

Have you ever been in a bookstore and picked up a book that you thought you might like...and you go to the Table of Contents and read the chapter headings and THEN...oh THEN...oh...surely not...has anyone done what I do a lot...NO...you go to the last page of the book and read it!! NO!!! You can't do that... you can't see how it ends before you've read the whole thing!!! Yeah...some consider that doing what I just described is sacrilege! Well, maybe it is...

But I like knowing how it's all going to end! And if it's good...I might buy the book! Church family, we know how the story ends... “You've Already Won.” We sing...

**I know how the story ends**  
**We will be with you again**

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And that drives us... We're to set our hearts on seeing Jesus...on things above. We're citizens of a better country, as the writer of Hebrews says...we're pilgrims passing through. This is not our home. Heaven is. So, in essence, we've read the back of the book... We know how the story ends...

And for the prophet Daniel...an administrator in the Medo-Persian Empire...a man who was a Hebrew...a citizen of different land... He longed for his people to go home! Daniel knew God was going to bring his people back to Israel... He knew from the writings of the prophet Jeremiah that their 70-year captivity was almost up...but, Daniel was frightened by the visions he had been having... Visions of beasts...terrible beasts that foretold terrible trouble for his people and that's why he prayed such a fervent prayer for his people. Remember it:

1. **We have sinned**
  2. **Done wrong**
  3. **Acted wickedly**
  4. **Rebelled**
  5. **Turned aside from your commandments and rules**
  6. **Not listened to your prophets**
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And it's because of that rebellion that they were taken into captivity by the Babylonians in the first place. And so, as we saw last week, Daniel has prayed for all he's worth...asking God to have mercy on his people and his nation. Again, he's praying because God has shown him that the future is going to be rough for Israel. Let's see more of that future now...

**Daniel 9:24-27**

<sup>24</sup> “Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. <sup>25</sup> Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. <sup>26</sup> And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. <sup>27</sup> And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week,<sup>[a]</sup> and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

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Now, we just read four verses of Scripture, (just four verses); and yet, these four verses have been hotly debated and even down-right argued about for centuries, as to how to interpret them. So, as I've told you before, I'm going to do my best to lay out for you, as best I can, reasonable interpretations of these verses...knowing that NOT EVERYONE IS GOING TO AGREE on how to

interpret these verses. But I want you to understand the hermeneutic, (meaning: method of interpretation), I seek to use.

First of all, I seek to interpret Scripture literally, as much as possible. You see, I'm convinced a literal interpretation of Scripture is the best hermeneutic to use, when seeking to understand the Bible. Dr. David Black (from SEBTS) has taught me this, (as well as hundreds of other students through the years). It's also what I see almost all of the commentators that I use regularly, doing as well. This method is called the

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### **“Historical-Grammatical Method”**

**#1 Use Proper Grammatical Rules:** Take the normal meaning of the words, phrases and sentences in a verse unless it is impossible to do so. *“If the plain sense makes sense, seek no other sense.”*

**#2 Use Proper Syntax:** properly use words and punctuation as they're arranged to form phrases, clauses and sentences.

**#3 Use of Proper Literary style:** The Bible is written in different literary styles or genres of writing, (i.e., history, poetry, prophecy, narrative, etc.). For instance, Psalms 91:4 says: “He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you may take refuge...” Is God a bird? No. The Psalmist is describing how God protects us like a mother bird does her young.

**#4 Use Proper Context:** We must not isolate verses. Verses should be read within the context of the chapter, the book and the Bible as a whole. Scripture interprets Scripture.

**#5 Use of Proper Historical Settings:** we seek to understand the historical background of the author and the recipients. To exegete, (interpret), Scripture properly, we don't ask: “What does it mean to me?” but rather, “What did it mean to the original audience?” Bible dictionaries, encyclopedias, commentaries or helpful to understand Bible customs, culture, geography, etc.

