

THE GATE CHURCH HIGH DESERT  
RANDY HOWARD

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6:30PM  
JAN - APR, 2021



# BACK TO THE FUTURE

A STUDY OF REVELATIONS AND THE VICTORY OF CHRIST

## A PROPER APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING - THE BOOK OF REVELATION

### CHAPTER ONE

#### **Developing the Right Hermeneutic (*Interpretation of Scripture*)**

Literal, Figurative, Symbolic and Figurative Language  
Systems of Eschatology and the Approach to End Times  
Preterism, Futurism, Historicism and Idealism  
Amillennialism, Pre-Millennialism and Post Millennialism

### CHAPTER TWO

#### **Deciphering the Old Testament Prophecies (*Daniel, Zechariah*)**

Zechariah's Description of the Temple  
Daniel's Vision of the Four Kingdoms  
Daniel's Timeline of the Seventy Weeks

### CHAPTER THREE

#### **Discovering the First Century Relevance of Jesus' Prophecy (*Matthew 23-25*)**

The Temple Experience and a Walk in the Garden  
The Disciples Questions and a Curiosity for the Unknown  
The Future Unveiled and the Prophecies Unfold

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Detailing the Observations as Seen in the Visions of John (*Revelation*)**

The Purpose of the Book (Christ and His Church Victorious)

The Person of the Book (*Christ*)

*Jesus Christ the Lamb of God | Jesus Christ the Lord of All*

The Prophecy of the Book (Warnings, Judgments and Outcomes)

*Dating the Revelation: Crucial to Understanding the Book*

*Warnings to the Churches of Asia Minor*

*Judgments on the Jews, the Romans Empire and the Nations of Earth*

*Second Coming, the Kingdom of God and New Creation*

## **LESSON SEVEN:**

### **Deciphering the Old Testament Prophecies (*Daniel, Ezekiel*)**

Daniel's Vision of the Four Kingdoms

Daniel's Timeline of the Seventy Weeks

Description of the Temple

### **Daniel's Vision of the Four Kingdoms and the Timeline of the Seventy Weeks**

#### Prophetic Messages Given to Daniel

Living several hundred years before Jesus came into the world, Daniel recorded visions, dreams, and prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, the end-times, the future of the Jews, and the coming of the kingdom of God. Here we will examine the divine messages recorded first in Daniel 2 and then in Daniel 9.

#### The Message of Daniel 2

Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, had a dream in which God revealed the future. Daniel was able to tell the king his dream and give its interpretation. Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar that he saw in his dream a tremendous statue with a head of fine gold, a breast and arms of silver, a belly and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet partly of iron and partly of clay. Daniel then told the king that in his dream a rock appeared and hit the feet of the statue, causing the statue to collapse. The statue was

then blown away as dust in the wind. Finally, the stone became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (Dan. 2:31-35). Daniel then revealed to the king what the dream meant.

*“You, O king, . . . are the head of gold. After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze . . . then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron.”*  
(Dan. 2:37-40)

Daniel told the king that the four parts of the statue represented four kingdoms, one following after the other. Daniel also told King Nebuchadnezzar that his kingdom—the Babylonian kingdom—was the first kingdom. Other passages in the book of Daniel talk further about these four kingdoms. They identify the Medo-Persian kingdom as the second kingdom (5:28; 8:20) and the Greek Empire as the third kingdom (8:21). Indeed, we know from history that there were four consecutive kingdoms in that region of the world: the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire.

Whether readers believe the futurist view or the partial preterist view, they will agree that God revealed to Daniel that there would be these four earthly kingdoms. Daniel then explained the rock in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, which crushed those kingdoms and grew into a mountain that filled the earth.

*“In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.”* (Dan. 2:44)

Daniel revealed that the rock will come into the earth, crush all other kingdoms, and bring in the kingdom of God. Then God's kingdom will grow as a mountain that fills the earth. Whether readers believe the futurist view or the partial preterist view, they will agree that the Rock is Jesus Christ coming into the world to establish God's eternal kingdom. **The two views disagree concerning when the Rock comes into the earth and when the kingdom of God gets established.** Please allow us to explain.

