

The 70-Weeks Prophecy

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The Length of the 70 Weeks

The 70 weeks prophecy is given in Daniel 9:24-27. Verse 24 declares that 70 weeks are given for the Jewish nation to get right with God (*To finish the transgression and To make an end of sins*, v. 24). God's part is *To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy* (all in v. 24). During this time period the city of Jerusalem would be restored and built and *Messiah the Prince* would come (v. 25). Given the context, *Messiah the Prince* must refer to Christ, a conclusion reached by both historicist and futurist scholars; preterist scholars believe this Messiah to be a future priest but not Christ. Finally, after 69 weeks, Messiah would die (v. 26). Note that 69 weeks is deduced from the fact that verse 25 says that the 62 weeks is immediately preceded by the 7 weeks; thus 7 plus 62 equals 69. This puts Christ's death late in the period of the 70 weeks.

It should also be noted that the 70 weeks would begin with *the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem* (v. 25). Historicists and futurists alike acknowledge that a period of 70 literal weeks is far too short for all of the things in this prophecy to be fulfilled no matter how they are interpreted in detail. To remedy this shortfall, they note the context of Daniel contemplating the 70 years of Jeremiah's prophecy and conclude that Gabriel uses a kind of play on words to imply that his explanation consists of 70 weeks of years. Then 70 weeks of years is interpreted to mean 490 years on the grounds that a week of years constitutes a period of seven years. Furthermore, futurists understand that the word for *weeks* means *sevens* so that 70 sevens of years is seen even more clearly to refer to a period of 490 years. Futurists believe all of this is reinforced by a reference in Daniel 10:2, where the literal Hebrew refers to a period of three *weeks days*. The fact that the word for *days* is not present with any of the *weeks* in Daniel 9 is taken to mean that weeks of years are meant.

We acknowledge the likelihood that there is a play on words between the 70 years and the 70 weeks, a fact that implies the 70 weeks to mean weeks of years. However, to interpret the word *weeks* to mean *sevens* does not fit the evidence. First, the Hebrew word here translated by most translators as *weeks* is, in fact, the normal Hebrew word for *weeks*; and so it is always translated outside of Daniel 9. Thus, it should be rendered *weeks* here also. Second, the relationship between the 70 years and the 70 weeks confirms this conclusion. In the Hebrew text, 70 years is stated as *70 years*, while the expression for 70 weeks is literally stated as *weeks 70*. The juxtaposition of

these two expressions confirms that *weeks* is the correct translation and understanding, as seen in the following outline:

70 years...weeks 70.

Just as the two references to the number 70 are parallel, so must the other two words. Just as the word for *years* refers to a calendar period of time, so must the other word. To translate *weeks* as *sevens* destroys the relationship between the 70 years and the weeks 70. Therefore, we conclude that the weeks are indeed *weeks* and not *sevens*.

Regarding the evidence from Daniel 10:2, the inclusion of the word for *days* with the word for *weeks* is simply a Hebrew idiom for *full, whole, or entire weeks*, as many translators have written it. Therefore, the absence of the word for *days* in the weeks of Daniel 9 does not imply that the weeks are seven-year periods.

So how should we derive 490 years from 70 weeks (of years)? The 70 weeks are determined to represent 490 years on the year-day principle. A week of years is equal to 7 years because each day in the week is symbolic of a year. Furthermore, the Bible provides only one way that a symbolic day is used, and that is to represent a literal year. See Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:4-6 for the easiest way to understand this evidence. Therefore, contrary to futurist claims, the year-day principle is indeed taught in an apocalyptic setting. Although Daniel 9:24-27 itself may not be an apocalyptic prophecy, it is an apocalyptic book and in the apocalyptic section of that book.

