

Key:

Purple – Introduction, Conclusion, Main Points, and Sermon Thread

Blue – Explanation/Exposition

Red – Application

Green – Illustration

Brown – Quotation

Yellow – Sermon Notes

Seventy Sevens and Two Princes

Daniel 9:20–27

Let's take our Bibles together and turn to the book of Daniel in the OT. Let's look a second time at Daniel 9. Today we want to zero in on Daniel 9:20–27. "Seventy Sevens and Two Princes." That's the subject matter for our message today.

Sometimes we pray for something, and God says, "Yes!" Praise the Lord! The Lord gives and the Lord takes away! Blessed be the Name of the Lord! Sometimes we pray for something, and God says, "No!" Praise God! The Lord gives and the Lord takes away! Blessed be the Name of the Lord!

Sometimes we pray and God says, "Not yet." Praise God! And sometimes we pray, and God shows us we're not even praying for the right things. Or God shows us something bigger than we could previously conceptualize.

For example, sometimes we pray that God would take away some pain or inconvenience in our lives. And God shows us that that pain or that inconvenience is actually doing something important in our lives. And that's why God has allowed it.

We have a great example of this in the NT (see 2 Cor 12:7–10). Paul prayed for a thorn to be removed from his flesh. We don't know what that thorn was, but it was obviously exceedingly painful for Paul. And in response, God said, "No! My work is being done through that pain. My power is being perfected in your weakness."

And so Paul says, "So be it. I will boast in my weakness." The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Now, this is not a perfect corollary to Daniel 9. But something similar happens 600 years before Paul. Daniel was a man of prayer like Paul as a man of prayer. God showed Paul a better answer to his prayer than he imagined. Likewise, God showed Daniel a better answer to his prayer than he imagined.

If you remember from last week, Daniel was reading Jeremiah, and the seventy years of captivity were coming to an end. So Daniel was pleading with God. Daniel was adoring God and confessing to God and petitioning God to bring his people back to the Promised Land. Those prayers were incredibly emotional. Look at Daniel 9:19.

¹⁹ O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name."

You can feel the pathos in the language of his prayer. You can sense Daniel's emotion and his heartbreak as he's longing for the Promised Land. He's longing for God to bring his people home like he promised.

What happens next? How's God going to answer, or not answer, this prayer? Let's find out today in Daniel 9.

Let's start with this. Write this down as #1 in your notes. This is a complicated passage of Scripture, so let's keep the outline simple. The first thing that happens in this narrative is that God does answer Daniel's prayer.

1) God **answers** Daniel's prayer (9:20–23)

Except for the fact that God answers it a little differently than Daniel expected.

Look with me at verse 20.

²⁰ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel,

Notice Daniel was confessing his own sin along with the sin of his people. That's instructive. Daniel was not a sinless person, even though you might say he's presented more sinlessly than any OT believer. And that's true. But he still had sin to confess.

I probably overstated the case last week when I said that Daniel was just a boy when he was taken into exile in Babylon. I said he didn't have time to sin or rebel against God.

Well, Daniel doesn't see it that way. He sees himself as a sinner. And he has sinned just like his own people, Israel, have sinned. He confessed sin on behalf of all of them as a people. But he also confesses his own sin.

Back to verse 20,

²⁰ *While I was speaking and praying, and presenting my plea before the LORD my God for the holy hill of my God,*

Notice Yahweh is mentioned again here in **verse 20**. **Daniel 9** is the only chapter in the book of **Daniel** where Yahweh is mentioned by name. That adds to the personal nature of this prayer and its answer.

Also he was praying for God's "holy hill," namely Mt. Zion or Jerusalem which lay in ruins from Nebuchadnezzar's plundering.

Look at verse 21,

²¹ *while I was speaking in prayer,*

In other words, in mid-prayer...

the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.

Okay, wow! This is amazing. Gabriel makes another appearance to Daniel. If you remember, he appeared to Daniel before in **chapter 8** when he revealed the powerful unicorn-goat that would destroy the mighty ram. That was a prophecy concerning Alexander the Great who would destroy the Medo-Persian Empire. That was amazing!

Now Gabriel's back, and he's got another vision for Daniel. In **chapter 8**, Daniel had an amazing but troubling vision from the Lord. And Gabriel was sent to explain it. This time, Gabriel comes to give a vision to Daniel, and he doesn't explain it at all! He just leaves it for Daniel to ponder. (And the rest of us!).

