

Daniel 9 and the Mysterious End-Time Nuclear Deal

Daniel's cryptic prophecy of the "70 weeks" recorded in chapter 9 of his enigmatic book. It is perhaps the most compelling prophecy of the coming of the Messiah and the End of Days in the Scriptures, and even gives us a strong clue as to WHEN the Messiah will return to save His people! Is this prophecy DUAL? Is it soon to be fulfilled? How much time do we have left?

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The Middle East is exploding. The world is watching breathlessly as violence escalates and fears bring terror to the faces of millions around the earth. What terror lies ahead for this world?

The future is laid out in Biblical prophecy which has much to tell us about the current Middle East crisis, and the nuclear agreement America and Europe and the United Nations have made with Iran.

In a much misunderstood prophecy in the book of Daniel this very end time process is described, and tied in with the soon coming of the Messiah to save Israel, and the entire earth, from cosmocide and utter annihilation.

The Prophecy

One of the most amazing and intriguing prophecies of all the Bible is found in Daniel 9:24-27. Throughout the ages men and women have puzzled over the meaning of this cryptic passage. It has stumped theologians, baffled scholars, and puzzled Christians and Jews alike for thousands of years. Let us carefully review this entire prophecy, and see how germane it is to the present "peace process" in the Middle East. Notice!

First of all, let's read the passage in the King James Version:

"SEVENTY WEEKS are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish [margin, to restrain] the transgression, and to make an end [margin, to seal up] of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem [margin, to build again Jerusalem] unto Messiah the Prince

shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall [margin, breach, or ditch], in troublous times.

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be CUT OFF, but not for himself [margin, and shall have nothing]: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined [margin, it shall be cut off by desolations].

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for ONE WEEK: and in the midst of the WEEK he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations [margin, and upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolater], he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate [margin, desolater]” (Dan.9:24-27).

What a strange prophecy! It outlines strange events to occur in and around Jerusalem, till the coming of the Messiah and the end of the age. What are these mysterious “seventy weeks”?

In Numbers 14:34 God told the Israelites, “After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day of a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years . . .” Each day of the prophetic 70 weeks, then, is a year in being fulfilled!

Ezekiel confirms this same principle. God told Ezekiel concerning the punishment and siege of Israel, “This shall be a sign to the house of Israel. Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou has accomplished them, lie on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year” (Ezek.4:3-6).

To understand the 70 weeks prophecy, one must realize each day of the prophecy equals a year being fulfilled. Since there are seven days in a week – or a total of 490 days in 70 weeks -- this prophecy involves 490 years. At the end of this time period, the "Most Holy" -- the Messiah -- will bring in everlasting righteousness – He will become King of the whole earth and put a complete end to all man's rebellion. All nations will finally be reconciled to Him.

The Historical Fulfillment

But how are these 490 years to be understood? When do they commence? And are they consecutive? “Know therefore,” Gabriel told Daniel, “and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince [the Messianic king] shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks [a total of 69 weeks or 483 prophetic years]: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times” (Dan. 9:25).

What commandment or decree was this? Daniel recorded this prophecy in 538-537 B.C. History records that Cyrus reigned from 538-537 until 530-529. Cambyses followed Cyrus on the throne and reigned for eight years, until 522-521. He was followed by Darius I who reigned 36 years, until December 23, 486, when Xerxes took the throne. Xerxes was the Ahasuerus of the Bible (see Finegan, *Light From the Ancient Past*, p.238). Xerxes reigned from 486 to 465-464 when he was followed by his son Artaxerxes. Artaxerxes then reigned nearly 41 years, until 424 B.C.

Which of these men made a decree to “restore and to build Jerusalem”? Cyrus made a decree in 536-535 regarding the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem (see Ezra 1: 1-2). This particular decree was specifically to build the Temple – the city is not mentioned. This decree, therefore, is not the one spoken of by Daniel in chapter 9:25. The Jew's had opposition in building the Temple throughout the days of Cyrus, "even until the reign of Darius king of Persia" (Ezra 4:4-5). Local Samaritans frustrated their purpose and attempted to over throw the project. Work on the Temple ceased until the second year of Darius (521-485) (see Ezra 4:24).

