

The Rapture and Related Events

Topic 1, Rapture Timing

Foreword

I do believe that the church will be caught up in the clouds to be with our Lord for eternity. I consider myself pre-trib only because I believe that the so-called rapture takes place before the seven bowls of the wrath of God, which is the Great Tribulation. I do not support the Dispensationalists' belief that the Great Tribulation is a seven-year period of tribulation against Israel that occurs after the rapture. Scripture does not support this position. There are many other wild teachings about the Rapture that I do not support because they are unsupported by the Scriptures. I wish to expound upon several points we have been taught about the Rapture and attempt to shed the light of Biblical truth on them.

There is even some controversy over those seven bowls. Some teach that they were poured out upon Jerusalem in 70. That is a very plausible position to those who teach an early date for the writing of Revelation. I must admit that the evidence for an early date is appealing, but so is a late date. Both are appealing for different reasons.

First, what is the rapture? It is a name that men have given to the gathering of Christians unto Jesus Christ. Paul wrote about it in:

[I Thessalonians 4: 16-17](#), For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

The word rapture itself is not in the Scripture. It is taken from the Latin translation of the Greek word, *αρπαγησομεθα*, *harpagesometha* (verb indicative future passive 1st person plural form of *harpazo*--Strong's 726), "shall be caught up, seized, snatched away, etc." The Latin is *rapiemur*, future passive indicative first person plural of the verb, *rapio*, to seize, snatch, carry away (we-first person plural, shall-future passive, be carried away-indicative). It describes that time, when Christ returns, that true believers will be caught up (future passive plural indicative) into the air to meet the Lord Jesus. The phrase has the same voice, tense, and mood in all three languages.

The English word, rapture, has several definitions other than being caught up into the air to meet the Lord. Here are three of them: (1) "A state of being carried away by overwhelming emotion"; (2) "A state of elated bliss" (3) "common term for nitrogen narcosis (*rapture of the deep*)." However, we are not interested in those definitions in this study. Biblical definitions and understandings are our concern here. Related Scripture is [I Corinthians 15:52](#), and [II Thessalonians 2: 1-12](#).

Of course, just because the word "rapture" does not appear in Biblical texts does not indicate it is a meaningless word. The word "Trinity" does not appear in the scriptures either. Yet it is a valid word describing a valid truth. To most Christians, rapture means that time when Jesus returns and catches up His church up to meet Him in the air. It is acceptable to use the word in this context.

I used to have a problem with the use of this word. Now, after much study and more spiritual maturity, I have come to accept the use of the word to indicate the time of our gathering back to Christ. Just as I accept the use of the word, "trinity" to describe the Godhead, I also accept the word, "rapture" to describe the gathering of Christ's church unto Himself.

An aside here. The popular hymn, "I'll Fly Away" by Albert Brumley, has nothing whatsoever to do with the rapture. It is about going to be with our Lord after our death. It is accented by the phrase in the chorus, "When I die, hallelujah by and by, I'll fly away."

The word becomes unacceptable when those theories of the sensationalists add unscriptural doctrines to it, e.g. the secret rapture where jewelry, clothing, false teeth, hairpieces, etc., are all that is left of Christians when the event occurs. Planes crash and automobiles collide when their drivers suddenly disappear, and no one has a clue what has happened. This is sensationalism, which has no place in scripture study. The word says, in [Matthew 24:26-27](#), "**Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. (27) For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**"

It also concerns me when the Dispensationalist teaching, that Israel and the Church are forever separate, is used to disparage Israel. This teaching says that the Church will be caught up to be with Jesus for 7 years while Israel goes through the worst hell that ever came upon earth. That is poppycock and it is anti-Semitic. The truth is somewhat different from what the heresy of Dispensationalism teaches. The Bible teaches, especially in Romans chapters 9-11, that true Israel consists of those Israelites that believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior (the remnant). Moreover, true Israel consists of saved Gentiles as well. The church has not replaced Israel. True Israelites are all Christians. Jewish Christians are true Israelites and Gentile Christians have been grafted into the stock of Israel. Dispensationalists must either misinterpret these chapters in Romans or ignore them altogether. See the study entitled "[The Relationship Between Israel and the Church](#)."

TOPIC 1: Rapture Timing.

Many people have taught, preached, and written many things about this subject. The truth can be only one thing, and not several. Hence, we must look at the scripture in order to find the truth. We must consider several scripture passages, in context.

[1 Corinthians 15:51-52](#) Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, (52) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

The context of this verse is Paul's discourse about the natural preceding the spiritual. The first man, Adam, was of the flesh, hence natural. The Second Man, Christ, was from heaven and thus spiritual. When we die, we will put off the natural and put on the spiritual. In these verses (51-52), Paul was teaching that not everyone on earth will die (we shall not all sleep), but some will be alive when Christ returns. Those remaining alive at that time will be changed instantly from natural, flesh bodies into spiritual, incorruptible bodies. When will these things occur? At the last trump. This is the trumpet sounded by the seventh angel, which is the last trumpet sounded. This trumpet ushers in the end of the age. To study the events that occur when this trumpet sounds view the [Seventh Trumpet Quick Reference Popup](#) (NOTE: This link will open a Popup Window). If you prefer not to open a popup, you may connect directly to the [Revelation Quick Reference Study Page](#).

Therefore, we know that Paul is speaking of the time of the sounding of the seventh trumpet revealed to us in the Book of Revelation. After the angel sounds that trump, many events, including the rapture, will take place.

Let us now consider the Epistle to the Thessalonians for another look at the timing of the rapture.

[2 Thessalonians 2:1-4](#) Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, (2) That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. (3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

Many rapture teachers totally avoid this passage, or they ascribe it to some other event, or they accept the passage while ignoring verses 3 and 4. It seems as though they do not want to admit that the Antichrist will be revealed before the rapture. To most rapture teachers, that is unacceptable. The church must escape all tribulation and they must avoid Antichrist at all costs in their thinking.

The teaching of Dispensationalism brings about those thoughts. It is an erroneous doctrine that claims that the church and Israel are forever separate. It maintains a different plan of salvation for Israel than the Gospel. According to Dispensationalists, there is one path to salvation for Israel (or the "Jews" as they refer to Israel) and another for the church. The Dispensationalist claims that Antichrist comes to bring tribulation to Israel and that Israel must endure the Great Tribulation, but the church is totally separate from these things.

There are so many erroneous doctrines that have spun off this heresy that it is hard to believe anyone will support it. Tribulation saints, inaccuracies about the 144,000 Jewish virgins, and horrors for those "left behind" are all examples of the silliness of the spin-offs of Dispensationalism.

Verse 1 gives us the context. Paul is discussing the return of Christ and the Gathering of His church unto Himself, in other words, the rapture of the church. In the next verse, he calls that day the Day of Christ. Verse 2 tells us that there were others, through various means, saying that this event had already occurred. Paul assured the Thessalonians it had not.

Verse 3 brings us to the central point. The day discussed in the previous two verses, the Day of Christ, or gathering of the church to Himself is the day, in this verse, that shall not come until certain events happen. Now the words, "that day shall not come" are in italics, which indicates they are not explicitly contained in the Greek text. Yet, the Greek implies them, for Paul is using an elliptical statement. The English would be awkward without these words, though a Greek speaker would perfectly understand the implication.

Here is the literal rendering: let not someone you deceive in any manner, because if not come the apostasy first and revealed the man of sin the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself over all called God or worshipped so that he into the temple sanctuary of God [this is the Most Holy Place] to sit, showing himself to be God.

We must supply the ellipsis after the Greek word, *hoti*, "because." The ellipsis takes us back the original statement of the Day of Christ. Thus, "that day shall not come" though not in the original, is actually implied. The sentence would not make sense without that phrase. The majority of all English translations include a version of "that day shall not come" in their texts.

In other words, the rapture will not occur until after a general apostasy, or falling away from the faith, occurs. Nor will it happen until after the revealing of the man of sin. This man of sin is also known as the Prince that will come, the Little Horn, the Antichrist, the Lawless One, the Beast out of the Earth, the False Prophet, the Dragon, that Wicked, and the Wicked One, and others. He will claim to be God and will sit in the Most Holy Place. Who places himself in the place of God? Antichrist does, of course. Antichrist means one who opposes Christ as well as one who comes in the place of Christ, claiming to be Him. Thayer Definition: anti, 1) over against, opposite to, before 2) for, instead of, in place of (something).

The Day of Christ, on which the rapture occurs, will not happen until an apostasy and the revealing of the antichrist occurs. Admittedly, the revealing of Antichrist could happen at any time. A general apostasy from God is going on at this very moment thus the man of sin could appear soon.

Let us now look at the prophecy of Daniel.

