

## Daniel's Prophecy

### **"Seventy Weeks are Determined" Daniel 9:24-27**

by H. C. Heffren

The prophecy that is about to engage your attention is found in Daniel 9:24-27. Although our readers may have pondered it many times with perplexity and frustration, basically its message is not difficult. We have to admit that it has been a source of conflicting opinions and interpretations, still it is a part of God's Word and therefore we should search for the message it seeks to convey. This will be both rewarding and enlightening.

This passage of scripture reads as follows:

"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. Know ye 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 troublesome times. 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. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice 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."

Although this passage of scripture has presented a great variety of opinions and different interpretations among theologians and scholars, there are basically only two major irreconcilable dissimilarities. On the one hand, there are those who accept the prophecy as totally fulfilled. These are often referred to as Amillennialists, but a more appropriate designation would be Scriptural Millennialists. These believers regard the Kingdom of God, which was inaugurated by Christ as the Scriptural fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers in the Old Testament.

The Dispensationalists on the contrary claim that Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week is in the future, and will begin when the so-called "Rapture" takes place. In order to do this, they have originated what is called the "postponement Theory," which means that the first sixty-nine weeks of Daniel happened on schedule, but the Seventieth Week was postponed or put in abeyance indefinitely. The church age according to them is called, "The Great Parentheses" according to H. A. Ironside and many others. H. A. Ironside portrays the prophets as men standing on the prairie gazing at the distant mountains. They see the range of mountains, and dimly see the more distant peaks, but they do not see the intervening valleys that separate them. This, says Ironside, is like the prophets who saw the First Coming of Christ, and also saw the Second coming, but they did not see the Church Age that intervened. (The Great Parentheses, page 12) What Mr. Ironside fails to reveal is that the prophets were not telling just what they saw as men standing on the prairie, but as we read in 2 Peter 2:21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." In view of the fact that the Bible was Divinely inspired, any suggestion that the prophets were less than 100% accurate in their predictions reflects on the Holy Spirit, the INSPIRER.

It is in this connection that the interpretation of the Dispensationalists is violently and diametrically at variance with the Word of God. For instance: In Ironside's book (The Great Parenthesis, page 23) he tells of the prophecy of Daniel,

then adds, "The fact is that they were not fulfilled." **BUT JESUS SAID**, "These are the words that I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that **ALL THINGS MUST BE FULFILLED**, which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me."

Although we have only made one quotation, we can add scores of others. Whose word has the authority, Ironside and the Dispensationalists, or Christ? **CHRIST SAID** that He had fulfilled **ALL** that the prophets had written. **IRONSIDE SAID**, he did not. This is a serious allegation and needs to be investigated. Now on page 23 of this book by Ironside I quote: "The fact is they were not fulfilled. Israel did not recognize their Messiah. They did not know Him yet as their Sin-bearer. Their transgression has not been finished. An end of sins for them has not been made. They do not know anything yet of atonement for iniquity."

There is a scriptural answer here for each of these assertions.

- The Jews "finished" their transgression when they Crucified Christ. That was their crowing offense. The Enormity of the crime of condemning Christ to death on The cross cannot be exceeded, and therefore it "finished" their Transgression.

Ironside has stated, "They do not know anything yet of atonement for iniquity."

- The Bible says, "He came unto His own but His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.

Atonement for all mankind has been made, and when we believe it, this is what makes us "sons of God." Those who reject Him, neglect Him or refuse Him, are still among those who "receive Him not." The Atonement or death of Christ for us was made for "WHOSOEVER" will believe. (John 3:16)

Ironside continues, "The seventieth week has been postponed by God Himself. The moment Messiah died on the cross the prophetic clock stopped. There has not been one tick on that clock for nineteen centuries. It will not begin to go again until the entire present age has come to an end, and Israel will once more be taken up by God."

There are a few questions that ought to be asked here.

- Where does the scripture say unambiguously that God Postponed the seventieth week?
- What clock was God using when it stopped?
  - What has Israel got to do to start the clock ticking again?

A lot of these questions appear senseless, but they are based on Dispensational claims. They say that God postponed the Seventieth Week. The various meanings in Roget's Thesaurus state that postpone means: to delay, defer, procrastinate, suspend, waive, table, shelve, reserve, etc. According to Deuteronomy 22:18, God does not permit any of these interpretations to accompany prophecy that He has determined. If God has anything to do with it, it must be executed on time or we can deem it false. God did fulfill the covenant He promised in the Seventieth week of Daniel according to His infallible Word. Dispensationalists reject this and say, "Another covenant with the so-called Anti-Christ is required to fulfill their interpretation of prophecy."

