

# Is the Seventieth Week of Daniel Future?

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The interpretation of the revelation given to Daniel concerning the seventy weeks (Daniel 9:24–27) constitutes one of the determining factors in the whole system of prophecy. The attention given to it by all schools of interpretation, and the attacks upon the authenticity of the book itself combine to focus the white light of investigation upon it. The interpretation of this passage inevitably colors all other prophetic views, and a proper understanding of it is the *sine qua non* of any student of prophecy.

## **I. The Importance of the Revelation.**

The importance of the revelation of Daniel nine lies first of all in the chronology which it establishes. Properly understood, we have here the major outline of the period from Daniel to Christ and from the rapture of the Church to the second coming of Christ in glory. Certainly, no other Old Testament passage does as much for ordering events future from Daniel's point of view as does the passage under consideration.

Properly interpreted, the prophecy of Daniel furnishes an excellent example of the principle that prophecy is subject to literal interpretation. Practically all expositors, however opposed to prophecy *per se*, agree that at least part of the seventy weeks of Daniel is to be interpreted literally. In fact, such is the force of the literal interpretation that those who deny the possibility of accurate prophecy are compelled to move the date of the writing of Daniel until after the events which they believe fulfilled it. From the standpoint of this article, if the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel were subject to literal fulfillment, it is a powerful argument that the final seventieth week will have a similar fulfillment.

Another important aspect of the passage is frequently overlooked by expositors. The seventy weeks of Daniel, properly interpreted, demonstrate the distinct place of the Christian church and Israel in the purposes of God. The seventy weeks of Daniel are totally in reference to Israel and her relation to Gentile powers and the rejection of Israel's Messiah. The peculiar purpose of God in calling out a people from every nation to form the church and the program of the present age are nowhere in view in this prophecy.

## **II. The Historic Fulfillment of the Sixty-Nine Weeks.**

The interpretation of the seventy weeks of Daniel is divided into two main problems, the fulfillment of the sixty-nine weeks, and the fulfillment of the seventieth week. Our present study is primarily concerned with the latter problem. However, in order to have a background for judgment and interpretation, it is necessary to survey briefly the various interpretations of the first sixty-nine weeks.

There are few passages of Scripture which have occasioned a greater variety of interpretation than Daniel 9:24–27. A comparison of commentaries reveals that seldom can two be found with exactly the same exegesis. As Dr. James A. Montgomery states in concluding his long discussion of the passage: "To sum up: The history of the exegesis of the 70 Weeks is the Dismal Swamp of O.T. criticism. The difficulties that beset any 'rationalistic' treatment of the figures are great enough, for the critics on this side of the fence do not agree among themselves; but the trackless

wilderness of assumptions and theories in the efforts to obtain an exact chronology fitting into the history of Salvation, after these 2, 000 years of infinitely varied interpretations, would seem to preclude any use of the 70 Weeks for the determination of a definite prophetic chronology.” While we do not share Dr. Montgomery’s pessimism, we must face a bewildering lack of unanimity among expositors.

Most of the difficulty of expositors in the study of this passage may be traced to their premises. In general, there

are two main divisions of interpretation: Christological and non-Christological. The former interprets the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel as culminating in Christ while the latter finds fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy in events before or after Christ. Most writers on the subject have not been slow to notice the repeated use of the number seventy in relation to the prophetic program. It had been predicted that Israel’s servitude under the Babylonians would last seventy years. The seventy years were inflicted because of her failure to observe her Sabbatic years (Lev 26:34, 35; 2 Chron 36:21). The plan for the Sabbatic years involved the basic number *seven*. Sir Robert Anderson also advances the interesting conclusion that it was exactly 490 luni-solar years (360 days each) or seventy times seven years from the dedication of the temple in the eleventh year of Solomon to the dedication of the second temple in 515 B.C. These facts have led expositors to seek a literal fulfillment of Daniel 9:24–27.

