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Daniel 9:26

And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

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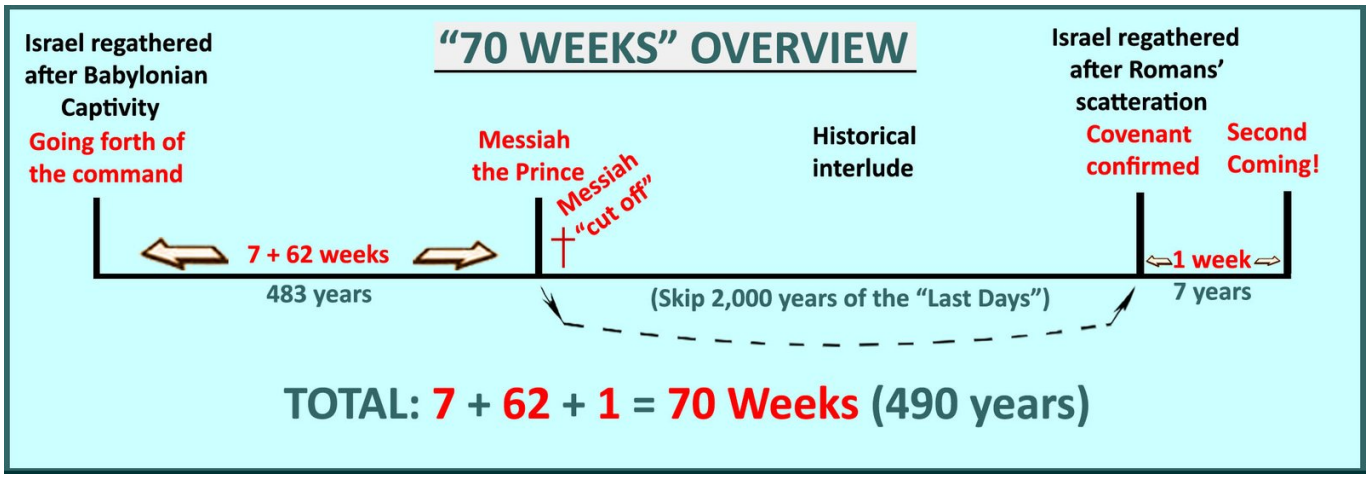
"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off."

The previous verse 25 mentioned the appearance of Messiah the Prince. This marked the end of the first period of 69 weeks (*"seven weeks and sixty-two weeks"*); and now in this verse 26 comes the beginning of a long interlude, or break, in the 70 weeks' time span.

The first main event in this long interlude was Jesus' execution, followed by the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple (followed by a couple thousand more years of history); then finally, the 70 weeks resumes once more (in the next verse 27) with the start of its 70th week, the soon-coming last seven years of our present age of history.

But that does sound strange, and one may wonder why this interruption? How are we to understand this *"70 weeks"* time prediction as a two-stage era with such a lengthy interval between its two stages? As

we continue our study, this perplexing issue should resolve itself.



Although the prophecy doesn't mention Christ's Second Coming directly, we know from the first part of Gabriel's message about *"an end of sins… everlasting righteousness… to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy"*, and from many other Scriptures on the subject, that Christ's Second Coming is the climactic event that will bring all these wonderful changes into the world.

But it would almost seem that an abortive attempt along these lines has already happened, but it came to an abrupt end at the Crucifixion of Christ. Perhaps "abortive" is the wrong word; Christ's crucifixion was the expected, predicted outcome, and it was not abortive as such.