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Now, why do I tell you all of this? Well, it's to let you know there is a “rhyme to my reason.” You see, language was given to us by God for the purpose of being able to communicate to us through His Word. Therefore, “Words,” if you will, are “vessels of meaning.” So, (again), I seek to read Scripture “literally” where I can. Take for example, what I shared with you a few weeks ago: the meaning of the 1,000 years regarding the Millennial Reign of Jesus described in Revelation chapter 20. I believe that's 1,000 literal years. I don't take as symbolism. But some do. Some, for instance, say the number 10, is much like the number 7 and is a “perfect number,” so if you take 10 times 100, which is even more “perfect,” then you get an indefinite period of time, as in eternity. Meaning, some see the Millennial Reign of Christ as figurative.

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The problem is...you've got to do something with what the purpose for the 1,000 years is. Why is there a need for 1,000 more years before eternity kicks in? Well, based on Old Testament prophecies, the Messiah, the Promised One of Israel is going to keep His promise to the nation of Israel to rule and reign on the throne of David from Jerusalem. Isaiah describes this...so does Zechariah and Micah. I could share many passages...and I will when we get to our series in Revelation, but to say that the 1,000 years is just symbolism would be to make the prophecies about the reign of Christ from Jerusalem, null and void. And I don't believe, (using Bible Hermeneutics properly) that this is accurate.

Now, I know I've spent a lot of time describing this...but, it's important that you understand how I'm seeking to teach with open hands on what **we can and can't say that we know for sure**...and yet, we have to have a framework from which to teach, or we'll be going in circles throughout the remainder of Daniel and when we get to the book of Revelation. It's like trying to hang clothes in a closet with no hangers.

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Let's look at our text. Verse 24.

## Daniel 9:24

<sup>24</sup>“Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

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Now, we need to understand what the words, “70 weeks” mean. The number 70 is easy to understand, it’s 70. But the Hebrew word for “weeks” means: “sevens.” So, we’re talking about “70 sevens.” Pretty much all scholars agree that the use of the word “sevens” here means: “years,” so you have 70 x 7 years or 490 years. Now again, it depends on who you talk to, because there are a few scholars who say the number 7 is a perfect number and therefore 70 x 7 is just a symbolic number that’s showing “great perfection” and is figurative... But that makes no sense to me. Before you know it, you’re making everything figurative and who decides? I’m convinced we’re talking about 490 years.

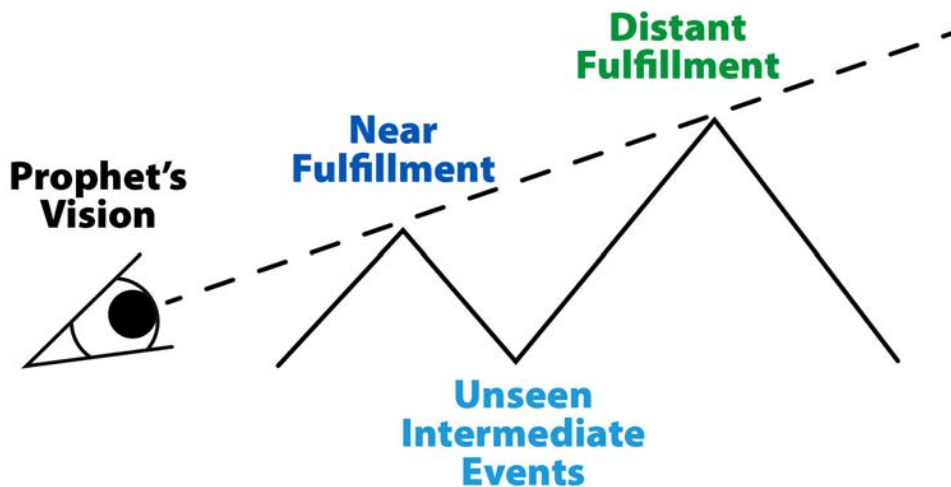
Let’s go deeper. Gabriel showed Daniel, 3 negative and 3 positive descriptions. Did you catch them:

1. **To finish the transgression (negative)**
  2. **Put an end to sin (negative)**
  3. **Atone for iniquity (negative)**
  4. **Bring in everlasting righteousness (positive)**
  5. **Seal the vision and prophet (positive)**
  6. **Anoint a most holy place (positive)**
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Now, some see all of this as being fulfilled when Jesus came, died on the cross and rose from the dead. In that, when He died on the cross and rose from the dead, He ended “transgression” and “put an end to sin” and “atoned for iniquity.” And of course, that’s all true...but sin remains in the world, right...it’s not ended. And an “everlasting righteousness” hasn’t come...not yet...so, I don’t believe this prophecy, (found in verse 24), has been completely fulfilled.

