

Entrust Systematic Theology: Eschatology Part 4 11/7/19

## THE 70<sup>TH</sup> WEEK OF DANIEL

### I. Introduction to Daniel's 70 Weeks

- While in the Babylonian captivity (605-538 B.C.), Daniel was given the prophecy of the 70 weeks (Dan 9:24-27):

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. <sup>25</sup> So you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. <sup>26</sup> Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. <sup>27</sup> And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations *will come* one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

#### A. The Six-Fold Purpose of the 70 Weeks (Dan 9:24)

- The Hebrew word translated “week” in Daniel 9 means “a unit of seven” and refers to time periods of seven without specifying what units of time are in view.
- In this particular context, these “seventy sevens” refer to years (rather than to days or months) and therefore to a total of 490 years. According to verse 24, God has decreed this period of 490 years in which to accomplish six purposes on behalf of the nation of Israel (“your people”) and the city of Jerusalem (“your holy city”):
  - 1) to finish the transgression
  - 2) to make an end of sin
  - 3) to make atonement for iniquity
  - 4) to bring in everlasting righteousness

- 5) to seal up vision and prophecy
  - 6) to anoint the most holy place
- Significant debate has arisen regarding the exact referent of these goals and the timing of their fulfillment.
  - Some of them clearly will not be accomplished until just before Jesus returns to establish His messianic kingdom, and therefore the seventy weeks of Daniel must extend to the very end of the present age.

### **B. The Three-fold Division of the 70 Weeks (Dan 9:25-27)**

- The remainder of the passage divides these “seventy sevens” (490 years) into three distinct time periods:
  - 1) Seven Sevens ( $7 \times 7 = 49$  years)
    - a. The first seven sevens (49 years) commence at “the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem” (v. 25a)
    - b. This is a reference to
      - i. the decree to Nehemiah in 445 B.C. (Neh 2:1-8) – and they conclude when the restoration of Jerusalem was completed (in either 409 or 396 B.C., depending on which decree is in view).

Nehemiah 2:1-8 And it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine *was* before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. <sup>2</sup> So the king said to me, “Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart.” Then I was very much afraid. <sup>3</sup> I said to the king, “Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?” <sup>4</sup> Then the king said to me, “What would you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven. <sup>5</sup> I said to the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, **send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.**” <sup>6</sup> **Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, “How long will your journey be, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.** <sup>7</sup> And I said to the king, “If it please the king, let letters be given me for the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah, <sup>8</sup> and a **letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to**

**make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go.” And the king granted *them* to me because the good hand of my God *was* on me.**

- 2) Sixty-Two Sevens (  $62 \times 7 = 434$  years)
  - a. The next 62 sevens (434 years) then begin immediately and conclude at the arrival of “Messiah the Prince” (v. 25b)
  - b. Seems to reference Jesus’ triumphal entry as Messiah on Palm Sunday (Matt. 21)
- So, 7 weeks is 7 periods of 7 years, which is 49 years. And 62 weeks is 62 periods of 7 years;  $62 \times 7$  is 434 years.  $49 + 434 = 483$  years.
- Dan. 9:25 teaches that from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem there will be 483 years until “Messiah the Prince.” March/April 445 BC and add 483 Jewish years → 30 A.D., the day that Christ enters Jerusalem to reveal himself publicly as Messiah (Matt. 21).
- The phrase, “When he entered Jerusalem..” seems to mark the day on the divine calendar when the 483 years was up and the Messiah enters Jerusalem exactly as foretold

3) A Final Seven (7 years) = A Total of 490 Years

- a. This final term of seven years is discussed below.

### **C. The Temporal Gap Between the 69th and 70th Weeks**

“Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary...” (v. 26)

- Some time after his arrival at the completion of the 69<sup>th</sup> week (v. 26a) – and yet prior to the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> week (v. 27) – the Messiah will be crucified (“the Messiah will be cut off ,” v. 26b).
- Then, the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary (v. 26d).
- The crucifixion was A.D. 33 +/- and the city of Jerusalem was destroyed A.D. 70.

