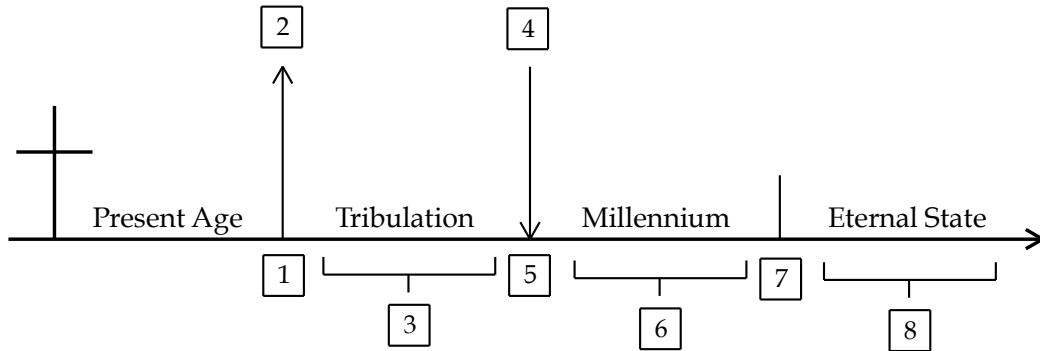


Entrust Eschatology The 70TH Week of Daniel 11/9/23

I. Introduction



1. The Imminent Rapture of the Church
2. The Judgment Seat of Christ
3. **The 70TH Week of Daniel**
4. The Second Coming of Christ
5. The Divine Restoration of Israel
6. The Millennial Reign of Christ
7. The Final Judgment of Unbelievers
8. The Final State of Eternity

Daniel's 70 Weeks

After Jeremiah had been told that Judah would remain in captivity for 70 years (Jer 29:10), Daniel sensed that this time period was almost over and asked God whether His people would now be restored to their land. The Lord answered and told Daniel that there were another 70 “sevens” that He had appointed for the nation of Israel:

Daniel 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. 25 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. 26 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. 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.”

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

- The Hebrew word translated “week” in Daniel 9:24–27 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”):
 - 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
 - to anoint the most holy place
- Debate has arisen regarding the meaning and referent of these six goals, as well as the timing of their fulfillment.
- But at least some of them—the final three in particular—clearly will not be accomplished until just before Jesus returns to establish His messianic kingdom, and therefore the 70 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 ($7 + 62 + 1 = 70$)
 - Seven Sevens (49 years)
 - 62 Sevens (434 years)
 - One seven: a final period of seven (7 years) = A Total of 490 Years

- When did the first seven sevens (49 years) begin?

- Powerful evidence indicates that it began at “the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem” (v. 25a)
- This is likely a reference to either the decree to Ezra in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26) or the decree to Nehemiah in 445 B.C. (Neh 2:1- 8) — and they concluded when the restoration of Jerusalem was completed (in either 409 or 396 B.C., depending on which decree is in view).

Ezra 7:12-13 “Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect *peace*. And now ¹³ I have issued a decree that any of the people of Israel and their priests and the Levites in my kingdom who are willing to go to Jerusalem, may go with you.”

Nehemiah 2:7-8 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, ⁸ 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.

- That leaves the question of when the next period of sevens occurred, namely, the 62 sevens.
 - The next 62 sevens ($62 \times 7 = 434$ years) then began immediately and concluded at the arrival of “Messiah the Prince” (v. 25b) in the early

A.D. 30s, a reference to either the baptism of Jesus or His triumphal entry as Messiah on Palm Sunday.

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

- Some time after His arrival at the completion of the 69TH week (v. 26a) – and yet prior to the beginning of the 70TH week (v. 27) – the Messiah will be crucified (“the Messiah will be cut off,” Dan 9:26b) (A.D. 33) and the city of Jerusalem will be destroyed (“and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary,” Dan 9:26c) (A.D. 70), ushering in a period of indeterminate length that Jesus called “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).
- This intervening gap of time between the 69TH 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. There is a clear biblical precedent of OT prophecies predicting two or more future events in a way that it appears they will occur at the same time, and yet later revelation clarifies a significant gap of time separating them (Isa 9:6–7; Jer 29:10–14; Zech 9:9–10).