The Beginning Date for the 70 Weeks

By determining the date for the *going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem* (v. 25), we can calculate the beginning date for the 70 weeks. There are four official statements from three different Persian kings that pertain to the rebuilding of part or all of the city of Jerusalem. They are outlined below:

Cyrus (538/537 B.C.)—a decree to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:1-4) under the leadership of Zerubbabel (Ezra 2:2)

Darius I (520/519 B.C.)—a statement to confirm Cyrus' decree after Samaritan trouble (Ezra 6:1-12)

Artaxerxes I (458/457 B.C.)—a decree to allow the Jews to return in greater numbers and to appoint judges for both religious and political cases under the leadership of Ezra (Ezra 7:11-26)

Artaxerxes I (445/444 B.C.)—a statement giving permission to Nehemiah to return and supervise a rebuilding in confirmation of his earlier decree (Nehemiah 2:1-18)

It should be acknowledged that none of the decrees specifically mention the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. However, Ezra seems to have understood that it was implied in Artaxerxes' first decree, for Jerusalem was reestablished as the Jewish capital, and the Jewish nation was given a fair amount of autonomy, subject to ultimate Persian oversight of course, as a result of this decree. This would be what is called Jerusalem's *restoration* since it is mentioned separately from its *building* (Daniel 9:25). Ezra 7 discusses this decree and tells us that Ezra traveled from Babylon to Jerusalem with the king's decree from the first to the fifth months in the seventh year of Artaxerxes' reign (vv. 8-9). We now know that Artaxerxes' seventh year as king of Persia extended on the fall-to-fall reckoning used by the Jews from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 B.C. Since Ezra's journey occurred from the first to the fifth months of that year (Ezra 7:9), it would place it in 457 B.C. (not 458). Therefore the going forth of Artaxerxes' decree was in the year 457 B.C. [Note: It is interesting to note that even if the spring-to-spring reckoning had been used, since Ezra and company could not have left Babylon on the same day the king issued his decree, the first day of the first month (Ezra 7:9) would have been on the first day of spring in 457 B.C. Even though it was possible under this scenario that Artaxerxes I could have issued his decree in late 458 B.C., its "going forth" was not until the spring of 457 B.C. Therefore, in either time reckoning, the beginning of the 70 Weeks prophecy is 457 B.C., not 458.]

The testimony of Ezra 6:14 confirms this conclusion by referring to the three decrees of all three kings as one decree: "And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." That means that not until the decree of Artaxerxes could the command to restore and build Jerusalem be said to go forth. Futurists identify his second decree to Nehemiah as the beginning of the entire prophecy on the basis that Nehemiah asked the king permission to "rebuild" the city (Nehemiah 2:5). However, Nehemiah only supervised the building of the wall, and it only took 52 days (Nehemiah 6:15). Also, some of the private houses had already been built (Nehemiah 7:3), although apparently most of them had not (Nehemiah 7:4). This implies that the rebuilding of the city had begun under Ezra. It is quite revealing that Artaxerxes' second decree authorizing Nehemiah's return to Jerusalem had not yet been issued when Ezra wrote the words in Ezra 6:14. Therefore, we can safely infer that the command to restore and build Jerusalem was the one given by Artaxerxes in 457 B.C.

In Daniel 9:24, a total of six things needed to be accomplished during the period of the 70 weeks (or 490 years): (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*; and (6) *To anoint the Most Holy*.

The Hebrew word for *transgression* at the beginning of the list essentially means *to rebel* and is so noted in I Kings 12:19, II Kings 1:1, 3:5. As a noun, the word can be correctly translated here as *transgression* or especially as *rebellion*. In context, it is the Jewish nation whose rebellion caused them to be in Babylonian Captivity in the first place. Now they are given a period of 490 years to put an end to their rebellion and get right with God.

The Hebrew root word for the verb *To make an end* in the second phrase on the list means *to seal up* something. One of the extended meanings is *to stop* or *to bring to an end* some action. In this context, *to seal up sins* means *to make an end of sins* or to stop sinning. As the nation was to stop their habit of rebellion against God, so they should stop their other sinful habits in general.

The third phrase in the list refers to Christ's atonement for sin, as the Hebrew root word for *reconciliation* means *atonement*. This Christ did in his death on Calvary. Although *reconciliation* is denoted by the word *atonement*, perhaps a more literal translation would be *To atone* (or "make atonement") *for iniquity*.