The non-Christological interpretation of the passage attempts to find fulfillment of the seventy weeks in the events leading up to the persecution of Antiochus IV, known commonly as Antiochus Epiphanes. In 168 B.C., a pagan altar was constructed on top of the great altar of burnt sacrifices, and a pagan sacrifice was offered under the rulership of Antiochus Epiphanes. The act precipitated the Maccabean revolt which Antiochus attempted unsuccessfully to put down with great cruelty (167-164 B.C.). The system of chronology adopted by those who interpret Daniel to prophesy this event varies with the writer.

Generally, there is agreement among them that the seventy weeks of Daniel began with the beginning of the seventy years of Jeremiah. The beginning of the servitude of Jerusalem in 606 B.C. does not, however, give a satisfactory terminus for the first seven weeks, or forty-nine years of the prophecy. Accordingly, Dr. Montgomery quotes with approval the view that the seventy weeks began at 586 B.C.,

when Jerusalem was completely desolated according to his chronology and the forty-nine years accordingly bring us approximately to 538 B.C. when the Jews were permitted to return to Jerusalem. The sixty-two weeks or 434 years begin at 538 B.C. and culminate in the desecration of Antiochus in 168. As is apparent, however, there are two drastic errors in this system of computation. The beginning of the seventy weeks did not begin with the Jeremianic prophecy but with the command to restore Jerusalem, which is identified most satisfactorily as occurring in 445 B.C. The terminus of the seventy weeks does not take us to 168 B.C. as would be expected, but to 104 B.C. There is an error, here, of more than sixty years which no amount of juggling can erase.

Dr. Montgomery solves the problem by conveniently determining that Daniel was in error in his calculation: “To be sure, a similar objection may be made against our identification of the final Week of the Seventy with the period of Ant.’s tyranny, for the 62 Weeks would then take us down some 65 years too far. We can meet this objection only by surmising a chronological miscalculation on the part of the writer [Daniel]. For the first 49 years he had exact Scriptural

information; he was profoundly conscious of the epochal character of his own age; there was the necessity of extending Jer.'s 70 years into a much larger figure in order to bring it up to date (the natural process of all interpretation of prophecy), and the 70 years became 70 Year-Weeks, 490 years, too high a figure indeed, but he was not embarrassed, in the absence of a known chronology, in squeezing these 434 years between the Return and the Antiochian persecution."

It will be noticed that the interpretation of Daniel's seventy weeks to make them fulfilled in the Antiochian persecution involves the premises: (1) Jeremiah was wrong; (2) Daniel was in error; (3) The Christological view is not worthy of serious consideration even though it provides for a literal interpretation. For anyone having a serious view of the inspiration of the Scriptures, this non-Christological

interpretation must be dismissed as being only a clumsy attempt to counter the better interpretations which provide for a literal fulfillment. It is really no solution at all.

A more interesting non-Christological view is advanced by the Jews themselves. The prevailing interpretation of the Jews after 70 A.D. was that the events of Daniel's seventieth week have their fulfillment in the destruction of Jerusalem. Like other forms of the non-Christological view, they are not too concerned with a literal fulfillment of Daniel's chronology, though their interpretation is more satisfactory than the view of the destructive higher critics. Some aspects of their interpretation find their way even into the Christological view as portrayed by some writers.

The Christological view, which finds the sixty-nine weeks of Daniel culminating in Christ, has been accepted by most conservative expositors. The fathers from the second to the fourth century abound in explanations which bring the culmination of the sixty-nine weeks to the period of Christ's public ministry and death. The most satisfactory solution of the Christological interpretation is that of Sir Robert Anderson, a view that fully honors the accuracy and authority of Daniel's revelation. His conclusions embrace the following points: (1) the seventy weeks of Daniel represent 490 years, divided into three parts: forty-nine years, four hundred and thirty-four years (following the first forty-nine years), and the last week of seven years. (2) There was only one decree ever issued for the rebuilding of Jerusalem—that given to Nehemiah and its date is 445 B.C., specifically the first of Nisan or March 14 of that year. (3) The city was actually rebuilt during the time of Nehemiah at the end of the prophesied desolations of Jerusalem. (4) The sixty-two weeks, or 434 years, immediately follow the first forty-nine years, and on the basis of a prophetic year of 360 days total 173,880 days, which would end April 6, A.D. 32—the probable date when Christ rode into Jerusalem in fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9.