- The people of the prince to come are who and did what?
- This is spoken of a bit in Dan. 2:40-43 where Daniel is giving the meaning of the statue dream King Nebuchadnezzar has. Incredibly, Daniel foretells the Medo-Persian, Greek, and Roman kingdoms, well before they existed. Sure enough, they came about. And the last kingdom is the mixed Roman kingdom.
- They are those who destroyed the city and the sanctuary, or temple: the Romans of the Roman Empire, A.D. 70.
- So, there is this “prince to come” who is from the people of the Roman Empire. “Prince to come” means some future leader. And he is from the Roman Empire; or, generally western culture; from the pagan roman peoples and system;
- Following that there is this period of indeterminate length that Jesus called “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).
- This intervening gap of time between the 69<sup>th</sup> and final week of Daniel 9 constitutes the present age and will continue until the pre-tribulational rapture of the church. The existence of this temporal gap is clear for several reasons:

1. The 70th week is described in such a way that sets it apart from the 69 weeks, which suggests there may be something different about it.

2. Other OT prophecies predict two future events and present them in such a way that it appears they will occur simultaneously, and yet later revelation clarifies the existence of a significant gap of time separating the two. Example:

Isaiah 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; <sup>2</sup> To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn

Luke 4:17-21 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, <sup>18</sup> “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, <sup>19</sup> TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.” <sup>20</sup> And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

<sup>21</sup> And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

-Jesus stops at Isa. 61:2a.

Luke 4:16-21 clarifies a gap of time between the first-century fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1-2a and the eschatological fulfillment of Isaiah 61:2b.

**3.** According to the prophecy itself, both the crucifixion of Christ (Dan 9:26a) and the destruction of Jerusalem 40 years later (Dan 9:26b) occur *after the 69<sup>th</sup> week* and yet *not during the 70<sup>th</sup> week*, and therefore a temporal gap of at least some length (a minimum of 40y years) must separate the two.

The question, then, is not *whether* a temporal gap exists between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> weeks, but rather *how long* it is.

**4.** Not all of the six divine purposes to be accomplished during the 70 weeks have been fulfilled, which is clear in part because these purposes have specific reference to the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem ("for your people and your holy city" in v. 24).

Harold Hoehner: "Israel has not yet finished her transgression, nor been purged of her iniquity. Nor has she experienced the everlasting righteousness promised her. Paul sees this still in the future for Israel (Rom. 11:25-27)."

So, the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27 did not occur in the first century A.D. and must be yet future.

**5.** Jesus indicated that "the abomination of desolation spoken of through Daniel the prophet" would not occur during His earthly ministry but rather would be a sign of the great tribulation immediately preceding His return (Matthew 24:15 "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand)).

Therefore, this places the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27 in the future, just before the Second Coming of Christ (Matt 24:15-31).

**6.** The events of the last half of the 70<sup>th</sup> week (as described in Dan 9:27b) correspond well to the second 3 ½ years of the tribulation, as described in the Book of Revelation, which is yet future.

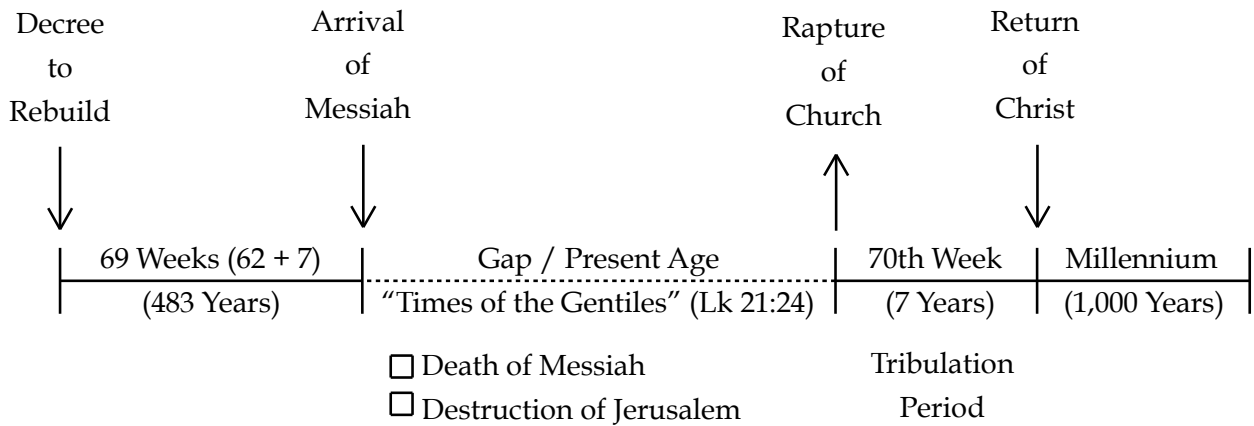
The one who confirms the covenant in Daniel 9:27 cannot be Christ, because at no time in His earthly ministry did He confirm an already-existing covenant.