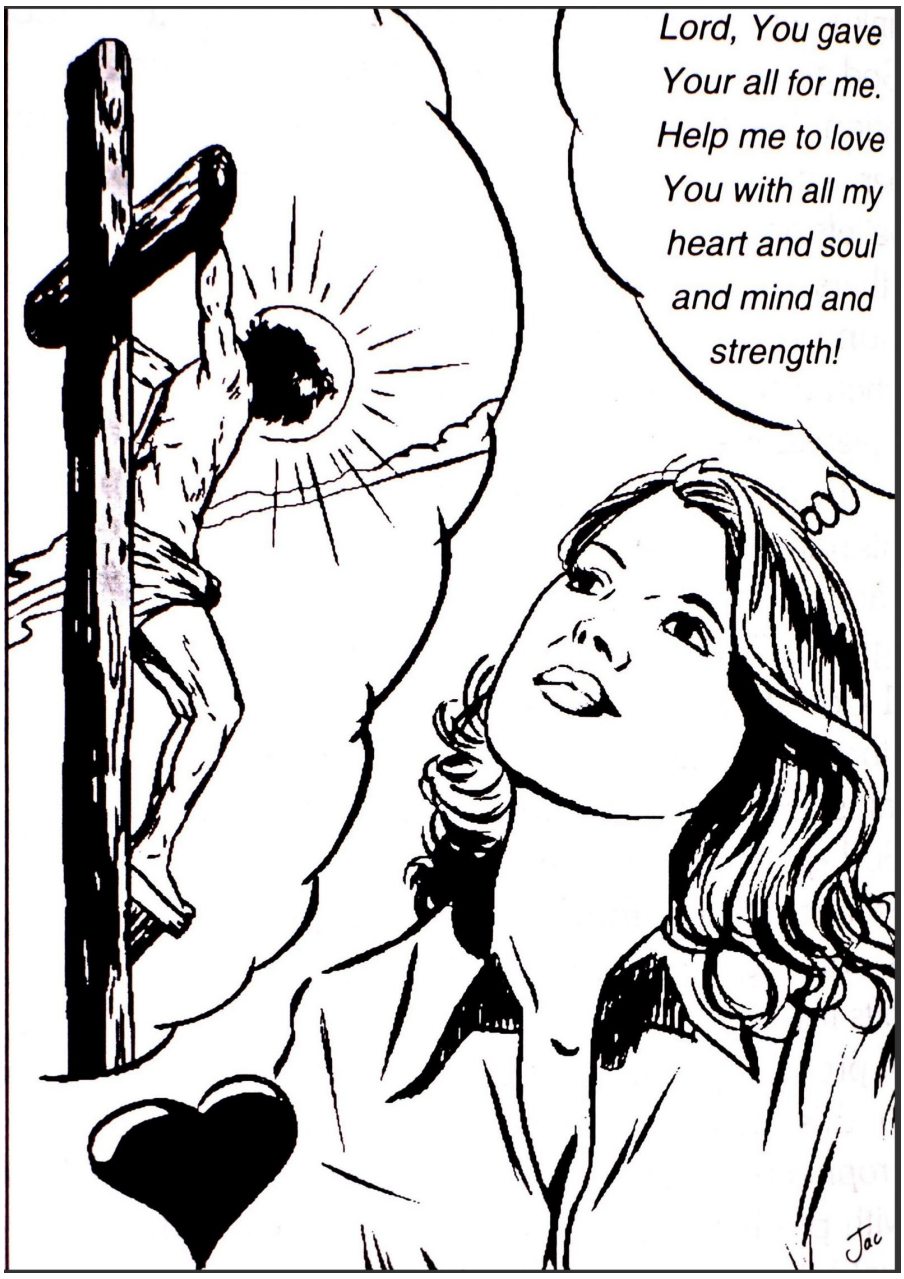
At any rate verse 26 tells us that *"Messiah shall be cut off"*, referring to the Crucifixion and His own people's rejection of Him. This betrayal of their own Messiah led to the Jewish people falling into the hands of a rival *"prince"*, one who brought great devastation to Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (as this verse 26 will go on to explain).

"Messiah shall be cut off."

In the gloomy years before the Babylonian Captivity, the Lord told Jeremiah the prophet that Judah and surrounding nations would *"serve the king of Babylon seventy years."* (Jeremiah 25:11) The Jewish people may have thought that, once those 70 years were finished, their Messiah would come in great supernatural power to deliver them from the

Babylonians. Well, the Lord did use a powerful and benevolent king, Cyrus, to throw off the Babylonian yoke, but he wasn't the Messiah. Nevertheless, the expectation continues, even in Jesus' time, that the Messiah would come and establish the Jewish nation as a great and powerful empire.

This phrase in Daniel's *"70 weeks"* prophecy about Messiah being *"cut off"* helps then to set the record straight about their Messiah's First Coming; it would not result in some kind of great political deliverance. There was much more to it than that, and the *"70 weeks"* prophecy elaborates on what the process of deliverance really meant: not just political deliverance from captivity in a strange land (Babylon) or from Roman oppression, but also deliverance from sin and this present evil world.



