

(Daniel 9:24) - As we considered this verse in our last lesson, it is worth reading again so that we may appreciate the greatness of Christ our Lord and Savior and what He Himself accomplished for us, and all of God's chosen people, to save us from our sins. As the Lord Jesus Christ was (and is) the Surety, Substitute, and Redeemer of His people, He "FINISHED OUR TRANSGRESSIONS, MADE AN END OF OUR SINS, MADE RECONCILIATION FOR OUR INIQUITIES, BROUGHT IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, SEALED UP THE VISION AND PROPHECY, and ANOINTED THE MOST HOLY. All of this describes the fullness of the salvation that God fully and freely gives to His people in and by the Lord Jesus Christ Who is identified in the next verse as "*Messiah the Prince.*" All of this was determined by God before the foundation of the world (*Acts 2:22-23; 4:26-28; Heb. 10:7-10*). In doing all of this for His people, Christ fulfilled all righteousness and revealed Himself as the righteousness of His people. It was on this ground that God saved His elect who lived in the Old Testament age before Messiah the Prince came in time. God justified them before the work was actually accomplished by Christ at the cross in time, but it was not without, or apart from, this work that Christ came in time to accomplish at the cross (*Heb. 10:14*). We see in this and the following verses that God's thoughts and determination before time did not (and will not) ignore, deny, or negate God's accomplishments in time by the Lord Jesus Christ and the work of God the Holy Spirit to give spiritual life to His people. What God determined before time began will have its accomplishment at God's appointed time (*Gal. 4:4-6; 1:15-16*).

(Daniel 9:25) - Gabriel made certain that Daniel would know that all this great work of God's grace would be accomplished by "*Messiah the Prince*" Who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The time span would be from the time "*of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem*" (*Ezra 1:1-4*) to the time when Christ would come into the world and begin His earthly ministry. There are divisions of times here, and not all agree on how to view these times. Some claim that the numbers here are totally symbolic and cannot be traced historically in calendar time. Others disagree on this and claim we can trace these numbers historically. Whatever view you take on this, the important issue here is to know that all of these numbers refer to the coming of Christ into the world in time and events surrounding His finished work in time. This is not a prophecy of some future time when Christ would secretly rapture His church out of the world and begin a seven-year period of tribulation. The whole time of the New Covenant that continues until Christ returns (finally and publicly) is a time of tribulation for the true church in the world. It may be that these numbers cannot be pinpointed specifically with calendar time, but I believe they come close. I also recognize that there is truth symbolized in these numbers.

Consider that the first "*seven weeks*" equal forty-nine years, and this is about the time it took for the people who returned to rebuild the Temple, the walls of Jerusalem, and to be settled in the city. All this was done in "*troublous times,*" times of much sin, rebellion, and persecution. From that time, there were "*threescore and two weeks,*" which is sixty-two weeks of years and adds up to 434 years. Add this to 49, and it comes out to 483 years, and we can say that this is about, not of His birth, but the time when He began His earthly ministry at His baptism.

(Daniel 9:26) - After this, Christ was "*cut off*" (*Isa. 53:8*), "*BUT NOT FOR HIMSELF.*" This describes Christ's death for the sins of His people and His fulfilling all things stated in *verse 24*. This happened in the midst of the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (*9:27*). And it is made clear here that Christ did not die for His own sins, for He had no and knew no sin (*2 Cor. 5:21*). He died for the sins of His people imputed to Him. This is made clear in the Biblical

revelation of the doctrine of imputation as it is concerned in the justification of God's people (*Rom. 8:32-34*). To be justified before God involves the forgiveness of all our sins on a just ground and God's declaration that we are righteous on a just ground. God is the only source of justification. God's elect are the only objects of justification. Christ's righteousness is the only ground of justification. Imputation is the only means and instrument of justification. This is the sins of God's elect imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness imputed to them (*Psa. 32:1-2; cf. Rom. 4:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:21*). The work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth, which includes the gifts of faith and repentance, is the fruit of justification.

"*The people of the prince*" who would come and "*destroy the city and the sanctuary*" refer to the Roman emperor, Titus, and the Roman legions who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70. This was God's judgment upon unbelieving Israel and their rejection of Christ. This historically marked the fact that had been established in time before this by Christ on the cross that God was finished with this nation, as a nation, under the terms of the Old Covenant law. God's dealings with this nation as a physical people under the Old Covenant was finished when Christ finished His work of redeeming His people who are spiritual Israel (*Heb. 8*). SPIRITUAL Israel (God's elect out of all nations) has always been the object of spiritual and eternal salvation by God's grace in Christ. Each member of this spiritual nation is identified by their God-given faith in Christ and repentance of dead works (*1 Thess. 1:2-5*).

(Daniel 9:27) - And Christ "*shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.*" This covenant already existed, the everlasting covenant of grace ratified by the blood of Christ. This covenant was "*confirmed*" (established in time) by Christ when He established the New Covenant by His finished work on the cross. The New Covenant is the fulfillment in time of all the conditions of the everlasting covenant of grace made before time. This confirmation took place "*in the midst of the week,*" which would be about three and one-half years after His public ministry began. The "*many*" describes His elect children for whom He died and arose and on whom the Holy Spirit was poured out bringing them to faith in Christ and repentance of dead works (*ex. Acts 2*). "*And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*" is literally, "And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate." Again, this describes the Roman onslaught to destroy the city and the temple. Obviously, this did not happen in the seventieth week of the prophecy, but it took place later as God's judgment upon the nation Israel and because of events that took place within the seventieth week. These events culminated in the majority of the Jews rejecting Christ and persecuting true believers so severely that these believers were scattered throughout the world and went about preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles (*Acts 8:1-4*).

So, in the middle of the seventieth week (three and one-half years) the Messiah was crucified and accomplished all that was necessary, as described in *verse 24*, to save His people from their sins. What happened in the next three and one-half years? The unbelieving Jews rejected the Gospel of God's grace and persecuted Christ's disciples even unto the death of Stephen and the scattering of them all "*throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria*" (*Acts 8:1*). And, of course, we know that all of this was purposed by God to bring the Gospel to the elect Gentiles (*Acts 8:4*).

The Book of Revelation shows us also that the three and one-half years symbolically speak of the whole period of time in which the church would be exiled and persecuted in the earth by Satan and the unbelieving world. In *Revelation 11:2-3*, John speaks of forty-two months and then of 1260 days. He does the same thing in *Revelation 12:6* and *13:5*. In *Revelation 12:14*, John speaks of "*times,*" "*a time*" and "*half a time*" (three and one-half years). John applies this time reference to circumstances after the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ and which would last up to the second coming of Christ.