

THE
SEVENTY WEEKS
of Daniel 9

Based on passages in:
The King James Bible
E.G. White, Desire of Ages
Uriah Smith, Daniel & Revelation

In Light of Prophecy Fulfilled
1775 E Palm Canyon Drive 110-108
Palm Springs, California 92264
www.inlightofprophecyfulfilled.org

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Introduction

This is a study on the Seventy Week Prophecy of Daniel 9. First is a brief outline taken from The Desire of Ages, then, because this prophecy does not start until Daniel 9:23 and the explanations require numerous references to Daniel 8 and the first part of Daniel 9, both Daniel 8 and the first part of Daniel 9 (KJV) are quoted. A detailed description of Daniel 8 and the first part of Daniel 9 is beyond the scope of this booklet.

We are noticing that the first gospel message was based on “*The time is fulfilled*” referring, of course, to Daniel’s 70 week prophecy. The great religious awakening of the early 1800s was also based on prophecy using the 70 week portion of the 2300 day prophecy to justify first, 1843, and, later, 1844.

At the now worldly turmoil of our current age we need to show that prophecy has predicted the separation message. This end time separation message study, too, is beyond the scope of this booklet.

Seventy Week Outline

The burden of Christ’s preaching was, “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe*

the gospel.” Thus the gospel message, as given by the Saviour Himself, was based on the prophecies. The “*time*” which He declared to be fulfilled was the period made known by the angel Gabriel to Daniel. “*Seventy weeks,*” said the angel, “*are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.*” Daniel 9:24. A day in prophecy stands for a year. (See Numbers 14:34; Ezekiel 4:6 and appendix 1). The seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety days, represent four hundred and ninety years. A starting point for this period is given: “*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks,*” sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years. Daniel 9:25. The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, as completed by the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus (see Ezra 6:14; 7:1, 9, margin), went into effect in the

autumn of B.C. 457. From this time four hundred and eighty-three years extend to the autumn of A.D. 27. According to the prophecy, this period was to reach to the Messiah, the Anointed One. In A.D. 27, Jesus at His baptism received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and soon afterward began His ministry. Then the message was proclaimed. *“The time is fulfilled.”*

Then, said the angel, *“He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [seven years].”* For seven years after the Saviour entered on His ministry, the gospel was to be preached especially to the Jews; for three and a half years by Christ Himself; and afterward by the apostles. *“In the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.”* Daniel 9:27. In the spring of A.D. 31, Christ the true sacrifice was offered on Calvary. Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain, showing that the sacredness and significance of the sacrificial service had departed. The time had come for the earthly sacrifice and oblation to cease.

The one week—seven years—ended in A.D. 34. Then by the stoning of Stephen the Jews finally sealed their rejection of the gospel; the disciples who were

scattered abroad by persecution *“went everywhere preaching the word”* (Acts 8:4); and shortly after, Saul the persecutor was converted, and became Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

The time of Christ’s coming, His anointing by the Holy Spirit, His death, and the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles, were definitely pointed out. It was the privilege of the Jewish people to understand these prophecies, and to recognize their fulfillment in the mission of Jesus. Christ urged upon His disciples the importance of prophetic study. Referring to the prophecy given to Daniel in regard to their time, He said, *“Whoso readeth, let him understand.”* Matthew 24:15. After His resurrection He explained to the disciples in *“all the prophets”* *“the things concerning Himself.”* Luke 24:27. The Saviour had spoken through all the prophets. *“The Spirit of Christ which was in them”* *“testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”* 1 Peter 1:11.

It was Gabriel, the angel next in rank to the Son of God, who came with the divine message to Daniel. It was Gabriel, *“His angel,”* whom Christ sent to open the future to the beloved John; and a blessing is pronounced on

those who read and hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things written therein. Revelation 1:3.

“The Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants and prophets.” While *“the secret things belong unto the Lord our God,”* *“those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever.”* Amos 3:7; Deuteronomy 29:29. God has given these things to us, and His blessing will attend the reverent, prayerful study of the prophetic scriptures.

As the message of Christ’s first advent announced the kingdom of His grace, so the message of His second advent announces the kingdom of His glory. And the second message, like the first, is based on the prophecies. The words of the angel to Daniel relating to the last days were to be understood in the time of the end. At that time, *“many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.”* *“The wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.”* Daniel 12:4, 10. The Saviour Himself has given signs of His coming, and He says, *“When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at*

hand.” *“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.”*

“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Luke 21:31, 34, 36.

We have reached the period foretold in these scriptures. The time of the end is come, the visions of the prophets are unsealed, and their solemn warnings point us to our Lord’s coming in glory as near at hand. .

Daniel Chapter 8

8:1 *In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, [even unto] me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.*

8:2 *And I saw in a vision; and it came to pass, when I saw, that I [was] at Shushan [in] the palace, which [is] in the province of Elam; and I saw in a vision, and I was by the river of Ulai.*

8:3 *Then I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, there stood before the river a ram which had [two] horns: and the [two] horns [were] high; but one [was] higher than the other, and the*

higher came up last.

8:4 I saw the ram pushing westward, and northward, and southward; so that no beasts might stand before him, neither [was there any] that could deliver out of his hand; but he did according to his will, and became great.

