

1844 Made Simple



SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: Lev. 7:27; 17:10; Luke 3:1-22; Rom. 5:8; Gal. 3:13; 1 Thess. 5:9, 10; 1 Pet. 2:24.

Memory Text: “And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent” (Matthew 27:51).

So far, we've seen that Daniel 8 ended with Daniel needing more explanation about the 2,300 days. Daniel 9 provides that explanation. Gabriel, the same angel interpreter in Daniel 8, points him directly back to the *mashah* of Daniel 8, the only part of the vision that he didn't understand. Gabriel immediately gives him another time prophecy, the 70 weeks, which is “cut off,” obviously from the larger time prophecy of the 2,300 days.

Unlike the 2,300 days, which doesn't mention a specific starting point, Daniel 9 does have one: the “commandment to restore and build Jerusalem,” which we saw last week was issued in 457 B.C.

Meanwhile, 69 of the 70 weeks of this prophecy reach to “the Messiah the Prince,” Jesus. Thus, Jesus Himself forms the center of this prophecy; He's the foundation, the focal point of the 70 weeks. It all rests on Jesus, “the chief corner stone” (Eph. 2:20).

So far, then, the 70 weeks look like this:

70 weeks are “cut off”



*Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, August 19.

Doing the Math

Last week we saw that the “commandment to restore and build Jerusalem” occurred in the reign of the Persian King Artaxerxes. That is, it was issued not during the time of Babylon but after, in the next kingdom of Media-Persia.

What kingdom did the prophecy of Daniel 8 start with? How does that answer provide another link between Daniel 8 and 9?

Daniel 9 gives us the exact starting point of the 70-week prophecy, 457 B.C. It then says that from that point, there will be 69 weeks until “the Messiah the Prince.” Sixty-nine weeks comes to 483 days; applying, then, the day-year principle means that, from the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, 483 years would pass.

Do the math, counting 483 years from 457 B.C. What date do you get?

To get at the date, you need to subtract 457 from 483. That comes to 26, which would mean A.D. 26. However, we are dealing with a calendar here and not a straight number line, which goes like this: -2 -1 0 1 2 3. The calendar, of course, doesn’t have a slot for zero (there’s no zero year). The calendar, instead, goes like this: -2, -1, 1, 2, or, more specifically, 2 B.C., 1 B.C., A.D. 1, A.D. 2. Thus, with the zero year missing on the calendar, 483 years would extend one more year on the calendar, coming to A.D. 27 instead of 26.

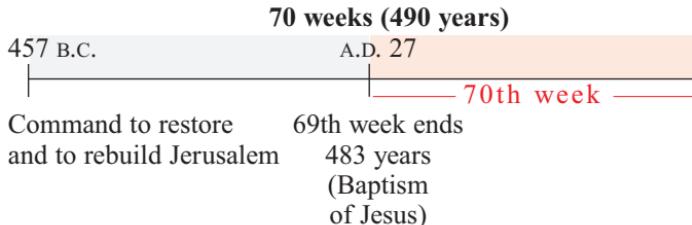
Read Luke 3:1-22. What major event is portrayed here, and how does this help us understand the meaning of the prophecy of Daniel 9?

The prophecy doesn’t talk about the birth of Jesus; instead, it talks about Him as the “Messiah,” the “Anointed,” the Christ; that is, Jesus in His official capacity. Luke puts John’s ministry in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, which can be dated to A.D. 27. Seeing that John baptized Jesus shortly after John’s own ministry began, we have this incredible prophecy, given more than five hundred years earlier, pointing to the ministry of Jesus.

What does the baptism of Jesus say to you about how closely Christ relates to humanity? What hope does His close tie to us offer us in our daily struggles?

Messiah Cut Off

So far, in our study of the 70-week prophecy (490 years), we've covered 69 weeks (or 483 of those 490 years). We've also looked at two distinct historical events that can be accurately dated. See the chart below:



Study the above chart until the events depicted on it are clear to you.

Read Daniel 9:26. It says that after the 62 weeks the Messiah will be “cut off”; that’s the 62 weeks that come after the first 7 (see vs. 25), which means that after this 69th week (A.D. 27) the Messiah will be cut off, but “not for himself.”

Look up these following texts (*Isa. 53:5; Rom. 5:8; Gal. 3:13; 1 Thess. 5:9, 10; 1 Pet. 2:24*). How do they help us understand what this prophecy is talking about?

Up until now, the prophecy covered the first 69 weeks. Verse 26 now introduces the last week, the final seven years of the prophecy—and it does so with an image of Christ’s atoning death. Not only was He “cut off” (a different verb from that used in 9:24), but He was cut off “not for himself,” giving the idea that His death was in behalf of others. We see here the substitutionary aspect of Christ’s sacrifice: His death wasn’t for Himself; it was for us.