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And this brings us to another important point when thinking about prophecy. Let me show you something... see this chart...



This is what we often see when looking at Old Testament prophecy. It’s called the “Mountain tops of Prophecy.” For the prophet, they see a “near fulfillment” and then there can be a “distant fulfillment” that they can’t see or may even understand. I think of

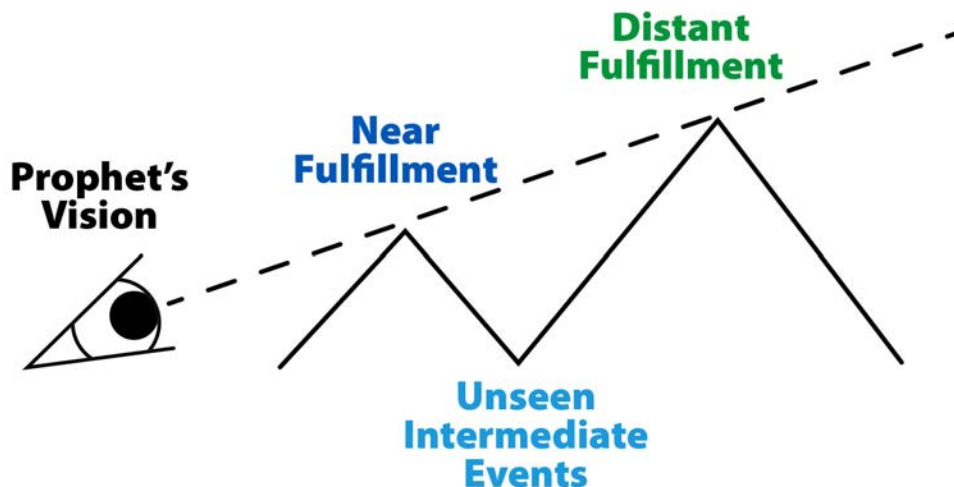
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## Isaiah 9:6-7

<sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over

his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

That is a Messianic prophecy, because that child was Jesus...born in Bethlehem, but the government was not placed on His shoulders then...no...that won't happen until He returns to earth the second time...at His Second Coming (another mountain). See it...



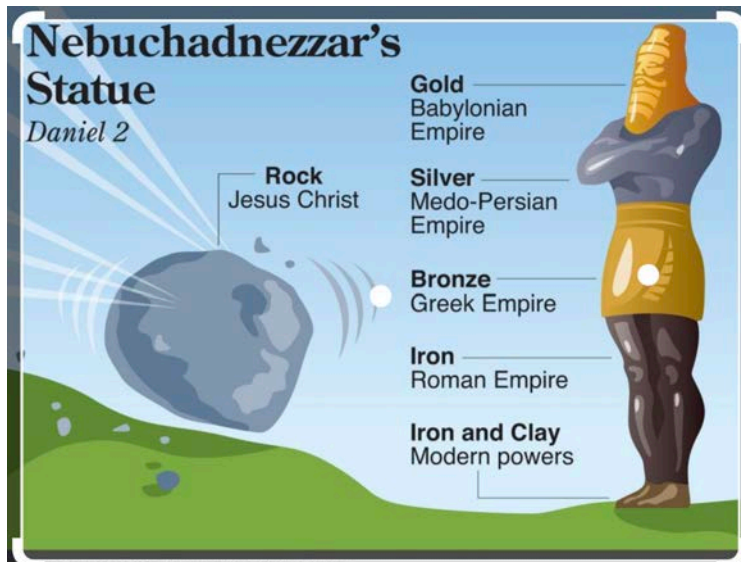
Near fulfillment, distant fulfillment...unseen intermediate events. Again, this idea of mountain peaks of prophecy is the idea that a prophet would be looking into the future and observing more than one event (the mountains), like looking through a telescope and seeing two things back-to-back, but not able to see the valley of time in between.

Ultimately, eventually, yes... there's going to be a new heaven and new earth and a new Jerusalem, and eventually there will be no more sin or iniquity, but that hasn't happened yet.