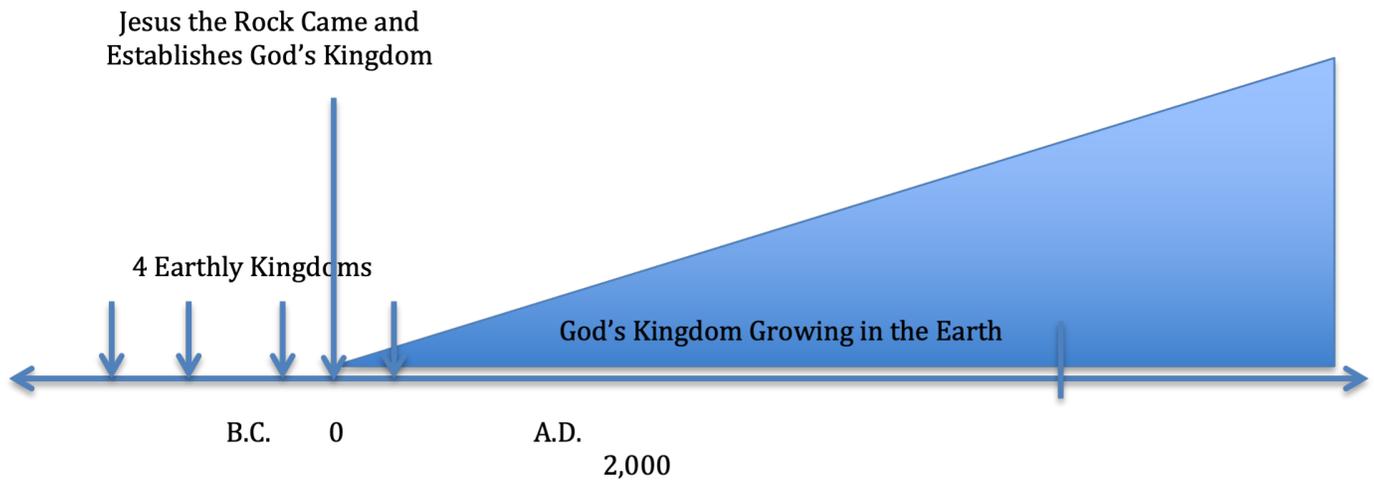
### Futurist Understanding of God's Kingdom

The futurist teachers say that God's kingdom will be brought into the earth in the future. They say that at the second coming of Jesus Christ, after a seven-year tribulation, Jesus will bring the kingdom from heaven down to earth. Then the kingdom of God will remain upon the earth for 1,000 years.

### Historicist Understanding of God's Kingdom

Those who hold to the Historicist view believe that Jesus was enthroned over God's kingdom 2,000 years ago when He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. Since that day the kingdom has been growing in the earth, and eventually it will fill the whole earth, as did the mountain in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

## Time Line of Daniel 2 according to the Historicist View:



The Historicist view teaches that the kingdom of God eventually will fill the earth; however, evil will remain in the earth until the second coming of Jesus. We can see this by examining our Lord's parable concerning the man who sowed seeds in his field. Those seeds grew to maturity, but an enemy sowed tares in the same field, and those tares also grew. As Jesus explained this parable to His disciples, it became clear that both good and evil are growing in the earth. Both the good and the evil will be allowed to grow together until the day Jesus returns and separates one from the other (Matt. 13:24-43). In another parable, Jesus compared the kingdom with a mustard seed growing into the biggest tree in a garden. In similar fashion, the kingdom of God has been growing in the earth and one day will be the biggest, most influential entity on the earth, even though there will be other plants that are not of God's kingdom (Matt. 13:31-32).

This is exactly what we see happening historically since Jesus sat down on His throne. Christianity started off in one small region in the Middle East with one Leader and 12

followers. Today, 2,000 years later, it is the largest religion covering the face of the earth. Out of six billion people, more than two billion claim to be Christians today.