The chronology of Sir Robert Anderson has a number of distinct advantages over other systems. It provides a literal fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel. It is based on sound historical and chronological data. Most of all, it presents an interpretation of Scripture which fully honors the doctrine of inspiration. If a system of interpretation based on carefully established principles can bring the fulfillment of the prophecy into such accurate detail, it is ridiculous to attempt to warp Daniel's prophecy, into some sort of interpretation which admittedly does not fulfill the chronology of the passage. If Antiochus missed the proper date by more than sixty years, by occurring too soon, and the destruction of Jerusalem obviously occurred too late, undoubtedly all true scholars would immediately embrace the Christological interpretation if it were not for prejudice either against the Person of Christ, as in the case of the Jew, or against a literal fulfillment of prophecy, as in the case of the destructive critics. The case for the Christological

interpretation, particularly the viewpoint of Sir Robert Anderson, stands on every point superior to other views.

The important point of the Christological interpretation is that the first sixty-nine weeks had a *literal* fulfillment, both as to details and as to chronology. In approaching the task of interpreting the prophecy concerning the seventieth week, we must in all fairness to the principles approved by the fulfillment of the sixty-nine weeks, expect a literal fulfillment of the seventieth week both in its detail and in its chronology. The beginning of the seventy weeks of Daniel was marked by a definite event. At the end of the sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, there was a definite break in the prophecy which was fulfilled literally by the death of Christ. Likewise the final week of the prophecy, the seventieth week, apparently has a definite beginning and ends with the “full end” of the period of desolations. There are indications in the text that a considerable time period elapses between the close of the

sixty-ninth week and the beginning of the seventieth week. The question naturally arises, and it is decisive, is the seventieth week of Daniel future, or has it been already fulfilled in history? To this question we now direct our thought.

### **III. Have the Events of Daniel’s Seventieth Week Been Fulfilled?**

There are at least five theories in regard to the fulfillment of the seventieth week of Daniel, that is, most interpretations can be classified in one of five categories. Those who find the fulfillment of the first sixty-nine weeks in the events of the Maccabean persecution usually find the fulfillment of the seventieth week in the same period of persecution. As this view has been previously found to fail in fulfilling the passage, their interpretation of the fulfillment of the seventieth week likewise fails. The view of the Jews that the seventieth week is fulfilled in the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. likewise fails in fitting the chronology of Daniel.

Three other views have commended themselves to conservative scholars. There are some who hold that the seventieth week of Daniel is an indefinite period beginning while Christ was on earth and extending to the consummation of all things. This is in harmony with Daniel 9:24, which indicates that the program of God for bringing in everlasting righteousness and cessation of Israel’s persecutions will be completed by the end of the seventieth week. This interpretation breaks down utterly, however, as a literal fulfillment. The chronology of the sixty-nine weeks established the principle of literal fulfillment, and we cannot for the sake of convenience postulate an indefinite period for the final week of the prophecy. While we cannot accept this spiritual interpretation of the passage, it is an interesting confession on the part of those who accept it that *history does not record events which correspond with the prophecy of the seventieth week*.

One other view, however, claims our serious attention. It is advanced by a number of able expositors and claims to be a literal interpretation. In brief, the view accepts a system of chronology which allows for the termination of the sixty-nine weeks of the prophecy at the baptism of Christ. The first half of the seventieth week is, in their judgment, fulfilled by the events of the public ministry of Christ. In the middle of the week, Christ is crucified, the sacrifice and oblation cease, and the events of the last half of the seventieth week are immediately fulfilled in the events which follow. The seventy weeks terminate, perhaps, in some event such as the conversion of Cornelius. In other words, the seventieth week has already been fulfilled literally, and we cannot look for any future fulfillment.