[Daniel 9:24-27](#) Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. (25) Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. (26) And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the

prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. (27) And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

From the time of the decree of Darius the son of Ahasuerus to rebuild the city of Jerusalem until the end of the age will be seventy sevens of years. That is a total of 490 years. After sixty-nine sevens (483 years), the Messiah was cut off, that is, killed. His crucifixion took place 483 years after the decree, just as the prophecy said.

We need to examine seventy sevens. We must look at other occurrences of this phrase in the Scriptures. Jesus used the term in [Matthew 18:21-22](#), "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? {22} Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven." He went on to tell the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant. The gist of the whole passage is that we are to forgive others that have sinned against us until they are completely forgiven. Seven is the number of completion and seventy sevens (490) is equivalent to spiritual perfection. We are to keep on forgiving until our forgiveness is complete and hence perfect (which is a synonym for complete).

We must also note that the captivity of Israel was for seventy years and we should keep in mind that Jubilee was equivalent to forty nine years or four periods of seven years. Hence seven, forty-nine and four hundred ninety have symbolic significance. There is more here than a strictly literal interpretation of the 490 years. We must understand that 490, like 144,000, has much more than a simply literal sense.

We have discussed the 144,000 elsewhere. They represent the entire body of Christ from past, present and future. It is like taking the twelve tribes, squaring them, and then multiplying them by 1000. Twelve thousand Israelites from each tribe signify ultimate completion. We know from passages like [Romans 9:6-8](#), "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: (7) Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." To which we must add, [Ephesians 2:19](#), "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." In context, the passage from Ephesians says that both the "circumcision" and uncircumcision" are fellow citizens and members of the household of God. So the Bible tells us that not all who claim to be Israelites, just because they have a lineage and bloodline to Abraham, are Israelites. Paul says that only those Jews and Gentiles that have Christ as their Savior are the true Israel. This is not what the Dispensationalists call "Replacement Theology"; it is simply what the Bible teaches. The church has not replaced Israel; they have become a part of Israel. There are too many passages to back this up to discuss it here. Look for a future study on this subject. (It is available now; see [The Relationship Between Israel](#)

[and the Church.](#)") Thus, the 144,000 are the true Israel, that is, they are believers in Christ, and the number represents the entire Body of Christ in toto.

In Daniel's prophecy, he prayed about the seventy years of captivity and mentioned he had read the words of Jeremiah, who had said that the captivity would last seventy years because Israel had not kept her Sabbath years for 490 years. Israel had not observed her Sabbath years seventy times. Since every seventh year was a Sabbath year and Israel had failed to keep the Sabbath year seventy times, it had been 490 years since Israel had kept her Sabbaths. The seventy years of captivity allowed the land to lie fallow and all at once keep the seventy Sabbaths that Israel missed.

We can now see the symbolic significance of the future 490 years. Israel had rejected its years of rest for the land for 490 years. Now Daniel was given a future prophecy of the 490 years in opposition to the 490 years in the past when Israel neglected her sabbatical years.

Note that when Christ was crucified, 483 years had elapsed. There is a remaining period of seven years to fill.

The current wisdom in rapture teaching circles is that the last seven years will not occur until the end of the age. Yet the prophecy easily fits the destruction of Jerusalem in A 70. It follows, therefore, that the prophecy of the seventieth week may have a dual fulfillment. While the prophecy does fit the destruction of Jerusalem, it may also have a future fulfillment. If so, the destruction of Jerusalem is just the first fulfillment of the prophecy. Remember that the prophecy was to take us through to the time when transgression would end, when sins would end, when iniquity would be reconciled, when everlasting righteousness would be brought in, when vision and prophecy would end, and when the most Holy would be anointed King of kings and Lord of lords. That can only be at the very end of the age. Thus, the ultimate fulfillment is at the time of Christ's return, which occurs at the end of the age.

Since the prophecy was ultimately about the end of the age, then the last seven years must also be at the end of the age. Three and one half is an interesting number. Christ's ministry was for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. The Romans laid siege to Jerusalem for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years before it fell. Dispensationalists teach that the antichrist will make a seven-year covenant with Israel and will break that truce in $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. They also incorrectly teach that the church will be gone when the antichrist comes. We have already proven that false in this study.

I think it more likely that the man of sin will make a peace covenant with the entire world, rather than just Israel, though Israel will play the most prominent role in the truce. He will stop the worship of God after $3\frac{1}{2}$ years. The Revelation of Jesus Christ fills in the details concerning how this will play out. Yet the Revelation only mentions $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, and not seven.

The entire point of coming to Daniel is to show that the rapture will not happen until the end of the age. The prince that shall come is another name for Antichrist. He will make the world desolate from the time he causes the sacrifice and oblation to cease until the consummation of the age. One could say that the "sacrifice and oblation" is an ancient Hebrew term for worship

service. Therefore, the Antichrist will stop all worship of God. We will discuss this further in Topic 5.

In order to stop the sacrifice and oblation, some think he will have to start it in the first place. Those practices have not taken place since the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. In order to sit in the temple, he may be forced to build one, if one is not erected before then. There are those parties in Israel who have plans already laid to rebuild the temple. Antichrist may well use those very plans. The Dome of the Rock, or the Al Aqsa Mosque, which sits upon the Temple Mount, that is, upon Zion, directly over the Rock Moriah where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac (he was to sacrifice Ishmael according to the Muslims, who claim the Bible is corrupt), could very well be used by Antichrist as a substitute for the Temple, to re-establish the sacrifice and oblation. Yet, I still believe this means the worship of God in a group gathering and not blood sacrifices, or food and drink sacrifices.

I believe that at the time of Antichrist, he will covenant with the world to provide peace. That necessarily means a treaty with Israel, which is the political, religious, and physical center of the world. Almost all the conflicts in the world revolve around Islam and Israel. In order to have "world peace," (there is no peace-[Jeremiah 8:11](#)) the world must address the Israel/Palestinian issue. This demands a treaty of peace between them in order to have world peace. The Antichrist will establish such a treaty and this will allow "Zionism" to flourish in the midst of allowing Palestinians access to their supposed ancient lands. By this, I mean that Judaism will have the freedom to worship in their own way. This may entail true blood sacrifices. Though uncertain, this is certainly possible. All other religions will also have the freedom to worship as they wish under this treaty.

Let us now consider what the Revelation says:

[Revelation 14:14-19](#) And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. (15) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. (16) And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. (17) And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. (18) And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. (19) And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

This is a picture of the harvest of the earth. The harvest was used symbolically by Christ to signify those who are righteous, that is, those who are God's people. They are the saved. Some examples are:

[Matthew 9:37-38](#) Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; {38} Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

[Matthew 13:30](#) Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

[Matthew 13:39](#) The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

[John 4:35](#) Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

Notice that in this passage, the earth is reaped twice, once for the harvest and once for the vintage. The harvest signifies the saved and thus the rapture. The vintage, according to this passage, represents the wicked; for the grapes shall be cast into the winepress of the wrath of God. They are truly "grapes of wrath." The vintage signifies those left upon the earth to receive the contents of the bowls of the wrath of God in the seven bowl judgments. The harvest signifies those taken away by Christ before the seven bowl judgments.

Note that the One that reaps the harvest is "one like unto the Son of Man" and He is sitting upon a cloud. This is Jesus. Remember that when Jesus arose into the clouds, the angel said He would return just as He left. He left in the clouds and He will return in the clouds.

[Mark 13:26](#) And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

In verse 15 (the harvest of the earth is ripe), the grain harvest is definitely in view here. The word rendered ripe in the KJV is actually the word "dried" in the Greek. Harvesters do not reap grain like wheat, oats, and barley until after the heads dry. This is unlike the harvest of corn, maize, or sorghum. Those grains are not dry when harvested; they dry afterward. Of course, we keep sweet corn as fresh and moist as possible for human consumption. Grain threshed directly from the stalk requires dry wheat and barley. Since threshing takes place soon after harvest, the grain dries on the branch so to speak.

God compares His children to wheat in several scripture passages. The most well known is the parable of the wheat and tares in [Matthew 13:24-30](#) and [37-40](#). The wheat represents the children of God while the tares represent the children of the devil. According to Jesus Himself, (in [Matthew 13:38](#)) the harvest refers to the gathering of the saints at the end of the age. Additionally, Jesus said that the good seed, that is the wheat, is the children of the kingdom.

The actual gathering of the saints to Christ, that is, the harvest, occurs here in [Revelation 14:16](#). The seventh trumpet has sounded, and the voice of the archangel has shouted (crying with a loud voice is shouting, see [1 Thessalonians 4:15](#)), and Christ has gathered the harvest.