## God's Kingdom Destroys the Roman Empire

Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream reveals that the Rock comes into the earth at the time of the fourth kingdom, which is the Roman Empire. The Rock grows into God's kingdom and destroys the Roman Empire. Since the futurist view teaches that the kingdom of God will come into the earth at the second coming of Jesus, they must identify some Roman Empire that will be in a ruling position at the time Jesus returns. Some futurist teachers say that there must be a revived Roman Empire in the earth at that time. Some teachers are looking at the United Nations, the European Union, or some confederation of Muslim nations as this revived Roman Empire. Others say that the Roman Catholic Church is the Roman Empire that the Rock soon will come and crush. Since futurist teachers envision the antichrist playing a central role in the end-times, they typically place that evil ruler as head or in a place of great influence in the Roman kingdom that will be destroyed by the Rock. That belief leaves them very critical and suspicious of the Roman Catholic Church or any Roman governmental entity that they think may be in power at the time of our Lord's return. In contrast, Historicist teachers are not looking for a revived Roman Empire. Adherents believe that the Rock came into the earth 2,000 years ago. Jesus came and established the kingdom of God during the first century when the Roman Empire was actually in power. God's kingdom has already destroyed the Roman Empire.

## Summary of Daniel 2

If you embrace the Historicist understanding of Daniel 2, you will believe that the kingdom of God was established when Jesus came to earth 2,000 years ago. You will not be looking for a revived Roman Empire. You will not be suspiciously watching various governments associated with that area of the world where Rome once ruled, nor will you be suspicious of the Roman Catholic Church becoming that Roman Empire. The Rock that came into the earth 2,000 years ago caused the Roman Empire to crumble exactly as the words of Daniel revealed. If you embrace the Historicist view, you will realize that it is possible to experience and walk in God's kingdom today.

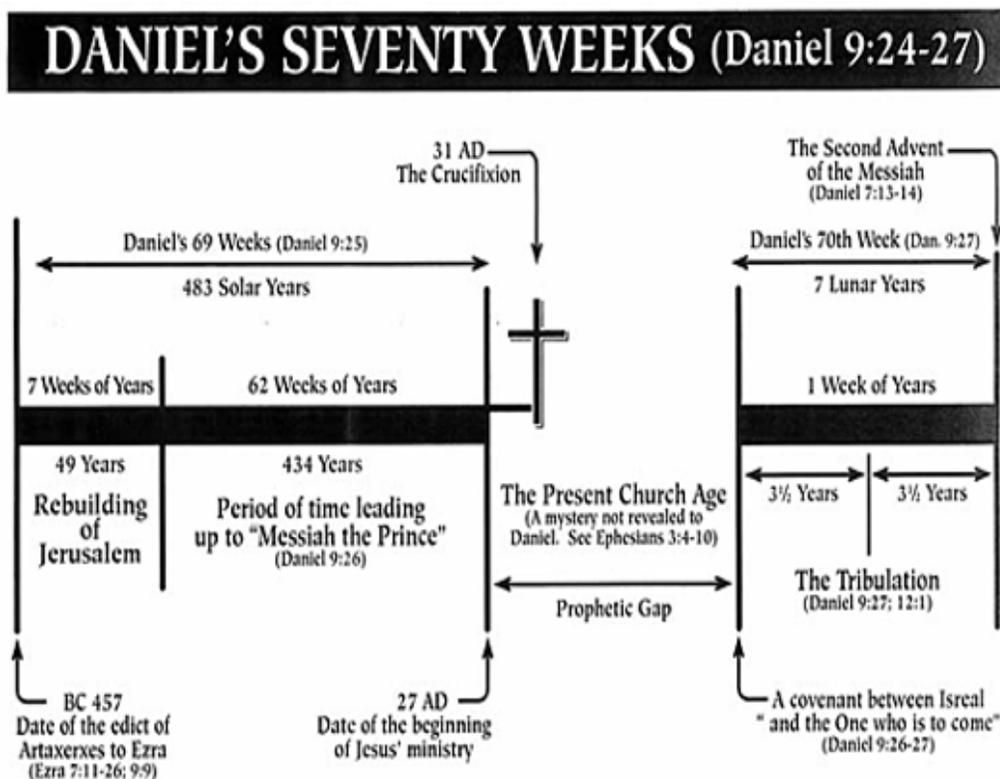
That kingdom consists of *"righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"* (Rom. 14:17). As you seek first God's kingdom, you will experience the blessings of God through which *"all these things [food, clothing, and other provisions] will be added to you"* (Matt. 6:33).