In contrast, the description of this individual matches the wicked person in Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 12 and 13, who has not yet appeared and been judged as described in Revelation 19:19-20.

In fact, writing near the end of the first century – several decades after the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 – the apostle John describes a 42-month period of time in the future in which this “beast” will exercise authority on earth (Rev 13:5).

That corresponds to the 42 months in the second half of Daniel’s 70th week. This places the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27 in the future, just before the return of Christ to establish His millennial kingdom.

- Therefore, because the 69 weeks conclude with the first coming of Christ and the 70th week is completed just before His return, there must be an interval of time between the two as follows:



#### D. The Eschatological Context of Daniel’s 70th Week

- Often known as Daniel’s 70th Week, the final seven in Daniel 9 coincides with the 7-year tribulation period (cf. Dan 7:25; Rev 11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5) that will take place between the rapture and the return of Christ to establish His millennial reign on earth.

- This unprecedented season of God's wrath being poured out upon the earth is described not only in Daniel 9:27 but also throughout the entirety of Revelation 6-18.
- Stephen Miller: "After the coming of Messiah, he was rejected by Israel; and the time of the Gentiles began, which is not counted in the 'seventy sevens.'"
- Just as God focused his attention on the Jewish people for about 2000 years, these past 2000 years his attention has been focused on the Gentiles.
- However, just as many Gentiles were saved during the Old Testament period, in this present age there are many Jewish believers. At the end of the present age, God will again deal with Israel in a special manner, and the final seven will begin.
- During the last seven, which immediately precede Christ's second coming, there will be a terrible time of tribulation for Israel and the world.
- God will use this trial to bring Israel and many others to saving faith.
- At that time the majority of the people in Israel will acknowledge Jesus as the promised Messiah, repent, and be saved (cf. Rom 11:25-29; Zech 12:10-13:1).
- The final seven (seven years) will be terminated by Christ's second coming and the establishment of his earthly kingdom, which will last 1000 years. Christ's reign will, of course, continue beyond the millennium into the eternal state.

## II. A Biblical Description of Daniel's Seventieth Week

Daniel 9:26-27 Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. <sup>27</sup> And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

- Jesus was executed just after his public declaration as Messiah, when he went to the cross to pay for our sin (v. 26b). The, Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70.



- V. 27 is the major point of focus as it pertains to this 70<sup>th</sup> week, which is also called, “The Great Tribulation” (Rev. 7:14), or “Jacob’s Troubles” (Jer. 30:7).
- Daniel’s 70<sup>th</sup> week is also the topic of teaching Christ’s words in Matt 24:15-31.