The fourth phrase on the list is *To bring in everlasting righteousness*. Futurist scholars identify this phrase with the idea of what Christ will bring in when He establishes His everlasting kingdom on earth. However, this obviously did not occur within the 70 weeks of the prophecy. Therefore, in the context of the previous phrase (*to make reconciliation—or atonement—for iniquity*), we should interpret this phrase to consist of what Christ did at the cross. His atonement at the cross made everlasting righteousness available to all who would accept and remain faithful to Him. It is everlasting in nature because once made available, it will always apply to God's people. Thus, its existence is not limited to Christ's everlasting kingdom.

The fifth phrase in the list is *To seal up vision and prophecy*. *To seal up* is usually translated with the meaning of *to authenticate* or *to confirm* and is applied to the 70 weeks prophecy itself or even by some historicists to include the 2,300 day prophecy of which the 70 weeks prophecy is a part. In other words, this view states that it is God who authenticates, or confirms the accuracy of, the prophecy or prophecies in question (2,300 days and/or 70 weeks). However, the Hebrew word usually translated as *prophecy* is actually the normal word for *prophet* and is never translated as *prophecy* outside of this verse. Furthermore, the Hebrew verb meaning *to seal up* is the same verb employed in the second phrase, where it means *to make an end of sins*. From these facts we conclude that the statement refers to making an end of the prophetic voice among the Jewish people. This, then, points to the loss of the prophetic voice among the Jews as a result of their failure to get right with God during their period of national probation (i.e., during the 70 weeks). In Acts 7 Stephen became the last prophetic voice to the Jewish nation in outlining the failures in their history. He even saw a vision during his address (Acts 7:55-56). Thus, he was the last prophet to that nation. Its rejection of Jesus meant the loss of the prophetic voice and the gospel

going to the Gentles shortly after Stephen's address. This seems to fulfill the meaning of this phrase.

The final phrase is *To anoint the Most Holy*. The Hebrew words for *Most Holy* occur numerous times throughout the Old Testament and always to refer to the sanctuary or something associated with it. Therefore, this phrase does not refer to the anointing of Jesus as the Messiah. *To anoint* a sanctuary is to consecrate it so that it can be utilized on behalf of a religious people. In other words, anointing a sanctuary is its inauguration service (Exodus 40:9-10). But which sanctuary does this verse have in mind? It cannot be Solomon's Temple, for it had been anointed centuries earlier than the beginning of the 70 weeks. Neither is it the Second Temple, for it was anointed in 515 B.C. (Ezra 6:15-18), almost 60 years before the beginning of the 70 weeks. That leaves only one sanctuary, the one in heaven. Christ must have anointed the heavenly sanctuary so that He could begin His High Priestly ministry there shortly after His ascension. That would have been within the period designated by the 70 weeks.

In Daniel 9:25, two periods within the 70 weeks—7 weeks and 62 weeks—are mentioned in the context of the coming of the Messiah and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Some translations (e.g. RSV, NEB) place punctuation after reference to the 7 weeks so that the coming of the Messiah would occur after the 7 weeks. Such punctuation also identifies the 62 weeks as the time for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. However, the original Hebrew text of the Old Testament had no punctuation marks at all. So we should study the context to determine if there should be a punctuation mark after the 7 weeks or not. The literary structure of verses 25b through 26a demonstrates as follows that there should be no punctuation after the 7 weeks:

- A To restore and build Jerusalem
- B Until Messiah the Prince
- A There shall be seven weeks
- B and sixty-two weeks
- A The street shall be built again, and the wall...
- B And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off...

From this series of alternating parallel statements, we see that the seven weeks refers to Jerusalem rather than to the Messiah. We therefore conclude that the seven weeks was the period assigned for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the 62 weeks applied to the appearance of the Messiah. From 457 B.C., another forty-nine years brings us to 408 B.C. Unfortunately, there is insufficient historical information to verify exactly when the rebuilding of Jerusalem was finished. But since the prophecy is accurate (as we will see) in other respects, we have the right to believe that it was initially rebuilt by 408 B.C.

