

Daniel's Vision of the Seventy Weeks

(Part 2, God's Answer)



DANIEL 9:20-27

TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL HELPS

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DIVISION III

The History and Destiny of Israel: Five Prophecies or Pictures Clearly Seen in Daniel's Visions, [Daniel 8:1–12:13](#)

Daniel's Vision of the Seventy Weeks (Part 2, God's Answer): A Prophecy of God's Plan for Israel, His Timeline of Events, [Daniel 9:20-27](#)

([Daniel 9:20-27](#)) Introduction: God immediately answered Daniel's great prayer. The LORD loved His dear prophet, and He loved His people—all who truly trusted and followed Him. Therefore, He was bound to hear this prayer that was so passionately and honestly offered up by His dear servant. Daniel's urgent plea was for the LORD to forgive his people's sins and return them to the **Promised Land** so they could rebuild Jerusalem and the nation ([Daniel 9:15-19](#)).

In answer to Daniel's fervent prayer for forgiveness and restoration, the LORD gave him an astonishing prophecy. This new prophecy revealed that God would not only forgive and restore Israel, but also that a day was coming when He would offer the whole world forgiveness of sins ([Daniel 9:24](#)).

God now revealed His timeline, His great plan for the human race, to Daniel, and through him to the whole world. The vision given to Daniel actually shows the span of time, the number of years, before the coming of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, to die on the cross. Furthermore, it reveals the final period of human history, the seven-year period of horrifying tribulation that is coming to earth under the tyranny of the antichrist.

This is, Daniel's Vision of the Seventy Weeks (Part 2, God's Answer): A Prophecy of God's Plan for Israel, His Timeline of Events, [Daniel 9:20-27](#).

1. **God revealed His plan to Daniel: Daniel was given insight into the future by the angel Gabriel (vv.20-23).**
2. **God laid out His six-fold plan for Israel (and for the human race): it would be fulfilled over a period of 490 years (70 sevens), (v.24).**
3. **God divided the plan into three periods (vv.25-27).**

1. ([Daniel 9:20-23](#)) Insight, Source, God—Understanding, Needed, to Grasp Future Events—Understanding, Source, Prayer and Bible Study—Gabriel, Angel, Ministered to Daniel—Daniel, Vision of, God's Plan for Israel.

God revealed to Daniel His plan for Israel and for all human beings. He did so through the angel Gabriel. Gabriel abruptly interrupted Daniel's prayer, at the very point where the prophet was asking for forgiveness ([Daniel 9:20](#), cf [Daniel 9:19](#)). The LORD had heard Daniel's prayer and knew his heart was genuine.

Note that Gabriel appeared at the time of the evening worship and sacrifice ([Daniel 9:21](#)). The timing was significant, for the sacrificial lamb pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ was to be the focus of this present vision and prophecy. Daniel's request for God to forgive the sins of the people was to be accomplished by the coming Savior's death upon the cross. **Note** also that Daniel *was praying* during the evening worship and sacrifice. This points to his strong faith in God's promise to forgive sins through the substitute sacrifice. God forgives sin no other way. A person must approach God for forgiveness through the sacrificial death of Christ, through His blood that was shed on the cross ([Ephesians 1:7](#)).

Gabriel informed Daniel of several facts:

1. He had been sent to give Daniel very special insight into God's plans for the future of the Jews as well as for the human race as a whole.
2. He declared that the dear prophet's prayer had been heard and his request granted ([Daniel 9:23](#)). In fact, the very moment Daniel had begun to pray, the LORD had heard. He immediately answered His dear servant's prayer. Note why: because Daniel was very special to God, deeply loved and highly esteemed. In God's eyes, Daniel was a precious believer because he had lived a consistent life before the LORD. He had diligently studied God's Word and prayed fervently. His life was a positive, steadfast testimony for the LORD. This was clear evidence that he truly believed the LORD and His Holy Word ([Daniel 9:2-3](#)).
3. Daniel was to listen closely to the message being brought him so he could understand the vision.

Thought 1. Daniel needed special insight and understanding with regard to his people, Israel. Therefore, he sought the LORD through prayer and Bible Study, and the LORD met his dear servant's need. When any of us lack insight or wisdom, we too must seek the LORD through prayer and through studying God's Holy Word. If we are genuine and faithful, the LORD will hear our prayers and meet our needs. He will give us whatever understanding or wisdom we need to deal with our specific area of concern.

