

“TRIBULATION TIME-TABLE”

DANIEL 9:20-27

Theme: God’s program for Israel will be fulfilled regardless of the resistance by Satan.

I. The Source of the Time Table – 9:20-23

A. The Focus of the Request – vv. 20-21

1. As detailed in the previous section, Daniel was heartbroken and genuinely contrite over the sinful condition of the people – confessing their sins profusely before the Lord.
2. His primary focus was that after 70 years of captivity, if the people confessed their sins, God promised Jeremiah that He would restore the Jews to their land - ***Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-14.***
3. *While [Daniel] was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel,” his primary concern was the ability of the Jews to return to Israel – “and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God [Zion].”*
4. While Daniel was exerting himself before the Lord, *“the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.”*
5. Daniel’s primary concern was that the people’s sins – that he genuinely mourned over – be confessed so that the people could be restored to Israel.

B. The Focus of the Revelation – vv. 22-23

1. However, God’s primary focus was not the immediate return of the Jews to the land of Israel (although He fulfilled that promise as He does all of His promises).
2. The primary concern of God dealt with something completely removed from the immediate concern of Daniel – the ultimate and final redemption that would be granted through the Messiah.
3. This angel Gabriel (who appeared to Daniel in the form of a man) carried a message from God to Daniel – a statement that dealt with the time-table of redemption:
 - a) *“He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, ‘O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding’”* – he was going to orient Daniel to something entirely outside Daniel’s thoughts.
 - b) He then revealed why Daniel was the one to receive the stewardship of the revelation concerning the work of the Messiah and the ultimate victory of God over sin – *“At the beginning of your*

supplications, the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.”

4. As we will see, Daniel is primarily concerned with confessing Israel’s sins so they may return to the land, and God’s response deals with what will transpire in the ultimate plan of redemption.

II. **The Significance of the Time-Table – 9:24**

A. **The Delineation of the Time-Span**

1. *“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city”* – a clear indication of the timetable given the prophecy.
2. This obviously cannot refer to literal weeks of 7 days for nothing even approximating what is described in this passage occurred within 490 days of this vision.
3. It is, therefore, clear that the *“seventy weeks”* refers to a more extended period – in light of the practice of the “sabbatical year,” Israel was already familiar with weeks of years – cp. **Leviticus 25:3-4**.
4. Thus, utilizing the fulfilled prophecy, we will see that the *“seventy weeks”* are weeks of years or 490 years.
5. This 490-year period deals with *“your people and your holy city”* – meaning the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem.
6. God has carved out this period to accomplish the ultimate deliverance of His people without a view to the program He possesses for the Gentiles (either the unbelieving or the Church).

B. **The Description of the Accomplishments of Christ**

1. Included in the purpose of God and within the view of these *“seventy weeks”* is the accomplishment of Christ in both the first advent and the second.
2. Concerning the accomplishments of Christ in the first advent (later referred to in v. 25), Gabriel reveals the following:
 - a) *“to finish the transgression”* – describes the intention and focus of God’s redemption – to restrain the hearts of men who are in rebellion to God.
 - b) *“to make an end to sin”* – describes the degree to which this restraint extends – even to the abolition of sin.

- c) *“to make atonement for iniquity”* – describes how this is to be done – through atonement for sin.
3. Concerning the accomplishment of Christ in the Second Advent
- a) *“to bring in everlasting righteousness”* – although this is an accomplishment that spans the first & second advents (the first advent is provided spiritually, whereas the second advent will provide it actually).
 - b) *“to seal up vision and prophecy”* refers to the final fulfillment of what has been revealed about the end of the age – the consummation of all that has been promised.
 - c) *“and to anoint the most holy place”* –refers to the consecration of the Temple of God, which will have been desecrated by the abominations of the Antichrist – cp. v. 27.

III. The Sequence of the Time Table – **9:25-27**

A. The Sequence of the First Advent – **vv. 25-26**

1. *“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”* – or a total of 69 weeks (483 years).
2. The beginning of the 69 weeks is most likely the decree by Artaxerxes given to Ezra in 458 B.C. found in **Ezra 7:11-26**.
3. *“Seven weeks”* later, or 49 years, would be 409 B.C. – the year Nehemiah completed his efforts in the physical and spiritual rebuilding of Jerusalem (This is the year of his last act, according to the historian Prideaux).
4. *“Sixty-two weeks”* later comes the “Messiah” – which 434 years after 409 B.C. brings us to A.D. 26 – the approximate time of the official presentation of the Messiah at the baptism of Christ – cp. **Matthew 3:13-17**.
5. *“It [Jerusalem] will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress”* – referring to the difficulties that both Ezra and Nehemiah faced in their efforts to rebuild Jerusalem.
6. Then, sometime after but closely associated with the first 69 weeks will come two major catastrophic events:
 - a) First, *“then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing”* – referring to the lonely way that the Lord Jesus Christ died at the hands of the Romans.
 - b) Second, *“and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary”* – referring to the Romans' destruction of

Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70.

- (1) *“And its end will come with a flood,”* meaning the city will be entirely overwhelmed by destruction.
- (2) *“Even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined”* – means that despite the resistance of the Jews, God had determined that this destruction occur – cp. **Matthew 23:37-24:2.**

B. The Sequence of the Second Advent – v. 27

1. Between the conclusion of the first 69 weeks and the beginning of the 70th week, there is a gap of an unspecified period of time.
2. Since we are dealing with God’s decree *“for your people and your holy city”* – v. 24 – a clear reference to the Jews, God’s plan for the church remains a mystery, a parenthetical in the program of God for His chosen people Israel.
3. Thus, the seventieth week begins when God once again resumes His plan for the Jews in the Tribulation Period, which necessarily lasts for one week, or seven years.
4. *“And he [the prince foretold in v. 26] will make a firm covenant with the many for one week”* – meaning that the 70th week will begin with the Antichrist establishing a covenant of peace with Israel.
5. However, *“in the middle of the week, he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering;”* – that is, the Antichrist will violate the covenant he made with Israel after 3 ½ years – a period corresponding to the other passages dealing with the events of the Tribulation – cp. **Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5.**
6. Then, he will follow the traditions that Antiochus Epiphany had established – *“on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”* – **Revelation 19:11-19.**

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