Regarding the coming of the Messiah, we should first note that in the context of the prophecy, this is Christ, as both historicist and futurist scholars agree. When did Jesus make His appearance as the Messiah? The Hebrew word for *Messiah* means *the anointed one*. According to a comparison of Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22, John 1:29-34, and Acts 10:38 (cf. Luke 4:18), Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism and thus was prepared to start His earthly ministry. Likewise, God's priests and kings were anointed in order to begin their service (Exodus 30:30; I Kings 19:16). Christ's baptism occurred in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1, 21), the Roman emperor, which is dated to A.D. 27. That is exactly 483 years (69 weeks) after the beginning of the 70 weeks in 457 B.C. Sixty-nine weeks is taken from the fact that a period of 7 weeks was followed by a period of 62 weeks. Thus, when verse 25 says the Messiah would come after the 62 weeks, we must add 7 weeks (or 49 years) to the 62 weeks to arrive at a total of 69 weeks (or 483 years per $69 \times 7 = 483$). This confirms the view that the coming of the Messiah was associated with the 62 weeks and not the 7 weeks.

The Futurist Date for the Beginning of the 70 Weeks

The futurist interpretation of the 70 weeks prophecy is the most popular one today. Among other things, almost all futurists select the date of Artaxerxes' second decree, which most date to 445 B.C. and others to 444 B.C., as the starting point. But if Christ appeared as the Messiah after 69 weeks, reckoning the years as regular solar years extends too far to fit historically. For example, 69 weeks times 7 days per week equals 483 years. If you then subtract 445 or 444 from 483, you reach the year A.D. 39 or 40, respectively (remembering that movement from a B.C. to an A.D. date means you must add one year because there was no zero year). But all acknowledge that this is almost ten years too late.

To resolve this problem almost all futurists assume that the years in this prophecy are so-called prophetic years consisting of only 360 days. Under this assumption, the 69 weeks, or 483, years equals 173,880 days. Dividing 173,880 by the true solar year of 365.25 makes the 483 prophetic years equal just over 476 solar years. Then 476 minus 445 plus 1 equals the year A.D. 32; assuming the starting date to be 444 B.C. takes you to A.D. 33 instead. The dates of A.D. 32 or 33 are then taken as referring to Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Still other futurists find a way to reach the year A.D. 30.

The problem with these assumptions is that they do not work with the precision they demand. Calculating the time periods on the basis of a so-called prophetic year requires an accounting for the extra days when you convert to solar years in order to ascertain the actual date. And the problem is that we simply do not know the precise day that any of Artaxerxes' decrees were issued. In addition, the baptism of Jesus is a much better event to mark the official coming of the Messiah than His triumphal entry into Jerusalem at the very end of His public ministry. Furthermore, Artaxerxes' second decree was just a confirmation of his first one, making the first one the start of

the 70 weeks. Because of these problems, which some futurist scholars publicly acknowledge, at least one futurist interpreter adopted the date of Artaxerxes' first decree, which he dated to 458 B.C. (rather than to 457 B.C., based on the fall-to-fall reckoning) and using the regular solar year instead, calculated the year A.D. 26 as the coming of the Messiah at His baptism (although he forgot to add one year when moving from a B.C. to an A.D. date). But nearly all futurists cling to the prophetic-year method.

The 70th Week

Daniel 9:26 tells us that the Messiah would be cut off after 62 weeks (or actually after 69 weeks); the Hebrew verb for *cut off* is used to denote a death penalty, which was precisely the same verb used to describe the Messiah's death in Isaiah 53:8. The next phrase, *but not for Himself*, literally means *and nothing to* (or "for") *Him*. It can be understood as *He will have nothing left*—that is, He will die in abject poverty. It can also mean that He would have no one for Him, that is, He will die as a largely rejected Messiah. We suggest this latter meaning because God is more interested in people than in things.

The remaining portion of verse 26 is an unmistakable reference to the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans in A.D. 70. The first clause in this reference is *And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*. Many interpreters identify the *prince* in this verse as Titus, the Roman general whose army destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. His *people* would then be his soldiers. It is known that Titus instructed his soldiers not to completely destroy Jerusalem and its Temple, but that when the Jews resisted so fiercely, his soldiers got carried away and devastated the city and Temple. Thus, the emphasis is on the *people* of the prince as the ones who destroyed the city.