And to bring about this *"everlasting righteousness"* (and all the other things mentioned in verse 24) would require the death of the Messiah as a sacrificial offering for sin: *"Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself."* And the deliverance and beneficiaries of Messiah's sacrificial offering were to extend far beyond the boundaries of the Israeli nation.

And here is where a little fine-tuning of this passage might be helpful. In several Bible versions (NIV, NASU, RSV, NAS, ASV, ESV), the following

translation is used: *"Messiah will be cut off and have nothing"* – which is closer to the original Hebrew wording apparently. Three other versions give the following translations: *"the people that shall deny him shall not be His."* (Douay-Rheims) *"The Anointed One will be killed, His kingdom still unrealized."* (The Living Bible) *"The Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing."* (New Living Translation)

The general idea here seems to be this: the Crucifixion (when Messiah was *"cut off"*) not only brought an end to Jesus' earthly life, but it also meant the great Messianic "kingdom" – at least from Daniel and the Jewish people's point of view – would be *"cut off"*, or unrealized. That is, Jesus was *"cut off"* from being a Messiah to the Jewish nation. Instead He became the Messiah for the whole world – and, of course, also to those Jews who would honor and receive Him.

In other words, Gabriel was telling Daniel that the *"70 weeks"* had a much wider application than what he was probably thinking. In order for their Jewish Messiah to become the Savior of the whole world, there would have to be a sort of "cutting-off" process to distance Him from the Jewish kingdom so that His spiritual Kingdom could extend worldwide.

This shift towards including the rest of the world under Messiah's dominion signified a huge extension of His range of influence that, of course, would require extra time to implement and prepare for. There followed then a sort of "intermission" in the 70 weeks – a time when the Israeli nation would be shunted out of the mainstream of history.

During this rather lengthy postponement, known as the Gospel Age, the *"gospel of the kingdom"* was to be *"preached in all the world"*, as Jesus had predicted in Matthew 24:14. And once this happens, *"then the end will come,"* He said. Once the Good News has reached every nation, once *"the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled"* (Luke 21:24), only then would the time be right to make the transition from a worldwide spiritual kingdom to an actual physical Kingdom of God on earth – what Daniel and the Jewish people were always hoping for – the fulfillment of what Daniel's *"70 weeks"* prophecy had foretold so long ago.

So once the time becomes ripe for Christ's Second Coming, only then will Israel be brought back into the mainstream of history; and only then

can the *"70 weeks"* prophecy start up again and be completed in the events of its last 70th *"week"* – events which must needs center once more around the city of Jerusalem, just as they had many centuries before.

The First Coming of Christ brought on the creation of the New Testament, a document which, among many other things, re-wrote the guidelines given in the Old Testament. In particular, it introduced a whole new set of principles about what it meant to be a citizen in God's Kingdom. (See especially the "Sermon on the Mount", Matthew 5-7.)

Such citizenship would be based, not on flesh-and-blood ancestry, but on spiritual values – righteousness, concern for others, and, of course, willingness to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Being a descendant of Abraham might grant citizenship in the earthly Jewish kingdom, but it had very little to do with belonging to God's Heavenly Kingdom. God's purpose then for the Gospel Age has been to seek out those in every nation who wish to be His representatives on earth now and future citizens in His Heavenly Kingdom.

"The people of the prince who is to come."

In the previous 25th verse where it mentions *"Messiah the Prince"*, the word *"Prince"* was capitalized because it was referring to Jesus the Messiah. But here in verse 26 the same word is not capitalized, nor is the title of *"Messiah"* used; furthermore, he is called *"the prince who is to come"* – which differentiates him from the Messiah who had come a few years earlier. So at this point the passage is referring to a different *"prince"* – the Roman emperor Vespasian who sent his armies (led by his general Titus) to march into Israel and destroyed *"the city and the sanctuary".*

Even without the capitalization etc., it is fairly obvious that the *"prince"* who came to *"destroy the city and the sanctuary"* could not have been the *"Prince"* who is identified as the *"Messiah".* As we know from secular history, it was the Romans who descended on Israel, and this was the obvious fulfillment of what this verse was predicting would happen after Messiah's execution.