Darius also made a decree and ordered the construction of the temple to continue (Ezra 6:11-12). But, again, this decree was to build the house of God – not the city of Jerusalem. The Temple, except for the finishing touches, was completed by the sixth year of the reign of Darius (Ezra 6:14-15). Therefore, the evidence is that neither of these two decrees was the one spoken of by Daniel the prophet.

A third decree, however, was made by king Artaxerxes I (464-423). Since the Temple was already built, Artaxerxes’ decree concerned another matter. In the seventh year of Artaxerxes, the Jewish scribe Ezra came to Jerusalem, carrying a copy of a letter containing the decree of king Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:1, 6, 12). We read in the book of Ezra: “Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own freewill to go up to Jerusalem . . . Forasmuch as thou art sent of the king ... to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of thy God which is in thine hand: and to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered unto the God of Israel, whose habitation is in Jerusalem, and all the silver and gold that thou canst find in all the province of Babylon . . . “ (see Ezra 7:11-16).

After this epochal decree, Ezra prayed to God, saying: “Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the swords, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day. And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape . . . to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem” (Ezra 9:7-9).

Mark carefully – this decree gave Ezra authority not only to rebuild and beautify the house of God, but also to repopulate Jerusalem, to set government in operation, and to

rebuild the city and the wall! The Jews had never been given authority from the Persian kings to rebuild Jerusalem and the city wall. However, early in the reign of Artaxerxes, the Samaritans had accused the Jews of building the city once again (Ezra 4:7, 11-12). The king issued an order for the Jews to stop all such activity until further notice (vs.17-21). After a thorough investigation, Artaxerxes issued (another decree – the decree mentioned in Ezra 7. This must be the decree Daniel had reference to since it was the first one that clearly involved the city of Jerusalem as well as the temple.

When, then, was the “seventh year” of king Artaxerxes? To understand when the seventh year of Artaxerxes occurred, we must find the year he ascended to the throne.

Artaxerxes’ Seventh Year

Ctesias, a Greek physician at the court of Artaxerxes II, and who undoubtedly had access to the Persian archives, relates that Artaxerxes learned that Artabanus had killed his father. Artabanus was slain, and Artaxerxes assumed the throne without fear of a rival.

But when was Xerxes murdered?

Discoveries in Mesopotamia and Egypt have thoroughly established the chronologies of the Neo-Babylonian and Persian empires. The evidence of Ptolemy’s Canon, the Saros Tablets, and papyri dated with two calendar systems, reveal that Xerxes’ reign ended in his 21st year. His 21st year then was counted from spring of 465 B.C. to spring of 464. (The Persian civil year was reckoned from spring to spring). Artaxerxes’ first year thus began in the spring of 464 B.C. Artaxerxes must have ascended to the throne sometime in the year 465/464 B.C.

A document that was written during the accession year of Artaxerxes has been found. It is listed as Aramaic papyrus (AP 6) and was written from the Jewish colony of Elephantine in Egypt. The document was dated the 18th of Kislev or the 17th of Thoth, “in the year 21, the beginning of reign when King Artaxerxes sat on his throne.” Artaxerxes I took the throne in the 21st year of Xerxes. He must be the Artaxerxes in question, since neither Artaxerxes II or III came to the throne in a year 21.

The 18th of Kislev or 17th of Thoth dates the document as having been written the evening of January 2 or daytime January 3, 464 B.C., since the Hebrews reckon a day from sunset to sunset. Therefore, by January 3, 464 B.C., Jews in Egypt obviously knew that Artaxerxes had ascended the Persian throne. The document speaks of “the beginning of the reign” of Artaxerxes, or his accession year. What does this mean?

Since January 2/3, 464, is dated in the accession year of Artaxerxes, his first regnal year – according to the Hebrew reckoning – could not officially begin until Tishri 1, in the autumn of 464 B.C.! The Hebrew civil calendar began each year in the autumn with Tishri. Since the first year of Artaxerxes, according to the Hebrew civil year, did not begin until autumn of 464 B.C., seven years later would bring us to autumn of 458

B.C. The seventh year of Artaxerxes, therefore, was from the autumn of 458 to the autumn of 457 B.C.