8:5 And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat [had] a notable horn between his eyes.

8:6 And he came to the ram that had [two] horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in the fury of his power.

8:7 And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand.

8:8 Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven.

8:9 And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which

waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant [land].

8:10 And it waxed great, [even] to the host of heaven; and it cast down [some] of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them.

8:11 Yea, he magnified [himself] even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily [sacrifice] was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down.

8:12 And an host was given [him] against the daily [sacrifice] by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered.

8:13 Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain [saint] which spake, How long [shall be] the vision [concerning] the daily [sacrifice], and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?

8:14 And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.

8:15 And it came to pass, when I, [even] I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a man.

8:16 *And I heard a man's voice between [the banks of] Ulai, which called, and said, Gabriel, make this [man] to understand the vision.*

8:17 *So he came near where I stood: and when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face: but he said unto me, Understand, O son of man: for at the time of the end [shall be] the vision.*

8:18 *Now as he was speaking with me, I was in a deep sleep on my face toward the ground: but he touched me, and set me upright.*

8:19 *And he said, Behold, I will make thee know what shall be in the last end of the indignation: for at the time appointed the end [shall be].*

8:20 *The ram which thou sawest having [two] horns [are] the kings of Media and Persia.*

8:21 *And the rough goat [is] the king of Grecia: and the great horn that [is] between his eyes [is] the first king.*

8:22 *Now that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of the nation, but not in his power.*

8:23 *And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.*

8:24 *And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.*

8:25 *And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify [himself] in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand.*

8:26 *And the vision of the evening and the morning which was told [is] true: wherefore shut thou up the vision; for it [shall be] for many days.*

8:27 *And I Daniel fainted, and was sick [certain] days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood [it].*

Daniel Chapter 9:1-22

9:1 *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;*

9:2 *In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years*

in the desolations of Jerusalem.

9:3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

9:4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

9:5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

9:6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

9:7 O Lord, righteousness [belongeth] unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, [that are] near, and [that are] far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

9:8 O Lord, to us [belongeth] confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against

thee.

9:9 To the Lord our God [belong] mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;

9:10 Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

9:11 Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that [is] written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

9:12 And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

9:13 As [it is] written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

9:14 Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God [is] righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we

obeyed not his voice.

9:15 And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

9:16 O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people [are become] a reproach to all [that are] about us.

9:17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

9:18 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

9:19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

9:20 And whiles I [was]

speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

9:21 Yea, whiles I [was] speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

9:22. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

Daniel Chapter 9:23

Daniel 9:23. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

The manner in which Gabriel introduces himself on this occasion, shows that he has come to complete some unfulfilled mission. This can be nothing less than to carry out the instruction to make this man “*understand the vision*,” as recorded in chapter 8. “*I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding*.” As the charge still rested upon him to make Daniel understand, and as

he explained to Daniel in chapter 8 all that he could then bear, and yet he did not understand the vision, he now comes to resume his work and complete his mission. As soon as Daniel commenced his fervent supplication, the commandment came forth; that is, Gabriel received instruction to visit Daniel, and impart to him the requisite information.

From the time it takes to read Daniel's prayer down to the point at which Gabriel made his appearance upon the scene, the reader can judge of the speed with which this messenger was dispatched from the court of heaven to this servant of God. No wonder that Daniel says he was caused to fly swiftly or that Ezekiel compares the movements of these celestial beings to a flash of lightning. Eze.1:14.

"Understand the matter," he says to Daniel. What matter?—That, evidently, which he did not before understand, as stated in the last verse of chapter 8. *"Consider the vision."* What vision? Not the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's image, nor the vision of chapter 7, for there was no difficulty with either of these; but the vision of chapter 8, in reference to which his mind was filled with doubt and

astonishment. *"I am come to show thee,"* also said the angel. Show thee in reference to what?—Certainly in reference to something wherein he was entertaining wrong ideas, and something, at the same time, pertaining to his prayer, as it was this which had called forth Gabriel on his mission at this time.

But Daniel had no difficulty in understanding what the angel told him about the ram, he-goat, and little horn, the kingdoms of Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Nor was he mistaken in regard to the ending of the seventy years' captivity. But the burden of his petition was respecting the repairing of the desolations of the sanctuary, which lay in ruins; and he had undoubtedly drawn the conclusion that when the end of the seventy years' captivity came, the time would come for the fulfilment of what the angel had said respecting the cleansing of the sanctuary at the end of the 2300 days. Now he must be set right. And this explains why at this particular time, so soon after the previous vision, instruction was sent to him. Now the seventy years of captivity were drawing to their close, and Daniel was applying to a wrong issue the instruction he had before received

from the angel. He was falling into a misunderstanding, and was acting upon it; Hence he must not be suffered longer to remain ignorant of the true import of the former vision. "*I am come to show thee;*" "*understand the matter;*" "*consider the vision.*" Such were the words used by the very person Daniel had seen in the former vision, and to whom he had heard the command given, "*Make this man to understand the vision,*" and who, he knew, had never carried out that instruction. But now he appears, and says, "*I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.*" How could Daniel's mind be more emphatically carried back to the vision of chapter 8, and how could the connection between that visit of the angel and this be more distinctly shown, than by such words at such a time from such a person? The considerations already presented are sufficient to show conclusively the connection between chapters 8 and 9; but this will still further appear in subsequent verses.