This is the Rapture. It takes place just before the seven bowls of the wrath of God are poured out upon the earth, which is the Great Tribulation. God's people have no place in the Great Tribulation. They will be in Heaven as the bride of Christ. The Revelation gives no definite amount of time to the seven bowls of God's wrath. Some say this takes seven years. I am not prepared to accept that. I figure that it will take only a few days. I do not believe this is about the seven-year period of tribulation that rapture teachers and dispensationalists preach. I believe that period of time takes place when the tribulation of Antichrist occurs in [Revelation 12:17](#), "[And the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.](#)"

The church will not escape tribulation, but it will escape the Great Tribulation, or the wrath of God, that will come upon the earth. The church will experience tribulation when the reign of Antichrist begins in [Revelation 12:17](#) and even before that. In fact, the church is currently going through tribulation. Nevertheless, the current tribulation is localized. The tribulation of the end times will be a general persecution of the church. I believe Antichrist will make his peace covenant and when he stops the worship of God, tribulation will come upon the church. Still, God will care for her during that period.

I also believe that Antichrist may be Muslim and that Islam may be the end time religion of the Beast and False Prophet. Consider that some branches of Islam believe that the Twelfth Imam will be revealed at the end of the age. They also believe Christ will return and will kill all those who are not Muslims and will destroy every cross in the world. This is the belief of the current President of Iran. He feels that nuclear war, which he wishes to wage, will usher in the Twelfth Imam. If Antichrist is a Muslim, then the worship he will stop will be any religious worship other than Islam.

Some say the antichrist will be an Assyrian. If so, where are Assyrians today? They are in northern Iraq and are still a homogenous people. They are Muslims. If the antichrist is a Assyrian, he will most likely be a Muslim.

I suggest you obtain and read a copy of [The Islamic Antichrist: The Shocking Truth about the Real Nature of the Beast](#) by Joel Richardson.

The Rapture occurs after the seventh trumpet sounds and takes place just before the Great Tribulation, which only takes a short period to accomplish. After God's wrath is poured out, then the armies will gather at Armageddon, and then Christ will return with his Church and will smite His enemies with the sword of His mouth. After that, the end of the age occurs and then comes the Great White Throne Judgment.

Topic 2, Essential Rapture Events

These are the basic events of the rapture of the church with a small amount of commentary.

We will be gathered back to Jesus and taken to heaven with Him after the last trumpet, which I believe to be the Seventh Trumpet of Revelation.

The Bible says, "[Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.](#)" ([1 Corinthians 15:51-52 NKJV](#))

At the end of the age, sometime after the Seventh Trumpet has sounded, the human, flesh bodies of all believers alive at that time will be instantly changed into our heavenly bodies that are imperishable, which means that they are not subject to age or death. Those believers who are already dead are currently with Christ. Their bodies will be changed from the dust left behind into those same imperishable bodies. All will live forever.

I am not suggesting that the dead in Christ are disembodied spirits. We see in [Revelation 6:9-10](#), that the souls of the dead are given white robes. Robes are clothing; therefore the souls were clothed in white, which means pure, that is, without sin. Paul said in [2 Corinthians 5:2-3](#), that we long to put on the clothes of our spiritual body. He said in verse 3, "[...having been clothed, we shall not be found naked.](#)" The New Living Translation renders it "[...we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies.](#)" Those souls of the departed referred to in Revelation are clothed in sinless heavenly bodies of some sort, but apparently not the imperishable bodies spoken of in this passage. John Gill said about this subject, "*'Souls', being immaterial and incorporeal, are invisible to the bodily eye; these therefore were either clothed with corporeal forms, as angels sometimes are or rather John saw them in a visionary way, as he saw the angels...*" (*John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible, note on [Revelation 6:9](#)*)

We then find that the Bible says, "[For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.](#)" ([1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 NKJV](#))

This describes what we know traditionally as the rapture of the saints. It is this simple; we will instantly receive our imperishable bodies, both the living and the dead, and will rise into the air to meet our Savior in the clouds and from that point onward, we will eternally be with our Lord. I take this literally. This event occurs at the end of the age. Nothing is said here about any events surrounding this occurrence. We are simply getting the essentials.

Nothing is said about a "secret rapture," nor does any scripture support such an event. In fact, Scripture says the very opposite. In [Matthew 24:30-31](#), the Lord Himself said, "[And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.](#)" This apocalyptic statement has a dual fulfillment.

It was partially fulfilled when Jerusalem was destroyed-Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven with power and glory is symbolic of God's judgment (see [Jer 4:13](#); [Joel 2:1-2](#); [Zeph 1:15](#)). This surely happened to Jerusalem in AD 70. The future fulfillment of this prophecy is the exact time that Paul is talking about above. When Jesus sends his angels all over the world to gather His people to Himself, it will be an open event for the entire world to see. All the tribes or peoples of the earth will see this event and mourn. They will mourn because they will remain and they will know that they are not a part of the saved.

The proponents of a secret rapture believe that God has two paths to salvation. One is for the church, the other for Israel. They teach, contrary to Scripture (especially Romans chapters 9-11) that Israel and the church are forever separate. Accordingly, God has a plan of salvation for the church and that is the rapture. However, according to these folks, His plan for Israel or the Jews is different. They will suffer through a seven year tribulation period that is horrendous where God will pour out His wrath on Israel because they rejected Christ when He came. This cannot be upheld by Scripture. All humans are saved by the blood of Christ and that includes Israel. See the study entitled, [The Relationship between Israel and the Christian Church](#).

The church will see tribulation, just as it always has. In fact, tribulation is commonplace in the church today. We in the US are not going through very much tribulation today, but there is some persecution even here. Western Europe is seeing more persecution against the church than we in the US are. But in the remainder of the world, Christianity is under immense attack. It is a deadly danger to be a Christian in most of the world. Tribulation and persecution are occurring right now against the church outside to the protected areas of the West. This persecution is spreading and not receding. It will eventually take over the world and the entire church will suffer persecution and tribulation. The church will not be removed from this persecution. As in the early days of the church, persecution strengthens believers. The same is true today and will remain true in the future.

The rapture will occur after the seventh trumpet sounds, and after the believers are raised with Christ, then God will pour out the last seven bowls of God's wrath on the unbelievers left behind. This not specifically against Israel; it is against any and all unbelievers, both Jew and Gentile. After the wrath of God is finished, Christ will return with His church behind him like a might army and Christ will destroy all His enemies that survive the wrath of God with a word. He will speak and they will be destroyed. You will find these events in Revelation chapters 14-19.

There is nothing that tells us of a seven year tribulation period against the Jews. It simply is not in Scripture. The only place seven years is mentioned is in Daniel. There is simply says that the prince that will come will force people into a covenant with him for seven years and somewhere in the midst of that covenant period, he will change the rules and outlaw the worship of God. There is no seven year period in Revelation. Revelation speaks only of a 3.5 year period. More information about this seven year will be provided in the study entitled "The Seventieth Week."

Topic 3, Olivet Discourse

Many teach that the Olivet Discourse, which is the prophecy in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, does not apply to the church, but only to the Jews (and Israel).

We may easily answer this charge by examining the brief conversation the disciples have with Jesus before He begins the Olivet Discourse.

[Matthew 24:1-3](#) And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. {2} And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. {3} And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

When Jesus and the disciples left Jerusalem the day after the Triumphal Entry, they went out through the Eastern Gate toward the Mount of Olives. As they climbed the mount, they looked at the magnificent buildings of the Temple and its precincts. One wonders how much more magnificent the view must have been when Solomon's Temple stood. Yet, Herod had done a very good job of making his Temple magnificent and monumental. Even now, when one gazes toward Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives it is a wondrous sight, even without the Temple. Upon viewing the resplendence of Herod's Temple, Christ told them that a time was coming when those majestic edifices would be destroyed. They were taken aback.

Upon arrival on the Mount of Olives, they privately asked Him three distinct questions. (1.) When would the Temple be destroyed, (2.) what would be the sign of His return, and (3.) what would signify the end of the age

Jesus gave them information about the destruction of the Temple, which would occur almost forty years later. For example, He told them "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." These two things did happen before 70 AD. There were false prophets saying that Israel would defeat the Romans. They did not. There were several insurrection leaders and many fought one another, instead of the Romans, during the siege. There was much fighting over food and water, and even over children eaten for food in Jerusalem during the siege. Life was miserable in that time. Most of the inhabitants of Jerusalem were killed.

He gave many signs of His return, one of which was [Matthew 24:30-31](#), "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." This most definitely applies to the church because it describes its rapture, or gathering back to Christ.

Of the end of the age, He said, in [Matthew 25:46](#), "**And these [the unrighteous] shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.**" This passage describes the judgment of God at the end of the age.

The Olivet Discourse is addressed to both the church and to Israel. Some things applied solely to the judgment of Jerusalem and Israel in 70 AD. Other things applied to the return of Christ at the end of the age. Additionally, some things applied to both.