Fall-to-Fall Reckoning

But do we have proof that the Hebrews still used the fall-to-fall reckoning for their civil year after they returned from Babylonian captivity? Or did they adopt the Babylonian custom of dating each civil year from spring to spring?

There is conclusive evidence that during Nehemiah's time the Hebrew civil calendar was still in use. Consider: in Nehemiah 1:1, Nehemiah said he received bad news of Jerusalem in the month Chisleu, (November-December) in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. He later mentioned that in Nisan (March-April), in the twentieth year of the king, he gave wine to Artaxerxes (2:1). Thus Nehemiah said Chisleu or Kislev preceded Nisan in the 20th regnal year of Artaxerxes, showing he used a fall to fall reckoning.

Today, the Jews still reckon the year from fall to fall, beginning the new year in the autumn. They celebrate Rosh Hoshana, or New Year's day, in the autumn, on Tishri 1. They have clung tenaciously to this practice.

According to the Hebrew calendar used by Nehemiah, then, the seventh year of Artaxerxes fell from the fall of 458 to the fall of 457 B.C. Ezra's journey from Babylon to Jerusalem took place from about late March to about early August (Ezra 7:8-9), 457 B.C. He carried the decree of king Artaxerxes with him. Therefore, the famous decree for the restoration of Jerusalem was signed, sealed, delivered to Ezra, and went into effect as soon as he reached Jerusalem – in the late summer or early fall of 457 B.C.

Now we have dated the decree. Notice again Daniel was told that from the issuance of the decree till the coming of the Messiah was to be “seven weeks, threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times” (Daniel 9:25).

The re-settling and rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem made rapid strides from the 20th year to the 32nd year of Artaxerxes (Neh.5:14-16). The building program continued into the reign of Darius II who succeeded Artaxerxes. During his reign the wall around Jerusalem was finished (Neh.12:22, 27-30, 43). But even after the wall was complete, many buildings within the city had yet to be built (Neh.7:1-4; 11:1-2).

These were “troublous times,” as Daniel foretold and as Ezra 4:5 summarized. Persecution and hindrances slowed progress. But after seven prophetic weeks the city was rebuilt and the temple restored.

Then Daniel mentioned “sixty two weeks” were to follow – or 434 more years were to pass – until the appearance of the Messiah. Thus a total of sixty nine prophetic weeks -- or 483 literal years – were to exist from the commandment of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. till the appearance of the Messiah.

457 B.C. -- year-date of the decree
 $\frac{-483}{26}$ years -- time to pass till Messiah would come
 A.D.
 $\frac{+1}{27}$ -- since there is no year “zero”
 A.D. -- year the prophecy would be fulfilled!

Counting 483 years from 457 B.C., then, brings you to 27 A.D. This was the year the Messiah was prophesied to appear on the scene.

Was this prophecy fulfilled? What happened in 27 A.D.? For a full explanation, be sure to read our article *The Birth, Ministry, and Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ!*

Yeshua Begins His Ministry

The very interesting fact is that 27 A.D. was the very year Jesus Christ – Yeshua Ha Moshiach, in Hebrew – began his ministry, and commenced preaching the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God (Matt. 3:13-17; 4:1-23; 9:35).

Daniel also foretold what was to happen to the Messiah. The Jews of Jesus' time thought that when the Messiah would appear he would restore the Kingdom of Israel and deliver them from the Romans. They looked for a shining knight on a white charger. But when Christ came as the humble preacher from Nazareth, of all places, they rejected Him. This was too much! So they had Him put to death claiming He was an impostor, a heretic. After preaching the gospel for three years, from the spring of 27 A.D. until the spring of 30 A.D., Jesus was condemned by the Sanhedrin and the high priest, and put to death!

The apostle Paul explained, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom.5:8). “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (II Cor:5:21). “We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son . . . “ (Rom.5:10).

Did Daniel foretell that Christ would die for our sins and reconcile us to God? Notice!