By the way, just a few other clarifying remarks about **verse 21**. Gabriel is described as "the man Gabriel." This doesn't mean that Gabriel was actually a man, a homosapien. We know from elsewhere that Gabriel is an angel of the Lord (see **Dan 8:15–16**; **Luke 1:19, 26**). But he shows up here *appearing* like a man.

And that's clear from the statement that he came to Daniel "in swift flight." Everyone see that in **verse 21**? Let me be clear about that—**homosapiens don't fly! Not without help anyways.**

So obviously, this is more than just a man flying toward Daniel. This is an angel. And he comes at the time of the evening sacrifice, which is roughly dusk. The Torah (**Exod 29:38–42**; **Num 28:3–8**) prescribed two lambs each day: one offered in the morning and the other "at twilight" (Hebrew בֵּין הָעֶרְבָיִם, literally "between the evenings"). The evening offering included a lamb, a grain offering, and a drink offering.

That statement right there is fascinating, because the evening sacrifices haven't taken place for decades. Daniel's been in Babylon for nigh on seventy years. And the temple is in ruins. But Daniel still reckons time based on the sacrifices of the temple.

Keep that statement in the back of your mind. Because that's intentional here. Daniel's been praying for the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, so perhaps that's why he reckons time this way.

Look at verse 22.

²² *He [Gabriel] made me [Daniel] understand, speaking with me and saying, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding.*

O goodie! Daniel's prayers have been answered. Gabriel's going to tell him, **"You're going back! You're going back to the Promised Land."**

²³ *At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved.*

Daniel is "greatly loved" by whom? By Yahweh. This is what's referred to as a divine passive in Hebrew. God loves Daniel, and I'm sure you can imagine why. **Daniel has been a rockstar in Babylon for the Lord.** He's been faithful to him despite despotic rulers. Those rulers have come and gone, including the great Nebuchadnezzar. Good leaders and bad leaders. Smart leaders and dumb leaders (e.g., Belshazzar). Evil leaders and a redeemed leader (i.e., Nebuchadnezzar). Babylonian leaders and Medo-Persian leaders. And Daniel has faithfully served Yahweh under foreign rule for decades.

Look at the middle of **verse 23**.

Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.

What vision? What's this about? Daniel was praying about the return of the exiles to Jerusalem. Daniel was asking God to follow through on his promise as stated in Jeremiah seventy years ago. He didn't ask for a vision. He asked for Jeremiah's prophetic vision to be fulfilled.

Daniel asked for the seventy years to be completed. And the angel Gabriel basically says, **"Seventy years!!!? Don't you worry about those seventy years, Daniel. Let me give you something else to noodle—Seventy sevens of years! Let's talk about that!"**

Write this down as a second point in your notes. God answers Daniel's prayer, although not in the way he expected. And secondly...

2) God **reveals** the Messiah Prince to come (9:24–25)

There's a great moment in the NT when Peter asks Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother (see Matt 18:21–22). The Rabbis in Jesus's days suggested three or four times would be sufficient. Peter decided to go even farther than that and suggested seven times.

Peter was proud of himself for suggesting such a high number. But Jesus, without missing a beat, and with discernible affection for his most excitable disciple said, "No, Peter. Seventy times seven!" I would love to have seen the look on Peter's face after Jesus said that. I'm sure he was thunderstruck.

And I imagine a similar look on Daniel's face while he's talking with Gabriel. "Seventy years, Daniel. Yeah, yeah. God will take care of that. I've gotten something else to communicate to you. Seventy weeks of years!" What?

Look at **verse 24**,

²⁴ *"Seventy weeks [or seventy sevens... the Hebrew [שָׁבָעִים] can be translated "weeks" or "sevens"] are decreed about your people [the Israelites] and your holy city [Jerusalem], to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.*

The context of this passage suggests that these seventy weeks are actually seventy weeks of years, meaning seventy seven-year periods. So if you have seventy "weeks" or seventy "weeks of years" or seventy "sevens," you have 490 years.

And the language here is the language of a Messiah. There is atoning for iniquity. There is the bringing in of everlasting righteousness. The book of **Daniel**, like the other OT prophetic books, is prophesying the kingdom to come and the Messiah to come.