Some futurists regard the *ultimate prince* here as the Antichrist, of which Titus was a type. But a type is not identical to what it/he typifies, so it is difficult to understand how this *prince* could be the Antichrist. A third possibility has been suggested by some historicists, which is that the prince is the Messiah. This view is bolstered by the relationship of the two key words first associated with the Messiah, *Messiah the Prince* (v. 25). Those two words are then used separately as *Messiah* (v. 26a) and as *prince* (v. 26b). The point in this clause is that the people belonging to the Messiah—the Jews—would be responsible for the destruction of their own city because of their rejection of the Messiah. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem is mentioned in this prophecy as a warning that a consequence of the Jewish nation's complicity in the death of the Messiah their city would be destroyed.

The next clause concerning the destruction of Jerusalem reads, *The end of it shall be with a flood*. The metaphor of a flood as a description associated with warfare is well attested to in Scripture (Isaiah 8:7-8; Jeremiah 46:6-7, 47:2; cf. Revelation 12:15-16), referring its overwhelming nature.

Finally, the last clause concerning Jerusalem's destruction reads, *And till the end of the war desolations are determined*. That appears to be a straightforward statement that the Roman war against Jerusalem will result in desolation of the city, a result that is determined or decreed, apparently by God.

Before interpreting verse 27 in detail, we will examine the futurist interpretation that the 70th week is separated from the previous 69 weeks and understood as applied to a period of 7 years just before the Second Coming of Christ. The argument for this interpretation is at least two-fold. First, the events described in verse 27 represent the activities of the Antichrist. Second, the destruction of Jerusalem occurs between the crucifixion of Christ at the end of 69 weeks (v. 26) and the beginning of the 70th week in verse 27. And since that destruction occurred in A.D. 70, the 70th week cannot begin until after that date.

We reject this gap theory in the 70 weeks for at least two reasons. First, the only other two time periods making up the 70 weeks mentioned are the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks (v. 25). Since there is no gap between these weeks, there should not be a gap between the 69th and 70th week. Second, the literary structure shows that references to Jerusalem and the Messiah in this prophecy are given on an alternating basis. Earlier in this section we saw this structure operating from verse 25b through verse 26a. The following chart demonstrates its validity all the way through the 70th week:

- A To restore and build Jerusalem (v. 25)
- B Until Messiah the Prince (v. 25)
- A There shall be 7 weeks (v. 25)
- B 62 weeks (v. 25)
- A The street and wall will be rebuilt (v. 25)
- B Messiah shall be cut off (v. 26)
- A Destruction of Jerusalem (v. 26)
- B Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week (v. 27)
- A But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering...And on the wings of abomination.... (v. 27)

Among other things, the literary structure shown above illustrates that verse 27 concerns the Messiah and Jerusalem and not the Antichrist. The fact that the destruction of Jerusalem is mentioned in two different locations within the literary structure is proof that the event would *not* occur in a sequence between verses 26 and 27. This leaves us with the strong impression that the reason the destruction of Jerusalem was mentioned in this prophecy at all was that it was a warning that a consequence of the Jewish nation's complicity in the death of the Messiah would be the destruction of their city and Temple.

We now turn our attention to a more detailed analysis of Daniel 9:27, the final verse in the prophecy. Briefly speaking, futurist scholars identify the pronoun *he* at the beginning of this verse as the Antichrist. Then they declare that the Antichrist will make a covenant or treaty with the Jewish people and then will suddenly break it in the middle of the 70th week and stop the services in the rebuilt end-time Temple. He will also proceed to make war against the Jewish people until he is brought to his end at the Second Coming of Christ. Now let us examine this scenario more carefully in light of the text and thereby show reasons why we reject this futurist interpretation.