Daniel 9:26 – “And after [the period of threescore and two weeks] shall Messiah be cut off [that is, killed], *but not for himself* . . .” Daniel prophesied that the Messiah would be “CUT OFF.” The Hebrew word here is #3772 in *Strong's Concordance*. It is *karath*, a primitive root meaning “to cut (off, down, asunder); by implication, to destroy or consume; spec. to covenant (i.e. make an alliance or bargain, orig. by cutting flesh and passing between the pieces.”

How would the Messiah be “cut off”? What does this mean? He would be killed, destroyed, put to death! But in so doing, He would “make a covenant” – the New

Covenant – in His own blood, reconciling sinners to God! Thus He fulfilled the prophecy of making “reconciliation for iniquity” (Daniel 9:24).

This same astonishing truth is revealed by the prophet Isaiah, who lived 700 years before the coming of the Messiah in 27 A.D. Isaiah wrote of the future Messiah, “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was CUT OFF out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed [the children of the New Covenant, bought by His blood], he shall prolong his days [that is, be RESURRECTED BACK TO LIFE!], and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand” (Isaiah 53:7-10).

Read this whole chapter. It is the most astonishing and detailed prophecy of the first coming of Christ, the Messiah, in which He would be cut off, killed, and reconcile sinners to God by means of His pouring out His life as a sin offering for mankind.

Most Jewish rabbis, to this date, however, have not recognized this fact. Yet even their own translation of the prophecy in Daniel 9 provides us insight into this mystery.

Notice the Jewish *Tanakh* translation of this passage:

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city until the measure of transgression is filled and that of sin is complete, until iniquity is expiated and eternal righteousness ushered in; and prophetic vision ratified, and the Holy of Holies anointed. You must know and understand: From the issuance of the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the [time of the] anointed leader is seven weeks; and for sixty-two weeks it will be rebuilt, square and moat, but in a time of distress. And after those sixty-two weeks, the anointed one will disappear and vanish. The army of a leader who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary, but its end will come through a flood. Desolation is decreed until the end of war. During one week he will make a firm covenant with many. For half a week he will put a stop to the sacrifice and the meal offering. At the corner [of the altar] will be an appalling abomination until the decreed destruction will be poured down upon the appalling thing” (Dan.9:24-27).

“The Anointed One”

Notice! The prophecy in Daniel 9 in the *Tanakh* says in verse 26 that after the seven weeks, and sixty two weeks, “the anointed one will disappear and vanish.” That is a strange statement! The Jews expected that the Messiah would appear on a white horse, as a national champion against the Romans, and lead them to glory! Yet that is not quite what God inspired Daniel to write! God said that the Messiah would DISAPPEAR – VANISH!

After a ministry lasting three years, Jesus Christ was crucified and buried. And then He arose from the grave, and taught His disciples for forty days, and then notice what happened. After He gave them some final instructions, “He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud HID him from their sight. They were looking intently into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, WILL COME BACK in the same way you have seen him go into heaven’” (Acts 1:9-11).

Jesus literally VANISHED before their very eyes!

How exquisitely, uniquely, and precisely, this prophecy of Daniel was fulfilled! Jesus truly “disappeared and vanished,” just as Daniel the prophet FORETOLD over 580 years before!

But this event occurred BEFORE the fulfillment of the complete 70 WEEKS of the prophecy. Technically, only 69 weeks had gone by. Now notice the rest of the amazing, dumfounding prophecy!

Even as Christ the Messiah was “cut off,” so the prophesy itself was “CUT OFF” – that is, interrupted – and will resume with the final “week” of years ending with His SECOND COMING when He will finish the rest of the fulfillment of the prophecy, and usher in the Kingdom of Righteousness, the Kingdom of God, at His coming!

Daniel 9:24-27 and the End of Days

One of the keys to understanding Bible prophecy is the principle of DUALISM. That is, many Bible prophecies are not single events, but have a lesser forerunner, and then a major fulfillment – a former and later fulfillment. Some are deliberately ambiguous so that they can be taken, or explained two different ways – both of them being correct!

Such is the case of Daniel 9:26-27, the rest of this amazing prophecy. Notice! “The army of a leader who is to come will DESTROY THE CITY AND THE SANCTUARY” (v.26). Of course, this occurred in 70 A.D. when Titus and Vespasian, Roman generals, led the Roman armies in a conquest of Jerusalem because of Jewish rebellion. Over a million Jews perished in the war, and the city was burned and the Temple was razed.