Listen to what says:

[Luke 21:15 \(NASB\)](#)

“¹⁵ For I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute.”

1 Corinthians 2:12-14 (NASB)

“¹² Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

¹³ which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.

¹⁴ But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.”

Ephesians 1:18-19 (NASB)

“¹⁸ *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.”

James 1:5 (NASB)

“⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

1 Kings 3:9 (NASB)

“⁹ So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?”

Psalms 119:104 (NASB)

“¹⁰⁴ From Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way.”

Psalms 119:130 (NASB)

“¹³⁰ The unfolding of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple.”

Proverbs 2:6 (NASB)

“⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding.”

Ecclesiastes 2:26 (NASB)

“²⁶ For to a person who is good in His sight He has given wisdom and knowledge and joy, while to the sinner He has given the task of gathering and collecting so that he may give to one who is good in God's sight. This too is vanity and striving after wind.”

Isaiah 50:7 (NASB)

“⁷ For the Lord God helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.”

Daniel 2:21 (NASB)

“²¹ It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding.”

2. (Daniel 9:24) History, Prophecy Concerning, Climax of; God's Plan; Messiah's Kingdom—History, God's Plan, for Israel—Israel, Prophecy Concerning, God's Plan and Timetable—History, Timetable of, Discussed—Israel, Timetable of History, Discussed—Christ, Future Kingdom of, Six Results—Kingdom of Christ, Prophecy Concerning, Results of—Antichrist, Timetable of, Discussed; Covenant with Israel—Israel, Prophecy Concerning, Covenant with Antichrist—God, Plan for World History, Timetable of—God, Timetable of, World History—Prayer, Answered, Daniel's Prayer—Vision, of Daniel, History Timetable—Deliverance, of Israel, Prophecy Concerning.

God laid out His six-fold plan for both Israel and the human race. God's plan and timetable would be fulfilled during *seventy sevens (490 years)*. Although some translations refer to *seventy weeks*, the Hebrew simply says seventy sevens. How do we know that the *seventy weeks* or *seventy sevens* is referring to years as opposed to actual weeks or days?

Quickly glance at [Daniel 9:24](#) to see an immediate answer to the question. This verse concerns the coming of Jesus Christ to offer salvation to the human race, which is spelled out in the six works that are listed. Looking back in history to the time of Daniel and the time of Christ, we know that it was centuries between the two periods, not days or weeks. Days and weeks were clearly not enough time for the events of [Daniel 9:24-27](#) to take place; therefore, we know that the *weeks* or *seventy sevens* definitely refer to years. Again, God informed Daniel that He had a wonderful plan for Israel, the prophet's dear people.

But note how God's plan for Israel includes salvation for the human race as well. While some of the predictions in this prophecy have already been partially fulfilled, **all six will be completely fulfilled at the end of 490 years.**

God Himself will be the One **who fulfills His six-fold plan** when Christ returns to set up God's kingdom on earth.

a. The first part of God's plan is to stop the rebellion or transgression of the Jews. Of course, as long as the nations are ruled by corrupt leaders, the rulers and their citizens will continue to rebel and transgress against the LORD. Thus part of God's wonderful plan for Israel is to put an end to their sin and rebellion. The day is coming when the Jews will no longer sin or rebel against God. That day will be when Jesus Christ returns to set up God's kingdom on earth.

b. The second part of God's plan is to put an end to sin. A day is coming when sin will no longer exist on the earth. No longer will people miss the mark or come short of what they should be or do. Of course, the only hope for such a perfect society is the return of Christ to earth. When He returns to establish God's kingdom on earth, then and only then will society be controlled and sin be eradicated forever.

c. The third part of God’s plan is to atone for all wickedness, making reconciliation between God and man possible. *Atone (kipper or kapper) means “to cover, expiate, condone, cancel, cleanse, pardon, or reconcile.”* Beyond question, this fact points to the atonement Jesus Christ secured upon the cross. It is His shed blood that *covers* our sins and reconciles us to God. Every promise and blessing of God, both now and in God’s coming kingdom on earth, is made possible only through the atoning death of Jesus Christ.

