

### III. Timeless Truth for Timely Topics in Biblical Perspective

#### *What Does the Bible Say?*

#### “The Last Things—Understanding Daniel’s Seventy Weeks”

#### Daniel 9

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We will start by looking at Daniel 9. One of my Old Testament professors told me this was the most difficult passage of the Old Testament and that only a fool would preach from it. So I am preaching from it and being well qualified as a fool. This is the third in our series of timeless truth for timely topics. Notice it is singular for the Bible is not a collection of truths, it is the truth. The first one was on leadership. The second one was what the Bible said on the sanctity of life. As we start in this study we’ll take the next three or four studies to look at what the Bible says about the last things. This is known as eschatology, the study of the last things or the study of the end times from God’s Word.

There are about three reasons why I have chosen to do this. One is there seems to be such confusion because of an over-complication and an over-affirmation about the last times which seem to go beyond God’s Word says yet everyone treats it as if God’s Word says it. Secondly, is to know exactly what God’s Word does say so that we can anticipate it because the Bible calls the second coming of Christ, the blessed hope that purifies. It has amazing impact in the life of believers. The third reason I want to do this and I know every generation says this, but my sense is that we are rapidly approaching the consummation of the ages. So I want to try and give as much clarity pastorally as I can in these regards.

So where would I start? In terms of the doctrine of the last times, the study of the last things, there are two passages that are absolutely crucial to understand. One is in the Old Testament and one is in the New Testament. The one in the New Testament we’ll get two in about two studies from now and that is found in Matthew 24 and 25. We will spend two to three studies in this New Testament passage. Then the key passage to understand from the Old Testament is Daniel 9 because it lays a foundation to anticipate what the New Testament says about the coming of Christ. I will start by reading all of Daniel 9 and the majority of this chapter is devoted to a prayer of Daniel that he makes upon the occasion of having read the book of Jeremiah where the prophecy is recorded twice that exile of God’s Old Covenant people, the Jews, Israel, would be in Babylon and it would be for seventy years. So let’s start in Daniel 9.

Daniel 9:1–4a says [1] *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—[2] in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

[3] *Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. [4a] I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession...* I commend the rest of this prayer for you study but would like to fast forward to the conclusion of this prayer that starts in verse 20. Daniel 9:20 says

*[20] While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the LORD my God for the holy hill of my God.*

While praying this prayer it says the prayer was doing four things. One he was speaking to God. Two he was praying to God, or calling upon the Lord. Three he was confessing not only his sin but the sin of his people that had sent them under the discipline of God into the exile of Babylon. The fourth thing is that he was presenting his plea. What is the plea he is presenting to the Lord? That plea is for the holy hill of my God and that is shorthand for Jerusalem, upon Mount Zion and the temple. Let's continue in Daniel 9.

Daniel 9:21–23 says *[21] while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. [22] He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. [23] At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.*

Here Gabriel is telling Daniel that while he was praying with God's people and the holy hill the word was sent out from the Lord through Gabriel to come to him. Gabriel comes as a messenger from God to give Daniel insight and wisdom concerning that which he is praying in which his reading of the book of Jeremiah had moved him to pray, when he realized the people were under exile because of their sin and were being disciplined for seventy years. Daniel is wanting to know the affirmation of this seventy years. He is confessing sin of himself and God's people that it might be brought to culmination. He wants to know when this seventy years will be up and he is asking for wisdom from the Lord and for understanding of this entire affair. So Gabriel comes with a vision to the prophet, Daniel.

In the Old Testament God communicated His Word through Prophets and Prophets received visions. When prophets received visions they then gave the Word of God. That's why the book of Isaiah is called the vision of Isaiah, even though it would contain a number of visions. The means of communication was vision and the people to whom it was communicated were Prophets and then they would give us what we now have as the Old Testament. So now comes this vision to Daniel, the Prophet. Daniel and Joseph are the only two I can find in the Old Testament of which there are no indictments against them at all. It doesn't mean they were sinless but there are no recorded indictments against them like the others.

Daniel 9:24–27 says *[24] "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. [25] 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. [26] 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. [27] And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, 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.”*

Daniel is asking about the seventy years and there is a direct relationship between the seventy weeks. Here comes Gabriel and the answer to the seventy years is seventy weeks or seventy sevens literally in the Hebrews. The word ‘weeks’ is not there but I think it’s an appropriate translation of it. What are these seventy weeks? There are approximately five interpretations of this and I will walk you through these.