One expression seems worthy of notice before we leave verse 23. It is the declaration of the angel to Daniel, "*For thou art greatly beloved.*" The angel brought this declaration direct from the courts of heaven. It

expressed the state of feeling that existed there in regard to Daniel. Think of celestial beings, the highest in the universe,—the Father, the Son, the holy angels,—having such regard and esteem for a mortal man here upon earth as to authorize an angel to bear the message to him that he is greatly beloved! This is one of the highest pinnacles of glory to which mortals can attain.

Abraham reached another, when it could be said of him that he was the "*friend of God;*" and Enoch another, when it could be said of him that he "*walked with God.*" Can we arrive at any such attainments? God is no respecter of persons; but he is a respecter of character. If in virtue and godliness we could equal these eminent men, we could move the divine love to equal depths. We, too, could be greatly beloved,—could be friends of God, and could walk with him. And we must be in our generation what they were in theirs. There is a figure used in reference to the last church which denotes the closest union with God: "*If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*"

Rev.3:20. To sup with the Lord denotes an intimacy equal to being greatly beloved by him,

walking with him, or being his friend. How desirable a position! Alas for the evils of our nature, which cut us off from this communion! Oh for grace to overcome these! that we may enjoy this spiritual union here, and finally enter the glories of his presence at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Daniel Chapter 9:24

Daniel 9:24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

Such are the first words the angel utters to Daniel, toward imparting to him that instruction which he came to give. Why does he thus abruptly introduce a period of time? We must again refer to the vision of chapter 8. We have seen that Daniel, at the close of that chapter, says that he did not understand the vision. Some portions of that he did not understand the vision. Some portions of that vision were at the time very clearly explained. It could not have been these portions which he did not

understand. We therefore inquire what it was which Daniel did not understand, or, in other words, what part of the vision was there left unexplained. In that vision four prominent things are brought to view: (1) The Ram; (2) The He-goat; (3) The Little Horn; (4) The period of the 2300 days. The symbols of the ram, the he-goat, and the little horn were explained. Nothing, however, was said respecting the time. This must therefore have been the point which he did not understand; and as without this the other portions of the vision were of no avail, he could well say, while the application of this period was left in obscurity, that he did not understand the vision.

If this view of the subject is correct, we should naturally expect, when the angel completed his explanation of the vision, that he would commence with the very point which had been omitted: namely, the time. And this we find to be true in fact. After citing Daniel's attention back to the former vision in the most direct and emphatic manner, and assuring him that he had now come forth to give him understanding in the matter, he commences upon the very point there omitted, and says, "*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy*

people and upon thy holy city."

But how does this language show any connection with the 2300 days, or throw any light upon that period? We answer: The language cannot be intelligibly referred to anything else: for the word here rendered determined signifies "cut off;" and no period is given in the vision here referred to from which the seventy weeks could be cut off but the 2300 days of the previous vision. How direct and natural, then, is the connection. Daniel's attention is fixed upon the 2300 days, which he did not understand, by the angel's directing him to the former vision; and he says, "*Seventy weeks are cut off.*" Cut off from what?—The 2300 days, most assuredly.

Proof may be called for that the word rendered determined signifies to cut off. An abundance can be given. The Hebrew word thus translated is nehhtak. This word Gesenius, in his Hebrew Lexicon, defines as follows: "Properly, to cut off; tropically, to divide; and so to determine, to decree." In the Chaldoe-Rabbinic Dictionary of Stockius, the word nehhtak is thus defined: "Scidit, abscidit, conscidit, inscidit, excidit—to cut, to cut away, to cut to pieces, to cut or engrave, to cut off." Mercerus in his

Thesaurus furnishes a specimen of Rabbinical usage in the phrase, hhatikah shel basar, "a piece of flesh," or "a cut of flesh." He translates the word as it occurs in Dan.9:24, by "praecisa est," is cut off. In the literal version of Arias Montanus, it is translated 'decisa est,' is cut off; in the marginal reading which is grammatically correct, it is rendered by the plural, "decisae sunt," are cut off. In the Latin version of Junius and Tremellius, nehhtak (the passive of hhathak) is rendered "decisae sunt," are cut off. Again, in Theodotion's Greek version of Daniel (which is the version used in the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, as being the most faithful), it is rendered by (sunetmethesan), were cut off; and in the Venetian copy by (tetmentai), have been cut. The idea of cutting off is preserved in the Vulgate, where the phrase is "abbreviatae sunt," are shortened.

"Thus Chaldaic and Rabbinical authority, and that of the earliest versions, the Septuagint and Vulgate, give the single signification of cutting off, to this verb."

"Hengstenberg, who enters into a critical examination of the original text, says, 'But the very use of the word, which does not elsewhere occur, while others

much more frequently used were at hand if Daniel had wished to express the idea of determination, and of which he has elsewhere, and even in this portion availed himself, seems to argue that the word stands from regard to its original meaning, and represents the seventy weeks in contrast with a determination of time (*en platei*) as a period cut off from subsequent duration, and accurately limited.”—

Christology of the Old Testament, Vol. II, p. 301. Washington, 1839.