d. The fourth part of God’s plan is to establish righteousness on earth, an everlasting righteousness. At the end of the 490 years, the timetable God has set, righteousness will flood the earth—and it will continue throughout all eternity. What a wonderful promise to Daniel! A day was coming when his people would live in a world of righteousness, a day when they would no longer be oppressed, enslaved, or mistreated. A society of righteousness will flood the earth.

e. The fifth part of God’s plan is to fulfill all His prophecies. Human history will reach its climax when all of God’s prophecies and visions have been fulfilled. It will be time for Christ to set up His eternal kingdom on earth and to establish the perfect society of peace, security, prosperity, righteousness, and justice. In that day, God will give Christ eternal dominion over the earth. Christ will rule with all the authority, glory, and power of God Himself, and He will be worshipped by all peoples of the earth ([Daniel 7:13-14](#)). In that day, every promise and vision of God will be completely fulfilled.

f. The sixth part of God’s plan is to anoint the *most holy*, which can refer either to a holy person or to a holy place. It may refer to the anointing of Jesus Christ by the Spirit of God to be the Savior of the world and to rule throughout eternity as the King of kings and LORD of lords. Or, it could refer to the holy temple of God, in particular to the future temple that will be built for the millennial reign of Christ on earth. The prophet Ezekiel described this temple in detail (see [Ezekiel 40:1–42:20](#) for more discussion).

In revealing His six-fold plan for Israel, the LORD had answered Daniel’s fervent prayer. The Jews who truly trusted the LORD would be forgiven their sins through the atoning death of Jesus Christ. They would be reconciled to God and live in a perfect society of righteousness, peace, security, prosperity, and justice. Furthermore, their temple would be anointed by God’s Spirit, which means that the very presence of God Himself would dwell within the holy temple. They will worship the LORD in an anointed temple in the presence of His anointed King. All these wonderful blessings of God’s plan will be accomplished during the seventy weeks or 490 years.

Thought 1. God told Daniel that He had a wonderful plan for Israel, the prophet’s own dear people. But note how God’s plan for Israel includes the human race as well. The Lord will fulfill His plan for both Israel and the rest of the world down to the very last detail. God’s Holy Word—including every promise and prophecy—is completely trustworthy.

Matthew 5:18 (NASB)

“¹⁸ For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.”

Luke 21:33 (NASB)

“³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.”

Deuteronomy 7:9 (NASB)

“⁹ Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments.”

1 Kings 8:56 (NASB)

“⁵⁶ Blessed be the Lord, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.”

Psalms 93:5 (NASB)

“⁵ Your testimonies are fully confirmed; Holiness befits Your house, O Lord, forevermore.”

Psalms 117:2 (NASB)

“² For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord!”

Ezekiel 12:25 (NASB)

“²⁵ For I the Lord will speak, and whatever word I speak will be performed. It will no longer be delayed, for in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and perform it," declares the Lord God.”

Daniel 9:12 (NASB)

“¹² Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done *anything* like what was done to Jerusalem.”

3. (Daniel 9:25-27) History, Prophecy Concerning, Climax of; God’s Plan; Messiah’s Kingdom—History, God’s Plan, for Israel—Israel, Prophecy Concerning, God’s Plan and Timetable—History, Timetable of, Discussed—Israel, Timetable of History, Discussed—Christ, Future Kingdom of, Six Results—Kingdom of Christ, Prophecy Concerning, Results of—Antichrist, Timetable of, Discussed; Covenant with Israel—Israel, Prophecy Concerning, Covenant with Antichrist—God, Plan for World History, Timetable of—God, Timetable of, World History—Prayer, Answered, Daniel’s Prayer—Vision, of Daniel, History Timetable—Deliverance, of Israel, Prophecy Concerning.