The one that many are aware of is the dispensational view which says you have the seven sevens and then there are the sixty two sevens and then unbeknownst to us in the giving of the vision but now we can assert from the New Testament, is actually the sixty nine weeks in with Jesus. There is a gap because of Israel’s rejection of Christ and God goes to a plan B in that gap or parenthesis for the church. As the church has been gathered from the Gentiles then the prophecy picks back up again at a specific time somewhere in the future in which there will be a prince who will come and make a covenant with a restored Israel, will renew sacrifices in that place and then will abandon that covenant. That one who will restore them will be a leader of a renewed Roman empire, an anti-Christ and at that point there will be a coming of Christ in which He will take out His church at that time, during, in the middle or right before that seven weeks and then at the end of that seven years then will come the second coming of Christ. He only came for His church partially at the beginning of the week and then He comes at the end of the week. So the big point is that it is not seventy weeks but really sixty nine weeks with a gap to this date is now 2,000 years and counting. In other words it is four times longer than the vision itself. Then it picks back up.

The second view was basically put out by the Lutheran church. It is an interesting view done by a Bible believing scholar years ago led by a Bible scholar named Hengstenberg. In fact on his commentary on Daniel 9, he had over 200 pages written in his commentary just on those verses. Leupold has another commentary on this as well. Their position summed up is that the seven sevens, seventy weeks are divided into three uneven sections. There are the seven sevens. There are the sixty two and the two which make sixty nine and then there is one last seven at the end to make seventy to bring it to 490 years. So these three uneven administrations, their position is that the seven sevens are not actual years but is just a symbolic term and it refers to the time from the release of the Babylonian exile until the coming of Christ. Then the sixty two weeks is the symbolic term that stands from the resurrection of Christ until the end times and then the last week is on the end times itself. In other words, they would say we’re in the sixty two weeks right now. That is their position.

A third position is liberal theology that kind of plays with it a little bit and doesn’t believe anything about it. Most of them end up saying that those are not really weeks of years and that they are actually days. It was all written after the exile and it was a way to capture what had happened and that the seven sevens and all are a literary attempt to record what actually happened. That is the way the liberals look at the text. It is not prophetic at all and written after it has occurred. They think the seven sevens, sixty two sevens and the last sevens are all days in actuality, representing what happened and restore them to get Jerusalem rebuilt. So it basically covers the time of Cyrus’ decree until Nehemiah finishes the building of the city.

Fourthly is the historical view. The historical view really has two elements to it. One of them says this is a prophetic word and for God a prophetic word is only prewriting history. So as He is prewriting history He is answering Daniel's prayer to tell him what is going to happen in seventy sevens and He divides it up in three administrations. These are actual years that will cover the 490 plus years as you do the math. As it's laid out it is actually covering the time that is going to lead up to the coming of Christ.

There is another category of those who see this as the prophetic historic view and these say it's not really years but seasons. You don't have to make all the years fit like that for it's just covering basically what happens and there is no need to try make it fit down to years, months, weeks and days. The legacy pastor of my seminary, EJ Young, that was his position where this was a span of time indicated by the prophecy but you don't have to make it fit directly. It's more or less a seven, seven season, a sixty two seven season, and then a final seven season that ends with the coming of Christ.

I want to make another comment before I walk you through this because I am one of those of the historic view. I actually think the years do match up without getting overly tedious to make everything work together but before I do that I want to make another point that you need to see.

Daniel has discovered from the book of Jeremiah, the prophecy, that Israel is going to be in exile for seventy years. Why was Israel going to be exile for seventy years? Isaiah says it will end with a decree from a ruler named Cyrus. Jeremiah says from the time of their exile until the completion of that will be seventy years. Why did God do this? You would say He put them under discipline because of their sin that is recorded throughout the Scriptures and you'd be right, but it also came to seventy years because of a particular sin. Let's look at Leviticus 26.

Leviticus 26:27–35 says [27] *“But if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me, [28] then I will walk contrary to you in fury, and I myself will discipline you sevenfold for your sins. [29] You shall eat the flesh of your sons, and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters. [30] And I will destroy your high places and cut down your incense altars and cast your dead bodies upon the dead bodies of your idols, and my soul will abhor you. (In other words even among God's own people will be cannibalism and destruction because of their idolatries.) [31] And I will lay your cities waste and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing aromas. [32] And I myself will devastate the land, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled at it. [33] And I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation, and your cities shall be a waste.*

[34] *“Then the land shall enjoy its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land shall rest, and enjoy its Sabbaths. [35] As long as it lies desolate it shall have rest, the rest that it did not have on your Sabbaths when you were dwelling in it.”*

The Sabbath principle is built for us in the Scripture and it is pretty much ignored for us today, where we're supposed to labor six days and rest one to the holy calling and vocation of worship. I only wish we would embrace that cycle as a way of life where instead of having a Lord's hour, we'd have a Lord's Day which is how God made us to live. It was not only for the week but it was also for the years. God established a

principle for six years and then in the seventh year it was to be a sabbatical year, where you were not to plant but let everything grow wild and give the land rest in the Sabbath year. Then after seven Sabbath years, 49 years, there would be a jubilee, the 50<sup>th</sup> year. So there you would have two years in a row with a Sabbath rest that would take place.