For example, Jesus told them that the Temple and all of its buildings would be utterly thrown down and would no longer exist ([Mat 24:1](#)). That occurred when the Romans conquered Jerusalem in the late summer of AD 70. When He spoke of the nursing mothers, the people in the fields, and on the rooftops fleeing ([Mat 24:17-19](#)), He referred to the siege of Jerusalem from 67 AD to 70 AD.

When Jesus talked about His return being like the lightning from the east ([Mat 24:27](#)), He was describing His return at the end of the age. When He tells of His angels gathering His chosen ones from the world over ([Mat 24:31](#)), He is describing the end of the age. When He specifically mentions the return of the Son of Man ([Mat 24:37](#)), He is discussing the end of the age.

When Jesus mentions false messiahs and false prophets ([Mat 24:24](#)), he is referring to both times, AD 70, and the end of the age, for both things occur at each time. He is also referring to both ages when he says the love of many will grow cold and sin will be rampant ([Mat 24:12](#)), because this was coincidental with the destruction of Jerusalem, and prophecy tells us that the same thing will happen at the end of the age ([2 Thes 2:3-12](#)).

These are some examples; the list above is not exhaustive. Nevertheless, one can readily fit all the teachings of the Olivet Discourse into one of these categories. The destruction of Jerusalem applied to the church, who were told to flee to safety, which they did. Since the end of the age includes the church as well, it is obvious that Matthew 24 applies to both the church and to Israel. Hence, to say that the church is not involved in the Discourse is to reject a good part of it.

Topic 4, The Last Trump

Some teach that the "last trump" in [1 Corinthians 15:52](#), and the "trump of God" of [1 Thessalonians 4:16](#) is not the seventh trumpet of [Revelation 11:15](#). In fact, they will give many examples of trumpets: trumpets for prayer, trumpets for war, trumpets to signify events, etc. However, none of these examples has any thing to do with the last trumpet. They use the examples to claim that this trumpet is some trumpet other than the last one blown at the end of the age.

People who wish to advance the [Any Moment Doctrine](#) of the rapture and those who support the false position that all end time prophecies must take place after the rapture of the church are those who propound this teaching. These folks' beliefs are in direct opposition to the statements of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2 concerning the rapture and the coming of Antichrist. They also

oppose what the Revelation teaches about the timing of the rapture. These beliefs are based on the doctrine of Dispensationalism.

Dispensationalists hold that the Church and Israel are forever separate and that the events in Revelation do not apply to the church but to Israel. Thus, the seventh trumpet of Revelation applies only to Israel and has nothing to do with the church.

Dispensationalism, as propounded by Charles Ryrie, "the father of modern Dispensationalism," seems based on a wrong assumption, namely, that the church and Israel are forever separate. There is no such separation of the church and Israel in the scriptures. In fact, the scriptures teach that the church is grafted in to the root of the olive tree. This root, according to Paul in [Romans 11:16](#), is the firstfruits of God's people, which are Israel. Only the blood of Jesus will save the world, including Israel, which has no different destiny than the church. To be saved, Gentiles and Jews alike must be saved by the blood of Christ. Unbelieving Gentiles and Jews are not saved.

They claim that the last trump of [1 Corinthians 15:52](#) is a special trumpet, "a uniquely appointed trumpet designated for the end of the Church age" and not the last trumpet of the age, which is sounded by the angel in [Revelation 11:15](#). This is to preserve the (incorrect) doctrine of the seven-year tribulation against Israel. The wrath of God is poured upon the whole unbelieving world, which includes unbelieving Israel.

They wish to prove that the seven year tribulation period is against Israel alone, and not against the anyone else. This teaching, which is prevalent among pre-tribbers, is that the church will be taken away, then antichrist will come and make a seven year covenant with Israel, then break it at 3½ years and then persecute Israel. Meanwhile the church will be in heaven at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Again, this is what Dispensationalism teaches.

The amazing thing is that scripture gets in the way of this teaching. The marriage supper of the lamb takes place after the battle of Armageddon, which occurs after the marriage of the church and Christ and after their return to fight the battle. Let us take a look, once again, at the sequence of events in Revelation: The rapture occurs. The seven bowls of the wrath of God are poured upon the ungodly, consisting of both unsaved Jews and unsaved Gentiles. Satan gathers the kings of the world to Armageddon to fight against Christ. Heaven is opened and Christ appears and the armies of heaven appear with Him. These armies are the wife (the Church) dressed in white linen married to the Groom following Him on white horses. Christ destroys the armies gathered against Him "shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming," ([2 Thes 2:8](#)). The wedding feast occurs; the birds of heaven eat the flesh of the destroyed armies of the Dragon. The Beast and False Prophet are cast into the lake of fire. The Dragon is locked in the abyss for 1000 years. No, the last trump of [1 Corinthians 15:52](#) is not a special trumpet, or any old trumpet, as the Dispensationalists claim, it is the one sounded by the angel in [Revelation 11:15](#).

In [1 Corinthians 15:52](#), the word "last" is translated from the Greek word, *εσχατη*, *eschatē*, the adjective dative feminine singular superlative form of *εσχατος*, *eschatos* from which we get our English word, eschatology, or the study of the end times. The adjective modifies the word 'trump'. The dative simply tells us that the word it modifies is the indirect object of the

preposition 'at'. Feminine tells us the gender, which is meaningless in English. The superlative degree means the highest form, for example in the words good, better, and best, best is the superlative. The superlative in this case indicates that this form of last is the uttermost last, or the absolute last with nothing further away. According to the Bauer/Danker/Arndt/Gingrich (BDAG) Lexicon, it can be understood as the place in the farthest corner.

Strong: 2078. εσχατος, *eschatos*, es'-khat-os; a superlative probably from 2192 (in the sense of contiguity); farthest, final (of place or time):--ends of, last, latter end, lowest, uttermost.

We can understand it as the absolute last, most final, farthest, and uttermost last trumpet of God. It is the last trumpet of the age and it is found in [Revelation 11:15](#): "And the seventh angel sounded [his trumpet]; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever."

Let's take a moment to recap what happens at the seventh trumpet in [Rev 11:15-19:21](#). When the angel sounds the trumpet, the Heavenly hosts sing that the time of judgment is here, and the archangel shouts. Satan is cast out of heaven ([Rev 12:9](#)). The church is persecuted (which is tribulation but not The Great Tribulation) ([Rev 12:17](#)). The antichrist and his world government (AKA Babylon) arise ([Rev 13:1-18](#)). The 144,000 are sealed ([Rev 14:1-5](#)). The harvest of the earth occurs, which is the Rapture ([Rev 14:14-20](#)). God's wrath is poured out (15:1-18:12). The beast's world government falls (chapter 18). The gathering together of the saints and their preparaton for the wedding supper occur ([Rev 19:6-7](#)). Armageddon occurs ([Rev 19:19-20](#)). And in chapter 20, we have the Millennium.

After the seventh trumpet sounds, there are no others in this age because the age comes to a close (Revelation 20) shortly after it sounds. That means that this trumpet is the absolute last, most final, farthest, and uttermost last trumpet. There is no other trumpet in this age sounded after the seventh. The last trump of [1 Corinthians 15:52](#) is the final trumpet of the age.

Topic 5, The Seventieth Week

Subtopic A—The Seventy Sevens

[Daniel 9:24-27](#) "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. {25} Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. {26} And

after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. {27} And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Let us share in a little exegesis. The seventy weeks of years, or 490 years will accomplish all of the following by the time they expire. The accomplishments are:

1. To finish transgression, which means rebellion against God and His precepts;
2. To end sin, which is disobedience of God;
3. To discharge our iniquity, or guilt;
4. To usher in eternal righteousness (which is the next age);
5. To seal up, or fulfill and make an end of revelation and prophecy;
6. To anoint or consecrate the Most Holy, which is the place in the temple where the Ark stood. This is also known as the Holy of Holies, Most Holy Place, Sanctum Sanctorum (Vulgate) Kodesh Kodeshim (Masoretic), Hagion Hagios (LXX & Vamvas).

Let us discuss each point individually.

1. **To finish transgression.** The Spirit uses three words in a row that all mean sin in one form or another. Here, transgression, is breaking the law, or rebelling against God's precepts. The Hebrew lemma form is פֶּשַׁע, *pasha*, transgression, or rebellion. This is either the punishment of transgression or the offering for transgression (BDB). Theological Wordbook says it is rebellion, or a breach of our relationship with God. It connotes lawbreaking or criminal activity (HALOT). Halladay says it is rebellion against God. The Hebrew word rendered "finish" means to cease, restrain, forbid, or finish. The original meaning of the Hebrew letters is an animal that has been tamed and trained and now is penned and awaits the time to go to work. In other words, transgression, or the breaking of the Law will have run its gamut and reached cessation. The meaning of the phrase is that after 70 weeks, transgression, or rebellion against God will stop. How? Through Christ and His completed work in history.