Why, then, it may be asked, did our translators render the word *determined*, when it so obviously means cut off? The answer is, They doubtless overlooked the connection between the eighth and ninth chapters, and considering it improper to render it cut off, when nothing was given from which the seventy weeks could be cut off, they gave the word its tropical instead of its literal meaning. But, as we have seen, the construction, the context, and the connection require the literal meaning, and render any other inadmissible.

Seventy weeks, then, or 490 days of the 2300, were cut off upon, or allotted to, Jerusalem and the Jews; and the events which were to be consummated

within that period are briefly stated. The transgression was to be finished; that is, the Jewish people were to fill up the cup of their iniquity, which they did in the rejection and crucifixion of Christ. An end of sins, or of sin-offerings, was to be made. This took place when the great offering was made on Calvary.

Reconciliation for iniquity was to be provided. This was made by the sacrificial death of the Son of God. Everlasting righteousness was to be brought in; the righteousness which our Lord manifested in his sinless life. The vision and the prophecy were to be sealed up, or made sure. By the events given to transpire in the seventy weeks, the prophecy is tested. By this the application of the whole vision is determined. If the events of this period are accurately fulfilled, the prophecy is of God, and will all be accomplished; and if these seventy weeks are fulfilled as weeks of years, then the 2300 days, of which these are a part, are so many years. Thus the events of the seventy weeks furnish a key to the whole vision. And the “*most holy*” was to be anointed; the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. In the examination of the sanctuary, on chapter 8:14, we saw that a time

came when the earthly sanctuary gave place to the heavenly, and the priestly ministration was transferred to that. Before the ministration in the sanctuary commenced, the sanctuary and all the holy vessels were to be anointed. Ex.40:9,10. The last event, therefore, of the seventy weeks, here brought to view, is the anointing of the heavenly tabernacle, or the opening of the ministration there. Thus this first division of the 2300 days bring us to the commencement of the service in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, as the whole period brings us to the commencement of the service in the second apartment, or most holy place, of that sanctuary.

The argument must now be considered conclusive that the ninth chapter of Daniel explains the eighth, and that the seventy weeks are a part of the 2300 days; and with a few extracts from the writings of others we will leave this point.

The Advent Shield in 1844 said:—

“We call attention to one fact which shows that there is a necessary ‘connection’ between the seventy weeks of the ninth chapter, and something else which precedes or follows it, called ‘the vision.’ It is found in the 24th

verse: ‘*Seventy weeks are determined [are cut off] upon thy people... to seal up the vision,*’ etc. Now there are but two significations to the phrase ‘*seal up.*’ They are, first, ‘to make secret,’ and second, ‘to make sure.’ We care not now in which of these significations the phrase is supposed to be used. That is not the point now before us. Let the signification be what it may, it shows that the prediction of the seventy weeks necessarily relates to something else beyond itself, called ‘*the vision,*’ in reference to which it performs this work, ‘*to seal up.*’ To talk of its sealing up itself is as much of an absurdity as to suppose that Josephus was so much afraid of the Romans that he refrained from telling the world that he thought the fourth kingdom of Daniel was ‘the kingdom of the Greeks.’ It is no more proper to say that the ninth chapter of Daniel ‘is complete in itself,’ than it would be to say that a map which was designed to show the relation of Massachusetts to the United States, referred to nothing but Massachusetts. It is no more complete in itself than a bond given in security for a note, or some other document to which it refers, is complete in itself; and we doubt if there is a schoolboy

of fourteen years in the land, of ordinary capacity, who would not, on reading the ninth chapter, with an understanding of the clause before us, decide that it referred to something distinct from itself, called '*the vision*.' What vision it is, there is no difficulty in determining. It naturally and obviously refers to the vision which was not fully explained to Daniel, and to which Gabriel calls his attention in the preceding verse,—the vision of the eighth chapter. Daniel tells us that Gabriel was commanded to make him understand the vision (8:16). This was not fully done at that interview connected with the vision; he is therefore sent to give Daniel the needed '*skill and understanding*,'—to explain its '*meaning*' by communicating to him the prediction of the seventy weeks."

"We claim that the ninth of Daniel is an appendix to the eighth, and that the seventy weeks and the 2300 days, or years, commence together. Our opponents deny this."—Signs of the Times, 1843.

"The grand principle involved in the interpretation of the 2300 days of Dan.8:14, is that the seventy weeks of Dan.9:24 are the first 490 days of the 2300 of the eighth chapter."—Advent Shield,

p.49.

"If the connection between the seventy weeks of Daniel 9 and the 2300 days of Daniel 8 does not exist, the whole system is shaken to its foundation; if it does exist, as we suppose, the system must stand."—Harmony of the Prophetic Chronology, p.33.

Says the learned Dr. Hales, in commenting upon the seventy weeks, "This chronological prophecy was evidently designed to explain the foregoing vision, especially in its chronological part of the 2300 days."—Chronology, Vol.II,P.517.