Now, think back with me...remember the dreams and visions Daniel had? Remember, those beasts?



Those beasts mimicked Nebuchadnezzar's dream of a statue...



that we learned depicted successive empires that would rule and reign until the final kingdom when Jesus (the rock/stone) would return to crush the final empire of the Antichrist. Remember that statue depicted Babylon (as the head of Gold)...that's where Daniel was (Babylon), but there were other mountain peaks...the mountains of Medo-Persia, Greek, Rome and future powers beyond that...mountains that extended beyond his time.

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Well, Gabriel reveals more...Back to Daniel 9, verse 25...

**Daniel 9:25**

<sup>25</sup> Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

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Now, the timeframe Gabriel mentioned there was: seven weeks, and then 62 weeks. Now the "7 weeks from the time the word goes out to restore and build Jerusalem," can be seen this way...using our understanding from verse 24, that we have 7 "sevens" and a "seven" is a year...so we have 7 x 7 or 49 years, and sure enough, in that span of time, when the people were released by Cyrus the Persian king and they returned to Jerusalem, Nehemiah rebuilt the walls and then the Temple was eventually rebuilt. So, then, using the same math

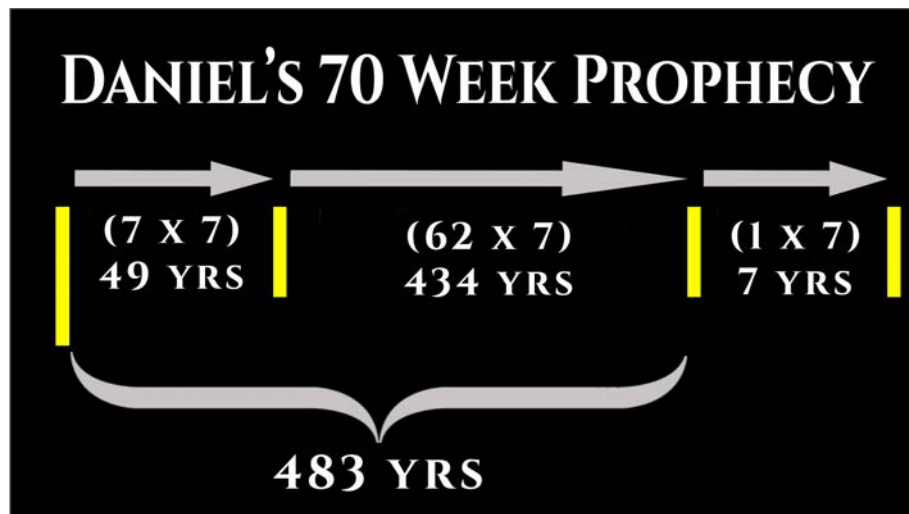
**"Seven" = 7 years**

**7 x 7 = 49 years**

**7 x 62 = 434 years**

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We can see it like this:



And that 434 years was the amount of time prophesied until the coming of the “anointed one, a prince.” Now who might that “anointed one,” be? Who was that? I’m convinced it was Jesus. Because the phrase “anointed one,” is the Hebrew word for “Messiah.” So, there’s no doubt in my mind that the “anointed one” is Jesus Himself. And verse 26 convinces me of that even more...watch...

**Daniel 9:26a**

***26 And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.***

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Did Jesus get cut off? Yes! He died on the cross! He gave up His life to “have nothing.” He is the anointed one who was cut off. Let’s keep reading...second part of the verse.

**Daniel 9:26b**

***And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.***

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Now, here comes the divergence in interpretations. It’s the second part of verse 26 where we see all the trouble. I’m going to do my best to seek to give you my thoughts on this (and I must tell you...it’s this verse that led me to reading every commentary I could find...and I spent about 12 hours reading and studying over this one verse). Again, let me be clear, this is one of the most debated and controversial verses in the entire Bible...and I can promise you...I’m not going to be able to settle the argument. All I can do is seek to use proper Biblical hermeneutics to interpret the verse.