However, many Bible prophecies show that the invasion of Judea and conquest of Jerusalem and the burning of the Temple are also predicted as events leading up to the SECOND COMING of the Messiah! Thus prophecy is *dual*. In the prophecy of Zechariah we read: “Lo, a day of the LORD is coming when your spoil shall be divided in your very midst! For I will gather ALL NATIONS TO JERUSALEM for WAR: The city shall be captured, the houses plundered, and the women violated; and a part of the city shall go into exile. But the rest of the population shall not be uprooted from the city.

“Then the LORD will come forth [from heaven, where He has gone!] and make war on those nations as He is wont to make war on a day of battle. On that day He will set His feet on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives shall split across from east to west . . . And the LORD my God, with all the holy beings, will come to you” (Zech. 14:1-5).

Notice! Here we find that God Himself – the Messiah – will STAND ON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES – the very same mountain from which Jesus Christ ascended to heaven (Acts 1:12) – and the same mountain to which the angels told the disciples that He would return (v.11). This prophecy of Zechariah, therefore, is a vision of the SECOND COMING of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, when He will fight against the nations who have once again conquered Jerusalem!

How incredible!

The Wicked Prince

The leader of the army which will come against Jerusalem will this time not be Titus or Vespasian, but the one foretold by Daniel who would arise in the END TIME, one who “will be extraordinarily destructive; he will prosper in what he does, and destroy the mighty and the people of holy ones. By his cunning, he will use deceit successfully. He will make great plans, will destroy many, taking them unawares, and will rise up against the CHIEF OF CHIEFS [the Messiah Himself!], but will be broken, not by [human] hands” (Daniel 8:24-25).

This wicked king is also described in Daniel 7. We read: “He will speak words against the Most High, and will harass the holy ones of the Most High. He will think of changing times and laws, and they will be delivered into his power for a time, times, and half a time [three and one half years]” (Dan.7:25).

The book of Revelation in the New Testament describes this wicked tyrant as a “beast.” The apostle John writes: “The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for FORTY-TWO MONTHS [three and one half years!]. . . . He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them” (Rev.13:5-7, NIV).

This “beast,” along with all the kings of the earth, will gather at Jerusalem to fight against Christ at His return, at “the battle on the great day of God Almighty” (Rev.16:14). John says, “They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings—and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers” (Rev. 17:14).

John goes on:

“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but

he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God [compare John 1:1-2,14]. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. . .

“Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army. But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet . . . The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulphur” (Rev.19:11-20).

Thus the army of this world ruling “beast” will be destroyed by Christ, and the beast himself slain in the lake of fire. As Daniel foretold, “its end will come through a flood. Desolation is determined until the END of the war” (Dan.9:27), when Christ Himself will end the “appalling abomination” and the prophesied “decreed destruction will be poured down upon the appalling thing” (Dan.9:27).

The End-Time Treaty

These things will culminate the final “week” of years of Daniel’s prophecy. They occur during the FINAL SEVEN YEARS of this age, leading up to the return of the Messiah!

In the end of this amazing prophecy of Daniel, we read that a wicked leader arises, and he will “confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the MIDST of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” (v.27).

What is this strange-sounding “covenant”? The Hebrew word *berith* literally means “a cutting,” or a “compact, league, confederacy, treaty.” That is, he will “confirm” an agreement, treaty, with the Jews and others, during this end-time of this age. What treaty is this? Could this be the infamous Oslo Peace Accords?

Notice carefully! The word “confirm” in this passage is *Strong's* #1396, the Hebrew word *gabar*, a primitive root meaning “to be strong,” “by implication, to prevail, act insolently: -- exceed, confirm, be great, be mighty, prevail, put to more (strength), strengthen, be stronger, be valiant.”