When Christ died on Calvary, we could say that His atoning work there was the end of transgression. Yet transgression goes on; it occurs constantly in the human species. However, since Christ's work forgives believers of their transgression or rebellion, we

may argue that it has ended in the lives of believers but not in the lives of unbelievers. Nevertheless, believers still sin and even though their sins are forgiven, we must conclude that transgression has not truly ended. Hence, we may have a dual fulfillment, one is the spiritual realm, viz. forgiveness of transgression because of Christ's work, and the other is at the end of the age when all transgression will cease eternally. When He died on Calvary, all believers in His death and resurrection were finished with transgression of the Law. In eternity, all whose names are written in the Book of Life will be finished with transgression. This necessarily implies that the fulfillment of the prophecy is dual. Transgression will be finished *spiritually* for believers after the resurrection in *circa* 30 AD. It will end *physically* and eternally at the Judgment day.

2. **To make an end of sins.** The word used here (lexical form), חַטָּאת, *chattath* (also חַטָּאָה, *chattah*), the most common Hebrew word for sin, is used some 279 times in the OT. It means nearly the same thing as the Greek word for sin, ἁμαρτία, *hamartia*, which is "offence" or falling short of the mark. To make an end of sins is expressive and easily understood. It means to finish. This will mark the end of sin at the death of Christ, and, in dual fulfillment, the end of the age. To be fair to the text, though, we must also understand that the meaning of the Hebrew root here, can also be "to seal". It is (lexical form) חָתַם *chattam* (pronounced khat-tham'), and it means to seal up. So the clause could also read "to seal up sins." To seal usually means to conceal, or to take from view. What would take our sins from view? Obviously, that would be the blood of Jesus. It seals or covers our sins from God's view (Micah 7:18-19, Psalm 103:12, Isaiah 43:25, Jeremiah 31:34, Hebrews 10:2, 1 John 1:7, etc). Sin will not fully end until eternity. Therefore, the ultimate fulfillment is at the end of the age.
3. **To make reconciliation for iniquity.** Here is the third in a series of words meaning sin. It is (uninflected) עוֹן, *avōn* or *avone* (also עוֹוֹן), in this context, guilt (actual, judicial guilt, not perceived guilt or a guilty conscience). Iniquity is a wrongful act; it is wickedness; it is a crime or criminal activity. Iniquity is willful wicked conduct. This is a most serious action. It means to deliberately sin or to live in sinful conduct. To reconcile is to set things straight or to cover or atone. It is to restore things to their original state. Adam and Eve lived in a state of sinless bliss with their Lord. This was the original state. Then sin entered the world and transformed it into the chaos we see today. One meaning here is that our guilt will be set straight, that is, Christ's shed blood will cover it (see above). His atonement assuages our guilt. Christ fulfilled this with His death and resurrection. Reconciliation occurs every time someone believes in Christ for salvation. Therefore, this is a continuing fulfillment. Ultimately, this atonement will restore us to our original sinless state with God. The final fulfillment comes at the end of the age when we enter eternity with Christ. It is then that God restores our original sinless state of bliss like Adam and Eve enjoyed.
4. **To bring in everlasting righteousness.** The righteousness provided by the temporary atonement provided by the blood of bulls and goats will no longer be required for Jesus' shed blood brings upon believers the righteousness of God, which is everlasting righteousness (Psalm 119:142, Romans 4:22-24, Hebrews 10:10). Yet there is also a dual

fulfillment here at the end of the age when all sin will cease and righteousness will rule completely.

5. **To seal up the vision and prophecy.** Two prominent things may be in view here. One suggestion is that the fulfillment of this very prophecy given by Gabriel to Daniel will seal up all prophecy. In other words, this prophecy would make an end to all other prophecy. That is to say, after the fulfillment of this prophecy, all prophecy and prophetic vision would end. However, since Jesus, John, Peter, Paul, and others all received and revealed prophecy, this cannot be the meaning here.

What is more probable is that Jesus Christ fulfills all prophecy and there would be no more need for prophetic vision after the seventy weeks ends. We have adequately made the point here that the seventy weeks ends at the end of the age.

6. **To anoint the most Holy.** Anointing literally means pouring oil over or on something or someone. In Biblical usage, it means to consecrate or set apart for some purpose. Samuel anointed David king by pouring fragrant anointing oil (the recipe is contained in Exodus 30:23-25) over David's head thus setting him apart from the people as king over them. In the New Testament the word "anoint" is often used figuratively of the infilling of the Spirit. The most common Biblical connotation of the word is consecration. The word, "anoint" tells us that the anointed is set apart, or consecrated to some special purpose. Paul is a good example of consecration. God set him apart to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. Of course, the Hebrew word for "anoint" is *mashach*, which is the root of the word *mashiyach*, the Anointed One, or Messiah.

A partial consensus of commentators, with objections, of course, is that this refers to Christ's anointing of the Temple upon His entering into it as the Messiah. When the Triumphal Entry took place, the people viewed Him as the Messiah. He immediately entered the Temple and cleansed it. Some may view this as His anointing of the Temple.

The Hebrew text rendered 'the most holy,' is קֹדֶשׁ קֹדֶשִׁים, *qodesh qodeshim*, literally "holy of holies." Thus, the correct literal reading of the phrase is "to set apart the Holy of Holies." The curtain concealing the Holy of Holies from the world split in half at the death of Jesus and opened the Most Holy Place for all to see, causing it to no longer be holy or set apart. Consequently, the Most Holy Place was no longer a part of the Temple, but was set apart or anointed for all believers in Christ, who now have direct access to the Father through Christ. Figuratively, Christ has become our Holy of Holies.

There is another thought we should explore. That is what the Book of Hebrews says about the subject of anointing.

Hebrews 9:11-12 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; (12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

The Greater and Perfect Tabernacle is that which is in Heaven. It is the true temple and human hands did not make it; God made it. The blood of goats and calves was only a figure of the true sacrifice and it did not cleanse the sins or the salve the conscience of the people. But Jesus the Messiah, entered into the true Tabernacle in Heaven with His Own shed blood, and by implication, sprinkled His Own blood on the altar in Heaven, not for His Own sins, for He had none, but for the sins of the world, thereby obtaining eternal redemption for those that believe.

Look at this closely. If the figure is the Old Covenant high priest going into the Holy of Holies, on the Day of Atonement, and sprinkling the blood of goats and calves on the Mercy Seat, then the real thing is Christ sprinkling His Own blood on the Mercy Seat in Heaven. The writer does not say this, but it is the implication. This is the fulfillment in eternity and the end of the age.

We seem to have established that the end of the age is the end of the seventy weeks. All of the attributes of the period given by Gabriel seem to indicate that the end of the seventy weeks is at the end of the age. Each of them must have its ultimate fulfillment at the end of the age. Let me be specific about the end of the age. The Greek phrase, *συντελεια του αιωνος*, *sunteleia tou aionos*, literally means the end of the age. Yet many translations render it "the end of the world." That is basically what it is—the end of this world and its system, or the end of this age of the earth. What age is that? It is the age of sin and the age of man. In the previous age, Adam and Eve lived in bliss with God. There was no sin. That age ended with sin entering the world and the next age began; that very age is still extant today. We live in it. When this age ends, eternity with God begins; it is the Heaven age, for Heaven is wherever God abides. We must admit, then, that the end of the seventy weeks is also the end of the age. That means that the final week must be the last era before the Heaven age begins. While the First Advent and the Resurrection partially fulfilled the prophecy, the final fulfillment is at the end of the age. Please note that I am not teaching the theological doctrine of the "Three Earth Ages," I am simply discussing the sinful condition of men and women, how we got that way, and how it will end.

Daniel 9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah confirm for us that the city of Jerusalem, including the Temple and the fortified walls, was rebuilt. The rebuilding took forty-nine years. Sir Robert Anderson

(1841-1918) wrote a book entitled The Coming Prince, in which he precisely calculated the dates given in Daniel. Dr. Harold Hoehner (1935-2009), Distinguished Professor of New Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, who wrote Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ, confirmed Anderson's work.

This prophecy began when Artaxerxes issued his second decree to allow Nehemiah to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8). This decree was issued (according to Anderson) on the first of Nisan, 445 BC (March 14, 445 BC on the Julian Calendar). The workers completed the wall, the city, and the Temple in 396 BC, 49 years after their beginning.

The next period includes the time between 396 BC and the moment when Messiah the Prince revealed Himself to Israel at the Triumphal Entry, which occurred April 6, 32 AD (Julian Calendar). That period totals 173,880 days, or 483 years of 360 days each, exactly as Gabriel prophesied. Check it out for yourself. The Coming Prince is available online, free, in PDF format; simply search for the title and you will find it. Both works are available at various booksellers.