Okay...we were just talking about a “prince” who was the “anointed one,” but then we read about a “prince who is to come,” the one who will “destroy the city and the sanctuary?” Did Jesus do that? No! Of course not. So, who is this “prince to come.” Well, let’s go a bit deeper...let’s read verse 27 for added context, which will help us interpret verse 26:

**Daniel 9:27**

***27 And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week,<sup>[a]</sup> and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.***

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Okay...we’ve seen several things about this “coming prince.” He is going to do these 7 things:

1. **Destroy the city (Jerusalem)**
2. **Destroy the sanctuary (Temple)**
3. **Decree Desolations (abominable things)**
4. **Make a strong covenant with many (7 years)**

5. Half-way through the 7 years, he'll end the sacrifices in Temple
6. This "prince" will do abominable things that make desolate
7. Ultimately, this "prince" will come to a decreed end

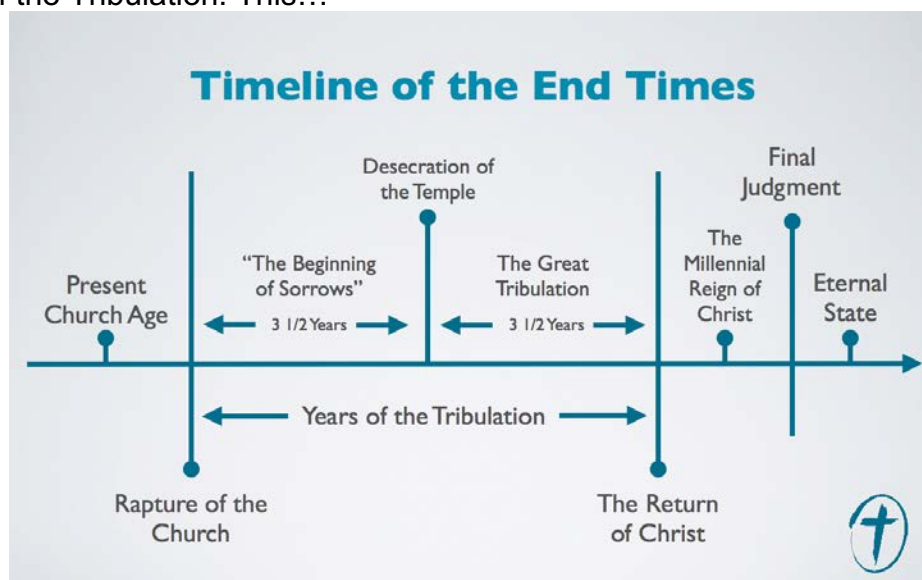
Church family, who does that sound like to you? It sounds like the Antichrist to me. Remember, we're in chapter 9 and we're coming off of chapter 8 where Daniel had visions of the four beasts, ending with a terrible fourth beast with 10 horns and one "little horn" popping up and as we read in verses 24 and 25, he will have "great power and cunning and bring fearful destruction" and even "rise up against the Prince of princes," but be destroyed by the Prince of princes (Jesus). Church, I believe this is a description of the Antichrist.

As you're turning, I'll say this. I get it, there are those who say, (and it's a reasonable argument), that the "prince to come" in verses 26 and 27 was actually the Roman Emperor Titus who destroyed the Temple in 70 AD and that's when the Temple sacrifices stopped. But that man (Titus) did not make decrees that led to the "abomination of desolation" that is described in verses 26-27. Others say the "prince" was Antiochus Epiphanes, the Greek king who ruled the Seleucid Empire and died in 164 BC... He persecuted the Jews and desecrated the Temple, sacrificing a pig to the god Zeus...sparking the Maccabean revolt and what the Jews now celebrate as Hanukkah. And yet, the Temple was restored and the sacrifices continued.