Many Christians who believe the futurist view claim these benefits but then a moment later teach that the kingdom of God will not be available until the second coming of Jesus. Hence, they vacillate between the two beliefs. If you embrace the Historicist view, you will know without a doubt that the kingdom is already here. It is growing and advancing every day. When Jesus Christ returns, He will subdue all remaining evil and establish His perfect will throughout the world. Since God's kingdom is advancing progressively in the earth, you can confidently say that God's kingdom is here, and it is growing.

## Overview of Daniel's Prophecy – The Futurists View

Futurist teachers say that God's Kingdom will be brought into the earth in the future. They teach that at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, after a seven-year tribulation, He will bring the Kingdom from heaven down to earth. Then the Kingdom of God will remain upon the earth for 1,000 years.

### Time Line of Daniel 9 According to Futurists



## The Gentiles in Prophecy



	Nebuchadnezzar's Dream (Daniel 2)	Daniel's Dream (Daniel 7)	The Kingdoms Prophesied
	Gold (Head)	Lion	Babylonian
	Silver (Breast & Arms)	Bear	Medo-Persian
	Brass (Belly & Thighs)	Leopard	Greek
	Iron (Legs)	Beast with Iron Teeth	Roman
	P R O P H E T I C   G A P		
	Iron & Clay (Feet)	Ten Horns	Antichrist
	Stone	Son of Man	Jesus Christ

## **Overview of Daniel's Prophecy – The Historicist View**

This view teaches that the Kingdom of God will eventually fill the earth in a progressive manner started when Jesus ascended to the throne in heaven 2,000 years ago. Jesus taught this in the parables found in Matthew 13:24-43.

Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream reveals that the Rock comes into the earth during the fourth Kingdom (Roman Empire) and destroys it then the rock grows into the Kingdom of God as a mountain.

Since the futurists believe this happens in our future, they must identify some new Roman Empire emerging in our future for Daniel's prophecy to be fulfilled.

Historicists believe that Jesus was enthroned over God's Kingdom 2,000 years ago when He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father. The Kingdom has been growing ever since. This coincides with the mountain in Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

In the wake of this expanding Kingdom, the Roman Empire came down in 476 AD.

### **The Message of Daniel 9**

God sent the angel Gabriel to Daniel with a message concerning the Jews (Daniel 9:3-19). The words that came to Daniel were concerning Daniel's future. The words of Gabriel are interpreted differently by futurists and historicists.

Gabriel made these declarations in Daniel 9:24,

*“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.”*

Both futurists and historicists agree that the Jews and Jerusalem were to experience 70 weeks of God’s favor during which time God will fulfill the prophecies and promises. Both futurists and historicists agree that seventy weeks equals 490 years in prophetic language (Genesis 29:27; Leviticus 25:8; Number 14:34; Ezekiel 4:4-6).

Gabriel speaks of three groupings of weeks with the first two joined together (7 weeks and 62 weeks equaling 69 weeks).

*“So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.” (Daniel 9:25)*

69 weeks equals 483 years in prophetic language. In 457 BC, Artaxerxes, King of Persia, decreed that the Jews were free to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple (Ezra 7:12-26). By adding 483 years to that date, we come to the year AD 27. Because Jesus was born in 4 BC, He would have been 30 years old in AD 27 and beginning His earthly ministry by being revealed as the Messiah.

Between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the revealing of the Messiah, there were 483 years. There would be seven years left to complete the 70 weeks. Gabriel went on to say,

*“Then after sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come like a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.” (Daniel 9:26)*

Gabriel was saying that after the Messiah was cut off, Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed. This is exactly what happened in AD 70. Daniel prophesied it and so did Jesus in Matthew 24 and Luke 21.

### **Daniel’s Seventieth Week**

The final week or the final seven year period of favor on the Jews would have to have begun in AD 27 for there to be continuity of time and prophetic consistency. The futurist believes this week has been postponed because of Jewish rejection of Christ as the Messiah. Therefore, the future will contain the final week with the second coming of Christ and the revelation of the anti-christ. They believe the anti-christ is mentioned in Daniel 9:27.

*“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering.”*

However, this is faulty interpretation as the he is referring not to an antichrist but to Christ! In the middle of the week the Messiah puts a stop to sacrifice and grain

offerings because, according to Hebrews, He became the ultimate sacrifice for all removing the need for all sacrifices.

