

The Three Prophetic Periods of Daniel's 70 Weeks Prophecy Daniel 9

By Carl Franklin

The First Period The First 7 Weeks of the 70 564-515 BCE 49 Years

The first period in the seventy weeks was already underway when Daniel understood Jeremiah's prophecy in 539 BC, the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus (Cyrus the Great). It was in 539 BC, that the prophet Daniel prayed (Dan. 9) to the Lord regarding the seventy years of servitude that Jeremiah had prophesied (Jer. 29:10). This seventy-year period from the first invasion and captivity of some Jews had begun in 609 BC and had just ended in 539 BC. Daniel had been taken captive in 604 BC, the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's 43-year reign, and was now an old man in his 80's. He had lived to see Jerusalem rebuilt under the governorship of Nehemiah; yet according to Daniel's own testimony, the sanctuary was still desolate (Dan. 9:17). The temple had not been rebuilt and was still in its seventy-year period desolation. This seventy-year period for the desolation of the Temple began in 585 BC with the final invasion of the Babylonian armies that destroyed the Temple. This seventy year period for the desolation of the Temple did not end until 515 BC or 25 years [inclusive counting] after Daniel had first understood Jeremiah's prophecy in 539 BC.

This is the historical setting of the seventy-weeks prophecy that was given to Daniel as recorded in Daniel 9:20-27. The seventy weeks of the prophecy (a day for a year) are divided into three periods that are separated by large gaps in time. The first period consists of seven prophetic weeks, or 49 years, and extended from 564 to 515 BC, during which Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt. The second period consists of 62 prophetic weeks, or 434 years, and extended from 404 BC to 30 AD, when Christ was crucified. The third period consists of one prophetic week, or seven years, during which the final prophecies of the book of Revelation will be fulfilled and

Christ will return to rule the earth.

The three periods in the seventy-weeks prophecy have generally been interpreted as a continuous period of 490 years with no intervening gaps in time, which as we will see is not correct. We will first examine the evidence of chronology:

NEBUCHADNEZZAR BEGINS 7 YEARS OF MADNESS 567 DAN 4:29-33

(567-561) (Daniel and the sister of Ahasuerus govern Babylon during this period. God takes advantage of Nebu's period of madness to fulfill His prophecies. God had apparently meant that Nebuchadnezzar fulfill them, but in his vanity he had to be struck mad for seven years !)

**COMMAND TO REBUILD JERUSALEM GIVEN IN
20TH YEAR OF AHASUREUS (ARTAXERXES OR
ASTYGES--husband of Esther and father of Cyrus)** 564 NEH 1:1-2:8

**THE GOING FORTH OF THE COMMANDMENT TO
RESTORE AND REBUILD JERUSALEM** 564 DAN 9:25

**THE BEGINNING OF THE FIRST 7 WEEKS OF
THE 70 -- 7x7 = 49 YEARS** 564 DAN 9:25
(564-515)

**NEHEMIAH MADE GOVERNOR JUDEA
FOR 12 YEARS** 564 NEH 5:14
(564-552)

**The First Period
564-515 BC**

The Seven Weeks Are 49 Years

The first seven weeks in the prophecy began in 564 BC. Nebuchadnezzar had entered a seven-year period of madness (567-561 BC) as foretold by Daniel (Dan. 4:29-33). Daniel, now in his 50's, and Nebuchadnezzar's wife, sister of Ahasuerus of Persia (also known as Artaxerxes or Astyges), ruled the Chaldean Empire during this seven-year period. Esther and Ahasuerus ruled Persia. Esther had been taken to Ahasuerus in the seventh year of his reign, which was 577 BC (Es. 2:16). In his twentieth year, Ahasuerus issued the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Neh. 1:1-2:8). The year was 564 BC—the midpoint of

Nebuchadnezzar's madness. Thus was it possible to appoint Nehemiah, faithful servant of Ahasuerus and Esther, as governor of Judea. Nehemiah ruled as governor for twelve years (564 to 552 BC), supervising the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and the laying of the foundation of the temple. The events of Nehemiah 1-7:4 occurred during 564-563 BC.

