

Daniel's seventy weeks of prophecy essay sample

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Introduction:

The forecast of the Book of Daniel have captivated readers and has formed controversy for the past two thousand years. Evangelical believers trust that the prophet Daniel, a representative in the courts of Near-Eastern governments in the sixth century BC, prophesied the future of humankind from his own era to the finale of the period. Actually, the volume was written in Palestine in the mid-second century BC by a writer who had expectations that God would establish His everlasting kingdom in His own near future. Daniel had believed that the 70 year exile period, would soon come to an end and he earnestly prayed to God for forgiveness for his people and sought to understand God's plan for Israel. As he prayed, Gabriel an angel of the Lord appeared to him and shared with him the prophecy for the Israelites and the city of Jerusalem as recorded in Daniel 9: 24-27.

The Seventy Weeks

This verse (Dan 9: 24), shows that seventy weeks is the set period of time when the people of Israel will be in exile because God wanted them to repent that He may consecrate them so that an everlasting righteousness will be created as prophesied and for God to anoint a sacred place for worship. The seventy weeks which Gabriel speaks in Daniel 9: 24 is a fraction which generally recognize weeks of years. Daniel had realized that Israel's suffering in exile was a consequence for failure to observe the Sabbath day as they had been commanded by God when he brought them out of Egypt, with seventy years of exile being based on seventy weeks of years totaling

to 490 years, of Israel's disobedience of God's Sabbath year requirement, Leon Woods.

According to Stephen R. Miller (2001, 253), the seventy weeks prophecy may be interpreted into four major views as follows:

1. The seventy weeks referred by Gabriel are the total number of years, whereby in a week there are seven days times 70 years and this is a total of 490 years.
2. Again the 70 weeks are an emblematic time period which finalize in the first century A. D. which marks Jesus' death, burial and resurrection though it leaves the last three and a half years largely unaddressed.
3. These seventy weeks represent a symbolic period of time ending with the return of Jesus Christ in the second coming.
4. They are also blocks of time that end with the return of Christ.

By analyzing the following context, we find that while the first sixty nine weeks have been fulfilled at the coming of Christ, there is a gap, the present church era and the final week will proceed with the non-believers making a peace treaty for seven years, which will be subdivided three and one half years into this seventieth week of years. This is as seen in verse 25 of this chapter, where Gabriel tries to explain that when the rule is given for rebuilding and restoring Jerusalem awaiting the coming of the chosen one, there will be 7 weeks and 62 weeks.

According to scholar Calvin (1948, 25), he combines the two periods, i. e. 7 weeks and 62 weeks because it is after the completion of the two periods that Christ appears. He also interprets the weeks as the seven years

referring to “ years” in Daniel 9: 2. In regard to this, it is definite that there would be a period of 483 years from the time that a ruling is given to rebuild Jerusalem to the time that a Messiah is to emerge.

If we take the 483 years and multiply by 360 the number of days in a prophetic year, there are a total of 173, 880 days. If we further apply these 173, 880 days to our calendar, which has 365. 25 days to a year, we'll be in a position to figure out the year that Daniel's prophecy would begin its fulfillment and when it would be completed result for this sum is 476.

An approximation of the start of Daniel's Seventy Weeks of Prophecy

There are different rulings which many people have tried to quote in order to come up with the exact year when the verdict to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Some of the rulings include:

1. The verdict from Cyrus in 539 BC. As seen in the book of Ezra 1: 1-4.
2. The verdict from Darius in 519 BC. In Ezra 5: 3-7.
3. The verdict from Artaxerxes to Ezra in 457 BC. In Ezra 7: 11-16.
4. The verdict from Artaxerxes to Nehemiah in 444 BC. In Nehemiah 2: 1-8.

A Christian scholar named J. D. Wilson states that only the verdict from Artaxerxes to Nehemiah applies to this forecast. He explains that when Nehemiah heard of the desolate condition of Jerusalem, he was deeply grieved and when the King noticed that Nehemiah was not all right, asked him what was the reason. Nehemiah replied that the city of his ancestors lied waste and the gates had been consumed with fire. When the king asked

him how he could be assisted, he asked the King to for an order so that he could go and build the city and as we read in the bible, he was granted the orders.

According to McDowell, we find the decree that was given in 444 B. C., and this allow many scholars to use the date March 5 as the time when the decree was given for rebuilding the city of Jerusalem. There is no exact evidence to show the accurate time when rebuilding for the city of Jerusalem took place but there is a widespread agreement between Christian scholars on the following:

1. The evidence in the Bible to sustain the notion of the “ Prophetic Calendar” which calculates instance in terms of 360-day years.
2. Again in the Bible we find another instance when Nehemiah was given the order by Artaxerxes, and this could be the starting point of Daniel's prediction.
3. There a firm evidence from historians that pinpoint the 20th year of Artaxerxes as being either 444 BC or 445 BC.

The additional sources we find from historians and archaeologists help us to figure out the starting point of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. These sources outlines the events happening in a definite cycle, i. e. the ruling to rebuild Jerusalem followed by the real action of rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple taking place, this is followed by the appearance of the Messiah which will be followed by the elimination of the same and the last event being the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple once again (Walton 1986, 25).

Division of the Seventy Weeks

This Prophecy is divided into 3 parts. The first part indicates 7 weeks which is equal to 49 years and this is the time taken to rebuild the temple. The second part indicates 62 weeks which is equal to 434 years which help us arrive in another period when Jesus was anointed into His ministry and when He started preaching the gospel. The final division is the last one week, which is equal to 7 years. The scripture says that in the middle of the final seven years, the anointed one will be cut off, showing that Jesus would die after three and a half years of ministry and would cause the "sacrifice and oblation to end". The faultless sacrifice Jesus made on Calvary brought the need for animal sacrifices once and for all to an end.