Jesus' ministry lasted 3.5 years until He was cut off in the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. Three and a half years later, Stephen was martyred with the high priest rejecting once and for all the message of the gospel. As a result, Paul and Peter were called to go to the Gentiles for favor had lifted from the Jews.

For seventy weeks, the Jews had favor, including the 70<sup>th</sup> week with 3.5 years with the Messiah present and the 3.5 years of the gospel being presented to the Jews first. This completes the 70 weeks as prophesied by Daniel.

## **The 70 weeks of Daniel**

Of all the controversial topics found in the Bible, none other has been so abused or misunderstood than the prophecy known as Daniels 70 Weeks. There is no other Messianic prophecy that so perfectly foretells the coming of Christ and the year of His baptism and crucifixion. So why is this 70 week prophecy of Daniel 9 so misinterpreted? The true answer can only be attributed to ...

Our Adversary

The most significant reason being of course is that this prophecy of weeks is perfect proof that Jesus is the Christ (anointed one). Non-Messianic Jews would realize they had missed the first coming of the Messiah if they understood this prophecy, but they avoid it believing this passage is cursed. The one passage proving they missed the

Messiah and they won't read it! Who would you say is responsible? And what would you say if I told you that many now think this prophecy foretells the coming of antichrist?

As part of the Counter Reformation, the Catholic Church commissioned Jesuit priests to write counter interpretations of Bible prophecy as a counter response to the Protestant reformation when the finger was pointed at them as being antichrist. Spanish Jesuit, Francisco Ribera proposed that the final seven years of the 70 weeks of Daniel was a future antichrist and that antichrist would bring an end to sacrifices in a rebuilt temple. This is where the supposed 7 years of tribulation comes from before the second coming of Christ. But this was *manufactured* prophecy, written with the sole purpose of deceiving Christians on the true identity of antichrist. When has a Bible passage ever been so abused by Satan? Attributing Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week of Jesus' baptism and crucifixion and applying it instead to antichrist is outright blasphemous.

Daniel's 70 weeks is actually not that difficult to understand and current historical information makes it relatively easy to get accurate dates. Despite this, there are an alarming number of people who believe there is an unknown gap of time between the 69<sup>th</sup> and the 70<sup>th</sup> week that originated from the Spanish Jesuit Francisco Ribera. Chuck Missler and many others have been deceived by this and sadly are deceiving countless others. *Publishers Weekly* printed that *Left Behind* authors Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye took the fictional, future one man antichrist idea of Ribera, Bellarmine, Maitland, Todd, Newman, Irving, John Darby, Cyrus Scofield and Hal Lindsey and made it "*The most successful Christian-fiction series ever.*"

The book "*The Late Great Planet Earth*" by Hal Lindsey was primarily theological and this limited its appeal, but "*Left Behind*" was a successful series of fictional novels. So much so that John Hagee, Jack Van Impe and Peter and Paul Lalonde television ministries worked together and produced "*LEFT BEHIND: The Movie.*" This venture received attention from the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal that resulted in an interview with Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye on the Larry King Live show. This Left Behind fiction is now teaching much of the same Jesuit Futurism as Francisco Ribera, which is hiding the real truth on antichrist and some fictional seven year tribulation period that did in fact originate from an outrageous abuse of Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy that foretells the coming of Christ, not antichrist.

Futurism through this highly imaginative and fictional Left Behind series has unleashed a tsunami-sized tidal wave of false Prophecy, which is sweeping over the entire world. I mean, everyone believes movies and books, right? Thus we now have all this false teaching circulating on some illusory secret rapture and seven year tribulation period as many have taken these books as being primarily true and teach them as if they are Biblical truth even though these books are fictional.

### The Erroneous Gap Theory

The dispensational argument for a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks is based on the belief that verses 26 and 27 are phrased in a modern style of prose that describes events in a strictly sequential and chronological order. But a close examination of these two verses reveals that they are structured in the poetic style of synonymous (or perhaps synthetic) parallelism in which the 27th verse repeats and elaborates on the

content of the 26th verse. Thus, events that occur 'after the 69th week (v. 26) occur 'in the 70th week (v. 27). The death of Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem are the two principal events portrayed in vv. 26-27. Note especially the verbal correspondences between v. 26b and v. 27b.