God divided the plan for Israel and the world into three periods of human history. The 490 years (**Daniel 9:24**) are **divided into three periods:**

1. **Period #1:** This period of God's plan is **7 sevens**, which equals **49 years**.
2. **Period #2:** This period of God's plan is **7 sevens** plus **62 sevens**, which equals **483 years**.
3. **Period #3:** This period of God's plan is **1 seven**, which equals **seven years**.

a. The first period of God's plan is seven *sevens*, which equals 49 years ([Daniel 9:25^a](#)). The starting point of this particular period was the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, and the end of the period is the completion of the capital city. The complete rebuilding of Jerusalem was to take 49 years. When Daniel heard the explanation of this period of history, his heart was bound to leap for joy. God was revealing that the Jews would be set free from Babylonian captivity and would return home to rebuild their nation and their beloved capital Jerusalem. But note a very crucial fact: the particular decree for this period of time, as well as for the second period, was not identified. Which decree issued by the kings of ancient history is the starting point for the two time periods? After Persia conquered Babylon, various rulers issued three different decrees.

The first decree was issued by **Cyrus in 538 B.C.** (see [2 Chronicles 36:22-23](#); [Ezra 1:1-4](#); [Ezra 5:3-17](#) for more discussion). However, Cyrus' decree stressed rebuilding the temple without saying anything specific about rebuilding Jerusalem. Of course, the returning exiles would have rebuilt the city as well as their temple, but the decree stressed the temple and said nothing about rebuilding the city.

Therefore, it is unlikely that Cyrus' decree is the starting point for the periods of God's timetable. Another decree was issued by Artaxerxes I to Ezra in **458 B.C.** (see [Ezra 7:11-28](#) for more discussion). This particular decree commissioned Ezra to return to Jerusalem to investigate the people and make sure they were obeying the law, God's Holy Word. The emphasis was on safeguarding the Jews' religion, not on rebuilding Jerusalem. Therefore it is unlikely that this decree is the starting point for God's timetable.

Sometime later a third decree was issued, this one also by King Artaxerxes I, written to Nehemiah in **445 B.C.** (see [Neh. 2:1-8](#) for more discussion). This particular decree does focus upon rebuilding Jerusalem, in particular its walls.

Most scholars hold to either the second or the third decree, the one issued to Ezra in **458 B.C.** or to Nehemiah in **445 B.C.** Of course, each scholar presents reasonable arguments for his position. No matter which decree God meant to be the starting point, the end of the second period of God's plan was the coming of the Anointed One, Christ Himself.

b. The second period of God's plan was **seven sevens** (just discussed) **plus sixty-two sevens**, which **equaled 483 years** ([Daniel 9:25^b](#)). The starting point for this second period was also the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, but the end of the period stretched all the way up to the coming of the Anointed One Himself, Christ Jesus.

Gabriel said that **two momentous events** would take place at that time:

1) The period would bring about the cutting off or death of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ ([Daniel 9:26^a](#)). **Note** the reference to the fact that Christ would not die for Himself, which strongly suggests that He would be dying for others. Although it would seem as though He accomplished nothing when He died, He would be accomplishing everything for those who truly placed their trust in Him.

2) The period would be followed by two significant events: first, the Romans would destroy Jerusalem and the temple in **70 A.D.** and, second, centuries of war and desolation would take place on earth. This would continue right on up until the end of human history. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Rome would not end the sufferings of the nation Israel. The Jews would continue to suffer at the hands of the Gentiles until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note that the people of Rome, the people who were to destroy the city of Jerusalem, are said to be the people of the *prince (ruler)* who would come to destroy the city ([Daniel 9:26^b](#)). This is a clear reference to the *future antichrist*, the *little horn* who was revealed in the earlier visions given to Daniel ([Daniel 7:8](#), [Daniel 7:24-25](#); [Daniel 8:23-27](#)).

c. The third period of God's plan was **one seven**, which equals seven years ([Daniel 9:27](#)). Keep in mind that this third period of God's plan will complete His purpose for the world. Furthermore, the six wonderful blessings of [Daniel 9:24](#) will be completely fulfilled at *the end* of this third period. However, these seven years will be a time of terrifying tribulation under the rule of the *antichrist*. The word *He* in [Daniel 9:27](#) refers back to the *ruler who will come* and destroy the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary ([Daniel 9:26](#)). This is a clear reference to the *antichrist*. **Note another fact as well:** there is a long period of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, a time that will witness centuries of war and desolation, as is stated at the end of [Daniel 9:26](#). Even Christ has warned the world of violence, natural disasters, and false messiahs (see [Matthew 24:5-8](#) for more discussion).