That's beyond what Daniel was envisioning when he was praying. Daniel was praying for the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem. And the Gabriel reveals to him, **"Yeah, yeah, God has bigger fish to fry. Of course God is going to bring the Israelites back to the Promised Land. But watch this. God is also going to bring the long-awaited Messiah! The serpent crusher! The son of David, that the Israelites have been waiting centuries for. Let me tell you about that!"**

Look at **verse 25**.

²⁵ *Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build **Jerusalem** to the coming of an **anointed one**, a prince, there shall be seven weeks.*

Let's pause there. Notice seven weeks, here. Not seventy weeks, but "seven" in **verse 25**.

And at first glance this might seem to be the decree given by Cyrus that I mentioned last week. Cyrus, the king of Persia, said in **Ezra 1:2–4**,

"The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. ³Whoever is among you of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel—he is the God who is in Jerusalem. ⁴And let each survivor, in whatever

place he sojourns, be assisted by the men of his place with silver and gold, with goods and with beasts, besides freewill offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.”¹

Notice the decree here by Cyrus isn't about the city of Jerusalem itself. That decree in **Ezra** has to do with the temple, namely “the house at Jerusalem.” Zerubbabel went to rebuild the temple, not the city of Jerusalem or the walls around the city. That came later.

This decree from Cyrus the Persian took place in roughly 539 BC. That's roughly seventy years after the Israelites were taken into exile.² So Jeremiah's prophecy was fulfilled. Daniel's prayer was answered. That's a done deal.

But that's not what Gabriel is talking about in **Daniel 9:25**. Gabriel said, *from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks.*

The decree to restore and build Jerusalem took place after Daniel and after Cyrus in the days of Nehemiah (**Neh 2:1–8**). The Persian King Artaxerxes, who was several kings after Cyrus, tells Nehemiah to go build up Jerusalem. And Nehemiah, who was his cupbearer, obeys. That took place in approximately 444 BC.

And Nehemiah built the walls around Jerusalem in 52 days (**Neh 6:15**). But it took more like 49 years (or seven “weeks of years”) to restore the entire city of Jerusalem, namely its population, its infrastructure, and its civic life. That's what **verse 25** refers to with this first “seven weeks” or “seven sevens.”

And now, look at the end of **verse 25**.

And for sixty-two weeks it [Jerusalem] shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

The city of Jerusalem grew and expanded over the years under the Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires. But there was never lasting peace in that era—the intertestamental period. There was always trouble, because of the oppression of those powerful nations. Persia was a bear in Daniel's prophecy in **Daniel 7**. Greece was a four-winged leopard. And Rome was pictured as an indescribable beast. They were all beastly kingdoms, and trouble always surrounded Jerusalem.

So let's do the math here. When you take those sixty-two weeks of years and add to the seven weeks of years, you get sixty-nine weeks or sixty-nine weeks of years, namely 483 years. So the *terminus a quo* (starting point) of this prophecy is the command to rebuild Jerusalem in approximately 444 BC (**Neh 2:1-8**). You can see this on the picture below.

Taken from Harold Hoehner's *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*³

¹ So also 2 Chronicles 36:22–23, “Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: ‘Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.’”

² Walvoord, *Daniel*, 250: “In 597 B.C. Jeremiah had even written a letter to the exiles in Babylon (Jer. 29) in which he had announced that their time in captivity would last seventy years (v. 10). Jeremiah himself had been taken captive by Jews rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar and had been carried off to Egypt against his will to be buried in a strange land in a nameless grave. But the timeless Scriptures that he wrote found their way across desert and mountain to faraway Babylon and fell into the hands of Daniel... The time of the vision recorded in Daniel 9 was 538 B.C., about 67 years after Jerusalem had first been captured and Daniel carried off to Babylon (605 B.C.).”

³ See Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House) 1977. See also J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1363.

So the question is with this schema—what happens roughly 483 years after Artaxerxes sends his edict to rebuild the city of Jerusalem in 444 BC? By the way, those 483 prophetic years are more like 476 solar years, because of how the Hebrews reckoned their calendar. They went by a lunar calendar, not a solar calendar.⁴ So, with some augmenting, you have 360 days a year, not 365.

So with that in mind, let me ask the question differently. If the *terminus a quo* (starting point) of this prophecy is the command to rebuild Jerusalem in approximately 444 BC, then what is the *terminus ad quem* (the ending point of the prophecy)? The ending point is approximately AD 33! What takes place in approximately AD 33 that relates to “the coming of an anointed one, a prince”?