The dispensationalist insists there is a gap between verse 26 and verse 27. Why is this not true? The principal reason is that verses 26 and 27 are not relating events that are sequential (i.e., A B C D) but rather parallel (i.e., A B A B).

There is no gap between the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks in verse 25), making it unlikely for there to be a gap between the 69 weeks and the 70th week.

I am convinced that the theory of a gap is motivated as much by the antecedent determination to find additional justification for distinguishing between Israel and the church, as it is by any factors actually present in the text itself. In other words, if one had not *already* decided in favor of two distinct peoples of God with distinct dispensations in which God deals with each, would Daniel 9 ever have been interpreted in such a way as to yield the concept of a gap between the 69th and 70th weeks? Or, again, to put it even more bluntly, dispensationalists find a gap in Daniel 9 because they are *predisposed* to find one in order to justify an already existent theological construct.

Consider the following in regards to this erroneous gap theory. If you purchased a house on monthly repayments but made your payments every 6 months, do you think that the bank would accept this? Obviously not. How do you think the bank would

respond if you told them that you were in fact paying your monthly payments every month but you had added a 5 month gap between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> weeks making your monthly repayments actually occur every six months? Do you think they would accept your reasoning? It would be far more likely they would call the funny farm and have you committed for some serious psychiatric help! They would also tell you that one month is one month!

Daniel's 70 week prophecy is also just that! It is not 70 weeks plus some indefinite period of time thrown in between the 69<sup>th</sup> week and the 70<sup>th</sup> week. To quote the obvious, that would no longer be 70 weeks! The angelic interpreter speaking to Daniel declares exactly how long it is and nowhere does scripture say we can manipulate time periods by adding time in where we choose. This is nonsensical foolishness and not supported in the Bible anywhere. Those teaching this erroneous system have tragically been deceived by our adversary who has succeeded in having them spread this Jesuit spawned propaganda. Too many people underestimate what the enemy can do and has done over the centuries and continually do so.

And just to clarify since some have misunderstood in the past. **Yes the Bible does say we go through tribulation but we are not told how long.** Scripture says that "*except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved.*" (Matthew 24:21-22) **And yes scripture does teach there will be a second coming of Christ that many refer to as *the rapture*, but the word *rapture* is not found in the Bible and nor does it teach that it will be secret.**

## The Prophetic Meaning of Daniel's 70 Weeks

We find in Daniel 9:24 that God gave Daniel's people 70 weeks to ... end their sin and rebellion against Him, but if they ignored this warning then God would reject Israel as His chosen nation. When Bible prophecy is symbolic, the proven and established day for a year principle applies. (See Ezekiel 4:6 and Numbers 14:34) So Daniel's 70 weeks (490 days) is actually a literal 490 years. Daniel 9:25 informs us that these 70 prophetic weeks began with the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.

So what happened at the end of the 490 years? Stephen gave one immense and very significant speech before the Sanhedrin. This was God giving the Jews their final chance to repent. How did they respond and what did they do?

*Acts 7:54-60 "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."*

Notice that this is an extremely significant event as we see Stephen say, *"I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."* It is also interesting to note that Stephen effectively said, *"Father forgive them for they know not what they do."* The final 3.5 years, which was the same length of time as the

ministry of Jesus Christ, ended with the death of Stephen and him effectively saying the same words as Jesus when He was crucified. This marked the end of a very significant time period being the end of the Daniel's 70 weeks.

### The Ultimate Rejection of the Gospel

In the autumn of the year 34 A.D., the Jewish leaders rejected the Gospel message. They openly declared this rejection by the stoning of Stephen that was approved wholly by the leaders of Israel. The sad historical fact is Stephen was the first Christian martyr killed by the hands of the Jewish nation itself. The 490 years were up and the Jews not only did not repent but they killed the very Messiah they had been waiting for as well as the final messenger that was sent to give them their final chance to repent. The Jews were now rejected as God's chosen nation and were no different from the Gentiles.

After Jesus was baptized by John, Jesus states the following. Mark 1:15 "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*" What is this time that is fulfilled that Jesus speaks of here?