In opposition to this view, the interpretation is advanced that there is an indefinite period of time between the close of the sixty-ninth week and the beginning of the seventieth week. At some future date, the seventieth week will begin, and its events will come to pass literally and will follow the chronology of the seven years of the seventieth week of Daniel. This is the only view which provides a reasonable ground for believing the final week of Daniel is future. If we accept the premise that the final week of Daniel demands a literal fulfillment, we are shut up to the last two views named: that it was fulfilled literally in the first century before 40 A.D., or that it is yet future and we can look for a literal fulfillment at some future date. The two explanations oppose each other; both cannot be right; accordingly, we may well weigh the contentions of those who support each view as a basis for decision.

One of the most clever writers to support the interpretation that the seventieth week of Daniel is already fulfilled is Philip Mauro, whose views are set forth in his work, *The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation*. Mr. Mauro believes that God's purpose for Israel as a nation was finished upon their rejection of Christ and that the promises given to Israel are now being fulfilled in the church. He denies the possibility of a future millennium to fulfill the promises of a kingdom given to David and Israel. His work is accordingly prejudiced by his premises, but his appeal is to the Scriptures rather than human authority and for this reason his contentions should be weighed. He states the case in support of his position with all the force of a clever thinker and skillful debater. It is characteristic of his style, however, that he never discusses facts for which he does not have a ready solution, i.e., he selects for discussion only those points which are in favor of his viewpoint. This defect is too often overlooked by the unwary. He also has great skill in magnifying a minor point until it appears to be a decisive one, at the same time running rapidly over material which might upset his argument. Accordingly, it is more important to consider what he does not say, on some points, than what he states.

Philip Mauro's system of interpretation, in brief, involves the following points: (1) The first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel run from the decree of Cyrus (536 B.C.) to the baptism of Christ. As this amount totals 562 years rather than 483, Mauro, while insisting on literal fulfillment, claims that there can be no certainty of the exact historic length of years between the decree of Cyrus and the baptism of Christ—in fact, claims to find an error of eighty years which adjusts the difference. (2) The baptism of Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophecy, "to anoint the most holy" (Dan 9:24), the anointment being the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the "most holy" being Christ Himself. (3) The "prince that shall come" is Titus, and one who makes the covenant of Daniel 9:27 is Christ. (4) The cessation of the sacrifices in the middle of the seventieth week is the fulfillment of Old Testament sacrifices by the death of Christ. (5) All the six elements of the decree in relation to "thy people" and "thy holy city" mentioned in Daniel 9:24 are fulfilled by the life, death and resurrection of Christ. (6) There cannot be any break between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week of Daniel: "Never has a specified number of time-units, making up a described stretch of time, been taken to mean anything but *continuous* or *consecutive* time-units."

The issue between the two literal interpretations of Daniel's seventieth week is, then, clearly drawn. A glance at the six points enumerated will readily reveal that some of them are decisive in the interpretation. All six elements of the decree relating to Israel and Jerusalem must be fulfilled by the death of Christ. If so much as one of these was not fulfilled, then the interpretation is revealed to be faulty. If the one who makes the covenant is not Christ, it is admitted even by Mr. Mauro that the seventieth week must be still future: "Manifestly those two

ideas stand or fall together; for if verse 27 relates to Christ, then the last week followed immediately after the 69th; but if it relates to antichrist, or a coming Roman prince, then it is yet future." If the sacrifices actually ceased at the death of Christ, it would do much to substantiate Mr. Mauro's contention. While the final point, i.e., that there cannot be a break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks is begging the question, it is well to consider what parallels the Scripture may afford on the question.