Daniel Chapter 9:25-27

Daniel 9:25 *Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

9:26. *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

9:27. *And he shall confirm the*

covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The angel now gives to Daniel the event which is to mark the commencement of the seventy weeks. They were to date from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. And not only is the event given which was to determine the time of the commencement of this period, but those events also which were to transpire at its close. Thus a double test is provided by which to try the application of this prophecy. But more than this, the period of seventy weeks is divided into three grand divisions, and one of these is again divided, and the intermediate events are given which were to mark the termination of each one of these divisions. If, now, we can find a date which will harmonize with all these events, we have, beyond a doubt, the true application; for none but that which is correct could meet and fulfill so many conditions. Let the reader take in at one view the points of harmony

to be made, that he may be the better prepared to guard against a false application. First, we are to find, at the commencement of the period, a commandment going forth to restore and build Jerusalem. To this work or restoration seven weeks are allotted. As we reach the end of this first division, seven weeks from the commencement, we are to find, secondly, Jerusalem, in its material aspect restored, the work of building the street and the wall fully accomplished. From this point sixty-two weeks are measured off; and as we reach the termination of this division, sixty-nine weeks from the beginning, we are to see, thirdly, the manifestation before the world of the Messiah the Prince. One week more is given us, completing the seventy. Fourthly, in the midst of this week the Messiah is to be cut off, and to cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and, fifthly, when the last week of that period which was allotted to the Jews as the time during which they were to be the special people of God, expires, we naturally look for the going forth of the blessing and work of God to other people.

We now inquire for the initial date which will harmonize with all these particulars. The command respecting Jerusalem

was to include more than mere building. There was to be restoration; and by this we must understand all the forms and regulations of civil, political, and judicial society. When did such a command go forth? At the time these words were spoken to Daniel, Jerusalem lay in complete and utter desolation, and had thus been lying for seventy years. The restoration, pointed to in the future, must be its restoration from this desolation. We then inquire, When and how was Jerusalem restored after the seventy years' captivity?

There are but four events which can be taken as answering to the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. These are:

(1) The decree of Cyrus for the rebuilding of the house of God, B.C. 536 (Ezra 1:1-4);

(2) The decree of Darius for the prosecution of that work, which had been hindered, B.C. 519 (Ezra 6:1-12);

(3) The decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra, B.C. 457 (Ezra 7); and

(4) The commission to Nehemiah from the same king in his twentieth year, B.C. 444. (Nehemiah 2).

Dating from the first two of these decrees, the seventy weeks, being weeks of years, (see appendix 1) 490 years in all,

would fall many years short of reaching even to the Christian era; besides, these decrees had reference principally to the restoration of the temple and the temple-worship of the Jews, and not to the restoration of their civil state and polity, all of which must be included in the expression, "*To restore and to build Jerusalem.*"

These made a commencement of the work. They were preliminary to what was afterward accomplished. But of themselves they were altogether insufficient, both in their dates and in their nature, to meet the requirements of the prophecy; and thus failing in every respect, they cannot be brought into the controversy as marking the point from which the seventy weeks are to date. The only question now lies between the decrees which were granted to Ezra and to Nehemiah respectively.

The facts between which we are to decide here are briefly these: In B.C. 457, a decree was granted to Ezra by the Persian emperor Artaxerxes Longimanus to go up to Jerusalem with as many of his people as were minded to go with him. The commission granted him an unlimited amount of treasure, to beautify the house of God, to procure offerings for its service,

and to do whatever else might seem good unto him. It empowered him to ordain laws, set magistrates and judges, and execute punishment even unto death; in other words, to restore the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastical, according to the law of God and the ancient customs of that people. Inspiration has seen fit to preserve this decree; and a full and accurate copy of it is given in the seventh chapter of the book of Ezra. In the original, this decree is given, not in Hebrew, like the rest of the book of Ezra, but in the Chaldaic (or Eastern Aramaic), the language then used at Babylon; and thus we are furnished with the original document by virtue of which Ezra was authorized to restore and build Jerusalem.

Thirteen years after this, in the twentieth year of the same king, B.C. 444, Nehemiah sought and obtained permission to go up to Jerusalem. Nehemiah 2. Permission was granted him, but we have no evidence that it was anything more than verbal. It pertained to him individually, nothing being said about others going up with him. The king asked him how long a journey he wished to make, and when he would return. He received letters

to the governors beyond the river to help him on his way to Judea, and an order to the keeper of the king's forest for timber for beams, etc. When he arrived at Jerusalem, he found rulers and priests, nobles and people, already engaged in the work of building Jerusalem. Neh. 2:16. These were, of course, acting under the decree given to Ezra thirteen years before. And finally, Nehemiah, having arrived at Jerusalem, finished the work he came to accomplish, in fifty-two days. Neh.6:15.

Now which of these commissions, Ezra's or Nehemiah's, constitutes the decree for the restoration of Jerusalem, from which the seventy weeks are to be dated? It hardly seems that there can be any question on this point.

1. The grant to Nehemiah cannot be called a decree. It was necessary that a Persian decree should be put in writing, and signed by the king. Dan.6:8. Such was the document given to Ezra; but Nehemiah had nothing of the kind, his commission being only verbal. If it be said that the letters given him constitute the decree, then the decree was issued, not to Nehemiah, but to the governors beyond the river; besides, these would constitute a series of decrees, and not one decree, as

the prophecy contemplates.