Daniel 9:27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

- V. 27a – “and he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week” – Who is he?
- So, the “prince to come” is from the people of the Roman Empire, or Roman-influenced western pagan culture.
- The prince to come makes a firm covenant with the many of one week. In context, “the many” refers to Daniel’s people mentioned in v. 24; the Jews.
- A firm covenant, or treaty, is made with them, v. 27, for one week. Again, the Hebrew word “week” refers to a time period of 7 years.
- Thus, in the future, some sort of powerful world leader will make a treaty with the Jews; a 7-year treaty. No such thing has happened, so this is yet future.
- This political leader will have great skill to pull this off. He will be praised for this incredible accomplishment, and people will venerate him for creating this unprecedented unity; though the unity will be superficial.
- This period of 7 years is the 7-year tribulation which Jesus is teaching about in Matthew 24:15-31. We know that b/c Jesus is talking about the tribulation in Matthew 24, and references this passage in Daniel (“...the Abomination of Desolation spoke of through Daniel the prophet,” Matt. 24:15).
- So, this signing of the treaty seems to be the starting point of the 7-year tribulation. If you are around, and this massive treaty is signed, then know that the tribulation is about to begin.
- But there’s more in v. 27: the Antichrist will show himself as a servant of Satan when he turns against God’s people.



- V. 27b – “but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering” – So, the middle of the week would be what?
- 3 ½ years into the Tribulation; the mid-point. At that time, he, the supposed prince – this powerful ruler – stops sacrifice and offering.
- In an OT context, the only way sacrifice and offering could be understood is in reference to the Jewish practice in the Temple. But, is there a Temple right now in Israel?
- So, 3 ½ years into the tribulation, 3 ½ years after making this great treaty with Israel, the prince all of a sudden forbids the practice of sacrifice and offering; which means he basically outlaws Jews from practicing Judaism.
- V. 27c – “and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”
- Those statements, “abominations...who makes desolate,” are again what show that this verse is what Jesus is talking about in Matt. 24:15, “the abomination of desolation” from the book of Daniel.
- So, this world leader does more than outlaw the Jews from practicing Judaism. He does something that is an “abomination.”
- The Greek word translated abomination means something detestable, repulsive; often in the context of worshipping God.
- This prince to come is also referred to as the Antichrist, the man of lawlessness, and the beast elsewhere in the Bible. [ More on that in a bit ]
- He is someone who commits abomination, brings about destruction and makes desolate. What is the abomination and then destruction he brings about?

2 Thessalonians 2:1–4 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, <sup>2</sup> that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of

destruction, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

- V. 3 – Paul says that Christ will not return until a few things happen.
- V. 3 – the apostasy comes first. Apostasy means to externally associate with Christ and his people for a time, but to treacherously turn away and renounce it all. Jesus mentions that exact thing in Matt. 24:10 – where he says that during the 7-year Tribulation, many will turn away, or commit apostasy.
- Also, Christ will not come, v. 3, until this man of lawlessness, a.k.a. the son of destruction, is revealed. This is the prince to come who commits abomination in Daniel 9:27. So, he is revealed before Christ returns. What does he do?
- 2 Thess 2:4 – “he opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”
- The antichrist, or prince to come, seems like a brilliant, altruistic world leader; creates world unity; enacts this treaty with Israel; perhaps gets the noble peace prize or something. But, as Daniel 9:27 said, he outlaws Jewish worship halfway through the 7 years, and commits an abominable thing.
- According to 2 Thess 2:4 – what is that abominable thing? “...he takes his seat in the Temple of God.” Notice, that the Temple is mentioned there, which coincides with Daniel 9, since the Temple must exist for sacrifices.
- But, why does this world leader end Jewish worship in the Temple? Because he now sets himself as the object of worship in the Temple of God. He sets himself before the world as God.
- That is the highest act of abomination; of repulsive human actions; to display yourself in the place of the true God and demand worship.
- How could he do that? And how could many across the world fall for such a despicable act so as to worship a mere man?

Another passage that describes the Tribulation and this world leader/ “prince to come”:

Revelation 13:1-2 And the dragon stood on the sand of the seashore. Then I saw a beast coming up out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on his horns *were* ten diadems, and on his heads *were* blasphemous names. <sup>2</sup> And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like *those* of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.

- There is this terrifying beast: a body like a leopard, feet like a bear, mouth like a lion, with 7 heads, and 10 horns on each head, plus some crowns and wicked names.