So in Leviticus it is saying God will not only be aware of their sin and bring discipline and judgment upon His covenant people, described in very graphic terms, but one of the things He will do is remove them from the land because they would not affirm the Sabbath year. I do not have time to go back and walk you through the kings but Israel had disobeyed the Lord for the Sabbath year for 490 years which meant there were seventy Sabbath years that they had not observed. That's why the exile is seventy years. So that the land would finally get rest that they would not give it and the Lord will take them out of it to give it to the land.

I want to show you this in one other passage in II Chronicles. Here the chronicler, writing post exile describes the historical narrative for us. II Chronicles 36:17–23 says *[17] Therefore he brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary (Nebuchadnezzar came three times in order to destroy Jerusalem, in 604 BC, 597 BC and 586 BC) and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged. He gave them all into his hand. [18] And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon. [19] And they burned the house of God and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its palaces with fire and destroyed all its precious vessels. (Solomon's temple and David's palace are now destroyed.) [20] He took into exile in Babylon those who had escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and to his sons until the establishment of the kingdom of Persia, [21] to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its Sabbaths. All the days that it lay desolate it kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.*

*[22] Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: [23] "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.'"*

Now a word from Cyrus goes out that begins the process of returning the people back to the land in order to rebuild the city and the temple, the holy hill. So going back to Daniel 9 is what you have leading up to this prayer. Why is it seventy years? Take the 490 years of disobedience to God and distill it into the seventy Sabbaths so now God gives the land the seventy years that they would not give it. Now He comes to Daniel with a vision that goes in the other direction with seventy sevens and the 490 years that moving for the people toward the city and the temple. Where is he headed in this regard? Let's go back to Daniel 9. Daniel wants to know what will happen and so it is explained to him what will happen over the next 490 years, centered in Jerusalem, the temple and My holy hill with My Old Covenant people Israel.

There is going to be seventy sevens. That is 490 years and it is going to be administered in three administrations uneven, but the 490 years (seventy weeks) are

decreed to accomplish six things. The six are given with infinitive declarations of what God will do and accomplish when He brings this seventy weeks to a conclusion. The six things are given to us in Daniel 9:24. Daniel 9:24 says [24] *“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.*

One is to finish the transgression. Two is to put an end to sin. Three is to atone for iniquity. Four is to bring in everlasting righteousness. Five is to seal both vision and prophet, not as some translations read when it says vision and prophecy but it is vision and prophet. Sixthly is to anoint a most holy place or to anoint the holiness of the holy, literally in the Hebrew. That last phrase in verse 24 is literally a tough phrase to translate but its actual literal translation is to anoint the holiness of the holy.

Notice out of these six infinitives that three are negative and three are positive. The three that are negative have to do with sin. What are the three words used in the Bible to describe our rebellion against God in word, thought and deed? Those three words are sin, iniquity and transgression. Sin means to miss the mark. Iniquity means crooked and transgression means to step over. These are the phrases used in David's thanksgiving for forgiveness after his repentance. You find this in Psalm 32. Psalm 32:1–2 says [1] *Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* [2] *Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.*

So in this Daniel passage He is saying sin, rebellion against God, in these seventy weeks is going to be dealt with. He will put an end to it and that is that He will win a victory over sin. He will finish it. He will deal the death blow to sin. He will set up a dominion and a reign that is greater than sin. In this seventy weeks there will also be an atonement for iniquity. As you follow this you can see that the seventy weeks arise to describe history awaiting Israel and Jerusalem but the focus is not Israel and Jerusalem. The focus is on how God is going to use Israel and Jerusalem to deal the death blow to sin.

Then He moves from the negative to the positive. He says to bring in eternal righteousness. If you're a Christian today, are your sins over you or have they been eradicated in terms of their penalty and broken in terms of their power? Not only are you forgiven and set free from sin's power but you now have an everlasting righteousness. So when did sin have the death blow dealt to it and when was there brought a righteousness that was eternal, unconquerable, that stands everlasting?