2. The occasion of Nehemiah's petition to the king for permission to go up to Jerusalem was the report which certain ones, returning, had brought from thence, that those in the province were in great affliction and reproach, also that the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and the gates thereof burned with fire. Nehemiah 1. Whose work were these walls and gates that were broken down and burned with fire?—Evidently the work of Ezra and his associates; for it cannot for a moment be supposed that the utter destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, one hundred and forty-four years previous to that time, would have been reported to Nehemiah as a matter of news, nor that he would have considered it, as he evidently did, a fresh misfortune, calling for a fresh expression of grief. A decree, therefore, authorizing the building of these, had gone forth previous to the grant to Nehemiah.

3. If any should contend that Nehemiah's commission must be a decree, because the object of his request was that he might build the city, it is sufficient to reply, as shown above, that gates and walls had been built previous to his going up; besides, the work of building which he went to

perform was accomplished in fifty-two days; whereas, the prophecy allows for the building of the city, seven weeks, or forty-nine years.

4. There was nothing granted to Nehemiah which was not embraced in the decree to Ezra; while the latter had all the forms and conditions of a decree, and was vastly more ample in its provisions.

5. It is evident from the prayer of Ezra, as recorded in chapter 9:9 of his book, that he considered himself fully empowered to proceed with the building of the city and the wall; and it is evident that he understood, further, that the conditional prophecies concerning his people were then fulfilled, from the closing words of that prayer, in which he says, *"Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldst not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping?"*

6. Reckoning from the commission to Nehemiah, B.C. 444, the dates throughout are entirely disarranged; for from that point the troublesome times which were to attend the building of the street and wall did not last seven weeks, or forty-nine years.

Reckoning from that date, the sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, which were to extend to the Messiah the Prince, bring us to A.D. 40; but Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven declaring him his Son, in A.D. 27, thirteen years before. According to this calculation, the midst of the last or seventieth week, which is marked by the crucifixion, is placed in A.D.44, but the crucifixion took place in A.D. 31, thirteen years previous. And lastly, the seventy weeks, or 490 years, dating from the twentieth of Artaxerxes, extend to A.D. 47, with absolutely nothing to mark their termination. Hence if that be the year, and the grant to Nehemiah the event, from which to reckon, the prophecy has proved a failure. As it is, it only proves that theory a failure which dates the seventy weeks from Nehemiah's commission in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes.

7. Will these dates harmonize if we reckon from the decree to Ezra? Let us see. In this case, B.C. 457 is our starting- point. Forty-nine years were allotted to the building of the city and the wall. On this point, Prideaux (Connexion, Vol. I, p.322) says: "In the fifteenth year of Darius Nothus ended the first seven

weeks of Daniel's prophecy. For then the restoration of the church and state of the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea was fully finished, in that last act of reformation which is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Nehemiah, from the twenty-third verse to the end of the chapter, just forty-nine years after it had been commenced by Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus." This was B.C. 408.

So far we find harmony. Let us apply the measuring-rod of the prophecy still further. Sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, were to extend to Messiah the Prince. Dating from B.C. 457, they end in A.D. 27. And what event then occurred? (see appendix 2) Luke thus informs us: "*Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.*" Luke 3:21,22. After this, Jesus came "*preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled.*" Mark 1:14,15. The time here mentioned must have been some specific, definite, and predicted period; but no prophetic period

can be found then terminating, except the sixty-nine weeks of the prophecy of Daniel, which were to extend to the Messiah the Prince. The Messiah had now come; and with his own lips he announced the termination of that period which was to be marked by his manifestation. (see appendix 3)

Here, again, is indisputable harmony. But further, the Messiah was to confirm the covenant with many for one week. This would be the last week of the seventy, or the last seven years of the 490. In the midst of the week, the prophecy informs us, he should cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. These Jewish ordinances, pointing to the death of Christ, could cease only at the cross; and there they did virtually come to an end, though the outward observance was kept up till the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. After threescore and two weeks, according to the record, the Messiah was to be cut off. It is the same as if it had read: And after threescore and two weeks, in the midst of the seventieth week, shall Messiah be cut off, and cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. Now, as the word midst here means middle, according to an abundance of authority which we might produce if necessary,

the crucifixion is definitely located in the middle of the seventieth week.

It now becomes an important point to determine in what year the crucifixion took place. The following evidence is sufficient to be considered absolutely decisive on this question.

It is not to be questioned that our Saviour attended every Passover that occurred during his public ministry; and we have mention of only four such occasions previous to his crucifixion. These are found in the following passages: John2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 13:1. At the last-mentioned Passover he was crucified. From facts already established, let us then see where this would locate the crucifixion. As he began his ministry in the autumn of A.D. 27, his first Passover would occur the following spring, A.D. 28; his second, A.D. 29; his third, A.D. 30; and his fourth and last, A.D. 31. This gives us three years and a half for his public ministry, and corresponds exactly to the prophecy that he should be cut off in the midst, or middle, of the seventieth week. As that week of years commenced in the autumn of A.D. 27, the middle of the week would occur three and one half years later, in the spring of

31, where the crucifixion took place. Dr. Hales quotes Eusebius, A.D. 300, as saying: "It is recorded in history that the whole time of our Saviour's teaching and working miracles was three years and a half, which is the half of a week [of years]. This, John the evangelist will represent to those who critically attend to his Gospel."