Since 1993 the world’s nations have been striving to twist the neck of Israel, and hammerlock them into a “peace treaty” which is very dangerous to their security. The PEACE ACCORDS, which began in 1993, are now being called “the road map to peace.” Originally, these accords were designed to bring peace to the Middle East over a period of seven years – from 1993 to 2000 A.D. That didn’t work out. Then President Clinton literally pressured, hammered, cajoled, and threatened the leaders of the Palestinians and the Israelis to get this treaty and peace process back on track. He was there at the original signing on the White House lawn on September 13, 1993. He pushed it as long as he was in office. Then President Bush pushed the same “road map to peace.” Incremental

progress was made, and the Jews finally evacuated the Gaza Strip as a sign of good faith – but violence and rocket attacks still continued.

The prophecy states of an end-time world leader, “he will confirm a covenant with many . . .” The word for “many” in Hebrew in this verse is #7227 in *Strong's Concordance*, the word *rab*, meaning “abundant (in quantity, size, age, number, rank, quality).” It can refer to numbers, or even to a “captain, chief, great, lord, master,” or even “archer” (see also #7228 and #7229, all from the same root).

At this time the one who has been in the process of twisting Israel’s arm to force them to make “peace” with the Muslims and Palestinians, today, with more pressure than any previous administration, is none other than Barack Hussein Obama, the Muslim-American President of the United States!

In summer of 2015 Obama and the UN and European Union made a peace agreement with Iran giving that nation permission to acquire nuclear weapons in exchange for what?

The Nuclear Deal

Like a snake oil salesman trying to move a gallon of lies by promising that it’s either buy the bottle or die, Obama sold the Iran deal as the only alternative to war. In fact the deal is a certain road to war.

Or as Churchill said, “You were given the choice between war and dishonor. You chose dishonor, and you will have war.” Before long, the British and French were facing Czech tanks redesignated as Panzers that had been seized as part of the Nazi spoils of appeasement.

When Obama claimed that the Iran nuclear deal was the only alternative to war, he was lying in more ways than one. The United States has already been dragged into Iran’s war for control of Iraq. That war was one of the levers that Iran exploited to get its way on its nuclear program. Iran also came close to dragging us into its war in Syria and we are hovering on the edge of being dragged into Yemen.

Iran and ISIS have done a thorough job of carving up entire countries into Shiite and Sunni blocs. And there’s no sign that this Islamic realignment of the Sykes Picot borders is going to stop. If the process continues, the scale and scope of the war will expand and transform the region away from nation states.

Everyone will have a choice between backing a Sunni ISIS or a Shiite ISIS. Obama chose the Shiite ISIS.

This would be happening even without the deal, but Iran’s victory and Obama’s appeasement will speed up the process. Russia is blatantly joining the Shiite military coalition as part of Tehran’s victory celebration. And the Russians aren’t there just to

protect Assad, but to push America out of the region. As areas of operations overlap, there will be incidents. And Obama will back off once again.

But it's not just about Syria. Iran promised its Russian and Chinese backers that they will benefit from a major regional realignment. Nations allied with the US will be overthrown or suppressed. And once that process really gets underway and will begin to threaten oil supplies, even a Democrat won't be able to stay out. But by then America will have little credibility, few allies and major strategic disadvantages.

The real test won't be in Syria. It has already come and gone in Yemen. It will probably come in Bahrain. Bahrain has a majority Shiite population and is the home of the Fifth Fleet. During the Arab Spring the Saudis put down Iran's "civilian" uprising in Bahrain using tanks. The next time, it won't be that easy for the House of Khalifa or the House of Saud. If there's one thing that Iran knows it's how to arm and train insurgencies and this time around its bid for a takeover of Bahrain will have Russian backing.

Iran's Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain played a significant role in the Arab Spring protests under the umbrella of political Islam and human rights organizations. Iran's ideal game plan would be for its front groups to win Western political backing for a takeover the way that the Muslim Brotherhood did in Egypt. Turning over Bahrain to admirers of the Iranian Revolution would seem insane, but so was turning over Iran to Khomeini or Egypt to Al Qaeda's parent Muslim Brotherhood organization.

The Saudis have had to consider the possibility that Obama, Hillary or Biden would back Iran over the Saudis in Bahrain as they did in Iraq and Yemen. And they have been making their own plans.