Verse 27 begins with the statement that *Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week*. We note on the basis of the literary structure above that the pronoun *he* in this verse refers to the Messiah and not the Antichrist. Even if *he* did refer to the Antichrist, the Hebrew text does not say that he would make a covenant or treaty with anyone. First, in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word employed (in the literal Hebrew, but not necessarily in the English translations) to make a covenant is to *cut* a covenant (Genesis 15:18, 21:27, 32; Exodus 34:27; Deuteronomy 5:2-3, 9:9, 2, 29:1, 25, 31:16; Joshua 24:25; I Samuel 23:18; I Kings 8:9, 21, 20:34; II Kings 11:4, 17, 17:15, 35, 38, 23:3; I Chronicles 11:3; Jeremiah 31:32, 34:13, 15, 18), an expression that is totally absent in this entire prophecy. Second, the verb literally reads *shall make strong a covenant*. If it had the adjective form, then it would be *shall make a strong covenant*. Therefore, the Messiah is said to *make strong* or *confirm* an already existing covenant. The context of an existing covenant with the Jewish nation suggests that the covenant in view here is the Sinaitic covenant that God made with Israel at Mount Sinai in the time of Moses. Messiah would confirm this covenant for one week, that is, for the entire 70th week. This indicates that the Jewish nation could still restore their proper covenant relationship with God and receive the blessings of that covenant (Deuteronomy 28:1-14) but that the door would be shut after the expiration of their national probation at the end of the 70 weeks.

The second clause in verse 27 reads, *But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering*. The Hebrew word for *middle* does not necessarily mean exactly the halfway point but an approximate mid-point. Fortunately, we can determine the date of Christ's crucifixion based on two sets of data—that He was baptized in A.D. 27 and that there were four Passovers during His public ministry. We demonstrate this latter fact below.

In his gospel, the apostle John refers to three Passovers by name (John 2:13; 6:4; 13:1) and an unnamed “feast of the Jews” (John 5:1). The latter feast has been interpreted as any number of Jewish feasts by various Christian scholars throughout the centuries. We believe it is a reference to the Passover for two good reasons. First, John 6:4 calls Passover “a feast of the Jews,” which is the same phrase used in 5:1. Second, in John 4:35 Jesus stated that there were four months until the harvest, which was a reference to the grain harvest because of His reference to the “white” fields. In ancient Palestine grain was planted in the fall and harvested in the spring, in either our April or May. This would make Jesus' statement dated to either our December or January.

It is unlikely that this was either the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) or the Feast of Purim because these were celebrated throughout Judea (not specifically in Jerusalem), and they were not harvest festivals (note context of Jesus' reference to the soon-coming harvest). But John 5:1 says that "Jesus went up to Jerusalem" at the time of this "feast of the Jews." There were three Jewish feasts in which the Jews made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate: (1) Passover; (2) Pentecost; and (3) Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14; Deuteronomy 16:16). It could not be the Feast of Tabernacles because it concerned the fruit harvest and was in the fall of the year (Leviticus 23:34-39). It was also not likely the Feast of Pentecost (or of Weeks) because Jesus referred to the upcoming harvest as four months away, and there were only fifty days between the end of Passover and this feast (Leviticus 23:15-16)—and Passover would come between December or January and the Feast of Pentecost. Therefore, we conclude that the feast referred to in John 5:1 is the Passover. This makes a total of four different Passovers mentioned by John in his gospel pertaining to Jesus' public ministry.

According to Luke 3:1-22, Jesus was baptized in the fifteenth year of the reign of Roman Emperor Tiberius Caesar, which is dated by the Jewish fall-to-fall reckoning from the fall of A.D. 27 to the fall of A.D. 28. Based on the 70 Weeks prophecy of Daniel 9, the Messiah would come after 69 weeks (Daniel 9:25, 7 weeks + 62 weeks) from the "going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem" (v. 25). The word *Messiah* means *anointed*, and Jesus was anointed at His baptism (Acts 10:37-38; cf. Luke 3:22). Therefore, that prophecy in Daniel was actually a prediction of Jesus' baptism in the fall of A.D. 27 (69 weeks times 7 days per week equals 483 years; then 483 minus 457 equals A.D. 27, remembering to add one year because there was no zero year). Therefore, consistent with the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar, Jesus was baptized in the fall of A.D. 27. [Note: It was unlikely that outdoor baptisms would have been conducted in the winter months.]

Assuming that Jesus was baptized in the fall of A.D. 27, which marked the beginning of His public ministry (Matthew 3:13-4:23; Mark 1:9-15; Luke 3:21-4:15), the four Passovers would be those in the spring of A.D. 28, 29, 30, and 31. This would mean Jesus' public ministry lasted for three-and-a-half years from the fall of A.D. 27 to the spring of A.D. 31. Therefore, His crucifixion occurred in the early spring of A.D. 31, which happened to be right in the *middle* of the 70th week. And the end of the 70 Weeks prophecy would be dated to A.D. 34.