### Who is Right?

Dispensationalists anchor their entire system of interpretation on what they call the "Postponement Theory." According to Webster, a theory is an unproved assumption, or a hypothesis accepted for the sake of argument. This meaning is amplified elsewhere to include a surmise, supposition, conjecture, speculation or proposal. Neither "Postponement"

nor "Theory" has anything authoritative to rest upon. In the last analysis, it amounts to a shrewd guess.

John Walvoord, in his book called (The Millennial Kingdom, page 227) admits this weakness as follows: "While the most literal interpretation of the first 69 weeks is thus afforded a literal fulfillment, nothing can be found in history that affords a literal fulfillment of the last 7 or the Seventieth Week. It has been taken by many that this indicates a postponement of the fulfillment of the last seven years of the prophecy to the future preceding the Second Advent. If so, a parentheses of time involving the whole present age is indicated."

The issue is simply. Either we accept the statement of H. A. Ironside who has said, "The fact is, they (i.e. the prophecies of Daniel 9:24-27) were not fulfilled." Or, we accept Christ's statement that "all was fulfilled." (Luke 24:44) Either we build our theology on Walvoord's unproven dispensational hypothesis or we build on "Thus saith the Lord." There is no other alternative.

Let us examine the first statement Walvoord has  
Made.

"While the most literal interpretation of the first 69 weeks is thus afforded fulfillment." Please note that the first 69 weeks only measured a period of time, viz. 483 years until the baptism of Christ, or as Daniel wrote: "Until Messiah the Prince" or the Anointed. The opening words of Jesus when He began His ministry were, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He hath anointed Me." (Luke 4:18a) The first 69 weeks literally described the return of the Jews from Babylon and the rebuilding of Jerusalem during the first 7 weeks. The remaining 62 weeks is only a space of time until the 70<sup>th</sup> week. Everything in the prophecy hinged on the specific and detailed fulfillment of the 70<sup>th</sup> week 7+62+1+70.

Dispensationalism falls into a very embarrassing and fatal trap at this point. John Walvoord writes in (The Return of the Lord page 49) "For the purpose of the present study...we must assume the inspiration of Scripture and the validity of infallibility of its revelation."

Elsewhere, the same writer goes on record in favor of the inerrancy, infallibility and inspiration of the scriptures. (On page 124 of the Millennial Kingdom) he states..."Premillennialism is based on the thesis of the infallibility of the Scriptures." Infallibility means, "Incapable of error, that which is certain, reliable, decisive, conclusive, unerring, to be depended upon, trustworthy." It is unimpeachable. It is faithful, constant, precise and authentic.

Now notice how Dispensationalism discounts the infallible Word of God. The infallible Word of God states:

"Seventy weeks are determined." That is God's decree! However, because Dispensational doctrine finds, and I quote again, "Nothing in history that provides a literal fulfillment of the Seventieth Week, therefore it dictates a postponement." At this point, they exchange God's infallible Word that is inspired by the Holy Spirit for man's unproven assumption. Notice that they do not even offer a scriptural authority for their postponement, for there is none! They simply say, "If so, a parenthesis...is indicated." This is the biggest IF in Dispensationalism, where they discard God's infallible Word in favor of man's conjecture and supposition. If they are wrong and God's Word is right, their entire citadel of error crashes.

In Ironside's book (The Great Parentheses, page 25) He states, "Strange is it the many have supposed it was the Prince Messiah Himself who was to confirm a covenant for one week. But when did He ever make such a covenant? The blood of the covenant which He shed upon the cross is not to confirm a covenant for 7 years, but it is the blood of the everlasting covenant."

It is interesting to note here, that Dispensationalists do admit that there was a covenant ratified by Christ during the Seventieth Week. But the Jews reject this covenant, although it was "everlasting" as the fulfillment of Daniel 9:24-27. Again they substitute their interpretation for God's infallible Word.

We shall illustrate this point by a further quotation from (The Millennial Kingdom, page 133) "Daniel's Seventy Weeks are subject to literal interpretation even though the interval between the 69<sup>th</sup> and the 70<sup>th</sup> week is only hinted at by Daniel himself." Doctor Walvoord does not explain where this supremely important postponement was "ONLY HINTED AT" nor does he explain how the infallible Bible could be confronted with such an embarrassing error as flagrant as the postponement of the entire Old Testament to some future age, to maintain this delusion.