### **Is Titus the Prince that Shall Come?**

According to Daniel 9:26, after the sixty-ninth week (sixty-two and the first seven weeks) the "anointed one" shall be "cut off," and "the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." It is clear that the "anointed one" is Christ-the authorized translation is correct, "Messiah." But who are "the people" and "the prince"? It is a well-established fact of history that Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. by the Roman armies, to the utter destruction of upwards of one million Jews in the area. The people represented here can be none other than those of Rome. The "prince of the people" is accordingly a Roman prince. The interpretation of Mr. Mauro is that this is clearly the character Titus who led the armies

of Rome in 70 A.D. against Jerusalem. There are good reasons, however, for believing that the character thus introduced is to be identified with the future political ruler of the Mediterranean world in the time just before the second coming of Christ. Mr. Mauro flatly denies that there will be any such ruler, denies that the Roman people of the first century are to be identified in any way with the people of that future time.

It is not necessary to engage in a disputation of Mr. Mauro's entire system to show his error in this particular. It is a plain fact of history that God is dealing with the Jews of to-day in a way determined by the rejection of Christ by their fathers. If this can be true, then why should it be thought incredible that a future prince should be identified as Roman and as connected with the people who destroyed Jerusalem? Mr. Mauro overlooks a most significant fact in his chronology, however. If Titus is the "prince" of Daniel 9:26, then the destruction of Jerusalem occurred after the seventieth week, rather than after the sixty-ninth week. Is it not utterly inexplicable that the prophecy of verse twenty-six should be stated to be *after* the sixty-ninth week, if in matter of fact it is during and after the seventieth week? Does not the way in which the truth is stated infer that the events occur *after* the sixty-ninth week but *before* the seventieth week? If so, a parenthesis is called for, allowing for all events in their proper place and for a fulfillment of the seventieth week in the future.

Not only does the form of the prophecy infer a parenthesis between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week, but the expression "the people of the prince" is unusual. Normally, it would be expected that the prophecy would state that the prince would destroy the city. In Daniel 7 and 8, prophecies there in dealing with military triumphs speak of them as consummated by their leader. In Daniel 9:26, however, the usual form of statement is turned around and it is stated that "the people of the prince" destroyed the city. Now it is clear that such would be the case if the prince had no

direct connection with the event, but Jerusalem was destroyed under the personal direction of Titus. The language of the prophecy would seem to indicate that some other person than Titus was in view.

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contribute prophecies concerning the coming of a military leader who will rule the Mediterranean world. From Revelation 13:1-10, we gather that he will be the greatest military ruler in matter of power that the world has ever seen. A

comparison of Revelation 13 with the events of the destruction of Jerusalem reveals no similarity and must refer to a future event. Other passages (Dan 7:8, 11, 24–27; 11:36–45; 2 Thess 2:1–12) apparently refer to the same person. In view of the revelation of Daniel 7, it is not strange to find another reference in Daniel 9.

### **Who Makes the Covenant for One Week?**

Mr. Mauro strenuously objects to identifying the “prince that shall come” with a future political ruler, not so much because it contradicts the plain meaning of verse 26 but because it provides an interpretation of verse 27 which utterly destroys his theory. In verse 27 it is revealed: “And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease; and upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate; and even unto the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out upon the desolate.” Now, it is normal exegesis for a pronoun to claim as its antecedent the nearest noun with which it could be identified. The nearest antecedent in this case is the “prince that shall come.” This could not be Titus for he did not make such a covenant, and according to Mr. Mauro’s theory the seventieth week must immediately follow the sixty-ninth-and Titus did not appear on the scene until years later. Accordingly, Mr. Mauro identifies the one who makes the covenant as Christ.

In support of Mr. Mauro’s contention is the fact widely recognized by the Scriptures and expositors of the Scripture

that Christ is the minister of the new covenant and that in His death on the cross the new covenant was duly executed. An attempt to connect Daniel’s covenant with the new covenant, however, is a work of desperation rather than a natural exegesis. The new covenant is expressly called an “everlasting covenant” (Heb 13:20). The covenant of Daniel 9:27 continues only for one week in its intent, and if the break at the middle of the week may be so interpreted, the covenant is broken before it runs its course, i.e., at the end of the first half of the week. The two covenants have nothing in common as to their duration.