But running parallel with the false messiahs and the lawless of this world will be the church, the body of Christ—those who truly believe in the LORD and take a stand for righteousness. Although the plan that God revealed to Daniel did not include the *period of the Gentiles* and of the church, it was revealed in the time of Christ and of the apostles (see [Eph. 3:1-13](#) for more discussion). The death of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, was to bring about a new creation, a spiritual body of people that would include both Jews and Gentiles. In Christ, all prejudice and discrimination would be laid aside (see [Eph. 2:11-18](#) for more discussion).

Daniel and the generations preceding Christ knew nothing about this period of God's timeline and plan for the world, but we today are living in *the times of the Gentiles* and the time of the church ([Luke 21:24](#)).

The third period of God's plan that deals in particular with Israel, the period of the tribulation under the antichrist, is soon coming.

Two significant events will signal the beginning of the third period.

1) The beginning of the *seven weeks* or seven years will be the signing of a covenant or treaty between the antichrist and Israel ([Daniel 9:27](#)). A promise that guarantees peace and security will naturally appeal to the Jews. Any people who have suffered as much as the Jews have long for peace and security, long for the protection and help of anyone who will come to their aid. Thus, when the antichrist is able to bring peace among the nations of the Middle East, Israel will gladly grasp the opportunity. And for a period of three and one-half years, there will be peace for those who have suffered so long.

2) But at the midpoint of the seven years, the antichrist will break the covenant and attack Israel. He will no longer allow freedom of worship but instead will forbid the Jews to participate in the worship of the LORD. Although it is not discussed here, the antichrist will seek absolute authority over the nations of the world and seek to institute a worldwide religion of *imperial worship*, that is, the worship of the state. All people will be required to give their first loyalty to the government. After all, it will be the state that has brought peace, security, and prosperity to the peoples of the world.

At this particular time, the antichrist will set up some abominable object in the temple. Most likely, this will be an image that represents the state and will be placed in the temple to remind the Jews that their first loyalty belongs to the government (see [DEEPER STUDY # 1—Matthew 24:15](#) see page # 11 for more discussion; see [Rev. 13:1-10](#); [13:11-18](#); [Rev. 17:1](#)).

Thought 1. God promises that He will always be with us. The last days of human history will bring a period of severe trials, tribulation, and horrible suffering for true believers. But as in every generation when God's people are persecuted or going through terrible times, the LORD is with His people. God's presence will guide us through all hardships, no matter what may confront us. Even if we are called upon to bear the horrible sufferings inflicted by the antichrist, the LORD will be with us granting us a deep sense of His holy presence.

Listen to His wonderful promise.

[Matthew 18:20 \(NASB\)](#)

“²⁰ For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”

Matthew 28:20 (NASB)

“²⁰ Teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Genesis 28:15 (NASB)

“¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”

Exodus 33:14 (NASB)

“¹⁴ And He said, My presence shall go *with you*, and I will give you rest.”

Deuteronomy 20:1 (NASB)

“¹ When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots *and* people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you.”

Psalms 28:7 (NASB)

“⁷ The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him.”

Psalms 40:17 (NASB)

“¹⁷ Since I am afflicted and needy, Let the Lord be mindful of me. You are my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.”

Isaiah 41:10 (NASB)

“¹⁰ Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”

Isaiah 43:1-2 (NASB)

“¹ But now, thus says the Lord, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!

² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.”

DEEPER STUDY # 1

(**Matthew 24:15**) End Times— Antichrist— Abomination of Desolation (*bdelugma erēmōseōs*): the abomination that makes desolate. Note Christ's words, "**the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet.**" There are three passages in Daniel that speak of "the abomination of desolation."

Daniel 9:24-27 (NASB)

“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 11:31 (NASB)

“³¹ Forces from him will arise, desecrate the sanctuary fortress, and do away with the regular sacrifice. And they will set up the abomination of desolation.”

Daniel 12:11 (NASB)

“¹¹ From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, *there will be* 1,290 days.”

- a. In **Daniel 9:27** the term is *Bdelugma ton eremoseon*. The Hebrew says, "Upon the wing [or pinnacle] of abominations [shall come] the desolater" or "upon wings as a desolater [shall come] abomination."
- b. In **Daniel 11:31** the Hebrew says, "they shall put [place] the abomination that desolates."
- c. In **Daniel 12:11** the Hebrew says, "and from the time the daily [sacrifice] shall be taken away, and the abomination that makes desolate set up, [shall be]...."