In the last three and a half years of this prophecy, the gospel message was still preached to the Jews. As this period approached the end, we read that Stephen was stoned to death which marks the final decision of the Jewish leaders to reject Jesus Christ as the anointed one and from this time on the word of God was taken to the gentiles. There was the prediction of the destruction of the temple which came to pass and this signified the final desolation. The ruin of the first and the second place of worship were both as a consequence of the nation's rejection of the Messiah and defiance to God.

This incident signifies that the hallowed engagement of the Jewish people as God's chosen ones was eternally unacceptable. Through Christ a new agreement was made, that all who believed in Him and followed His statutes will be called the children of God and the seed of Abraham. Galatians 3: 29. This displays the wonderful power of God which allows fulfillment of all the

promises He made to His people through a prophecy that had been told for so many years ago.

We find the cutting off of the anointed one, i. e. Jesus Christ and also the destruction of the city and the holy place by the people of the coming prince. It is important to note that the people who demolish Jerusalem are said to be linked in some way to "the coming prince." We read that His end shall be in the flood which shows of the destruction of the coming prince. According to *Young*, the expression flood is used to describe of the outpouring God's fury and the last part of the coming prince will be under divine verdict.

If we explore verse 27 of this chapter we find that there is accuracy of the end that will be finalized with war. The part which says "until the end" may be used to specify the unending trouble upon the city of Jerusalem awaiting the end of the world. It also outlines of the one to come who will cause an agreement to exist with the many for one week. This we understand that the Messiah is the one to come who ratified a covenant by His death. Jesus endorsed a covenant which is eternal. Through His coming, He was supposed to ensure that sacrifice and offerings to cease because He would be the final sacrifice. Before His arrival, it is evident that there was no freedom of worship in the temple, the breaking of this covenant is signified by the coming upon the wing a desolating abominable idol, which will endure until the end. Jesus referred to the act of idolatry as the abomination of desolation standing in a sacred place.

Note it is "after" the sixty-two weeks that the anointed one is cut off. No mention is made of how long after; analytical prediction would permit a large

description. Nor is it alleged to be during the seventieth week. It is plainly "after" the sixty-two. That is all that can be extracted from the text.

But with the apparent distinction between the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks recognized, the subject must be addressed: these sixty-nine weeks can be plainly taken collectively and added consecutively without disruption.

The configuration of the 490-year compound seems to foretell three separate episodes of time, together adding up to 490 years but approving further. The seven weeks have their own finishing point specified. It is not hermeneutical assumptions which create these time-gaps but exegetical obligation (Leon 1973, 247).

Importance of the Prophecy

1. *Bring transgression to an end and make an end to sin* - through the coming of the anointed one, His major roles on earth was to bring to an end the sins of the world. This was fulfilled when Jesus shed His precious blood on the cross. It is through the shedding of blood that we get redemption from all sins, all yokes that had bound us and from all guilt that lived in us. He participated this during His ministry, i. e. when He told His disciples in Luke 5: 32 that His vocation was calling sinners to repent. In Luke 26 we find an instance when Jesus forgives Mary Magdalene. His major task was to proclaim repentance, that the nations may receive forgiveness after they have repented.
2. *Make atonement for iniquity and bring in Everlasting Righteousness* - the anointed one would forgive sins as in the case above and through

the forgiveness of sins a righteousness that would last forever was achieved.

3. *To seal the vision of and the prophecy and to anoint the sacred place of worship* - Jesus' coming to the world was to accomplish the vision that Daniel had seen in his revelation and to fulfill the prophecy as it had been foretold. We read in the Holy Scriptures that God's promises come to pass at His appointed time, and this exactly happened following the prophecy of Daniel. Early form of worship involved the priests who performed all duties including praying for people because no one could go before the Lord as other people who were not either priests or Levites were regarded as unholy. The temple of worship was divided into various sections (Hartman and Di Lella 1978, 11). One of the divisions was the holy of holies and in this particular section only the priests were allowed to enter. When Jesus was dying on the cross, the curtain that divided the temple was cut into two and this signified that everyone could enter and present their cares and needs to God almighty. In this we get the impact that Jesus brought in the freedom to worship regardless of who you are.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the seventy weeks will see the entire elimination of Israel's sins ceaselessly, the establishment of eternal righteousness, the final accomplishment of all Old Testament prediction and the dedication of the place of worship. Daniel instructs us that the ultimate seven years of this epoch will witness a global leader growing to authority and finally working vast blasphemy in the temple in Jerusalem an episode which marks the "

great tribulation" (Mathew 24) and " the day of the Lord" (2 Thessalonians 2). This presumes a biased hope for the people of Israel as well as the rebuilding of her holy place, an incident not rare in the prophetic utterance (Ezekiel 40-43. At the end, every Old Testament prediction will come to pass and the holy place of worship will be consecrated.

Bibliography

Calvin, John. *Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Daniel* . Calvin's Commentaries. (Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948) 23-34.

Hartman, Louis F. and Di Lella, Alexander. *The Book of Daniel* . The Anchor Bible. (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1978) 11

Leon, Wood. *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids, MI: The Zondervan Corporation, 1973), 247.

Stephen, Miller R. *Daniel* , Includes Indexes., electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001) 253.

Walton, John. Daniel's Four Kingdoms. (*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 1986) 29: 25-36.