For example, Luke 4:16–21 indicates a temporal gap between the first-century fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1–2a and the eschatological fulfillment of Isaiah 61:2b. This gap usually coincides with the interval between the first and second comings of Christ, as it does here in Daniel 9:26–27.

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; 2 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn

- Jesus preached this passage about Himself, however, he stopped before the end of Isa 61:2, interestingly:

Luke 4:17–20 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, 18 “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,
19 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord." 20 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.

2. The description of the 70TH week sets it apart from the 69 weeks, which suggests something different about it (Dan 9:25-27).
3. According to the prophecy:
 - a. both the crucifixion of Christ (Dan 9:26a) and the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem 40 years later (the destruction of A.D. 70 occurred roughly 40 years after Christ's crucifixion, Dan 9:26b) occur after the 69TH week and yet not during the 70TH week.
 - b. This results in a temporal gap of some length (a minimum of 40 years) that separates the two.

The question, then, is not whether a temporal gap exists between the 69TH and 70TH 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)."

Therefore, 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 (Matt 24:15).

Matthew 24:15-16 "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet [cf. Dan

9:27], standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), ¹⁶ then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.”

Jesus said that this “abomination” would be a sign of the great tribulation immediately preceding His return (Matt 24:15).

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 seven-year tribulation is often spoken of in terms of two periods of three and one-half years (Rev 11:3, 12:5, 13:5).

The events of the last half of the 70TH week (as described in Dan 9:27b) correspond well to the second three and one-half 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 (“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...,” Dan 9:27)

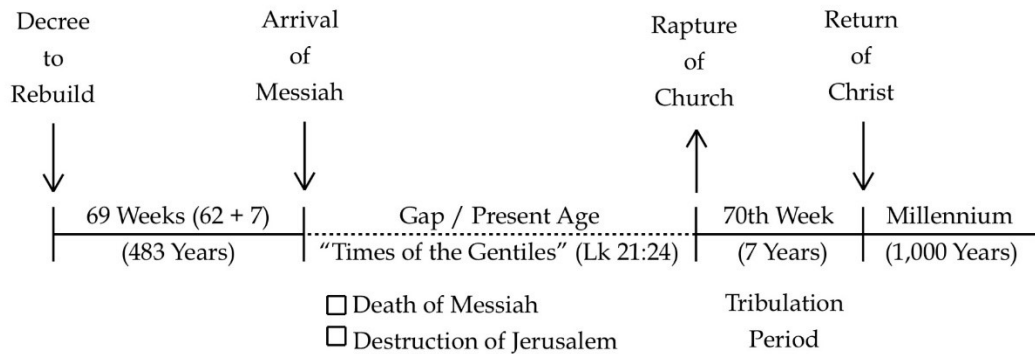
The reason Jesus cannot be the one who makes “a firm covenant” is because at no time in His earthly ministry did He confirm an already-existing covenant.

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), which corresponds to the 42 months (3.5 years = 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:



D. The Eschatological Context of Daneil's 70TH Week

- The final seven in Daniel 9:24–27 is often known as Daniel's Seventieth Week.
- This 70TH week coincides with the seven-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 and the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24; Luke 21; Mark 13), but also throughout Revelation 6-18. As Stephen R. Miller summarizes:
 - 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 two thousand years, these past two thousand 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 will immediately precede Christ's second advent, there will be a terrible time of tribulation for Israel and the world.
- God will use this trial to bring Israel and countless 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 a thousand years.
- Christ's reign will, of course, continue beyond the millennium into the eternal state.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

- John C. Whitcomb, "Daniel's Great 70-week's Prophecy: An Exegetical Insight," GTJ 2, no. 2: (Fall 1981): 259-63.
- Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "The Seventy Weeks of Daniel," in *Preaching and Teaching Last Things: Old Testament Eschatology for the Life of the Church*, 101-10. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.