Now we see while Daniel is praying about Israel and Jerusalem, the seventy sevens is giving you the history awaiting Jerusalem, Israel and God's Old Covenant people. The focus is not on them but it's on the Messiah, whom they have been established to bring the Messiah through not only the nation of Israel but the tribe of Judah and the line of David.

So He has established this with those first four and then He adds another positive and that is to seal up both vision and prophet. In other words, when this seventy weeks is over and God's means of communicating through vision and prophet are also over. Is God through communicating? No, because there is going to be a New Testament and He will communicate through vision and Apostles, but Old Testament will be completed. Everything in that Old Testament will be completed at the end of that seventy weeks

because the Messiah who wins the victory over sin and provides an eternal righteousness, that Messiah will also be the fulfillment of all that Old Testament prophecy and vision and so it is sealed up.

That's why He says in Luke 24:27, *[27] And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* When they were befuddled about what had happened on the cross He said "Do you not understand that from the Scriptures all of these things are to be fulfilled Me and that the Messiah must suffer and die." So Old Testament vision through prophet of God's means of communication has now finished in the coming of the Messiah as He fulfills it. There will be yet a New Testament that will come through Apostles but the Old Testament is sealed up and fulfilled in Him.

The sixth thing is that He will anoint the holiness of the holy. I cannot believe I have five things that deal with the Messiah and now the sixth one is going to be something else. So I go with the older translations that He will anoint the holiness of the Holy One. I believe He is pointing us to the three anointings of God upon the Messiah. The first will be at His baptism with water and the Spirit of God who came upon Him as a dove. Then the anointing at His resurrection and then His exaltation and ascension as He is declared King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

So here the focus becomes, not upon the people or the city, but the people in the city through which God over the next 490 years is going to bring them into existence. Now how will that happen? Let's look further in Daniel 9. Daniel 9:25–26a says *[25] 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. [26a] And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.*

He is saying we have this seventy weeks and I see no gaps. I see no gap between the seven sevens, the sixty two nor the sixty two and the seven. That has to be read in and I can't find anywhere in the Scripture that would cause me to read it in or demand for me to read it in. On the contrary the seventy sevens stand as a unit with these administrations. I believe the seven sevens deal with that period of time from which Cyrus initiated when he sent them back but Artaxerxes later declared and gave the actual decree to rebuild the city and it comes to completion under the direction and leadership of Nehemiah over about a twenty year period. So the seven sevens bring us into the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and into the 400s working through the decrees of Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes and to the completion of city where it is not finished until the walls have been put back in place and the city does not stand open where people used to run through it as before when they were in exile, but now it's a walled city. It has a moat and the Zerubbabel temple has been rebuilt under the leadership of Joshua the High Priest, Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah.

So the seven sevens have been completed and now we move into the sixty two weeks in which there will be continual assaults upon Jerusalem, continual rebuildings upon Jerusalem and continual times of trouble for Jerusalem but it will stand. There will be a time of trouble with the Lord for of those years 400 of them will have silence from the Lord, from Malachi to the coming of Christ. So of those 490 years 400 of them will

have silence from the Lord. Then will come the seventh week in relationship to the Messiah Himself. What will happen in that seventh week?

Daniel 9:26a says *[26a] And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.* Who is the anointed One? It is the One anointed for the calling and ministry He has been given as the Messiah. This is a very difficult passage. He shall be cut off and you can see why the language is used for it is calling up Isaiah. In Isaiah it says He shall be cut off from the land of the living and cut off from His people. In other words, it is speaking of the Messiah being brought to a death. Now that's an atoning death. It is part of fulfilling those six infinitives that set the direction of what this is to accomplish. So what seems to be a defeat of the Anointed One is actually leading to the great victory of the Anointed One and the fulfilling of the what those seventy weeks are there to accomplish. So when it says He shall be cut off and have nothing it is anticipating His crucifixion and His burial.

Related to that and affirming that is that there is coming a time in which as it further says in Daniel 9:26b, *[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.* So attached to that but not necessarily a part of it, affirms it. Daniel wanted to know what was going to happen to the city and the people. So over this seventy sevens I am going to bring the Messiah and He will be cut off but as He is cut off He will accomplish these six things in His atoning death. Jesus Himself before He goes to that cross warns them. This warning is in Matthew 24 and 25 in which we'll look at in two studies from now.

What was spoken of of Daniel shall occur in this generation. Attached to that the generation that saw all of this happen in the seventy weeks, will basically be alive to see the addendum to it and that is a prince who is to come who will destroy the city and the temple. Jesus has already said not one stone will be left upon the other. You will see Daniel's abomination of desolation. As that generation later sees it take place they will remember what Christ has said and it will be a time like never before.