Several matters need to be discussed about the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Christ and Daniel.

1. When was Daniel's prophecy fulfilled?
 - a. There was a past fulfillment; that is, there was a fulfillment before the time of Christ about **170 B.C.** This is clear. Antiochus Epiphanes, the king of Syria, conquered Jerusalem and tried to force Grecian society upon the Jews. He wanted the Jews to become full-fledged Greeks both in custom and religion. He knew that to be successful he had to destroy the Jewish religion. He therefore did three of the most horrible things that could ever be done in the mind of the Jewish people.

He desecrated the temple

(1) by taking the great altar of the burnt offering and turning it into an altar for the Greek Olympian god Zeus;

(2) by sacrificing swines' flesh upon it; and

(3) by setting up a trade of prostitution in the temple chambers (cp. [1 Maccabees 1:20-62](#); cp. also Josephus, [Ant. 12. 5:3-4](#); [Wars. 1. 1:2](#)).

- b. Christ said there is a future fulfillment: "**When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet.....**"

There are **primarily four views** of the future fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy.

1. One view says there is no future fulfillment; all the signs were fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. by Titus.
2. Others see Christ referring to the church age and to the trials which the church has to go through before Christ returns.
3. Still others view the prophecy as referring exclusively to the end time, having nothing to do with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
4. Others believe Christ is answering the very questions the disciples asked. He predicts both the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world.

In looking at what Christ was saying, it is best to let Him speak for Himself without *adding to* or *taking away* from His words. An attempt to let Him speak for Himself has been made in the former notes (see [Matthew 24:1-31](#)). The conclusion of the notes is that the prophecy is *fulfilled* in both Jerusalem's destruction and the end of the world. The Lord is answering the disciples' questions.

Christ was saying this: the same thing that happened under Antiochus Epiphanes will happen again to the Holy Place. In fact, Christ was saying that the temple would be so destroyed that not one stone would be left upon another. This destruction did happen: what Christ said took place in a most literal sense under Titus in 70 A.D. (See [Matthew 24:1-14](#), especially the notes that quote Josephus, the Jewish historian. Reading Josephus' record of Jerusalem's desolation reveals just how terrible the temple, the city, and the people were devastated.)

However, as discussed in the former notes, Christ was not only answering the disciples question about when the destruction of Jerusalem would take place, He was *also answering* their question about His return and the end of the world. Daniel's prophecy and the

Lord's elaboration on Daniel's prophecy are to have a double fulfillment. The signs that point toward one who had sinned so terribly (**Jerusalem**) are much the same as the signs that point toward another who is guilty of terrible sin (the world in the end time). The sin of Jerusalem was the most heinous sin that could be committed: the killing of God's own Son. And the sin of the world at the end of time will be just as terrible by following "**the abomination of desolation.**" Therefore, the world will witness an increase, an intensification of the signs at the end of time. As a result there will be *great trial* such as the world has never seen ([Matthew 24:21](#)).

2. A second matter that needs to be discussed about "**the abomination of desolation**" is the division of time that Christ and Daniel both seem to give. Christ says that the abomination of desolation launches the worst tribulation the world has ever known ([Matthew 24:15, 21](#)). In His own words, the signs that occur up until the abomination of desolation are called "**the beginning of sorrows**" ([Matthew 24:8](#)); and the trials that take place after the abomination of desolation are called "**great tribulations**," tribulations so great that they are unparalleled in history ([Matthew 24:21](#)). Daniel also gives a division of time just as Christ does.

"And he [the prince] shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause...the overspreading of abominations" ([Daniel 9:27](#)).

"In the midst of the week" (Daniel's seventieth week) definitely points to a period of time (**one week**) that is divided into two parts.

Now note these factors.

- a. Daniel was dealing with the "**seventieth week**," the *end* of his prophecy. **Two facts** tell us that Daniel was also dealing with the *end time* just as Christ was: (1) the fact that Christ was dealing with the end of Jerusalem and the end of the world and, (2) the fact that Christ said He was elaborating on Daniel's prophecy.
- b. Daniel said that what begins the second half of his seventieth week is "**the abomination of desolation**" or the prince who causes "**abominable idols**" (H.C. Leupold. *Exposition of Daniel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1969, p.434).