So let’s pause and review for a moment. Gabriel comes and tells Daniel, “**Not seventy years but seventy times seven years—490 years. 490 years after the edict from Artaxerxes to rebuild the city of Jerusalem, the long-awaited Messiah will come to 1) finish transgression, 2) put an end to sin, 3) atone for iniquity, 4) bring in everlasting righteousness, 5) seal both vision and prophet, 6) and anoint a most holy place.**” What does that sound like? What possible thing could have happened in approximately AD 33 to accomplish this?

Let me show you in a chart what this look like. This helps me when you graph it chronologically. This is a chart I put together almost twenty years ago when I was working through this for the first time.

You can see there the 444 BC date for Artaxerxes sending Nehemiah. You can see the “7 sevens” and the “62 sevens” culminating in Christ’s death and resurrection. You can also see the last seven, the seventieth seven, which we’ll get into in a moment.

I thought this graphic was amazing. I thought this was fantastic. But then I put this into an AI program and asked it to improve this. And this is what it came up with.



It’s a marginal improvement on my work. I guess AI is good for something. Maybe it’ll take over the world in a few years, but at least it made this awesome chart for me first!

You can see here, I hope, the key dates. 444 BC. Also AD 33. You can see the 7 sevens and the sixty-62 sevens. Those 483 prophetic years or 476 solar years take us from Nehemiah and the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem to Christ.

When you put all this together, when you take the time to do the math, you realize—even with approximations—that Gabriel was telling Daniel when the Messiah would come. Now you know why Jesus

⁴ 483 lunar years × 360 days = 173,880 days ÷ 365.2422 days ≈ 476 solar years.

would say throughout his ministry, “**You should have known. You should have been prepared**” (Matt 16:2–3; Luke 12:54–56; 19:41–44; 24:25–27; John 5:39–40, 46).

Now you know why Jesus would say at his entry into Jerusalem, “If these [people] were silent, the very stones would cry out” (Luke 19:40).

And just to add a little more evidence to this theory, look at the first statement in **verse 26**.

²⁶ *And after the sixty-two weeks,*

So this is after the sixty-two weeks, but also after the seven weeks. So this is ostensibly after the sixty-nine weeks of years—i.e., 483 years.

an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.

Let me read the Hebrew word for “an anointed one” and you tell me what this sounds like. The Hebrew is מָשִׁיחַ (*mā·šîḥ*). Does that word sound familiar? Is there really any debate about what the book of **Daniel** is prophesying here.

I think I told you many weeks ago that when we were considering the name for our church, we settled on Messiah Bible Church, which is a great name! And we thought about using the Hebrew. But מָשִׁיחַ Bible Church doesn’t really roll off the tongue. So we anglicized it.

Back to **verse 26**. This is the time frame in between the call to rebuild the city of Jerusalem (444 BC) and the coming of the anointed one, Jesus Christ (AD 33). At the completion of this time, the anointed one is “cut off,” in the sense that he is put to death.

The Hebrew word for “cut off” here is כָּרַת (*kā·răṭ*) which is used throughout the OT to refer to someone’s death. A person is metaphorically cut down. Or their life is cut short. The only possible way to understand this prophetically is the cutting off of Jesus’s life on the cross.

Gabriel is not talking about Jesus’s second coming here. Jesus doesn’t get cut off or cut down or cut short at his second coming. That takes place at his first coming. And when you combine this prophecy with **Isaiah 53**, and when you see what transpired with the anointed one, Jesus Messiah, at his crucifixion, this all makes sense.

Now I admit, this would have been cryptic and hard to discern in Daniel’s day. Daniel said himself that his own visions were confusing. And the Israelites had a hard time understanding the “cutting off” of the Messiah before the “rule of” the Messiah. They were all ready for Messiah’s rule. But they weren’t ready for Messiah’s death.

But from our vantage point, the math (at least in terms of approximation) adds up. And the prophecy makes sense. Christ had to die for his friends first before he could return for them. Christ had to pay for sin and establish victory, before he could come and permanently rule and reign.

Now look at the middle of **verse 26**. Because this is where the near prophecy of about 5 centuries from Daniel starts to mix with far prophecy of something like 25 centuries from Daniel and counting.

Here’s what Gabriel says,

And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.