Some months after Iran's Ahmadinejad visited Cairo and met with the Muslim Brotherhood's Morsi, the Saudis reversed the Qatari-Obama coup that had put the Muslim Brotherhood in power. As the deadline for last year's negotiations with Iran approached, the Saudis began dumping oil to hurt Russia and Iran. A similar Saudi move against Iran had helped bring on the Islamic Revolution. The Saudis probably don't expect to undo that disaster, but they were hoping to offset any Obama-backed Iranian recovery.

Instead of fighting to keep sanctions in place, the Saudis were instead poisoning the well.

Whether he understood it or not, by signing off on Iran's Shiite bomb, Obama was also signing off on an Egyptian-Saudi Sunni bomb. Israel's nuclear capability was tacitly understood as a defensive weapon of last resort that would not trigger a regional arms race. Genocidal military invasions of Israel came to an end and any weapons remained under wraps.

Iran however is not looking for a deterrent weapon against its neighbors. With the fall of Saddam, it faces no serious threat of invasion by Sunni forces. Today its nuclear program can have no other purpose except to expand its power and territory while forcing the United States out of the region. Nuking Israel would help seal its right to rule over the Muslim world while intimidating its enemies.

A Middle Eastern MAD with Iranians and Saudis in a nuclear standoff would be bad enough, but both powers have a long history of using terrorists to do their dirty work. And the transfer of nuclear materials to terrorists is a lot harder to track than ICBM launches.

Iran and Saudi Arabia getting the bomb won't be the end. It will only be the beginning. A decade ago, Iran had already funneled a billion dollars into helping Syria get its own nuclear reactor. A nuclear Iran will expand its points of proliferation to the Shiite regime in Baghdad, to Hezbollah in Lebanon and any other Shiite allied states it can set up. The Saudis will expand their own nuclear capabilities to their GCC allies and Egypt so that instead of two nuclear powers, there may be as many as ten nuclear nations.

Imagine the Cold War in miniature with a lot more proliferation and Jihadists with nukes on both sides.

That is what the Iran nuclear deal really means. Every Sunni kingdom will be glaring out from under its own nuclear shield as petty tyrants keep one finger on the populace and the other on the button. A single popular uprising could see nuclear weapons in the hands of Al Qaeda or ISIS.

Could this Iran deal be the “covenant” or agreement with “many” described and foretold to occur in the last days in Daniel chapter 9?

“And in the MIDST of the Week”

Daniel goes on to say, “And in the midst of the [final] week [of years – seven years] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate . . .”

Bible prophecy is often written in a manner that is NOT straightforward – in a vague, nebulous-appearing sense. The Hebrew language often makes for many interpretations because single words are often used with many different meanings, and the best meaning must often be determined by context. This leads to much subtlety and nuances of meaning.

In the passage just quoted, the subject of the entire passage, from verse 24 to verse 27, is the 70 WEEKS. As I have explained, we have seen the fulfillment of the first 69 weeks, or 483 years, leading up to the first coming of Messiah. The final week, then, must refer to the seven years (last week of days) leading up to the climax of the SECOND coming of the Messiah to inaugurate the Millennial rule of God upon the earth!

Therefore, when the passage states, “In the MIDST OF THE WEEK he shall cause sacrifice and oblation to cease,” this would be a clear reference to the FINAL WEEK OF THE PROPHECY! The final week under discussion is NOT necessarily the same week as the one just described, the “week” of the confirming of a very important “treaty” or “agreement” on the world scene. The two weeks are not necessarily one and the same thing. They could, however, be parallel or overlap each other, or run concurrently.

The 6,000 Year Plan of God

Notice! According to Jewish history and tradition, and early Christian traditions and beliefs, God Almighty is working out a 6,000 year plan on this earth with humankind. This plan began in 4004 B.C., according to the chronology of Archbishop James Ussher, whose Biblical chronology is the best one I’ve seen so far. This plan of God is based on the “seven day week.” According to the apostle Peter, one day is with God as a “thousand years,” and a thousand years as “one day” (II Pet.3:8-10).

Thus in God's Plan, the first six days of the week picture the first 6,000 years of mankind on earth. The weekly Sabbath, or seventh day, pictures the Millennial kingdom of God (compare Rev.20:4; Heb.4:4-11). Therefore, it will last 1,000 years! This indicates that the previous “six” days would last 6,000 years!