Of the unnatural darkness which occurred at the crucifixion, Hales, Vol. I, pp. 69, 70, thus speaks: "Hence it appears that the darkness which 'overspread the whole land of Judea' at the time of our Lord's crucifixion was preternatural, 'from the sixth until the ninth hour,' or from noon till three in the afternoon, in its duration, and also in its time, about full moon, when the moon could not possibly eclipse the sun. The time it happened, and the fact itself, are recorded in a curious and valuable passage of a respectable Roman Consul, Aurelius Cassiodorius Senator, about A.D. 514: 'In the consulate of Tiberius Caesar Aug. V and Aelius Sejanus (U.C. 784, A.D. 31), our Lord Jesus Christ suffered, on the 8th of the calends of April (25th March), when there happened such an eclipse of the sun as was never before nor since.'

"In this year, and in this day, agree also the Council of Cesarea, A.D. 196 or 198, the Alexandrian Chronicle, Maximus Monachus, Nicephorus Constantinus, Cedrenus; and in this year, but on different days, concur Eusebius and Epiphanius, followed by Kepler, Bucher, Patinus, and Petavius, some reckoning it the 10th of the calends of April, others the 13th." (See on chapter 11:22.)

Here, then, are thirteen credible authorities locating the crucifixion of Christ in the spring of A.D. 31. We may therefore set this down as a fixed date, as the most cautious or the most skeptical could require nothing more conclusive. This being in the middle of the last week, we have simply to reckon backward three and a half years to find where sixty-nine of the weeks ended, and forward from that point three and a half years, we find ourselves in the autumn of A.D. 27, where, as we have seen, the sixty-nine weeks ended, and Christ commenced his public ministry. And going from the crucifixion forward three and a half years, we are brought to the autumn of A.D. 34, as the grand terminating point of the whole period of the seventy weeks. This date is marked by the martyrdom

of Stephen, the formal rejection of the gospel of Christ by the Jewish Sanhedrin in the persecution of his disciples, and the turning of the apostles to the Gentiles. And these are just the events which one would expect to take place when that specified period which was cut off for the Jews, and allotted to them as a peculiar people, should fully expire.

A word respecting the date of the seventh of Artaxerxes, when the decree for restoring Jerusalem was given to Ezra, and the array of evidence on this point is complete. Was the seventh of Artaxerxes B.C. 457? For all those who can appreciate the force of facts, the following testimony will be sufficient here:

“The Bible gives the data for a complete system of chronology, extending from the creation to the birth of Cyrus—a clearly ascertained date. From this period downward we have the undisputed canon of Ptolemy, and the undoubted era of Nabonassar, extending below our vulgar era. At the point where inspired chronology leaves us, this canon of undoubted accuracy commences. And thus the whole arch is spanned. It is by the canon of Ptolemy that the great prophetic period of seventy weeks is fixed. This canon is

demonstrated by the concurrent agreement of more than twenty eclipses. This date we cannot change from B.C. 457, without first demonstrating the inaccuracy of Ptolemy’s canon. To do this it would be necessary to show that the large number of eclipses by which its accuracy has been repeatedly demonstrated have not been correctly computed; and such a result would unsettle every chronological date, and leave the settlement of epochs and the adjustment of eras entirely at the mercy of every dreamer, so that chronology would be of no more value than mere guesswork. As the seventy weeks must terminate in A.D. 34 unless the seventh of Artaxerxes is wrongly fixed, and as that cannot be changed without some evidence to that effect, we inquire, What evidence marked that termination? The time when the apostles turned to the Gentiles harmonizes with that date better than any other which has been named. And the crucifixion in A.D. 31, in the midst of the last week, is sustained by a mass of testimony which cannot be easily invalidated.”—Advent Herald.

From the facts above set forth, we see that, reckoning the seventy weeks from the decree given to Ezra in the seventh of Artaxerxes, B.C. 457, there is the most perfect

harmony throughout. The important and definite events of the manifestation of the Messiah at the baptism, the commencement of his public ministry, the crucifixion, and the turning away from the Jews to the Gentiles, with the proclamation of the new covenant, all come in in their exact place, and like a bright galaxy of blazing orbs of light, cluster round to set their seal to the prophecy, and make it sure.

It is thus evident that the decree of Ezra in the seventh of Artaxerxes, B.C. 457, is the point from which to date the seventy weeks. That was the going forth of the decree in the sense of the prophecy. The two previous decrees were preparatory and preliminary to this; and indeed they are regarded by Ezra as parts of it, the three being taken as one great whole. For in Ezra 6:14, we read: *“And they builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, king of Persia.”* It will be noticed that the decrees of these three kings are spoken of as one,—*“the commandment* [margin, “decree,” singular number] *of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes,”* showing that they are all reckoned as a

unit, the different decrees being but the successive steps by which the work was accomplished. And this decree could not be said to have “gone forth,” as intended by the prophecy, till the last permission which the prophecy required was embodied in the decree, and clothed with the authority of the empire. This point was reached in the grant given to Ezra, but not before. Here the decree assumed the proportions, and covered the ground, demanded by the prophecy, and from this point its “going forth” must be dated.