The periods follow in turn and the events relative to those periods follow in turn as well. In other words, the seven-week period applies to the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the sixty-two week period applies to the time from the end of the seven weeks, or 49 years, until the crucifixion of the Messiah. This totals 483 years. The final seven will not occur until nearly the end of the age as we discussed above.

Since the first two periods of weeks follow in the same succession as the two separate events, which are the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the coming of Messiah, then, it rationally follows that the third period of weeks follows in the same succession as the first two. In other words, the seven weeks precede the 62 weeks, which, in turn, precede the one week. The events follow in the same succession, namely, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the coming of Messiah, and the seven-year covenant. Since the 62 weeks follow the seven weeks and the coming of Messiah follows the rebuilding of Jerusalem, then, it follows that the one week must occur after the Messiah comes. In fact, Gabriel tells us the final heptad will take place sometime after the Messiah is crucified. Since the angel separates the 483 years from the final seven, so should we. Gabriel stops after the 483 years and tells about the destruction of the city and sanctuary before he begins again with the final seven. This separates them by an event not dated in this passage, namely the destruction of Jerusalem. We know from historical records that the destruction of Jerusalem occurred in 70 AD. When and where the final seven-year covenant will take place is not fully defined in these verses. We must search the scriptures for these answers.

Here is the succession in a visual format:

Seven Weeks	Sixty-Two Weeks	One Week
Rebuilding of Jerusalem	Messiah Cut Off	Seven Year Covenant
7 Weeks	62 Weeks	1 Week
49 Years (Subtotal 49)	434 Years (Subtotal: 483)	7 Years (Total 490)

Daniel 9:26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

Upon the completion of the City, the Temple, and the Walls, in 396 BC, 434 years elapsed. At that time, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt as prophesied in Zechariah 9:9, thus declaring Himself as the promised Messiah. A week later, the Romans, at the behest of the high priest, crucified Him. That is the meaning of cut-off. He died. Prophecy declares the death of Jesus on the cross in this verse. 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes, Jesus was killed on a Roman cross, precisely as Gabriel prophesied it.

"But not for himself" is rendered several ways in different translations. The LXX renders it "and there is no judgment in him." The Syriac is "And it is not with him." The KJV 1611 margin states, "and shall have nothing." The New Living Translation puts it this way: "the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple." The overall understanding should be that He ceased to have power and authority. It appeared to the world that he had accomplished nothing. However, we know the rest of the story. He arose on the third day and hundreds witnessed Him alive.

The angel stops there and goes in another direction. He then discusses the destruction of the very city and sanctuary he prophesied would be rebuilt. Gabriel says another prince will come that will destroy Jerusalem. The NLT (above—"and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple") specifically states this. We know the name of that prince, Titus Vespasian. He came and besieged the City with the Roman legions, which were comprised of the soldiers

from Italy as well as soldiers from the local inhabitants, who were a part of the Roman army. Not all Roman soldiers were Italian. Rome recruited soldiers from over the entire empire to serve in the army. Many local combat units were comprised of local men who joined the Roman Army. Rome fed and paid its soldiers adequately. Thus, many locals would join the army for economic reasons. Therefore, many of the Jews' local enemies became Roman soldiers and participated in the destruction of Jerusalem and Judea. Josephus gives us a list of the various legions, squadrons, and cohorts and the countries of their origin. Many enemies of the Jews comprised these divisions. Actually, scripture says that the people of this prince, and not the prince, will destroy the city and sanctuary. And so it was. Titus and his generals gave orders not to destroy the temple and city, yet some over-zealous troops broke military order and set fire to the temple. The fire spread to the city and destroyed both the temple and the city.

We may note interestingly that the destruction of Jerusalem took 3.5 years to complete. After the destruction of the temple occurred, the Romans set up their pagan standards in the place where the Holy of Holies stood. This would have been an abomination to the Jews. It was an abomination from the Romans, who also cause the desolation of the City—"the Abomination of Desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24:15). Additionally, 3.5 years later, the Romans destroyed the Jews at Masada, sending them into exile that would not end until May 1948 AD. That was a seven-year period, and the first fulfillment of the seventieth week. Nevertheless, it was not the final heptad, which will occur at the end of the age.

The flood refers to the devastation of the army, which swept away everything, leaving not one stone unturned (See Isa 8:7, 59:19, Jer 46:7-8, Dan 11:22). The desolations continued until the Romans finished their campaign. I would say that this included the defeat at Masada. The flooding of the invading army swept away everything that was once Judah leaving nothing but destruction in its wake, just like a flood of water. The desolation included the polity, the property, the buildings, the infrastructure and the people, which the Romans carried off to captivity in distant lands. Nothing was left of Palestine but desolation.

The Brenton translation of the LXX has a different take on the verse. "And after the sixty-two weeks, the anointed one shall be destroyed, and there is no judgment in him: and he shall destroy the city and the sanctuary with the prince that is coming: they shall be cut off with a flood, and to the end of the war which is rapidly completed he shall appoint the city to desolations."

This makes sense. Messiah Jesus will be killed and then, after His death and resurrection, He will use the "prince that is coming" as His instrument to destroy the city and sanctuary. The flood is the armies of Rome. The complete destruction occurred near the end of the siege and rapidly consumed the city and sanctuary because of the fire that the soldiers had started in the Temple.

The military actions of the Romans desolated the city and sanctuary and banished the Jews from Judea. They then forbid any Jew to return to Judea.

The difficulty in the transition from verse 26 to 27 is a bit complicated to exegete. Some say that Titus, the prince in verse 26 is the "he" that will establish a covenant with many. That certainly seems to follow grammatically. One could make a very good point that Titus was that man. Yet there is a problem with that assumption. At the beginning of his prophecy, Gabriel noted six things that could only happen at the end of the age. To repeat them, Gabriel: prophesied that the seventy weeks were decreed to accomplish six things:

To finish the transgression

To make an end of sins

To make reconciliation for iniquity

To bring in everlasting righteousness

To seal up the vision and prophecy

To anoint the most Holy

These six things can only be consummated at the end of the age, which is a time still future even now as these words are written. Again, have all of these events taken place? Have transgressions or sins ended? No. Has reconciliation been made for iniquity? Not totally; there are many yet to be saved and be reconciled to God. Reconciliation is ongoing in this age. We will be fully reconciled to God at the end of the age when Christ receives His own to Himself. Has everlasting righteousness occurred? No. Have vision and prophecy been sealed? No. Since the destruction of Jerusalem took place, has the Most Holy Place been anointed? No. None of these items will occur until the end of the age; therefore, the second fulfillment of the seventieth week will not occur until the end of the age.

So how do we understand any difference between the prince that will come and he that will make a seven-year covenant? This covenant is the last heptad; it is the final week of the seventy; it is the seventieth. Verse 27 discussed the seventieth week, which must occur at the end of the age in order that the six-fold purpose of the seventy weeks may be fulfilled. This could not have taken place immediately after the crucifixion because Jerusalem was not destroyed until 40 years later. This could not have taken place after the destruction of the city and Sanctuary because no

seven-year covenant was made at that time nor has it yet been made. Thus, the price that will come cannot be the "he" that makes the seven-year covenant unless he was able to live for hundreds of years. The two cannot be the same.

Since the six-fold purpose of the seventy weeks cannot be fulfilled until the end of the age, and the end of the age has not yet occurred, then this seven year covenant must occur at some future date, a date that approaches the end of the age. Therefore, there must be two distinct persons involved in this prophecy—Titus, and some future yet unnamed person. Many have come to this conclusion. Some have concluded that these six events were fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 and all prophets were fulfilled in that event. Others conclude that since Titus was Roman, the man that confirms this covenant must be somehow descended from Roman stock. Some conclude this to be Antichrist. There are many other scenarios.

I believe the seventieth week is yet future. I do not believe the destruction of Jerusalem was the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy, though it was figure of the seventieth week. I believe it will occur exactly seven years before the end of the age. I believe the Antichrist or his agent will be the architect of this covenant. This very prophecy applies to the end of the age. The coming prince applies not only to Titus Vespasian, but to another coming prince. Titus did not make a treaty, but came with an invading army that did not stop until Israel ceased to be a country. The future prince will make the covenant prophesied of here. Again, this is my belief. It is not chiseled in stone. In the future, I may learn more about it and change my opinion.

Keil & Delitzsch, Nineteenth Century Commentators on the Bible, make this statement concerning the prince that makes the covenant, "Therefore the thought is this: That ungodly prince shall impose on the mass of the people a strong covenant that they should follow him and give themselves to him as their God." And that brings us to...