**Matthew 24:15-20**

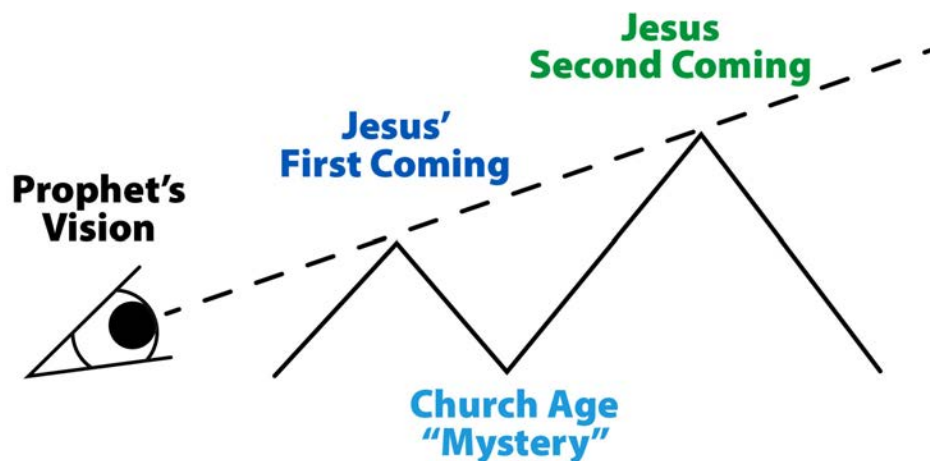
<sup>15</sup> "So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), <sup>16</sup> then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. <sup>17</sup> Let the one who is on the housetop not go down to take what is in his house, <sup>18</sup> and let the one who is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. <sup>19</sup> And alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! <sup>20</sup> Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on a Sabbath. <sup>21</sup> For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, and never will be.

Church, I'm convinced this is speaking of the "abomination of desolation" spoken of by Jesus, (by way of the prophet Daniel), which will be carried by the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation, the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. This...



I see the PRESENT CHURCH AGE, followed by the Rapture and then the Tribulation Period that Jesus described and then, 3 1/2 years in...the Antichrist will desecrate the Temple, setting up an image (statue) that must be worshipped, while taking his mark, to be able to buy, sell or trade

anything. Now, if that's the case...then there's a valley between the mountains of Jesus' first coming and His second coming...which is us...the Church.



This is a mystery and Daniel couldn't see it and the other prophets couldn't see it: us, the Church. Oh, they knew that Gentiles would be saved...grafted into the vine of God's chosen...but they couldn't envision what we know as the Church and the Church age, that we're living through today. The Apostle Peter described their dilemma this way:

**1 Peter 1:10-12**

<sup>10</sup> Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, <sup>11</sup> inquiring what person or time<sup>[a]</sup> the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. <sup>12</sup> It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

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Those things were the salvation of Gentiles, via the Church...us... The prophets couldn't fully see us, but they served us with their prophecies, just as Daniel did.

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Now, to summarize, let me be clear, I get it...some say that everything described in the verses we've studied today has already happened. They're called "preterists." They believe all prophecy in the Bible is really just history. The preterist interpretation of Scripture in regards to the book of Daniel and the book of Revelation is that these books are mainly symbolic pictures of what has happened in the past, during the first-century and before, and thus are NOT descriptions of what will occur in the end times. But that would be to forget the fact that Jesus has not set up His kingdom on earth, right? He has to keep His covenant with Israel as prophesied in Jeremiah 31 and Isaiah 11. Jesus will come and restore Israel and reign from Jerusalem. That hasn't happened yet.

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Church, God chose Israel to be the nation, the family, through whom Jesus would come into the world. And He made specific promises to Israel and He is going to keep those promises. The Church does not replace Israel (Replacement Theology). Paul spoke of God's plan for Israel in Romans 11.

**Romans 11:25-29**

<sup>25</sup> Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers:<sup>[d]</sup> a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. <sup>26</sup> And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob"; <sup>27</sup> "and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins." <sup>28</sup> As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. <sup>29</sup> For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

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Church God is going to fulfill His promises to Israel...God told Isaiah in Isaiah 59 that Jesus, the Deliverer, will come and fight for Israel. I believe this speaks of the battle that will take place in Megiddo, the great valley of Armageddon. The battle where the Antichrist will be overthrown and destroyed by Jesus, fulfilling what was prophesied in Daniel 9:27, "Ultimately this prince will come to a decreed end."

Church, God is sovereign, and one of the great blessings of prophecy is to eliminate our fears about the future. Why? Because God has a plan and it will all unfold perfectly, according to His divine will and divine timetable. However, you may see these events is up to you...but, one thing we can all agree on is what Paul told Titus:

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**Titus 2:11-15**

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, <sup>14</sup> who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. <sup>15</sup> Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.

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