Dispensationalism has resorted to some very serious and questionable allegations. For instance, on (page 228 of The Millennial Kingdom) we read, "This very fact confused even the prophets." In his book (The Return of the Lord, page 41) this same author says, "As the time of His ascension into the heavens drew near, the disciples were somewhat confused...they did not understand that the Kingdom would follow the Second Coming." Mr Walvoord does not enlighten us as to how he arrived at this clear understanding that all the apostles were confused in their understanding of the Bible, especially since the Holy Spirit inspired their utterances. To be confused means they were perplexed, bewildered, tangled, or a cross-purposes. This is a rather serious assessment to make against those who were chosen to be the vehicles of God's infallible truth. Dispensationalism is bankrupt of any scriptural authority to support the Postponement Theory! It is an unproven hypothetical assumption.

**The Bible says, "Seventy Weeks are Determined."**

Daniel 9:24...Commenting on this Bible passage in the Scofield reference Bible page 915, Dr. Scofield says, "Prophetic time invariable so near as to give full warning, so indeterminate as to give no satisfaction to mere curiosity." First of all, notice that the Bible says, "DETERMINED." Scofield says, "Prophetic time is invariably indeterminate." The prophetic time to

which Dr. Scofield refers is now more than 1900 years overdue, so it cannot be classified as near enough to give any warning.

The Bible says, "Seventy Weeks are determined." In the Scofield Bible, in his notes on the same page, he says, "Prophetic time is invariably indeterminate." Let us see if prophetic time is invariably indeterminate.

- Christ was to be buried and rise again in the third day. Was there anything indeterminate about His rising? Could He have risen any other day and still have fulfilled That prophecy?

- Joseph prophesied of seven fat years followed by seven Years of famine. Was the time to be regarded as invariably indeterminate?

- Jeremiah prophesied of seventy years of captivity in Babylon. What if that did not happen on schedule? If the seventieth year had happened several hundreds of years later, would that have fulfilled the prophecy? God keeps His appointments meticulously on schedule. This is what makes the scriptures **INFALIBLE**. A break or postponement does not make a fulfillment possible. It is a flagrant error!

Jesus said, "If I do not the works of my father, believe me not." (John 10:37) Dispensationalism is wrecked on this rock, for it is decisive! Daniel prophesied by the Holy Spirit and no man can tamper with what Deity has ordained. Jesus further said, "For the works which my Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me." (John 5:36b)

God's standard of the veracity of prophecy is this: "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if that thing follow not (no postponement permissible) nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously." (Deuteronomy 18:22) "The scripture cannot be broken."

## Let us ask what does Dispensationalism expect to Happen during Daniel's Seventieth Week?

Their current literature assures us that there will first of all be a secret rapture, when the believers will be caught up for a 7 year excursion in the air. Then, there will be the manifestation of the so-called Anti-Christ and his covenant with the Jews, which he will break in the middle of the week. Then will come The Great Tribulation and the Millennium. Unfortunately for them, none of these speculations can be found in Daniel 9:24. There is no reference to re-establishing the Jewish nation or economy mentioned. What the inspired writer and prophet did plainly say is this..."And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be as with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations shall be determined...and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." (Daniel 9:26-27b)

What Daniel wrote about was the "CONSUMATION" of Jewry, not its exaltation and eventual restoration. (On page 136 of *The Millennial Kingdom*) Dr. Walvoord states, "The doctrine of Israel remains one of the central features of pre-millennialism." I would like to point out that "Israel" is not a doctrine. Israel is a "history" as far as the Bible is concerned. Whether doctrine or history, it is not central in the Bible. Christ is the central theme in the Word of God and He is the One God has exalted. If Israel is central in pre-millennialism, we must remember that Christ is central in the Kingdom of God and in the Bible.

(On page 227 of *The Millennial Kingdom*) we read, "While Dispensationalists have regarded as a parentheses unexpected and without specific prediction in the Old Testament..." On the contrary, Peter says, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10:43) Surely that is specific and it includes ALL.

We repeat the following two quotations because we wish to answer them clearly. They are crucial to the issue we are dealing with, and therefore require special attention.

H. A. Ironside says in (The Great Parentheses, page 25) "Strange is it that many have supposed it was the Prince Messiah Himself who was to confirm a covenant for one week. But when did He ever make such a covenant? The blood of the covenant He shed on the cross is not to confirm a covenant for seven years, but it is the blood of the everlasting covenant." Now, to this we add this statement from Dr. John Walvoord in (The Millennial Kingdom page 227) which says, "Nothing can be found in history that provides a literal fulfillment of the last seven years, or Seventieth Week. It has been taken by many that this indicates a postponement of the fulfillment of the last seven years."