It’s interesting, too, that the verb (*krt*) used for “cut off” is directly linked with the Levitical sacrificial system, with those who violated the covenant being “cut off” from the people. (See *Lev. 7:27; 17:10, 14; 20:6, 17*.) In Daniel 9:26 we see an image of the innocent Jesus being “cut off” for the sins of others.

What does it mean that no matter what you have ever done, no matter how bad you have been, the penalty for those actions has been paid by the One who was “cut off,” not for Himself—but for you?

In the Midst of the Week

Read Daniel 9:27. Twice it talks about the “week.” What week is it referring to?

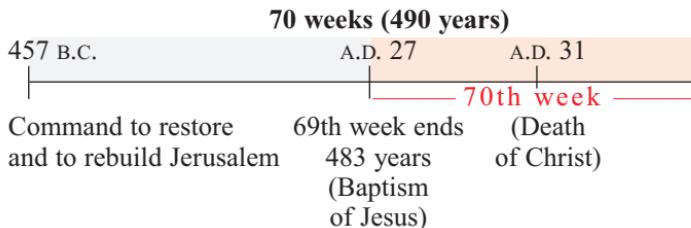
So far, we know that the prophecy is talking about Jesus, and that 69th week brought us to His baptism in A.D. 27. We saw, too, a direct reference in verse 26 to His atoning death. After all, that was the reason He came (*Mark 10:45, John 3:14*).

All that’s left of the 70-week prophecy is the final week, the 70th, the last 7 years.

What happens in the middle of the last week? What time period is it talking about?

Though verse 26 talked about Jesus’ death somewhat directly, verse 27 talks about it in the sense of what it accomplished: the end of the earthly sacrificial system, at least in the sense that they were of any more value (after all, some people today still offer sacrifices). This point was made clear in Mark 15:34-39, with the veil of the sanctuary rent in half, signaling the end of the earthly sanctuary service as a legitimate symbol of the ministry of Christ. The real sacrifice was, finally, offered; the old system had to give way for a new and better one. All that was equated with the old system—the sacrifice, the priesthood, and the sanctuary—have been replaced (*see Heb. 9:1-15*).

This occurred in the “midst of the week.” That would be three and a half years (half of seven). Through counting Passovers in John, we can show that it was three and a half years later, in the spring of A.D. 31, that Jesus was crucified. Thus, our chart now looks like this:



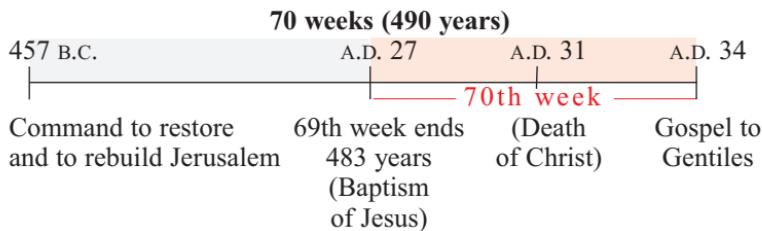
What a powerful prophecy for the messiahship of Jesus! Take whatever time you need until you understand what this prophecy is teaching. How is this amazing prophecy another revelation of God’s love to us? How does it help strengthen your faith?

The 70th Week

The last thing we need to look at in the 70-week prophecy is found again in Daniel 9:27: “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week.” What week is that? Obviously, it’s the 70th week, the last one in the prophecy. If we begin with 457 B.C., then 490 years later bring the end of the 70-week prophecy to A.D. 34. Thus, the last week, the 70th week, ends at that date.

Daniel 9:27 talks about the “covenant.” What covenant could that be referring to? Exod. 19:5, 34:10, Lev. 26:45, 1 Kings 19:10, Isa. 59:21, Jer. 50:5.

Thus, the 70-week prophecy talks about an affirmation of the covenant that God made with Israel. He will “confirm the covenant with many” during that specific period, obviously referring specifically to the Jews who accepted Jesus at that time. Though the prophecy itself doesn’t give a specific event for that last year, A.D. 34, many believe it was the year that the apostle Paul accepted the gospel and became the great preacher to the Gentiles (*Acts 9*). In other words, Israel’s exclusivity came to a close, and a new era in salvation history was inaugurated at the end of the 490 years as the gospel went to all the world.



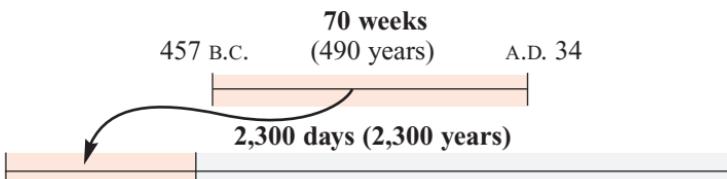
Review the above chart until you understand it well enough to explain it to others.

