Genesis 7:24, *the waters prevailed upon the earth for 150 days*. Thus, the calendar of Scripture gives us a month of 30 days, a year of 360 days.

It is true that in our day we use a year of 365 ° days; but according to Genesis, God determines time by 30 days to the month, 360 days to the year. So in prophetic chronology we use the calendar year of 360 days, and we have learned that God measures prophetic time *a day for a year*. Therefore, 30 days to a month would apply to 30 years - (7 weeks plus 62 weeks would be 483 years) - and by reckoning from the edict granted by Artaxerxes in 445 B.D. as the starting point of the 69 weeks, and the triumphal entry as the climax of the 69 weeks, we have the 483 years represented by the 69 weeks pointed out in Daniel 9:25, plus 6 to 8 years not accounted for.

So it seems that there is a small gap between the seven weeks and the sixty two weeks, in which there are years not accounted for, just as there is a gap between the sixty - ninth and the seventieth weeks.

One Bible scholar says: "In order to show that in sacred history and prophecy it is no unusual thing to skip years during which God's people are not especially concerned, it may be helpful to look at other dates.

"In 1 Kings 6:1 it is stated that it was in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt that Solomon began building the temple. If we will take the chronological Bible dates and follow them through from the Exodus to the 4th year of Solomon, we will find it is 611 years, or 131 years more than what is stated in 1 Kings 6:1. But by carefully going through the book of Judges and taking out the years when Israel was under the domination of foreign kings, and adding to it the 20 - year period in 1 Samuel when the ark was out of its accustomed place, we will find that they amount to just exactly 131 years.

1. In Judges 3:8 we learn that the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim *eight years*.
2. Judges 3:12 - 14 tells us that they were in servitude to the Moabites for a period of *eighteen years*.
3. In Judges 4:2,3 we learn that Israel was in servitude to the Canaanites for *twenty years*.
4. In Judges 6:1 they served the Midianites for *seven years*.
5. In Judges 10:7,8 they were in servitude to the Philistines for *eighteen years*.
6. In Judges 13:1 we read, "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for *forty years*."
7. In 1 Samuel 7:2 the ark was out of its accustomed place.

So it seems evident that the 480 years of 1 Kings 6:1 is a sacred cycle in which the years of foreign domination are not counted."

Sir Robert Anderson, a converted English lawyer, worked out the problem in his book called *The Coming Prince*, and used the date 445 as the one to coincide with the prediction of Daniel 9:25. He shows that according to Jewish reckoning, the 483 years would involve a total of 173,880 days. I quote from his book:

The 1st Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (the edict to rebuild Jerusalem) was 14th March, B.C. 445.

The 10th Nisan in Passion Week (Christ's entry into Jerusalem) was 6th April, A.D. 32.

The intervening period was 476 years and 24 days (the days being reckoned inclusively, as required by the language of the prophecy, and in accordance with the Jewish practice).

173,740 days

both inclusive)

24 days

116 days

173,880 days

years of 360 days (or 69 x 7 x 360) equals

173,880 days

It may be well to offer here two explanatory remarks. First: in reckoning years from B.C. to A.D., one year must always be omitted; for it is obvious, ex. gr., that from B.C. 1 to A.D. 1 was not TWO years, but one year. B.C. 1 ought to be described as B.C. 0, and it is so reckoned by astronomers.

Regardless of whose calculations we use, there seems to be a year or two difference. We can count on one thing however: The Bible is not wrong and God's calculations are not wrong. Any error that may occur is in profane chronology or could easily be in the time space not counted in God's timetable between the "7 weeks and the 62 weeks." The fact is, however, the difference in time in the calculations we have given is so small as to indicate that the "69 weeks" cover the time between the edict of Artaxerxes in B.C. 445 and the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

Then we read, "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. 9:26). We know that shortly after Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the little donkey, He was nailed to the cross; *He was "cut off."*

Now this is the question to which we must find an answer: Is there a time - space between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel's seventy weeks of prophecy? The only place to find the answer is in the textbook of the Christian, the Word of God.

Daniel 9:26 clearly tells us that between the 69th and 70th weeks. Messiah the Prince (the Lord Jesus Christ) should be cut off. That was fulfilled in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus on Golgotha.

In the second place, Daniel 9:26 tells us that Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed: This occurred in 70 A.D. when Titus the Roman overran the city, butchered 5,000,000 Jews and left not one stone upon another.