Subtopic B—The Seventieth Seven

J. Dwight Pentecost expressed what he called the Law of Double Reference: "*Two events, widely separated as to the time of their fulfillment, may be brought together into the scope of one prophecy. This was done because the prophet had a message for his own day as well as for a future time.*" (Things To Come, J. Dwight Pentecost, 1958, Dunham Publishing, London. 1964 printing, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids)

As we discussed in Topic 1, and in the subtopic above, the prophecy given to Daniel by Gabriel was of the entire period from Daniel's day until the end of the age. The prophecy consists of seventy weeks, or sevens of years, or 490 years. After the first 69 sevens, the Messiah would be killed. The seventieth week occurs at a later period.

Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

The verse seems to continue with the exploits of the general that destroyed Jerusalem and the defeated Israel at Masada. This ungodly prince, who, because of the grammatical construction of the passage, is not Titus Vespasian; he was in view in verse 26 (see above). This seventieth week occurs after the cutting off of Messiah, and after the destruction of Jerusalem. Some claim this prince to be the Messiah; others claim it to be Titus. However, why would Gabriel, after keeping all the events in chronological order suddenly change and go back to previous occurrences in a later verse? I do not believe he would. The destruction of Jerusalem and Judea occurred as though a flood had swept over it.. Therefore, the seventieth week occurs after Messiah died and after Titus finished his campaign. The covenant of seven years of Daniel 9:27 did not happen under Titus. He made no such treaty.

Since we are certain that the Seventy Weeks concludes at the end of the age, then it seems to make sense to me that the last seven years occurs near the end of time. We will proceed on that assumption.

OK. So the ungodly prince that will come must be the ruler predicted to come by the Revelation of Jesus Christ at the end of the age. We have the two beasts of Revelation, one is comprised of the nations; it comes out of the sea of nations. It is a conglomerate of preceding kingdoms: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The second beast, out of the earth, appears as a lamb but speaks as a dragon. This beast is the antichrist. He deceives men into believing he is God and into making peace with him. Revelation 13:3 "I saw that one of the heads of the beast seemed wounded beyond recovery—but the fatal wound was healed! The whole world marveled at this miracle and gave allegiance to the beast." It is at this point that the world seems to have peace. Yet, in just a few verses, he makes war with the saints. He persecutes and kills them. He conquers them. This very passage in Revelation fits with Daniel's prophecy. Revelation is silent on the treaty, but here in

this passage the world worships the beast with the exception of true believers. They do not so they are conquered, persecuted and killed.

Let us, once again, state the prevailing theory of the seventieth week of Daniel. Rapture adherents state that, in the end times, before the Antichrist comes, that Jesus will come and rapture the church. This will be a secret rapture leaving the ones left behind dazed. They will not understand what happened. Immediately after the rapture, the Antichrist will make a seven year peace treaty with Israel and will break that treaty 3½ years later, or half way through the treaty period. At that half way point the "Jews" (according to this theory), that is, Israel, will undergo the Great Tribulation. During this seven-year period, the church will be with Christ in Heaven at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Christ will return after the Great Tribulation. The church will be with Him and he will destroy his enemies at the Battle of Armageddon. This more or less describes the rapture as propounded by men like Van Impe, Lindsey, LeHaye, Walvoord, Pentecost, and plenty of others.

Unfortunately, that scenario does not fit the scriptures. The prophecy in Daniel states, "he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." We will later discuss the teaching that this prince is Jesus the Christ. However, let us now observe the teaching that this prince is Antichrist. According to this scenario, "He" is the prince that will come, or Antichrist, as Apostle John refers to him in his first epistle. He has other appellations as we discussed in the first topic. For the sake of brevity, we will refer to him as Antichrist through the remainder of this letter. Antichrist will confirm a covenant with many. The Hebrew shows that Antichrist will force this covenant on many. Literally, the Hebrew states, "he has strengthened a covenant with the many." He will come to them from a position of strength and they will be obliged to accept his terms. He will dictate the covenant to them.

This is similar to being conquered. Keil & Delitzsch put it this way: "*Therefore the thought is this: That ungodly prince shall impose on the mass of the people a strong covenant that they should follow him and give themselves to him as their God.*" (Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament under Daniel 9:27) Now this view is in concert with the Revelation of Jesus Christ (read Chapter 13, where the Antichrist forces himself on the people). It also agrees with Daniel's prophecy of the Little Horn. Antichrist will force the many to worship him, and to worship the image of the beast and to accept a mark in their foreheads or upon their right hands. He will also make war with the saints—those who refuse to accept his covenant.

Who are these "many"? Numerous folks refer to them as Israel. They base this on Gabriel's statement, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." The seventy weeks certainly apply to the Israelites, but the entire world is involved in these events. The world revolves around the nation

of Israel as it has since Joshua's conquest of the land. Whatever happens in Israel is magnified throughout the world.

For example, at the very moment I wrote this paragraph, (Monday, May 21st, 2007), Israel was attacking rocket launching sites in Gaza, where guerillas were launching rocket attacks against Israel. Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah rockets attack Israel, killing innocents. Yet, those groups are not condemned. However, when Israel retaliates against this aggression, the whole world condemns the Israelis. These actions affect the entire world. The UN can talk of little else. Whatever happens in Israel resonates throughout the entire world.

A more current event, Israel's 2010 naval blockade of Gaza and its attendant violence on board the Marmara have the whole world in an uproar. Israel is protecting herself, which any other nation has the right to do, yet she is condemned by the world, including our sitting president, Barak Obama, and the UN. Nothing proves the validity of the Scriptures more than Satan's black hatred of Israel. His hatred of Israel is the reason for all the violence and condemnation surrounding Israel.

Let us not forget that the Bible is one coherent book written over a period of millennia by many authors with many callings, most of whom never met. The people of God are those that have accepted His precepts and trusted Him faithfully. That includes the nation of Israel and her adopted sister, the Church. The church is not separate from Israel but is a continuation of the plan of God that began at creation. The church is an extension of Israel and not her replacement. All true believers are Israelites according to scripture (Rom 9:6; 24-26; 11:17). So, we who are Christians are like wild olive branches grafted in to the good olive root stock that is Israel. We Gentile Christians are members of Israel and are their brethren by adoption. Israel and the church are one people according to the Scriptures. Satan hates all of us, but he especially hates the natural children of Abraham, the root stock of Israel, whether or not they are saved. That is why the world revolves around Israel. It is because Satan is instigating the world against the Jews first, and then the Christians. The Muslims' primary goal is to wipe Israel off the map and when they have completed that task, they plan to go after Christians. They will not succeed in the end.

The seventy weeks determined upon Daniel's people, the Israelites (and the offspring of Israel, the Christians), resonated throughout the entire world. Men throughout the entire world noticed the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple. There was much opposition to the rebuilding of the city. The king gave his blessing to the reconstruction and provided funding to do so. Yet, even with the king's charge to rebuild the city, the opposition nearly succeeded in stopping the work. In the face of much opposition, the work was eventually finished after 49 years, which is 7 weeks of years just as Gabriel predicted. Read the story in Ezra and Nehemiah.

The next part of the prophecy, the coming of Messiah, absolutely affected the entire world. Christianity began as a Jewish movement in Israel. That small Jewish movement became worldwide. The Apostles and other Disciples of Christ rapidly spread Christianity throughout the world after the resurrection. That was an earth-shaking event affecting history right up to the present moment. This Jewish movement affected millions upon millions of people, most of them Gentiles. Yes, the prophecy was for Daniel's people, but it affected all nations for millennia.

The final week is no exception. Therefore, the many are not just Israelites; they are the multitudes of the world contrasted with the few who remain faithful unto God. Additionally, the Hebrew states "*the* many," instead of "many," which further contrasts great multitudes with the few. Jesus Himself said that only a few find the narrow gate leading to eternal life, but many take the broad path that leads to destruction. He meant that only a few, as compared to the multitudes, would believe in Him as Savior. These few reject the covenant of Antichrist.

Antichrist will force the multitudes into submission to his will, thus strengthening a covenant with the many. Still, those who remain faithful to God will not succumb to Antichrist's power. This angers him and causes him to wage war against the saints, that is, those faithful to God (Daniel 7:21 & Revelation 13:7).

Many rapture adherents teach that this is a *peace* treaty made strictly with Israel. It is not. Though Israel will be at the center of this treaty, the covenant will be with the whole world. Israel is the center of this treaty because, in the future, Israel will be at the center of world turmoil, just as it is today.

The treaty itself will not be a peace treaty; it will be the law according to Antichrist. It is his system set up by him and executed by him. It will apply to the entire world. People break this covenant at their peril. Those who do will be hunted down and killed, many by beheading (Revelation 20:4). In order to maintain this level of order, the Antichrist will need to have much power and strength. I believe most of the world will be with him and support him with fealty, with resources, and with troops. I suggest reading about the role of Islam in this process. Several good resources are available. I recommend Joel Richardson's "[The Islamic Antichrist](#)."