Yet there are strong opinions about this, that Jesus is the *"prince"* spoken of here. We might say that Christ had to allow the spiritual forces of Darkness to overrun the wayward people of that era and their city; that much is true. But the passage does not deal with what is going on in the spiritual realm; it is only continuing the story of what happens physically to the city of Jerusalem. Having started in a destroyed state, it gets re-built but ends up in a destroyed state. And these stages in Jerusalem's history come from the hand of rulers over worldly empires, not from Christ (who, for now, rules in the Heavenly Realm, not the Earthly Realm).

Because they had rejected the true *"Prince"*, the Israeli nation lost the blessing of God's protection, and another *"prince"* came along with an entirely different agenda to that of their now vanished *"Prince of Peace".* Jesus had referred to this invasion some 40 years before it happened:

> ***"As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace – but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.'"* (Luke 19:41-44, NIV)**



Jesus Weeping for Jerusalem

This verse 26 about the invasion of the Romans to *"destroy the city and the sanctuary"*, this section is not actually part of the 70-week time span, coming as it does *"after the sixty-two weeks"* and before the *"one week"* which starts with an event known as the confirming of *"a covenant"*. (9:27)

Although the 70 AD event happened long ago, it does pre-figure what the Antichrist will do in the more distant future. As the verse goes on to say, *"war will continue until the end."* (NIV) Fast forward to the End, and the spiritual descendant of this (earthly) Roman ruler in modern times will again invade Jerusalem. He will be an earthly ruler, known as the Antichrist, and will have nothing to do with the true Messiah (except that he will try to imitate him).

And in this way, verse 26 overlaps with and connects to the following verse 27 about the modern invasion of Jerusalem. For instance, *"the prince that shall come"* in this verse 26 carries on as the same subject of the next verse 27 – *"Then he shall confirm* etc." – the events of which actually take place some 2,000 years later. This long historical gap may seem illogical, but, when we compare this to other passages in the *Book of*

***Daniel*, we will see that it is not peculiar at all, but a very sensible way to understand this passage.**

For example, in Daniel 2:40-41 mention is made of the *"fourth kingdom"*, and in Daniel 7:7-8, 19-25 of the *"fourth beast"*. In both chapters it is obvious that this *"fourth kingdom/beast"* actually symbolizes two kingdoms – the ancient Roman empire and the modern Antichrist empire. But, like a double exposure in photography, they are merged into one *"fourth kingdom" / "fourth beast".*

Furthermore, there is the revelation in Daniel chapter 8, which starts from the ancient Greek Seleucid empire, then jumps abruptly into the final empire of the Antichrist (called the *"little horn"*). The same is true in chapter 11, where the angel Gabriel's discussion about the *"king of the north"*, ruler of the ancient Seleucid empire, changes into a discussion about the ruler of the final empire in the End of the Age.

And of course, this is the same kind of change we see in 9:26-27. The *"he"* in verse 26 about the ancient Roman ruler changes in verse 27 to a different *"he"* – the Antichrist ruler of the final empire. But spiritually, they are the same, rulers who claim divine status for themselves; and physically, they both carry out the same event, the military invasion of Jerusalem and its holy place.

So in this verse 26, and the next verse 27, we are getting a sort of economical presentation of future history (future to Daniel's time, that is), a composite picture of two separate historical events: the invasion in 70 A.D. by the Romans and, some 2,000 years later, a similar invasion by the modern Antichrist from Russia. (Regarding this latter invasion, the outstanding prophetic message in Ezekiel 38-39 predicts with uncanny clarity Russia's role on the End Time stage, a study of which may be found in the series of posts *Ezekiel 38-39: Ancient Prophet Glimpses Modern History!*)

What we have here could be compared to a double exposure in photography. That is, the prophecy is referring to two different armies and two different "antichrists" from two different eras, and the two "snapshots" have been superimposed on one another. This may sound a little odd, but this way of looking at future history, as we have seen,

shows up in each of the other revelations in the *Book of Daniel.*

Both the Roman and End of the Age empires were distant from Daniel's time, which may have something to do with the condensed portrayal of them in chapters 2 and 7. We could compare this to how mountain ranges, from a distance, can appear to the observer as a single range. Likewise, these revelations about the distant future appeared in the visions as one "range", that is, as one *"fourth kingdom"*, or one *"fourth beast"*. But in reality, they are two separate ranges, two separate empires in two different eras. (These points are covered more thoroughly in the post "Iron-Clay, Sea-Earth".)