I encourage you to read Josephus for he is the Jewish zealot who saw the handwriting on the wall, went over to Rome and he became the historian. He chronicled the arrival of the prince and his name was Titus but it wasn't him who brought this utter desolation. Read the cannibalism that Josephus records and hear the echo of Jesus' words for when this time comes, get out of the city. Flee for you will ask for the mountains to fall upon you. It will be a time like never before. One other pastor said "If I understand Josephus right, there is never a time in the martyrdom of the church that I would not have chosen over that time." The horrendous acts of cannibalism, infanticide and all that took place in Jerusalem from 68 AD to 70 AD in which the prince, not his people, the Roman army come in like a flood where it is utterly destroyed. The only thing left today is a retaining wall called the Western Wall and stones which they cast down in fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy which was based upon this prophecy in the book of Daniel – the abomination of desolation.

That has been decreed but it doesn't stop there. Jesus says these wars and desolations will continue until He comes again. Then we're told in Daniel 9:27a *[27a] And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering.* Verse 27 is not referring back to verse 26 but it's referring to what preceded it talking about the anointed one, the prince, the

Messiah that had been anointed. This is difficult to translate. In the Hebrew He doesn't make the covenant but He firms the covenant for the covenant has already been made. God made the covenant. The Messiah confirms, makes firm, assures the covenant and when He does what He does in that week all sacrifices become acts of abomination and desolation because He has put an end to them with His sacrifice which is why when He made that sacrifice the veil was rent in two.

Will they stop the sacrifices? No, for that generation will continue them. Instead of trusting in the finished sacrifice of Christ they will continue their desolations and abominations of animal sacrifices which were there to point to Christ, not to exist alongside of Christ or in place of Christ. So what will God do in the addendum? He will send the prince with the flood and then what they would not end in submission He will end by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Ever since then even the most orthodox Jews never have spoken at all of sacrifices.

There are multiple reasons why but what you would not accept and surrender to the sacrifice that put an end to all other sacrifices is because He has affirmed the covenant and there is one Mediator between God and man. It is the Man Christ Jesus and in Christ Jesus all sacrifices have ceased because this is the Lamb of God. This is the last, final and sufficient Sacrifice and when they would not do this that is why attached to this is a prince to come and now you would not do it by surrender but I will do it by subjugation. The temple is destroyed. The sacrifices are destroyed and they will never be in place again. Nowhere does it say they are going to rebuild that temple or that sacrifices are going to be reinstated. They have been brought to an end by the fulfillment of this covenant and they have been finished.

Then He makes this statement in Daniel 9:27b, [27b] *And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.* In other words, their continuation of those sacrifices, instead of surrendering to the sacrifice of the Messiah in that week, so God will bring in the desolator who with his people will bring the flood to bring it to a conclusion. That is the simple reading of a very difficult text.

Many times when we come to a difficult text that becomes the excuse to try and complicate it. I think the most valid sense of its reading is here is what is going to happen to your city and your people, through them whether they are surrendered or not, I am going to confirm My covenant and bring a Messiah who will put an end to transgression, sin and make an atonement. He will provide an eternal righteousness. Everything from the Old Testament will be fulfilled and there will be no need again for Old Testament prophets and vision and by the grace and mercy of God this glorious work of His grace has brought to us the Anointed One. Even though you would reject Him, I will establish Him.

My dear friends, the church of Jesus Christ that exists today is not plan B in a parenthesis. It was God's plan all along when He made the covenant, "Abraham, in you the nations shall be blessed and I will bring a people circumcised in heart from all the nations. I will bring a new city down from heaven and a new temple" and it is the Messiah Himself the Anointed One. He will be the temple. When that is embraced now we're ready for the next study. Now we can see what the Bible says about this millennium. When we understand the history of how God brings the King and

inaugurates His Kingdom and what does that Kingdom do but have a reign and what does that reign look like, then we can understand the millennium. Read the next study.

I want to leave you with this one thought. Almost all the systems that complicate this and this is where I rest my case in its accuracy in the years and the text, but I also rest my case in this; all other attempts at the seventy weeks either focus on Israel or the church or outside issues of life. What I brought to you is what God used and how He will use Israel and Jerusalem even in their rebellion to accomplish His covenantal purposes and it is not people centered, but Christ centered. This is what God will do to bring His Son and He is our Hope. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the time we could be together in Your Word. Would You guide and direct us as we attempt to serve You? Would You help us to understand Your Word? I confess this is a difficult text, Father, but help us not to use its difficulty to make complexity and increased complication. Help us simply to say what it says, not go beyond what it says nor fall short of what it says and help us see Christ for I pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.