Appendix 1

The explanation of these prophetic periods is based on what is called the “year-day principle;” that is, making each day stand for a year, according to the Scriptural rule for the application of symbolic time. Eze. 4:6; Num. 14:34. That the time in these visions of Daniel 8 and 9 is symbolic is evident from the nature and scope of the prophecy. The question calling out the answers on this point was, *“How long the vision?”* The vision, reckoning from 538 B.C. to our own time, sweeps over a period more than 2400 years in length. But if the 2300 days of the vision are literal days, we have a period of only a little over six years and a half for the duration of the kingdoms and the transaction of the great events brought to view, which

is absurd! The year-day principle numbers among its supporters such names as Augustine, Tichonius, Primasius, Andreas, the venerable Bede, Ambrosius, Ansbertus, Berengaud, and Bruno Astensis, besides the leading modern expositors. (See Elliott's "Horae Apocalypticæ," Vol. III, p. 241; and "The Sanctuary and Its Cleansing," pp. 45-52.) But what is more conclusive than all else is the fact that the prophecies have actually been fulfilled on this principle,—a demonstration of its correctness from which there is no appeal. This will be found in the prophecy of the seventy weeks throughout, and all the prophetic periods of Daniel 7 and 12, and Revelation 9, 12, and 13.

Appendix 2

There is abundance of authority for A.D. 27 as the date of Christ's baptism. See "Sacred Chronology," by S. Bliss; "New International Encyclopedia," art. "Jesus Christ;" "Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels," by Dr. Karl Wieseler, p.183.

Appendix 3

Luke declares that Jesus "*began to be about thirty years of age*" at the time of his baptism (Luke 3:23); and almost immediately after this he entered upon his ministry. How, then, could his ministry commence in A.D. 27, and he still be of the age named by Luke? The answer to this question is found in the fact that

Christ was born between three and four years before the beginning of the Christian era, that is, before the year marked A.D. 1. The mistake of dating the Christian era something over three years this side of the birth of Christ, instead of dating it from the year of his birth, as it was designed to be, arose on this wise: One of the most important of ancient eras was reckoned from the building of the city of Rome—*ab urbe condita*, expressed by the abbreviation A.U.C., or more briefly, U.C. In the year which is now numbered A.D. 532, Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian by birth, and a Roman abbot, who flourished in the reign of Justinian, invented the Christian era. According to the best evidence at his command, he placed the birth of Christ U.C. 753. But Christ was born before the death of Herod; and it was afterward ascertained on the clearest evidence that the death of Herod occurred in April, U.C. 750. Allowing a few months for the events recorded in Christ's life before the time of Herod's death, his birth is carried back to the latter part of U.C. 749, a little over three years before A.D. 1. Christ was therefore thirty years of age in A.D. 27. "The vulgar [common] era began to prevail in the West about the time of Charles Martel and Pope Gregory II, A.D. 730; but was not sanctioned by any public Acts or Rescripts till the first German Synod, in the time of Carolomannus, Duke of the Franks,

which, in the preface, was said to be assembled ‘Anno ab incarnatione Dom. 742, 11 Calendus Maii.’ But it was not established till the time of Pope Eugenius IV, A.D. 1431, who ordered this era to be used in the public Registers: according to Mariana and others.”—Hales’ Chronology, Vol.I, pp.83, 84. (See also “Life of Our Lord,” by S. J Andrews.)

There is still one more problem. Christ was born in B.C.4. and began His ministry at 30 years of age in A.D. 27 according to the way we now reckon dates. If you add 4 to 27 you get 31, not 30. What happened? How did we get an extra year?

In algebra we learned about the number line. It starts at the left with an infinitely small negative number ($-\infty$), goes past zero then goes to the right to an infinitely large number ($+\infty$).

$$\underline{-\infty \quad -4 \quad -3 \quad -2 \quad -1 \quad 0 \quad +1 \quad +2 \quad +3 \quad +4 \quad +\infty}$$

When you go from a -4 to a +4

you have added 4 to 4 and get 8 whole numbers. There are 8 whole numbers from -4 to +4.

When they set up reckoning dates they forgot about zero. So, the years look like this:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccccccccc} & & & & & & \text{BC} & & | & & \text{AD} & & & & & & \\ \hline \dots & 5 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & \dots \end{array}$$

When you go from B.C. 4 to A.D. 4 you have not added 4 to 4 because you have only progressed 7 years, not 8. This is how Christ could be born in B.C. 4, began His ministry in A.D. 27 and be 30 years of age. This is also why they first thought the end of the 2300 day prophecy was in 1843. When they found out there was no year zero but B.C. 1 was followed with A.D. 1 (although they didn’t use the algebraic number line to determine that), they had to change the end of that prophecy to 1844. This is not an issue with the 1260 day prophecy as it does not include the years that go from B.C. to A.D.