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Daniel 9:24

Seventy weeks are determined
For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of sins,
To make reconciliation for iniquity,
To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
And to anoint the Most Holy.

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"Seventy weeks are determined"

The Hebrew word (*shabua*) used here for *"week"* means "seven". We could compare this to how we use the word "dozen" to mean 12. It can be 12 of anything – eggs, years, sheep, whatever. Similarly, the word "decade" can actually mean ten of anything, although it is usually used to refer to a time span of ten years. The word *"week"* is supposed to mean "seven" – but because we associate "week" to mean seven days, it can be confusing.

A better translation might have said "seventy sevens" – meaning seventy sevens of years, that is, 490 years (70 x 7 = 490). Otherwise, it sounds as if the prophecy is talking about seven-day weeks, which would not make any sense. The time span would come out to only a little over a

year, and none of the events mentioned in the prophecy could have happened in such a short time.

Genesis 29:27 gives an example of this peculiar usage of the word *"week"*: *"Fulfill her week, and we will give you this one also for the service which you will serve with me still another seven years."* (This verse is talking about the deal Laban made with Jacob by which Laban would give him his daughter Rachel's hand in marriage.)

After introducing himself to the prophet Daniel in verses 20-23 of this chapter 9, the angel Gabriel goes on to explain the glorious outcome that will be ushered into the world of humankind at the completion of this *"70 weeks"* time span:

> **1) *"Finish the transgression."* It was the *"transgression"* of the Jewish people, their departure from God's ways that led to the loss of God's blessing of protection and the consequent invasion by Nebuchadnezzar, followed by their captivity in Babylon. Although this was probably the starting point, Gabriel's message does not have the same narrow focus of Daniel who, quite naturally, was thinking mainly of the fate of his Jewish brethren; he was concerned in his prayer about the sins of His own people which had brought on them the "curse" of the Babylonian Captivity.**
>
> **But the angel has a far wider viewpoint in mind, and his words – not just here, but in the rest of the prophecy – go far beyond the local situation that Daniel was embroiled in; they encompass "transgression" in general, the transgression of all mankind that began all the way back in the Garden of Eden – and the eventual liberation of humankind from their "captivity" in that transgression. This universal application becomes all the more evident as the message continues. For the 70 weeks will also. . .**
>
> **2) *"Make an end of sins."* Jesus once said, *"whoever commits sin is a slave of sin."* He said this to some who said, *"We. . . have never been in bondage to anyone."* (John 8:33-34) So, what the angel Gabriel is trying to do here is steer Daniel's attention away from the minor matter of the Jews' physical bondage – minor in God's way of looking at things – to the far more serious issue of spiritual bondage.**

In essence, the prophecy here becomes like a springboard, catapulting us from the physical captivity in Babylon that the Jews were longing to be freed from to the spiritual captivity in sin – from which all humanity so desperately need deliverance.

3) *"Make reconciliation for iniquity."* There seems little question that this part of the prophetic future was fulfilled by Christ's First Coming and His sacrificial death, which brought *"reconciliation for iniquity".* To pardon and make atonement for wrongdoing is probably the most important step in the process of finishing and making an end of wrongdoing. If it were only a matter of judgment and justice and accountability without any mercy or forgiveness, there would be lacking that most vital component: the inspiration and desire in people's hearts to want to change and live righteously.

So there are three words here: *"transgression, sins, iniquity",* which cover the various levels of "wrongdoing" that are to be forgiven and, in the Age to come, not allowed to function or thrive as they are nowadays. Does that mean a perpetual "wet blanket" is going to descend on the world? No, hardly. God has created us to enjoy life, and the Age to come will be full of pleasures, excitements, fulfillment, enjoyable work, freedom, and thrills that we can barely imagine right now.

It will be a world where the rule of Love will reign supreme. And that really is the antidote for wrongdoing. After all, what are the sins, transgressions, or iniquities spoken of here but the various attitudes, words, and deeds that violate the rule of Love? A lack of love for God and lack of concern for others is the fundamental cause of the hurt that we bring upon our fellow man.