In the third place, we learn in this verse that after the destruction of the Holy City, there will be a long period of wars and rumors of wars, which period Jesus spoke of as *the times of the gentiles*: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). We are still in *the times of the gentiles* and Gentile rulers still dominate world power throughout the earth. It is true that *the fig tree* (Israel) is budding and putting forth leaves, and by that sign we know that summer is near. Certainly we are living in the closing days of this age of grace - the period of time between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel's prophecy.

The Olivet Discourse recorded in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 is the key to the interpretation of Daniel 9:26,27. In Matthew 24, the disciples came to Jesus and showed Him the buildings of the temple - tremendous buildings of stone; and Jesus said to them, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." This literally happened in 70 A.D. *every stone was thrown down and the city was utterly destroyed.*

Later, on the Mount of Olives, the disciples asked Jesus, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, *and of the end of the world?*"

In reply, Jesus gave the disciples a list of things that will take place before His coming again. He warned, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many." This is the age of religious deception.

There will be "wars and rumours of wars." These things must come to pass - "but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. *all these are the beginning of sorrows.* Then shall they deliver you (the Jews) up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." (We are living in that hour of which Jesus spoke. Jews have been butchered by the millions in the last few years.)

"And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold...and this Gospel of the Kingdom

shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; *and then shall the end come*" (Matt. 24:1 - 14 in part).

The "*end*" is the time when Jesus will return - not FOR the Church in the Rapture, but WITH the Church in the Revelation - to destroy Antichrist. Notice in the very next verse: "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains."

Here Jesus specifically names four things: (1) Daniel; (2) the "abomination of desolation"; (3) the temple; (4) Judaea. In other words, Jesus points out a specific place and specific events that will transpire just before all hell breaks out on earth, and these things will occur in the middle of the *seventieth week*. After three and one - half years of peace, Antichrist will break his covenant with the Jews and make one last, desperate attempt to annihilate Israel from the face of the earth.

The following verses describe *the revelation* - not the Rapture. Then in verse 32 of the same chapter, Jesus gives the parable of the fig tree - and the fig tree is definitely Judah. (Study Jeremiah 24 in connection with this.) In this parable we are clearly instructed, "So likewise we, when ye shall see all these things, know that (the Revelation) is near, even at the doors."

In the true sense of the word, there are no "signs" of the Rapture; the signs given point to the Revelation - the time when Jesus will come in judgment to make His enemies His footstool. The Rapture is the time when Jesus will come to make up His jewels. At that time He will come as a thief in the night, and in a moment, "in the twinkling of an eye," all believers will be translated to meet the Lord in the clouds in the air. Daniel's seventieth week separates the Rapture from the Revelation. The Rapture will take place before the beginning of the reign of Antichrist; the Revelation will come *at the close* of the reign of Antichrist. There is definitely a time space between the 69th and 70th weeks of Daniel, and that space has already run through more than 1900 years.

We clearly see from the Scriptures, we have studied in detail that *Daniel's seventieth week* (as described in Daniel 9:24 - 27); *the Olivet discourse* (given by Jesus and recorded in Matthew 24:1 - 35); and *the revelation given to John* on the Isle of Patmos (the message contained in the seals, the trumpets and the vials - Rev. 6:1 through 18:24), all cover exactly the same period. This period has to do with the Jews here on earth; it has no reference whatsoever to the Church of the living God. We of the Church will not be here when these events take place; we will be with Jesus at the marriage supper in the sky, being rewarded for our stewardship.

God gave Daniel the blueprint of the seventieth week. In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus gave His disciples a much *fuller* picture of Daniel's seventieth week. John the Beloved, in exile, was given a minutely detailed report of Daniel's seventieth week, and what Daniel said in *one verse*, John enlarged to a grand total of thirteen tremendous chapters!

This proves to me beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Bible is not the product of man, but that it is God's infallible, verbally inspired Word. There was no need for Daniel to write 13 chapters describing the Great Tribulation period; there was no need for Jesus to give the disciples 13 chapters in Matthew; but in this day and hours there *is* a drastic need for the preaching of these 13 chapters that describe the judgment which will fall upon this earth immediately following the Rapture of the Church, when the Antichrist will reign supreme and blood will run like water in the streets.