

Fundamentals of Our Faith from the Beginning

Frameworks and the Future

Daniel 9:24-27

1. Basic positions:

- a. The first 69 weeks (483 years), which is the period between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the first advent of Christ, is followed by an indeterminant gap of time before the 70th week, which is the seven-year Great Tribulation.
 - i. This view understands the decree to have been in 445-444 B.C. which would be 483 years from Jesus' triumphal entry.¹
 - ii. This view understands vs 26 & 27 to describe two different events in chronological order.
 - iii. This view posits an indeterminant gap of time between the 69th and 70th weeks because they assert that events in v 24 have not yet happened so must still be future.²
- b. The seven weeks is the 49 years it took to rebuild the temple (cf. John 2:20); the 62 is from Darius to Christ's baptism; and the 70th is Christ's ministry, resurrection (middle of the week), and destruction of Jerusalem (Calvin).
- c. The 70 weeks (seventy sevens or 490 years) represent the completion of ten Jubilees (49x10) and point to the antitypical Jubilee (Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:16-21 cf. Leviticus 25:8f); the first 69 weeks is the period from Cyrus' decree in 538 B.C. to Christ's first advent (His baptism), and the 70th week follows immediately and includes the present age.
 - i. This view believes the numbers (7, 10, 70, 490) are meant to be understood theologically.
 - ii. This view understands the prophecy of 70 weeks to be directly related to Daniel's prayer and Jeremiah's 70 years (cf. 9:1-3).

2. Background:

- a. Daniel 9:1-2
 - i. First year of Darius³, meaning the end of Babylon (ruled concurrently with Cyrus).
 - ii. Jeremiah 25:8-12 – seventy years before the judgment of Babylon.
 - iii. Jeremiah's seventy years is enforced sabbath rest for the land (cf. 2 Chron. 36:21).
 - iv. 70 years was not exactly 70. The following are options for the beginning of the 70 years:
 1. Fall of Nineveh (612 B.C.) = 73 years.
 2. Nebuchadnezzar's accession (605 B.C.) = 66 years.
 3. Beginning of the captivity (597 B.C.) = 58 years.
 4. Destruction of the temple and city (586 B.C.) = 47 years.
- b. Daniel 9:3-4, 16, 19 and 20-23.
 - i. Daniel's prayer was prompted by Jeremiah's prophecy.
 - ii. Gabriel was sent regarding Daniel's prayer which concerned the 70 years.
 - iii. Gabriel's explanation of the vision connects the 70 years to the 70 weeks (note, 445 B.C. is 90+ years removed and would not have been an answer to Daniel's prayer).
- c. Cyrus' decree:
 - i. Cyrus issued a decree to rebuild the temple in 538 B.C. in fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy (cf. 2 Chron. 36:22-23).
 - ii. Though we are not told that his decree included rebuilding the city,⁴ this may be assumed...
 1. Given Daniel's prayer regarding the city (vs. 17 and 19).
 2. By the centrality of the temple to city life (a rebuilt city is necessary).
 3. The explicit connection made by Isaiah in 44:28 and 45:13.

¹ This is based on a 360-day year and assumes a 1st of Nissan decree and Christ's triumphal entry on April 6, 32 A.D.

² In addition, it is argued that "the prince to come" (v 26) must be future, i.e. Antichrist.

³ Not Darius the Great.

⁴ Note that rejecting this decree as that of v 25 because it does not specifically mention the city is an argument from silence.

3. The text (vs. 24-27):

- a. Vs. 24 lists six results of the prophecy:
 - i. To finish the transgression.
 - ii. To make an end of sin.
 - iii. To make atonement for iniquity (all agree this refers to Christ's death).
 - iv. To bring in everlasting righteousness.
 - v. To seal up vision and prophesy (cf. 2 Cor. 1:20; Heb. 1:1-2).
 - vi. To anoint the most holy (cf. Acts 10:38, anointing of Jesus; Luke 4:34, "holy One of God").
- b. Vs. 25 gives the content and timing of the decree:
 - i. The decree is to restore and rebuild Jerusalem with plaza and moat, even in distress.
 - 1. See 2. c. iii. Above regarding Cyrus' decree.
 - 2. Cyrus' decree set in motion all that was entailed in the rebuilding of Jerusalem.
 - ii. There would be 69 weeks (7 + 62) until "Messiah, the Prince" would come.
 - iii. The first seven weeks may refer to the 49 years it took to build the temple (46+3).
 - iv. Messiah comes at the conclusion of the 69 weeks, in other words, He *begins* the 70th week.
 - 1. There is no gap in or around Jeremiah's 70 years.
 - 2. There is no gap between the 7th and 62nd weeks.
 - 3. No other instance in Scripture admits of a gap where a definite time is specified.⁵
- c. Vs. 26 describes what will happen after the 69 weeks:
 - i. *After* the 69th week, Messiah will "be cut off and have nothing" (the beginning of 70th).
 - ii. The city and sanctuary will be destroyed by "the people of the prince to come."
 - 1. This refers to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D.
 - 2. The "people of the prince" refers to Titus and his armies.
 - 3. Some argue that the "prince who is to come" is the Antichrist yet to come, but...
 - a. The construction "people of the prince" makes them contemporaries.
 - b. The phrase "who is to come" is future to Daniel not to "the people".
 - c. Nothing in this text or other Scripture demands this.
- d. Vs. 27 recapitulates verse 26:
 - i. The verses are more likely parallel, not chronological: not ABC / DEF but ABC / ABC
Messiah -- destroying prince -- desolations
Covenant maker -- one who makes desolate -- desolations
 - ii. This would mean that the Messiah (26) and the one who makes a covenant (27) are parallel as would be the destroying prince (26) and the one who makes desolate (27).
 - iii. The covenant in 27 is likely the New Covenant made with the many (cf. Rom. 5:15).
[No other Scripture gives indication of a covenant made between Antichrist and Israel, and nothing in the language of this passage suggests this interpretation, and Jesus did establish the NC.]
 - iv. The *one week* is the 70th week inaugurated by Christ and either ends with the destruction of Jerusalem or is the whole church age.
 - v. The stoppage of sacrifice and grain offering in the middle is either Jesus' resurrection or the destruction of the temple.
 - vi. The "wing of abominations" likely refers to Titus or the Jews rejection of Christ.
 - vii. Matthew 24:15 is from Daniel ("let the reader of *Daniel* understand) and speaks of the destruction of Jerusalem.

⁵ "We are bold, therefore, to lay it down as an absolute rule, admitting of no exceptions, that when a definite measure of time or space is specified by the number of units composing it, within which a certain event is to happen or a certain thing is to be found, the units of time or space which make up that measure are to be understood as running continuously and successively" (Philp Mauro in *Kingdom*).