This is again a cryptic reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. It must have been cryptic to Daniel 2,500 years ago, because the temple didn’t even exist at that time! So not only is Gabriel telling him implicitly that the temple will be rebuilt, but he’s also telling him that the temple will once again be destroyed!

And that’ll take place after Messiah is cut off. That’ll take place in Jerusalem as “the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy [Jerusalem and the temple].” And we know from history that this clearly happened. After Jesus’s death and resurrection, the city of Jerusalem and the temple were razed to the ground by the Romans. They were led by a Roman general and future emperor named Titus. All this transpired in AD 70.

And yet, it doesn’t say the prince and the people *will come* and destroy the city and the sanctuary, as if the prince was Titus. It says *the people of the prince who is to come*! What does that mean?

And why do we have mention of another prince? Is this the same prince of **verse 25**? The anointed one? The Messiah? There's no way. It can't be. Because this prince does some despicable things, as we'll see in **verse 27**.

Write this down as a third point in your notes.

3) God **announces** the rise and the fall of the pretender prince (9:26–27)

“Seventy Sevens and Two Princes.” That’s the title of this message? **Sometimes we can get so absorbed in the seventy sevens that we forget that there are two princes!**

Who is this second prince in **verse 26**? Who is this “pretender prince” to come? Who is he?

Well, I would suggest to you that the prince referenced to here is indeed the “man of lawlessness” who Paul mentions in **2 Thessalonians 2:3–4**. I would suggest to you that this is the antichrist or the one who is restrained by the Restrainer for a time (**2 Thess 2:6–7**). This is also the little horn in **Daniel 7** (see **7:8, 20–25**). This is the beast in John’s **Revelation** (see **Rev 13:1–8; 17:8–14; 19:19–20**).

And to that you might say, “**Yeah, but the antichrist didn’t destroy Jerusalem in AD 70. That was Titus as part of the Roman Empire.**” Yes, but Gabriel doesn’t say that the prince destroyed Jerusalem. He said, “And the people of the prince *who is to come* shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.” In other words, the prince comes later. He comes after “his people” destroy of Jerusalem. From our vantage point we realize that it’s at least 1,950 years later.

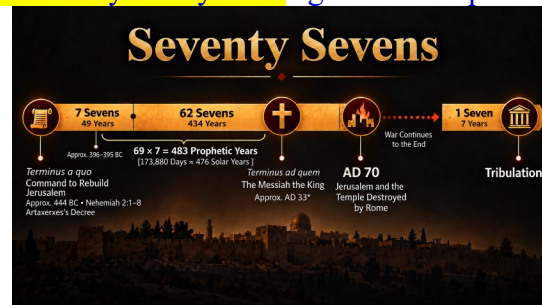
And look at **verse 27**. Let’s see what else Gabriel writes about this pretender prince.

²⁷ And he [the pretender prince, the man of lawlessness, the antichrist] shall make a strong covenant with many for one week,

So you have 69 weeks leading up the coming of Christ. And then you have one week after that. You have one week or one seven of years, namely a seven-year period after Christ’s death and resurrection. And this pretender prince will make a strong covenant with many during that week.

This seven-year period is what we refer to as the Great Tribulation (or more simply the Tribulation) that transpires at the end of human history right before Jesus’s millennial reign. This will be a time of unprecedented suffering, especially for God’s chosen people, the Israelites.

Let me show you than on that handy-dandy chart again that AI put together for me.



You can see the final seven here as the Tribulation. This is after Christ’s death. And this is after a period time that we call “the church.” More on that in a second.

Let’s keep reading in **verse 27**.

and for half of the week he [the pretender prince, the antichrist] shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

After Christ’s coming, the rise of the Roman Empire continued, along with its emperor, Titus. And this is the firstfruits of the coming antichrist who will rule and reign once the Restrainer is removed (**2 Thess 2:6–7**). These desolations were decreed ahead of time in the time of Daniel. We might even say that these desolations were decreed before the foundation of the world by God who knows the beginning from the end.

So, in other words, the pretender prince will do some abominable things involving God and his people at some time in our future. He’ll be like Antiochus Epiphanes 2.0. He’ll be worse than Titus. He’ll be worse than any ruler who ever lived.