The words of Christ should be carefully noted: "**When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet....**" ([Matthew 24:15](#)). Christ was about to explain in more detail what Daniel had prophesied. Thus Christ explained that the first half of Daniel's week would consist of signs which were "**the beginning of sorrows**" ([Matthew 24:8](#); cp. [Matthew 24:5-14](#)), and the last half of Daniel's week would consist of unparalleled trials of "**great**

tribulations." The second half of the week would be launched by "**the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place**" ([Matthew 24:15, 21](#)).

3. A third matter that needs to be looked at is the time frame of the end time (**the seventieth week**) as predicted by Christ and Daniel.

Scripture does refer to the length in these words (see [Rev. 11:2](#); [Rev. 12:6](#)).

"**Time, times, and half a time**" ([Daniel 7:25](#); [Daniel 12:7](#)).

"**1260 days**" ([Rev. 12:6](#)).

"**42 months**" ([Rev. 11:2](#); [Rev. 13:5-6](#)).

Based upon the days and months given in the **Book of Revelation**, if Daniel's time equals one year, then his words, "**Time [1 year], times [2 years], and half a time [1/2 year]**" are equal to 3-1/2 years. Daniel stated that the abomination of desolation shall be executed "**in the midst of the week,**" that is, after three and one half years. It is assumed that Christ's words "**the beginning of sorrows**" (**that is, the first half of the week**) are also three and one half years. Thus in combining the two periods of time (**3-1/2 years each**) the length of the last days or end time is said to be a literal seven years. Based upon the words of Revelation the prophecy of Christ can be charted as follows.

THE END OF THE WORLD

Seeing the Sign of the
Abomination of Desolation
In the Middle of the Time or Years
([Matthew 24:15](#))

Seeing the
Son of Man Coming
([Matthew 24:29-30](#))

3-1/2 years
Signs which are
"**The beginning of sorrows**"
([Matthew 24:8](#))

3-1/2 years
Unparalleled trials of
"**the great tribulation**"
([Matthew 24:21](#))

"**His angels...gather together His elect**"
([Matthew 24:31](#))

However, it should be noted that many Biblical scholars say that the words "**times**" in Daniel and "**days**" and "**months**" in Revelation (in fact, throughout all Scripture) are often used to refer to blocks of time, that is, to longer periods or indefinite periods of time.

4. A fourth matter that needs to be looked at is this: What or who is meant by "**the abomination of desolation**"? As has already been discussed, many excellent commentators hold that the prophecy refers to the destruction of Jerusalem under both Antiochus Epiphemes (170 B.C.) and under Titus (70 A.D.). There is strong historical evidence, as well as the fact that Christ was answering a specific question of the disciples ([Matthew 24:3](#)), to support a past fulfillment of the prophecy. But, what about the future fulfillment? What or who is meant by "**the abomination of desolation**" at the end of the world? (See [Rev. 11:7](#); cp. [2 Thes. 2:3-4](#); [Rev. 13:1](#); [Rev. 13:3](#) [Rev. 13:5-6](#).)

- a. Some indication is perhaps given by the phrase itself. In the Old Testament the word *abomination* is connected with idolatry or sacrilege. *Of desolation* means the same as *causes desolation*. In this case it is *the abomination* that causes *desolation*. That is, the abomination acts upon the Holy Place and personally causes the desolation. This, of course, points toward a person fulfilling the prophecy in the future just as there were two literal persons who fulfilled it in the past, Antiochus and Titus.
- b. [Mark 13:14](#) actually uses the *masculine* participle which indicates strongly that the abomination of desolation is a person.
- c. [Daniel 9:27](#) speaks of a prince who causes the desolation. Leupold, the great Lutheran theologian, translates the prince as *the destroyer*. (Leupold. *Exposition of Daniel*, p.433. Because of his extraordinary scholarship and simplicity of writing, Leupold should be referred to in studying Daniel.)
- d. Second Thessalonians and Revelation identify an *antichrist* who is to arise in the last days and cause unparalleled havoc upon the world and God's people.

[2 Thessalonians 2:3-5 \(NASB\)](#)

“³ Let no one in any way deceive you, for *it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,*

⁴ *who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.*

⁵ *Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?”*