Now, it is also widely accepted that the new covenant was enacted by the death of Christ. Mr. Mauro’s theory would involve that the death of Christ occur at the beginning of the seventieth week. Because of the fact that he believes the death of Christ occurred in the middle of the week, he is forced to the conclusion that the covenant is made *in* the week rather than *for* one week-in opposition to the usual translation. It is obvious that Mr. Mauro’s interpretation requires an unnatural exegesis.

A fact of great significance is that the covenant is made with “the many” which could only refer to “thy people” (Dan 9:24), Israel. The new covenant, insofar as it relates to Israel, is connected in Scripture with their millennial blessings and the future regathering of Israel (cf. Heb 8:8–12). Mr. Mauro, however, flatly denies that Israel has any place in God’s future program. He believes that the covenant mentioned in Daniel 9:27 is a covenant of grace toward all people as contained in the present Gospel of grace. Mr. Mauro, accordingly, is faced by a dilemma. If this is indeed a covenant between Christ and Israel regarding their future blessing, then his whole system breaks down for the passage would teach a future for Israel as such. The alternative is to admit that the covenant is not the new covenant and that Christ is not the one who enters into the covenant. Mr. Mauro’s escape from this dilemma is to deny what the passage plainly teaches-that the seventy weeks refer

specifically to “thy people,” Israel, and “thy city,” Jerusalem. In the last analysis, there is nothing whatever in the revelation concerning this covenant (Dan 9:27) to connect it with Christ.

## **Were Old Testament Sacrifices Ended by the Death of Christ?**

The argument concerning the identity of the one who makes the covenant is decisive in itself. If Christ did not make the covenant, then the last of the seventy weeks is yet awaiting fulfillment. A further question, however, has an important bearing on the issue. According to Daniel 9:27, the sacrifice and oblation are stopped in the midst of the seventieth week by the one who makes the covenant. According to Mr. Mauro this is the event of the death of Christ which supplanted Old Testament sacrifices. Mr. Mauro quotes from Hebrews 10:8, 9, where it is stated: "He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second." Mr. Mauro asks: "What perfect agreement with the words of the prophecy, 'He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease'!"

Now, this is an important point. If indeed the death of Christ causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease, it would be a powerful argument in support of Mr. Mauro's view. That the new covenant supplants the old and the one sacrifice of Christ supplants the many sacrifices of the old covenant is indeed the teaching of the Scriptures. It is something else, however, to state that He *caused* the sacrifice and oblation to cease. As a matter of fact, *the sacrifice and oblation did not cease until the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D.* It was the ruthless work of violence of the Roman armies that caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease in the first century, and if we interpret the passage correctly, the seventieth week of Daniel is a prophecy of a future restoration of these sacrifices under a covenant and their violent conclusion. Even the book of Hebrews speaks of the fact that at the time of the writing of the epistle, probably

shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, the priests were still ministering in the temple more than thirty years after the death of Christ. In Hebrews 8:4, we read, "Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, seeing there are those who offer the gifts according to the law." The argument is that Christ is a priest in heaven not in earth as there are still priests on earth serving according to the law of Moses. The Scriptures themselves are careful, then, by using the present tense, *are*, to include evidence which makes Mr. Mauro's interpretation inadmissible.

## **Have the Desolations of Daniel's Seventieth Week Been Fulfilled?**

Mr. Mauro is probably more embarrassed by the lack of a good explanation of the latter part of Daniel 9:27 than by any other feature of his interpretation. His system requires that the seventieth week of Daniel be a definite time period of seven years. It is therefore necessary that the desolations of the latter part of verse 27 be fulfilled within a period of three and one-half years of the death of Christ-according to his system. Mr. Mauro comes to the conclusion, however, that the desolations mentioned in this verse are those accomplished by the armies of Titus in 70 A.D. In other words, Mr. Mauro is unable to find any event within the seventieth week of Daniel to fulfill the prophecy of the latter part of Daniel's seventieth week, and in the end is forced to abandon his major thesis that the prophecies of Daniel's seventy weeks are subject to literal fulfillment.