First of all, let us do a little mathematics. The Bible says, "Seventy Weeks are determined." This period is composed of seven weeks, during which the city of Jerusalem is restored. Then a period of 434 years (62 weeks) elapse until the baptism of Christ. The baptism of Christ is established because He is referred to as Messiah, the Prince, in other words, the Anointed One. There remained but one week. It is generally established that Christ ministered three and one half years before His crucifixion, when He was cut off. The remaining three and one half years was the period of time when the gospel was proclaimed to the Jews, ending with Peter's Divinely guided mission to the house of Cornelius who was the first Gentile to embrace salvation. (Acts chapter 10) Further, the duration of the Covenant was not limited to one week, but was ratified during that one week of prophecy.

**Its duration was and is endless!**

### **This is the New and Everlasting Covenant**

Next, we take the keenest issue with Dr. Walvoord in his statement that, "Nothing can be found in history that provides a literal fulfillment of the last seven years, or the Seventieth Week." First of all it should be pointed out that the ministry,

death and resurrection of Christ was LITERAL. It was an historical event that actually happened. We repeat, that during that period of time, the Jews did "Finish" the transgression. Their culminating crime was the rejection of Christ and delivering Him up to be crucified. Christ pointed out to them a long list of prophets and godly men who they executed, and ended by saying, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." (Matthew 23:32)

- Christ did make an end of sins!
- Christ made expiation for sin!
- Christ did bring in everlasting righteousness!
  - The Old Testament lived in prophecy
  - The New Testament lives in history.

Now, if all the things prophesied were fulfilled on schedule, there is no need of wresting the scriptures and saying unequivocally, as these Dispensationalists have spoken, "The fact is they were not fulfilled." Dispensational interpretation was most surely not fulfilled, but God fulfilled all that was prophesied literally and with infallibility. It could not be otherwise, for God cannot fail. He knows the end from the beginning. As it is written: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counselor?" (Romans 11:34)

We just do not accuse God of being delinquent with His promises, and injecting postponements, and parentheses of time to justify our interpretation. We accept His terms and His time and if we seem mistaken, let us remember God has not changed. What God determines, man cannot postpone!

In my book, *The Sign of His Coming*, I take the following quotation when Daniel prophesied; "He shall

confirm the covenant." (Daniel 9:27) The evidence is very conclusive that "He" meant the Messiah. There are 281 references to "Covenant" in the scriptures listed in Young's Analytical Concordance. Not one of these scriptures in any way suggests the idea of a covenant between the Jews and a supposed Anti-Christ. There is not a hint anywhere that such a covenant is suggested, intended, proposed or prophesied at any time. Concerning the covenant between the believers and the Messiah, there are many scores of such references. (Jer. 31:31-33 and Hebrews 8:7-13)

Even more convincing is the testimony supplied by the Hebrew word for covenant which is used in the phrase, "He shall confirm the covenant." The Hebrew word is "Bereeth." According to the Pulpit commentaries, Vol. 29 page 275 "Bereeth" is only used in connection with a Divine Covenant. It is never used to designate a "league" with any other power or force, but is always reserved to describe a covenant between God and man. For that reason, the covenant cannot be applied to anyone except the Messiah. It cannot possibly describe a covenant with a supposed future Anti-Christ or any other political group-involving apostate Jews.

The Massoretic Text renders Daniel 9:27 thus: "And one week shall confirm a covenant with many, and in the middle of the week, my sacrifice and my offering shall be taken away." The use of the personal pronoun, "my" signifies that it was the Mosaic sacrifices and the oblations that were meant. God honored and ordained these shadows of good things until the time of Christ's death. That is the only sacrifice that God could call "My sacrifice." We see then, that the death of Christ did inaugurate the New and Everlasting Covenant and that Christ did confirm that Covenant at Calvary during His earthly ministry. When Christ died, the old Mosaic sacrifices ceased to have any further efficacious value. The way to God was now opened by, "A new and living way when the veil was Divinely torn asunder." (Hebrews 10:20)

Perhaps there is no better place to end this treatise than with the words found in Hebrews 13:20-21, "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ: to Whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

In other words, God's Word is infallible!  
That which God determines, He fulfills--on schedule!

Prophecy is not based on an unproven Dispensational assumption. The God who knows the end from the beginning, tolerates no such thing as a postponement theory! He does everything according to His own DETERMINATE WILL.