But his end is decreed. Everyone see that in **verse 27**? The desolator who makes desolate will be destroyed. Things will get worse and worse and worse, but then God will judge. That’s the message of the Prophets as a whole. That’s the message of the Bible as a whole. Things will get worse, but then God will judge, and things will get better.

I'm sure after receiving this Daniel was utterly perplexed and flabbergasted. In fact, Daniel says in **Daniel 8:27** after a similar vision, "I, Daniel, was overcome and lay sick for some days." Probably something similar happens here at the end of **Daniel 9** too. If so, Daniel doesn't say. The chapter just ends. *the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."*

The end! How do we make sense of this?

Well, let's go back to our schema. What we see here in **verse 27** is a reference to a future seven-year period. And that seven-year period is cut in half indicating something.

And this is a bit cryptic—I admit it. But that's the nature of prophecy, especially since we're dealing with something predicted hundreds of years before it occurs. But Jesus picks up on this language (**Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14; Luke 21:20**). And John, in the book of **Revelation**, picks up on it too. John speaks about a 42-month period of time or a 1,260-day period of time that coincides with this half of the week in **Daniel 9**.

Look again at **verse 27**: "and for half of the week." That half-week corresponds roughly to the "time, times, and half a time" mentioned in **Daniel 7:25** and **12:7**. This also corresponds to what is found in **Revelation 12:14**.

This chart shows the correspondence.

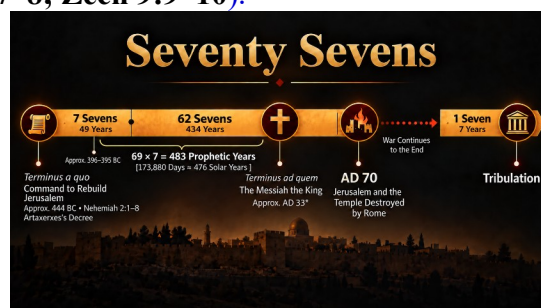
Reference	Expression	Description
Daniel 9:27	Last half of the week (3 ½ years)	The Desolator on the Wings of Abominations
Daniel 7:25	Time, times, and half a time	Saints given into the ruler's hand
Daniel 12:7	Time, times, and half a time	Duration of shattering of holy people
Revelation 12:14	Time, times, and half a time	Woman (Israel) protected in wilderness
Revelation 11:3	1,260 days	Two witnesses prophesy
Revelation 12:6	1,260 days	Woman flees into wilderness
Revelation 11:2	42 months	Nations trample holy city
Revelation 13:5	42 months	Beast exercises authority

This also aligns with the 1,260 days referenced in **Revelation 11:3** and **12:6**. Also it aligns with the 42 months noted in **Revelation 11:2** and **13:5**.

Those time sequences match: 1,260 days = 42 months = three and a half years. The one nuance to that is **Revelation 11:3**. That 1,260-day period is the same length of time as the others, but it cannot correspond to the other timeframes. And that's because the two witnesses who prophesy are put to death by the beast. It's actually the first reference to the beast (the antichrist) in **Revelation**. The antichrist kills these witnesses and the world celebrates. And this coincides with his great rise to power. So I put **Revelation 11:3** in **red** on the chart because this 1,260 day period refers to the first half of that seven-year tribulation not the back half like the rest of these references. **You can research that on your own and come to your own conclusions on that.**

So when we piece this all together, we see two "three and a half year" periods. The seven-year period is broken up into two "three and a half year" segments. Both segments involve the outpouring of God's wrath. The first three and a half years involve these two witnesses testifying to Christ. The second segment, after the killing of these witnesses and the abomination of desolation involves the rise and the reign of the antichrist.

Now here's where we need to put our Bible together as good Bible students. How do we make sense of these different passages in the OT and the NT? Not all Christians agree, but many premillennialists, and especially pretribulational premillennialists (that's my tribe), believe that the 483-year period of time is that time between Nehemiah and the first coming of Christ. After that, there is a "parenthesis" called the church, where God grafts Gentiles into his plan of redemption. We see a similar gapping in other places in the OT (see e.g., Isa 61:1–2; Dan 2:40–45, 7:7–8; Zech 9:9–10).



What we have in **Daniel 9:24–27** is what’s referred to as a “telescoped prophecy.” It’s a prophecy that observes multiple events in the future as if they are closely connected. But in reality, there may be periods of time that are between them. And they are all smushed together in the prophecy. That’s what happens with Daniel. He sees Christ first coming and his second coming altogether as part of these seventy sevens. And yet, we know from our vantage point that there’s this huge period of time called the church between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel’s prophecy.