However fascinating the above prophecy, we must remember that it's just part of a larger prophecy, the 2,300 days. That is, this 70th week was, as we saw, “cut off” from the larger *mashah* of Daniel 8. Thus, we have here two time prophecies, the 2,300 days, which didn't have a specified starting point, and the 70 weeks, which did. We have, therefore, the following two time periods:



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As we've seen, the grounding of the 70-week prophecy is in Jesus, and because the 70-week prophecy is just part of the 2,300-day prophecy, that prophecy is grounded in Jesus, as well. The next step is obvious. The 70 weeks, which have a definite starting point, are "cut off" from the 2,300 days (see tomorrow on why it has to be "cut off" at the beginning as opposed to the end of the 2,300 days).



Do the math. If you use the 70 weeks as the starting point of the 2,300 years, what date do you come to?

If you count 2,300 years from 457 B.C. (remembering to delete the nonexistent zero year), you get 1844; or, if you count the remaining 1810 years from A.D. 34 (2,300 minus the first 490 years), you come to 1844, as well. Thus, the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 can be shown to start in 1844.



Go back to week 5, Friday's study. We saw from the parallels between Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 that the cleansing of the sanctuary (the same event as the judgment scene in Daniel 7) had to occur after the 1,260-year period in Daniel 7 and yet before the Second Coming. How does the calculation done today fit in with that study?

What's so crucial, too, about the 2,300-day prophecy is that, being undeniably linked to the 70-week prophecy, it is inseparably tied in with Jesus. Again, one can't tamper with those dates in any substantial way without tampering with the dates of Jesus. Jesus Himself is the Surety of this prophecy. Obviously, then, the Lord deemed the 2,300-day prophecy important enough to, in a very real sense, base it on Jesus, on the greatest and most precise prophecy concerning His earthly mission, the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9.

Review what we've studied this week. Be prepared to talk about it in class on Sabbath.

Further Study: Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, pp. 409–432.

However clear it is that the 70 weeks are cut off from the 2,300 days, why do we cut them off from the beginning and not the end? The answer is because that's the only way it works logically. If we cut the 70 weeks off at the end, the 2,300 days would terminate in A.D. 34, an impossible conclusion, given the context of Daniel 8, which—parallel to Daniel 7—links the 2,300 days to the time of the end, and that hardly happened in A.D. 34. Plus, too, if you cut them off from the end, the beginning of the prophecy would start about sixteen hundred years before Babylon, the first kingdom depicted in these prophecies. In other words, cutting them off from the end doesn't work at all, given the context in which they appear. Meanwhile, cutting them off at the beginning places the start of the prophecy in the reign of Media-Persia, which fits the context of the vision (Daniel 8 began with Media-Persia) and places their end after the 1,260 years yet before the Second Coming, which also fits perfectly with the context of the vision.

Discussion Questions:

- ①** As a class, go over what has been studied in the past few weeks. Make sure, as much as possible, that everyone understands what has been covered.
- ②** Why does the date 1844 for Daniel 8:14 show why the sanctuary being cleansed is the heavenly one, not the earthly?
- ③** Why do you think is it important for us, as Adventists, to understand this prophecy, considering that the event depicted in it, the cleansing of the sanctuary, occurred so long ago? What does it mean to us as a church today?
- ④** As a class, talk about the implications of the phrase, he was “cut off but not for himself.” What hope does that offer to us? For whom was He cut off, why, and what does that mean? Talk about this too: The 70-week prophecy, a prophecy of the gospel, is linked with the 2,300-day prophecy. What does that tell us about why the gospel should form the foundation of our understanding of the meaning of the 2,300-day prophecy?

The Empty Pantry

Charlotte Ishkanian

Worry lines etched Alberto's forehead. He had a family to feed, but he had no money. He was a brick maker, but no one was buying bricks. And those who had ordered bricks had not paid him. One day Alberto's wife told him that they would eat the last of their rice that evening. All day Alberto prayed that God would send buyers for bricks, but no one came. At dinner the family ate their rice and then asked God to provide food for the next day.

The next morning the family again prayed for food. Alberto decided to ride his bike 12 miles to ask his brother for a loan. Just over a mile from home, Alberto saw some money lying in the road. He stopped and looked around. No one seemed to be looking for it, so he picked it up. It was a 50,000 *meticais* bill (about US\$2.00). Rejoicing, he started back home. On the way he saw another 50,000 *meticais* bill on the ground.

His wife was surprised when he returned so soon and even more surprised when he gave her the 100,000 *meticais*. "Did God send you a customer?" she asked.

"No, God sent us the money. I found it lying on the road." The couple called the children, and they thanked God for this gift. Alberto's wife set aside a tenth for God's tithe. Then she went to the market to buy corn, the cheapest grain available. She pounded it into flour and made porridge for dinner.

On Sabbath the family took their tithe to church. During a testimony time, Alberto shared what God had done for his family, and the church rejoiced over God's providence.

The following week some people who owed Alberto money for bricks came to pay their debts. With that money the family was able to buy the food and necessities they needed.

Alberto and his family love to tell others how God cared for them. Our mission offerings help spread the news that there is a God who cares.



Alberto Mutenga (left) and his family live in Chimoio, Mozambique. Charlotte Ishkanian is editor of Mission.