The first three phrases – *"finish the transgression… make an end of sins… make reconciliation for iniquity"* – seem to dwell on the negative side, the business of corralling and getting rid of the world's corruption and wickedness. This process got started when Jesus first came to introduce the Law of Love, then made the ultimate sacrifice of Himself on the Cross. That was *"reconciliation for iniquity"*, the atonement, by which Christ offers forgiveness, once and for all, for sin. Much of the world has not yet taken up that offer and continues to engage in wrongdoing; there

is plenty of evil and wickedness still going on in our world.

To truly *"finish the transgression, and make an end of sins"* will require the forceful intervention of Christ. His Return will bring great change in how the world is governed. Right now, it is dominated by ruthless and unprincipled rulers, and there is much war, bloodshed, injustice, poverty, and pollution in the earth as a result.

But that great event of the Second Coming will see the forces of spiritual Darkness cast into prison and the rule of Christ established on earth, along with the principles of love, truth, and justice. Then, *"the meek shall inherit the earth."* (Psalm 37:11, Matthew 5:12) Then we truly will see *"everlasting righteousness".*

> ***When Your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* (Isaiah 26:9) *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.* (Isaiah 11:9)**

The return of Christ will also *"seal up vision and prophecy"* (one of the conditions for the fulfillment of the *"70 weeks"*). To *"seal up"* usually means to keep something secret or hidden. But here the meaning is different. *"Vision and prophecy"* will be sealed because they will be finished – just as one would close a book when one is finished reading it.

What the prophets, including Daniel especially, saw in *"vision"* or heard in *"prophecy"* about the *"day of the Lord"* was <u>unsealed</u> – mysteries that were <u>open</u> to be studied and examined. But at the close of the *"seventy weeks"*, *"vision and prophecy"* – such as the revelations in the *Book of Daniel* about the coming of Christ, the destruction of the final *Beast*, establishment of the Kingdom of God – would finally find their fulfillments. Since, obviously, they have not seen their fulfillment, then the *"70 weeks"* time span also has not seen its fulfillment.

But when the *"vision and prophecy"* come to pass, when those mysteries from the Word meet with their solutions, it will be "case closed", and it will be time then for *"vision and prophecy"* to be <u>sealed</u>. They can, of course, be "opened" for the sake of our historical curiosity or investigation, but as far as the fulfillment is concerned, they will have

been finished (or "sealed") at the end of the *"70 weeks".*

And then *"to anoint the Most Holy"*: Is this talking about Christ the Messiah? Yes, it would certainly seem so. *"Messiah the Prince"* is mentioned twice in the next verses 25-26. He is the key figure, and the prophecy obviously was given with the intent of predicting the time of His First Coming. And the Second Coming? When Christ returns, He will take on His full anointing as *"the Most Holy"* – a great, powerful, and supernatural Being who will conquer the earth and re-claim it for the Kingdom of God.

Regarding this anointing of the *"Most Holy"*, the process actually began during Christ's first coming amongst the Israeli people. "Christ" is the Greek word for "Messiah" in Hebrew, and "Messiah" means "anointed one". Jesus received this anointing in part during His First Coming into the Earth. He Himself said once, *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me because He has anointed Me. . ."* (Luke 4:18) In the Old Testament, an anointing ceremony was done for persons when they were to take on the role of becoming king over the nation.

At Christ's Second Coming, the world *"will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"*. (Matt 24:30) When Christ adopts fully His role as King over planet Earth at this time, then certainly this prophecy about the *"Most Holy"* being anointed will be fulfilled completely. It marks the big turning point, the end of Satan's rule in the Earth and the ushering in of a whole new era of God's Kingdom.

Up to this time everything has gone mostly the Devil's way; *"the power of the holy people has been completely shattered,"* according to Daniel 12:7. But then suddenly, *"the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven",* and that marks the beginning of the end for the Devil and his kingdom on earth. (Matthew 24:30) And it also marks the end of the "captivity" of God's people in the world system, and for that matter, the end of all humankind's captivity in the bondage of sin.

And of course, it marks the end of the *"70 weeks"* time span declared by the angel Gabriel as the length of time that will pass before this great final moment in human history arrives.

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Continue to Part 4: Date of Christ's First Coming Predicted – Daniel 9:25