

# Daniel 9:24-27 Examined

[24] Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. [25] So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. [26] Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. [27] And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

Daniel 9:24-27 NASB

The last four verses of Daniel represent the core of eschatological discussion. The various views of what it means are compounded by the difficulty in translating these verses in the first place. Examining these verses, therefore, we must be careful to pay attention not only to the text we have, but also the context of the entire chapter, as well as being aware of alternate possible translations in some of the key phrases. It's not that one is trying to find a translation to suit their expectations, but the language itself is complex. Using the KJV as the standard, we will base our reading on the NASB, above, with departures from this as noted.

The whole of the chapter represents Daniel's prayer in response to the prophecy of Jeremiah, regarding the covenant (v4), the people's sins (v5), ignoring the prophets (v6). He petitions the Lord through v19, repenting on behalf of the people in intercession, and receives a visitation from the angel Gabriel. And, only the last four verses contain the actual prophetic content.

In v24, we note that the prophetic decree itself is for the seventy sevens, meaning 490 years. There is no mention of days here, nor any hermeneutical basis for a year-day principle. Simply put, 490 years are decreed, and in them, Israel is to do six things.

But, remember, how many times in the past was this people told to do something that they didn't do? The same is true here. The prophesied time period did occur, and Israel missed it, in accordance with Jesus' own words about missing the time of their visitation (Luke 19:44).

Ignoring the six things for a moment, we see that the decree is for the people and the city. Specifically, in v25, the city is described as having a "plaza and moat". Further, it is within this 490 years that the city is to be built, lived in, and Messiah will come. This leaves no space for the destructions in v27 to be fulfilled within another, future Jerusalem.

First, the specifics of the architecture are partial to a particular city, the one built in antiquity. The "plaza and moat" would not be the same city, and to talk about another city overlooks this. Second, the city was built in the first 49 years. To have another, future city that is built some other time does not fit the pattern, because it would not be built during the time period. And, finally, the whole of the prophecy starts with its decree for building, and ends with its prophesied destruction. The failure of the

Jewish nation to accomplish the six things, as a whole, was prophesied from the beginning—it was prophesies they wouldn't.

When we look at the 490 years, then, we see their real purpose was the bringing forth of Messiah. He would come at the end of this, and the Jews, still not repentant after seventy years of exile, would be given 490 years and fail again. This is what the prophecy says.

We could debate whether the six things were fulfilled in Jesus and John the Baptist, but the rest remains the same. I believe they were fulfilled by a remnant, and that remnant received life. But, of the last two verses specifically, we must take a closer look.

After the 69 weeks, Messiah is cut off. This, I believe refers to His baptism, not His crucifixion. He was cut off, as baptism is a sign of circumcision. He was cut off from the rest of men, and lived only by the Holy Ghost. The prophetic picture of this is 2 Kings 6, where Elisha cuts off a branch, casts it on the water, and that which was lost is restored, an iron ax heads floats. This is a picture of Jesus, the beach, being cast upon the many waters, to bring salvation, seeking to save those who are lost. What was impossible for iron to do, float, God did, and it is an example to all of us. It says He had nothing, because John 2:21 says he could not trust Himself to men, because He knew the hearts of all men. He lived separate, sanctified, that we might be sanctified. He did not even share His full counsel with His disciples. But, He lived without income, without a home, and, largely, without companionship.

Immediately after His baptism, He took His first disciples. They became the people of the Prince that would come. They destroyed the city and the sanctuary in the same way that Noah condemned the world by building the ark, according to Hebrews 11:7. Their faithfulness in be int built together as a living temple brought the destruction of the apostate and the desolation it the city. Its end would come like a flood, and there would be war until the end that Jesus prophesied, no stone left on another in of the temple, was completed. This began the seventieth week at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Jesus confirmed the covenant for seven years. First, in His Earthly ministry, and then, as Mark's Gospel confirms, after the cross (Mark 16:20).

Finally, Messiah does away with sacrifice in the middle of the last week. After three and a half years of ministry, His death ended the perpetual sacrifice, as His blood was sufficient for all.

The King James gets the next phrase right, for the over spreading of abominations, Jesus made it desolate, and because of His prophetic word and judgment, the end decreed was poured out on the desolate.

Thus, the Kingdom was to be established as Jerusalem was destroyed, and the words of this prophecy are completely, literally fulfilled. There is no mention of the temple in v27, only the fanciful imagination of an interpretation. As well, no mention of the abomination of desolation is found in chapter 9, despite supposed references (they belong to chapters 8 & 11).

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