And then after that period of the church, there is a seven-year period of tribulation where the man of lawlessness or the antichrist or the desolator is unleashed on the world. And after that seven-year period, there is the second coming of Christ, the millennium, then the great white throne judgment, and then the eternal state.

Several months ago I taught about this in a series called “Final Things.” And here’s the chart that we put together for that.

We have Christ’s coming. Then we have the period of the church. Then we have the rapture. Then the Tribulation, a.k.a. Daniel’s “seventieth seven.” Then we have Christ’s second coming, the millennial kingdom, and the eternal state with the New Jerusalem.

Daniel’s prophecy in **Daniel 9** is absolute essential to us understanding this chronological scheme. And Daniel was given, years ahead of time, the exact time reference of Christ’s coming and death. Christ Jesus is the anointed one “cut off” in **Daniel 9:26**. Christ was cut off. Satan was able to smash Christ’s heel, if you will—remember **Genesis 3:15**. But that’s not the end of it.

Satan will also empower his antichrist during the Tribulation, but his desolations will come to an end. And God will judge. And then Jesus’s reign will commence.

Now one of the assumptions built into our eschatological understanding of **Daniel 9:20–27** is that some of these things *haven’t* happened yet. Some Christians believe they have. Some Christians, especially within the postmillennial camp, see here accomplished references to the Roman Empire and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in AD 70. I understand where those people are coming from. But I think they are wrong.

And certainly, we can all agree as evangelical Christians that Christ has come, and he has made atonement for sinners. We can all agree on that. We all agree that, at least, 69 of these 70 weeks are in our rearview mirror.

But that final week (the final seven of **Daniel 9**), is, in my estimation, *still to come*. There’s a gap between the 69 weeks and the final week that we call “the church age” or the parenthesis. And the final seven years to come is the seven-year tribulational period that precedes the coming of Christ and the establishing of the millennial kingdom.

That’s how we put this all together. **Thank God for Daniel 9, and the wisdom that he gives us in this great book of the Bible.**

So let me close with this. I realize that this passage of Scripture is confusing. I know it’s cryptic too. But it’s also fascinating. And research and exploration of this prophecy produces great results. And there’s wisdom that’s given here in the book of the Bible.

And I would say applicationally, as a Christian in the church age, you need to do two things. You need to look backwards, and you need to look forward. You look backwards in faith, and you trust what God has done. And you look forwards in faith, and you trust in what God will do. And you praise God and you trust him. Everybody with me?

You look backwards and you realize, “we live after Christ.” The sixty-nine weeks are in my rear view. Atonement has been made. Christ has been cut off. Yes, war will continue to the end. But war and death can’t steal away what God has given you. You look backwards, you say, “Thank you, Jesus! Thank

you, Messiah, for the cross. Thank you for my salvation. Thank you for your resurrection. Thank you for dying for my sins.”

But at the same time, with the same faith and the same hope, we look to the future. And we realized that there’s still work to be done. The world’s going to get worse. God still has some activity with the covenant people of Israel. There are still some promises that need to be fulfilled. There is still a seven-year period of tribulation. And we’re going to trust God for that future.

We’re going to trust him looking backward. And we’re going to trust him looking forward. And we’re going to say, “Hallelujah, Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus.”

I will say this too in closing. You know, Daniel saw something amazing. He saw cryptically these things revealed more than 2,500 years ago. But Daniel would love to be where you’re at right now. He would love to be able to look backwards and say, “Aha! That’s how the prophecy was fulfilled. That’s what Gabriel was talking about! I had a sense.” He would love to be where you are at right now.

And let me say this on behalf of all of us in the room and Daniel. All of us would love to be looking backwards on all of this after the Tribulation. We’d love to be right now part of Jesus’s millennial kingdom or the eternal state, looking backwards and saying, “Aha, that’s what the Bible was talking about! Now I see it!”

We’re not there yet. We believe and we hope for that. Someday we’ll be there looking back on all that God has done and all that he’s brought about. And maybe we’ll continue to search the scriptures to have more and more “aha” moments. That’s what awaits us.

So look back and trust in Christ. And look forward, trusting in Christ.

That’s Daniel 9, church. Love y’all. Come back next week for Daniel 10. Pray with me.