And here is where it may help to get a feel for how earthly historical events appear to the celestial observers in the Realm Beyond. It is said that time is God's way of keeping things from happening all at once. For those in the Spirit Realm, the events in our world probably appear in condensed form. As history unfolds in our world, what was compressed spreads out over many centuries of time. History tends to repeat itself as the saying goes. That just means that the same event happens in different forms at different moments of our historical "time". Anyway, that could explain why some of Daniel's prophetic messages about future events seem to imply that the specific event mentioned, while having its ultimate fulfillment, nevertheless, appears as an ongoing one happening throughout history.

Although the two empires are very different – the Roman Caesar and the Russian demagogue invade Israel from two different geographical locations and in two very different time periods (ancient and modern) – yet in many ways they are similar. For example,

> **1) Both ancient and modern leaders cause the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple (the *"city and the sanctuary"*). That the Roman armies did this is historical fact; as for the Antichrist of the future, certain prophetic Scriptures indicate the same more or less: *"And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months."* (Revelation 11:2) *"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near."* (Luke 21:20)**
> **2) The Romans also carried out a great slaughter and persecution of the Jewish people. And as we can gather from certain Scriptures, it**

looks like the Antichrist will do so as well. (See Ezekiel 38:8-17.)
3) In addition, both the Roman Caesar and the Antichrist demagogue are objects of worship to the world and stand in opposition to the true worship of God. In Roman times Caesar-worship was practiced throughout the empire; as for the future Antichrist, there are several Scriptures that indicate he will be worshiped also – in the modern guise of secular adulation. (Daniel 11:36-37, Revelation 13:3,4,8,15, and others)
4) And finally, both *"princes"* represent empires that were rather different from the empires that had preceded Rome: for example, both feature republican government without hereditary kingship; both carry on organized persecution against Christians; and both belong to the era of the Last Days.

But, of course, there are some differences between the two "antichrists" and their invasions, which we will look into as we study more closely the wording in verses 26-27. At any rate it seems the closer we get to the End of the Age, the easier it becomes to differentiate the mountain ranges. What looked like one mountain range to Daniel easily separates into two ranges: the ancient invasion of Israel by the Romans and the modern one by the Antichrist from Russia.

"The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined."

During the Jewish Wars (rebellions that began in 66 AD), the Romans were kicked out of Jerusalem – an event that infuriated the Roman high command. Needless to say, it wasn't long before the might of Rome's legions descended upon Israel.



During the horrific war that followed, untold numbers of Jewish people died from starvation, disease, or slaughter. Whoever survived the Roman onslaught was driven out of Israel in what became known as the great Diaspora, the dispersion of the Jews throughout the empire. Israel ceased to exist as a political nation.

From Wikipedia, "Seige of Jerusalem":

Josephus had acted as a mediator for the Romans and, when negotiations failed, witnessed the siege and aftermath. He wrote:

"Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done), [Titus] Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and Temple. . . all the rest of the wall [surrounding Jerusalem], it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it [Jerusalem] had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind."

(Flavius Josephus. *The Wars of the Jews or History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*. Containing The Interval Of About Three Years. From The Taking Of Jerusalem By Titus To The Sedition At Cyrene. Book VII. Chapter 1.1)

"And truly, the very view itself was a melancholy thing; for those places which were adorned with trees and pleasant gardens,

were now become desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down. Nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judaea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change. For the war had laid all signs of beauty quite waste. Nor had anyone who had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again. But though he [a foreigner] were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it."

(Flavius Josephus. *The Wars of the Jews or History of the Destruction of Jerusalem*. Containing The Interval Of About One Month. From The Great Extremity To Which The Jews Were Reduced To The Taking Of Jerusalem By Titus. Book VI. Chapter 1.1)

Just as Gabriel's message had foretold, the end of Jerusalem came *"with a flood"*. Great *"desolations"* befell the city *"till the end of the war"*. Whether that was supposed to mean the end of the war with the Romans or not, isn't too clear. In a sense the *"war"* has continued: Jerusalem has seen plenty of trouble since then under various rulers – the Muslim caliphates, the Crusaders, the Ottoman Turks – but certainly nothing as dreadful as what took place at that time when the Romans reacted in fury against Israel's rebellion (or what will take place in the future).

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Continue to Part 6: Christ's Second Coming Predicted – Daniel 9:27