Revelation 13:3 *I saw* one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed. And the whole earth was amazed *and followed* after the beast;

- So, one of the 7 heads of the beast appears to be dead; lifeless. But, it is then healed, and the previously lifeless head comes back to life.
- This clearly symbolizes the death and resurrection of some world ruler. It says in v. 3, that the whole earth reacts with amazement and follows the beast. He does not appear to the world as a beast. This imagery of a beast in Revelation is symbolic of his character and nature. He will appear as a man.

Revelation 13:4-6 they worshiped the dragon because he gave his authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who is able to wage war with him?" <sup>5</sup> There was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies, and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him. <sup>6</sup> And he opened his mouth in blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, *that is*, those who dwell in heaven.

- Thus, in response to his rising from the dead, the beast is worshiped. And, as noted in, v. 6, he blasphemes God in the tabernacle, or the Temple, just as in Daniel 9:27 and 2 Thessalonians 2:4.
- This prince, or beast, or Antichrist, or man of lawlessness, sets himself up in the Temple to be worshiped in the place of the true God.
- How long is the Antichrist allowed to blasphemously exalt himself?
  - 42 months, which is 3 ½ years by the Jewish calendar. That perfectly coincides with Daniel 9:27, which says that the Tribulation, or 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, is 7 years.

- Halfway through those 7 years, what does the future world leader do?
- That is 3 ½ years into the Tribulation. So, that means that there is how much time left in the 7-year tribulation for him force people to worship him?
  - 3 ½ years, or, as Revelation 13:5 says, 42 months.
- Thus, how could so many people possibly fall for worshipping a mere man?
  - He will be killed and then rise from the dead somewhere around that 3 ½ year mark in the middle of the Tribulation.
- And, it will be at this mid-point which he then completely turns on both Jews and Christians. He shatters the treaty made at the beginning of the Tribulation.
- The Antichrist – this prince – demands worship. That reminds us of whom? Satan.
- Instead of promoting peace and unity, what happens?

Revelation 13:7-9 It was also given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them, and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him. <sup>8</sup> All who dwell on the earth will worship him, *everyone* whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who has been slain. <sup>9</sup> If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

Revelation 13:14-15 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth because of the signs which it was given him to perform in the presence of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life. <sup>15</sup> And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even speak and cause as many as do not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

- This explains how the Antichrist, or prince to come, makes desolation: he breaks the treaty he made at the beginning of the tribulation and then brings all out persecution and war upon the Jews and the Christians.
- Though only 3 ½ years, it will be a time of catastrophic persecution. One of the most common sites of those days will be the blood and body of a massacred Christian. But, every single one of them will go instantly to heaven, where they will never suffer or die again.

- The Antichrist's violent world domination will be short; 3 ½ years. He will be smashed when the world's true King returns at the end of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week and Tribulation, and Jesus will crush him, bring in peace, and upgrade the quality of the earth, and begin his good 1000-year reign.
  
- In summary
  - In Matthew 24:15ff Jesus foretells this individual spoken of in Daniel during the 7-year Tribulation who commits an abomination and makes desolation.
  
  - From Daniel 9, we saw that this individual, a prince to come, arises from some Western, Roman culture, who makes incredible political moves to unite the world and bring a treaty with the Jews. And the Temple is rebuilt.
  
  - This begins that future time called the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel, or the 7 year Tribulation.
  
  - Halfway, 3 ½ years into the Tribulation, this Antichrist breaks the treaty, forbids Jewish worship, turns on the Jews and commits an abomination.
  
  - From 2 Thessalonians 2, we saw that the abomination he commits is setting himself in the Temple; asserts himself as God; who is to be exclusively worshiped.
  
  - From Revelation 13, we saw that most of the world will worship him, because he is killed – perhaps assassinated – but Satan raises him from the dead.
  
  - From then on, the Antichrist unleashes catastrophic persecution against Jews and Christians, which is what it means that he enacts a desolation, though not all Christians and Jews are killed.
  
  - As foretold in Revelation 19, the Antichrist and his forces will be crushed when Jesus returns at the end of the 7-year Tribulation to take his rightful place as the true King and ruler to be worshiped; the Lamb of God, who died on the cross for our sins, and removes our guilt before God.