John wrote the Revelation to the churches, that is, to Christians. The saints that the dragon wages war with are those saved by the blood of Christ. They are Christians, God's people. The saints in

Daniel 7:21 are also God's people. After the Advent, God's people are Christians. Before the Advent, God's people were faithful Israelites who trusted in God to save them. They were saved because of their faith in what God had revealed to them at their time. Both the Saints before and those after the Advent were God's people based on their faith in Him. After the Advent, God does not consider those Gentiles or Jews that reject Christ to be His people (John 3:18, Romans 2:28, 9:6-8). Conversely, God does not consider His people, those saved by the blood of Christ, to be Jews or Gentiles, but simply, Christians, even though they may have been Jews or Gentiles before conversion. (Rom 10:12, Gal 3:38, Col 3:11)

Thus, the saints of Daniel 7:2 are those saved by faith and the saints of Revelation are also saved by faith. Those saved before the Advent were saved by their faith in what God had revealed to them. After the resurrection, they must be saved by belief in Christ, Whom God revealed fully in the New Covenant and Who fulfilled the completed revelation of God.

In the midst of the week, Antichrist changes the focus of his covenant. Though he forces the many to submit to his covenant, he himself changes his own rules. Many rapture adherents teach that he makes a seven-year peace treaty with Israel, and then, in the middle of the treaty, he breaks his covenant and all hellishness breaks loose. The scripture does not warrant this viewpoint.

There is no breaking of a treaty here. The text does not say it, nor does it imply it. It simply says that in the midst of the seven-year period, Antichrist will stop all worship of God. Antichrist has forced his rules on the many. This is not a negotiated treaty; it is a demand that people follow his will. What he will do in the midst of the week, is to stop the temple practices of worship i.e. sacrifice and oblation. He will attempt to change the set times and the laws. The set times in Israelite worship practices are the festivals, new moons, etc. What is in view here is that he will stop all forms of worship. He will not break the covenant; the covenant is still in effect: Antichrist still rules over them. The difference between the first half of the covenant and second is that he demands worship of himself. The overspreading of abominations refers to the actions that will take place when the Antichrist stops the worship of God and demands worship for himself. This proves who he really is-Satan.

Recall that antichrist means "instead of Christ" as well as "in opposition to Christ." Paul tells us that Antichrist will claim to be Christ and will set himself up as Christ in the temple sanctuary (2 Thes 2:4). Apparently, he will allow people to worship God (or any god they wish) until he decides that he wishes all to fall down and worship him. We know from the revelation that the Antichrist has a seemingly living statue made in his image and demands that all bow down and worship it. This is a brazen act of idolatry. The many will go along with this. The few will not.

This act of idolatry will undeniably set apart those who worship the image of the beast and those who do not. Those with the mark of the beast will he leave alone. The saints, who will not worship the image, and thus not receive his mark, will anger him. He will attack them. These very things cause the overspreading of abominations to occur.

Again, please note that the prince that comes does not break the treaty. He simply stops the worship of God (sacrifice and oblation). Then he demands worship of himself, just as the beast of Revelation 13. The breaking of the treaty in the midst thereof is not biblical. The treaty is not broken. It remains in place for all who will worship him.

The last phrase of verse 27 reads, "[and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.](#)"

This seems a bit difficult to unravel. Let us break it down. Three things are in view here.

1. Because of his widespread abominations (worshipping him and his image, blaspheming god, persecuting the saints, etc.), desolation comes upon him and his congregation
2. This desolation will usher in the consummation of all things, that is, the end of the age
3. The end will come upon him when Christ returns and destroys him and his legion with the sword of His mouth.

God's Word translation renders the phrase, "This will happen along with disgusting things that cause destruction until those time periods come to an end. It has been determined that this will happen to those who destroy the city." *Copyright © 1995 by GOD'S WORD to the Nations Bible Society. All rights reserved.*

As we learned earlier in this study, when this verse occurs, the rapture is very near. It is directly after John gives the number of the beast in Revelation 13 that the 144000, are found with the Lamb, Who is standing on Mount Zion (Rev 14:1-4). Then the angel proclaims the Gospel to the entire world one last time (Rev. 14:16). Another angel proclaims the end of the antichrist and his political and religious system, crying "Babylon is fallen!" Shortly after that the rapture occurs

(Rev. 14:14-16). Then in the next chapter, the great tribulation begins as the angels pour out the bowls or vials of God's wrath upon the earth. Then the Lord Jesus Christ and His Bride descend from heaven on white horses and Jesus the Messiah defeats the armies of the antichrist with the word of His mouth. The end of the age occurs. This brief discourse fits well with final words of the angel Gabriel in the last verse of Daniel chapter 9.

I am using the term, "rapture" because most people understand what that is. It is when Jesus returns and the church is "caught up" with Him into the heavens and taken home to glory with Him. I am no pre-trib rapture adherent because they believe that the church will be taken up to heaven before Antichrist, which is in direct opposition to the Scripture (2 Thes 1-4). They believe that the great tribulation is the time that Antichrist rules. I disagree. I believe the great tribulation is the pouring out of the seven vials of God's wrath on the earth. The church will remain on earth during the reign of the Antichrist but will be caught up (raptured) to Christ before the great and terrible wrath of God is poured out upon the earth. Immediately after the seven vials are poured out, Christ returns to defeat those forced of Antichrist still living after that tribulation occurs. His church returns with Him.

Conclusion

Many prophecies have dual fulfillments. Most of the prophecies in Daniel 9:24-27 have dual fulfillments. We need not go over territory we have already covered. For a review, see the six accomplishments of this prophecy at the beginning of this Topic. Since dual fulfillment is a recurring theme in this prophetic passage, it is probable that the final week or seven-year period follows this dictum. It appears to. The first fulfillment of the prophecy was when Antiochus IV Epiphanes conquered Jerusalem and sacrificed a pig on the altar in the Most Holy Place. This was also the first fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation.

The second fulfillment of the seven-year prophecy can be seen in Christ, Whose ministry lasted three and one-half years and then He was crucified. That would be a partial fulfillment of the seventieth week, in that the Antichrist stops all worship practices in the midst of a seven-year period. A third fulfillment occurred when the Romans conquered the Jews and destroyed their temple, their city, and their nation. That took seven years from the beginning of the siege at Jerusalem and ending with the Roman victory at Masada. Just after the temple was conquered, the Romans set up their pagan standards (their own system of Emperor Worship) and offered sacrifices to them on the spot that was the Most Holy Place. That was the second Abomination of Desolation; this one being the one prophesied by Christ in the Olivet Discourse.

The third fulfillment of the seventieth week is yet future. This will occur at the end of the age. At this time, another "prince that will come" will come in strength and power and will force the world to make a seven-year treaty with him. Again, you should read the book by Joel Richardson entitled "[The Islamic Antichrist](#)." This future prince, or the Antichrist, will apparently allow the religions of the world, including Christianity and Judaism, to continue in their worship. This is probably because of world pressure. However, in the midst of the treaty period, which means somewhere between its beginning and end, probably at the three and one-half year point, he will stop all the worship practices of all world religions and demand that he be worshipped as God. Most will obey. True Christians will not. He will seek them out and kill as many of them as he can. Paul tells us he will sit in the temple of God and claim to be God. He may simply rule from the Dome of the Rock, which sits atop the Rock Moriah where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac. This was the exact location of the Holy of Holies in the temple. This would be the third fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation. Again, if you will read "[The Islamic Antichrist](#)" you will get a very good understanding of the Muslim take on the end times. This will help you to understand the Bible's version.

There is no need to fear this, for God is with you if you are a Christian. If you are living when this momentous event occurs, you will receive the strength to make it through the hellacious persecution (which is not the Great Tribulation) that will come upon the church. Antichrist and his minions will behead many. History shows us that those Christians martyred for their faith in the past were well able to suffer the flames, the swords, the crosses, the tortures, and the beheadings. You will receive the strength to endure whatever happens to you. If you die in this period, you will join the martyrs in Heaven and sing praised to Christ with Whom you were able to suffer. It will be a great honor.

However, if you are not a Christian; if you do not believe in Christ as your Savior, you will probably follow the world in worshipping the beast. If you refuse to do so, you will be hunted and killed but you will not be given the strength to endure. If you do not have Christ as your Savior, here is what you must do: believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and that He was born of a virgin, grew as a man, died on the cross as a sacrifice in your place, was raised on the third day and today sits at the right hand of the Father making intercession for your sins. Then a glorious thing will happen. After suffering through the persecution of Antichrist, Christ will return and receive His believers to Himself and you will join them in Heaven. After that, God will pour His wrath out upon the earth (in the Great Tribulation) and then those that survive will form an army against God. Christ will return to the earth and will destroy them with a word from His mouth. Then Christ will reign on earth with eternal righteousness. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Maranatha!