In contrast to Mr. Mauro's difficulty, we have in Matthew 24:15, from Christ Himself, the prophecy of the fulfillment of Daniel's promised desolations. Christ said, "When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let him that readeth understand),..." The context which follows indicates that the events are preliminary to the second coming of Christ. In fact, so direct is the connection that some who like Mr. Mauro connect Matthew 24:15 with the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus, have

attempted to find fulfillment of the promise of Christ's return in the events of 70 A.D. The desolations of Daniel 9:27 instead of being fulfilled in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem are rather one of the signs pointing to the early return of Christ in glory.

### **The Declared Purpose of God for the Seventy Weeks.**

One of the decisive questions facing any interpreter of Daniel 9:24–27 is the question whether God's declared purpose for that period has been fulfilled. In this period, according to Daniel 9:24, it is God's purpose to (1) finish transgressions, (2) make an end of sins, (3) make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) seal up vision and prophecy, (6) anoint the most holy. It is Mr. Mauro's interpretation that points one through four were fulfilled by the death of Christ; point five is the resulting spiritual blindness which befalls Israel; point six is fulfilled by the anointing of the church on the day of Pentecost.

There are many interesting details involved in the discussion of each of these points which in the interest of brevity we cannot consider. It is of great importance to gain a clear view of the principles which dominate the interpretation, however. Mr. Mauro *must* find fulfillment of all the purpose of God revealed here before the end of the period extending three and one-half years beyond the death of Christ. In his interpretation, he claims to find such fulfillment, and it is this claim we must examine.

There are many details in his system which are open to question. For instance, he claims fulfillment of the prophecy that vision and prophecy are "sealed up," by which he means that Israel comes into *permanent* spiritual blindness. He perhaps overlooks the fact that God used Jews to write the New Testament after the date he claims for the close of Daniel's seventieth week—Jews without an exception if Luke was an Israelite. While Paul reveals that blindness in part befell Israel because of their rejection of Christ, it is also clear that the blindness will be lifted after the fullness

of the Gentiles is come in (Rom 11:25). Mr. Mauro's interpretation of the anointing of the most holy, that it refers to the baptism of Christ, while supported by some, is in violation of the consistent usage of the Old Testament. Tregelles states on this point, "The expression does not in a single case apply to any *person*." It is a better interpretation that it refers to a future return of the Shekinah glory. The Revised Version margin renders it, "a most holy place."

All these details are insignificant, however, before the principal objection to Mr. Mauro's interpretation. According to the specific limitation of Daniel 9:24, the prophecy pertains to "thy people," Israel, and to "thy city," Jerusalem. To make it plain, then, transgressions must be finished *in relation to Israel and Jerusalem*; an end must be made to sins, and iniquity must be *purged away* (cf. Revised Version margin) *in relation to Israel and Jerusalem*; everlasting righteousness must be brought in *for Israel and Jerusalem*; and so on through the prophecy.

What does Mr. Mauro do with the passage? For him the passage deals with the whole world, a general provision of salvation through the death of Christ which, according to his interpretation, does not relate to Jerusalem or to Israel as such at all. Jerusalem is only scheduled for destruction and Israel to be utterly cast off—according to Mr. Mauro's view. To make this prophecy of coming blessing to Israel and Jerusalem—which can only be fulfilled by the return of Christ to bring in a kingdom of righteousness—a reference to the work of Christ on the cross is to confuse the work of God in Christ on the cross and its application historically. The benefits of the death of Christ will be realized by Israel only after "they shall look unto me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for him..." (Zech 12:10), and in the day when "a fountain" be "opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (Zech 13:1)—events still

future from our point in history. Sir Robert Anderson has demonstrated that none of the prophecies of Daniel 9:24 have been

fulfilled: "A careful study of the Angel's words will show that not so much as one of them has been thus accomplished."