The events of the first seven weeks are prophesied:

"the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times"
(Dan. 9:25).

The subject of shifts to the following 62 weeks of the prophecy:

The Hebrew Syntax indicated there is a gap between the first 7 weeks and the following 62 weeks of the 70 weeks prophecy. In number of years the gap amounts to 111 years (515 to 404 BC). However, the divisions between the three periods are clearly designated in the Hebrew text. Let us examine the evidence. The Hebrew breaks down the thoughts as follows:

"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 [564 to 515 BC—49 years], and threescore and two weeks [404 BC to 30 AD—434 years]..." (Dan. 9:25).

"And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off [crucified], but not for himself [404 to 30 AD—434 years]..." (Dan. 9:26).

The Second Period

The 62 Weeks of the 70 404 BC to 30 AD 434 Years

The second period in the seventy weeks began in the days of the prophet Malachi. Malachi prophesied in 404 BC during the high priesthood of the wicked Jonathan (John), son of Joiada (Judas) and brother of Jesus (whom he murdered in the Temple) and Manasseh (Josephus XI.8.3).

Josephus confuses this Manasseh with a later Manasseh (Josephus XI.7.1), thus throwing most scholars off in their dating of the prophecies of Malachi.

The Persian king at the time of Malachi's prophecy was Artaxerxes II Mnemon, who ruled from 404 to 358 BC. Other kings ruled after him, and the Medo-Persian Empire continued into the fourth century BC, when it was conquered by Alexander the Great. Alexander's empire was divided after his death and survived until the rise of the Roman Empire, which ruled Jerusalem during the birth, ministry and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Daniel prophesied that the 62 weeks would end with the death of the Messiah, or Prince (future King). Verses 25 and 26 of Daniel 9 refer to the Messiah being "cut off."

MALACHI PROPHESIES
(410-409)

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The Persian kings during this period:

Artaxerxes I Longimanus	465-424
Xerxes II	424-404
Artaxerxes II Mnemon	404-358

Dan. 9:25-26

Beginning of the 62 weeks of the 70 weeks prophecy 404 BC (434 years—404 BC to 30 AD ending with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ)

Picking up once again with Daniel 9. The latter part of Verse 26 refers to a prince who would rule after the death of the Messiah. This later prince is a prince of this world, undoubtedly the final Beast described in Daniel 8, II Thessalonians 2 and Revelation 13. The Hebrew text indicates the shift in subject from the Messiah to this later prince by placing an *atnah* under the word "himself." This Hebrew punctuation mark appears as a small upside-down "v" and is used in the text to show a separation between the preceding thought and the thought that follows:

Crucifixion of the Anointed One

"And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off [crucified], but not for himself ..." (Dan. 9:26).

[*atnah* signifies a break in thought]

Destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD and in the End Time

"...and the people of the prince [the prince of the people] 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..." (Dan. 9:26). The Destruction of the Temple in 70 AD was a foretype of its final destruction in the end time.

[pause]

There is a major break at the end of Verse 26 in the form of a "pause" at the word "determined," showing, a prophetic leap forward to the last week or last 7 years of the 70 weeks. In the Hebrew this "pause" simply looks like our " : " Like the colon, this Hebrew punctuation mark indicates a major break in thought. Thus the Hebrew text shows a second gap in the fulfillment of the seventy-weeks prophecy. This second gap is an unknown period of time between the 62-week period and the last week, or seven years, of the prophecy.

The Third Period The Seventieth Week Will Be Seven Years

The third period in the seventy-weeks prophecy is yet to be fulfilled: Dan 9:27 "And he [the final Beast] 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 final week, or seven years, of Daniel's prophecy will see major end-time events take place before the return of Christ. All these events were foretold by Jesus Himself and are recorded in Chapter 24 of the Gospel of Matthew and in the book of Revelation. These prophesied events will

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include the heavenly signs, 3^{1/2} years of miraculous works by the two
witnesses, and the battle of Armageddon which is the consummation of the
age.

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