But how Jesus did He put an end to the sanctuary sacrifices? After all, they continued after Christ's death until the Temple was destroyed in A.D. 70. He must have ended them in the sense that they were no longer meaningful to God, that is, that He no longer viewed the sacrifices as being made to Him. The event resulting in the sacrifices losing their meaning was the death of Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36). At His death, Matthew 27:50-51; Mark 15:37-38; and Luke 23:45-46 record that the veil between the Holy Place and Most Holy Place was torn in two by unseen hands, thus signifying that the Temple services were no longer valid in God's sight.

The literary structure of verses 25b through 27 (see above) means that the remaining portion of verse 27 refers to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It consists of two clauses. The first one reads, *And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate*. One historicist understands that the phrase *on the wing of abominations* as an idiom expressing the idea that something will come right after the *abominations*. In this case, if abominations come first and is then followed by *one who makes desolate*, the Jewish people would be guilty of the abominations. This historicist views the Jewish abominations as either the continued practice of Temple sacrifices after they had become meaningless in the light of Messiah's death or to using the Temple as a veritable fortress in their defense against the Roman army in A.D. 70. However, the word for *abominations* refers to that which is *filthy* or *disgusting* and especially represents *idolatry* or even an *idol* itself. It is difficult to understand how the continued use of the sanctuary after it has lost its meaning or even using that sanctuary as a defensive position after that sanctuary has lost its meaning could be construed as idolatrous or filthy. However, it is of great interest that according to a comparison of Luke 21:20 with Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14, the Roman army that surrounded Jerusalem before it destroyed the city of Jerusalem constituted an *abomination of desolation*. In other words, an abomination came before the actual desolation (Luke 21:20). In this analogy, however, the abomination and the desolation were brought by the same evil power.

At the same time, this clause may also indicate that the desolator will descend upon Jerusalem with an overwhelming idolatrous and/or other filthy presence. This seems to be the case in Isaiah 8:7-8, which describes an Assyrian invasion as “stretching out of his wings [that] fill the breadth of Your land.” This related term of *abomination of desolation* is also found in Daniel 11:31 and 12:11. In 12:11 it is clearly associated with the Antichrist for its period of domination is related to a period of 1,290 and 1,260 days, i.e., 3 ½ times (cf. 12:7), which is the time associated with the little horn's domination in Daniel 7:25. So while the futurists are correct that an *abomination of desolation* applies to the Antichrist, Jesus also applied it to the events associated with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

The final clause in Daniel 9:27 reads, *Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate*. This is a very enigmatic statement that can apparently be translated in a variety of ways. However, when we note the repetition of key words from verse 26b, it helps to clarify the intent of verse 27. Note the following parallels of key words from the two verses (the parallel key words—based on the Hebrew text—are shown in italics):

Verse 26b:

“The *end* of it shall be with a *flood*, And till the *end* of the war *desolations are determined*.”

Verse 27b:

“Even until the *consummation*, which *is determined*, Is *poured out* on the *desolate*.”

The words *end* in verse 26 are paralleled in verse 27 with the word *consummation*. The word *flood* in verse 26 is paralleled with the words *poured out* in verse 27. The word *desolations* is paralleled in verse 27 by *desolate* except that one word is plural and the other singular. Finally, the verb *are determined* in verse 26 finds its parallel in the verb *is determined* in verse 27. Two things stand out. First, the subject of the verb *is determined* (v. 27) seems to be the *consummation* (as in the NKJV, KJV, RSV, NIV), so that it is the *end* or *consummation* that is determined (or decreed). Second, this tells us that the word *desolate* is a better translation than *desolater*, as some scholars prefer. In other words, to understand that the *end* or *consummation* is poured out on the *desolator* does not make natural sense. But consistency between verses 26 and 27 requires the more natural reading of the desolation being poured out on the desolate, that is, on the desolated, as the ones being desolated. Therefore, the sense seems to be that “Until the end, that which is decreed—the full measure of desolation—is (or will be) poured out on the desolate (or desolated).”