### **Is a Parenthesis Between Daniel's Sixty-ninth and Seventieth Week Unparalleled in Scripture?**

The entire burden of Mr. Mauro's argument is intended to support his contention that there is no break between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of Daniel. He not only holds that the passage does not admit such an interpretation, but he states that such an interpretation would be a violation of a consistent principle in Scripture that time-units are *always* continuous. To quote his exact words: "Never has a specified number of time-units, making up a described stretch of time, been taken to mean anything but *continuous* or *consecutive* time units."

Fortunately, for the brevity of our own study here, there is an entirely adequate answer to this statement. Not only does the internal evidence of the passage demand it by stating certain events are *after* the sixty-ninth week, rather than in or after the seventieth week, but there are parallel cases in the Scripture where God as it were stopped the clock of fulfillment only to resume the progress of fulfillment later.

The recent monograph of Dr. H. A. Ironside, *The Great Parenthesis*, is a worthy and timely contribution to the subject. Dr. Ironside shows a number of instances of parentheses in God's program: (1) The interval between the "acceptable year of the Lord" and the "day of vengeance of our God" (Isa 61:2—a parenthesis already extending more than nineteen hundred years. (2) The interval between the Roman empire as symbolized by the legs of iron of the great image of Daniel 2 and the feet of ten toes. *Confer* also Daniel 7:23–27; 8:24, 25. (3) The same interval is found between Daniel 11:35 and Daniel 11:36. (4) A great parenthesis occurs between Hosea 3:4 and verse 5, and again between Hosea 5:15 and 6:1. (5) A great parenthesis occurs also between Psalm 22:22 and 22:23 and between

Psalm 110:1 and 110:2. (6) Peter in quoting Psalm 34:12–16 stops in the middle of a verse to distinguish God's present work and His future dealing with sin (1 Pet 3:10–12).

(7) The great prophecy of Matthew 24 becomes intelligible only if the present age be considered a parenthesis between Daniel 9:26 and 9:27. (8) Acts 15:13–21 indicates that the apostles fully understood that during the present age the Old Testament prophecies would not be fulfilled, but would have fulfillment "after this" when God "will build again the tabernacle of David" (Acts 15:13). (9) Israel's yearly schedule of feasts showed a wide separation between the feasts prefiguring the death and resurrection of Christ and Pentecost, and the feasts speaking of Israel's regathering and blessing. (10) Romans 9–11 definitely provide for the parenthesis, particularly the figure of the olive tree in chapter 11. (11) The revelation of the Church as one body requires a parenthesis between God's past dealings and His future dealings with the nation Israel. (12) The consummation of the present parenthesis is of such a nature that it resumes the interrupted events of Daniel's last week.

To this imposing list of arguments for the parenthesis between Daniel's sixty-ninth and seventieth week, we can add the interesting computations of Sir Robert Anderson in regard to the statement in 1 Kings 6:1, that Solomon began to build the temple in the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt. A computation of the evidence indicates that this period was, instead, 573 years. On the basis of a study of Judges, Sir Robert Anderson

discovered a total of 93 years during which Israel was cast off as a nation-divided into five different periods of time (cf. Judges 3:8, 14; 4:2, 3; 6:1; 13:1). By subtracting this from 573, the figure is corrected to 480, the exact figure stated by the writer of 1 Kings.

### **Conclusion**

The answer to our leading question, Is the Seventieth Week of Daniel future?, can only be answered in the affirmative. The Scriptures bear a full testimony that God has a purpose yet unfulfilled for His people, Israel. If the events of Daniel's seventieth week are future, it is clear that the person who makes the covenant must be the wicked character who is the persecutor of all who will not worship him. The "many" with whom the covenant is made can be, on the basis of the context, only Israel, still in unbelief. The "end" of which Daniel 9:27 speaks can be only the return of Christ to bring righteousness, peace, prosperity, and universal knowledge of the Lord to this evil world. Before the world will witness these stirring events, we who are His look for that blessed moment when caught up from this world at the return of the Lord for His own we shall see His face and forever thereafter know one passion and one love-to worship and serve our blessed Lord.

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