However, according, to the book of Jubilees, Jewish literature written by Levites and priests during the intertestamental period, about 150-200 B.C., there is strong reason to believe that Adam and Eve did not sin, and forsake the ways of God, until seven years had passed in the Garden of Eden. For the proof of this, read my article *The 6,000 Year Plan of God – Are We Nearing the End of the World?* Therefore, they did not come under the influence of Satan the devil, and begin their “work” week, until 3997 B.C.

Notice:

“And during the first week of the first jubilee Adam and his wife had been in the garden of Eden for SEVEN YEARS tilling and guarding it. And we gave him work and we were teaching him to do everything which was appropriate for tilling. And he was tilling. And he was naked, but he neither knew it nor was he ashamed. And he was guarding the garden from the birds and beasts and cattle and gathering its fruits and eating. And he used to set aside the rest for himself and his wife. And what was being guarded he set aside.

“At the END OF SEVEN YEARS which he completed there, SEVEN YEARS EXACTLY, in the second month on the seventeenth day, the serpent came and drew near to the woman” (Jubilees 3:15-17).

As we know, Eve and Adam both sinned, were enticed into transgression, and banished from the Garden. This occurred most likely, therefore, seven years after their original creation, in 4004 B.C. – or in the year 3997 B.C. The seven years of idyllic

paradise should not be counted in the 6,000 years during which mankind has been subject to the “god of this world,” Satan the Adversary (II Cor.4:4, Eph.2:2).

However, even as there was a seven year period of peace and harmony, in the beginning, so there will be a final seven year period of the exact opposite – war, woe, horror and great destruction – in the earth – Daniel’s seventieth week – the last week of his prophecy – which is brought forcibly to a conclusion only by the swift arrival and intervention in human affairs by the Messiah Yeshua!

This means the final seven years of this age ends or terminates with the coming of the Messiah!

It is independent of that great event. The Oslo Accords began in 1993 and ended in 2000 A.D. as a failure. They lasted seven years. But the final week of this age, is still to come! When will it occur?

How close are we to the END?

Let’s notice carefully!

The Final “Week”

The Hebrew word for “weeks” in the prophecy of the 70 weeks, is the word *shavuot*. It also designates the “Feast of Shavuot,” or “Feast of Weeks,” which follows Passover, fifty days later. We are told to “count seven weeks,” till the 50th day, from the day after Passover, counting beginning Nisan 16, and the fiftieth day is “Shavuot,” the Feast of Weeks. Its name is derived from the counting of seven weeks from Passover, thus, “Feast of Weeks.”

The Hebrew word Shavuot, therefore, also refers to an ANNUAL HOLY DAY, which is counted, and looked forward to with great expectancy and joy. Anciently, it represented the day of the covenant God made with Israel on that day at Mount Sinai.

The Hebrew word “Shavuot” literally means #7620, *shavua*, (plural *Shavuot*), and means “literally *sevens*, *i.e. a week*.” It also means, #7621, “something sworn, an oath.” It was at Mount Sinai, after a period of seven sevens, that the Feast of Shavuot was arrived at, and it was the day God and Israel swore an “Oath” – a Covenant of Marriage.

So literally, the prophecy of Daniel is the prophecy of “seventy sevens” or even “seventy Shavuot” – that is, Festivals of Shavuot. If we look at it that way, then seventy such Festivals would equal 70 years, as the Feast occurs once a year!

Now, let’s take a fresh look at this intriguing prophecy.

“Seventy weeks [Shavuot] are determined.” Seventy Feasts of Shavuot would be 70 years!

“. . . for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression . . . to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.” (verse 24).

So this prophecy says (also) that there will be seventy years to the end point – the end of the age and the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God, ending the period of man’s transgression on the earth.

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince . . . (v.25). The United Nations voted to partition Israel in November 1947, and Israel became a state May 14, 1948. Both of these occurred during the Hebrew year 5708.

“There shall be seven weeks and sixty two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall [of protection], even in troublesome times” (v.25b). Seven “weeks” also means “seven Shavuot,” or Feasts of Weeks – meaning “seven years.” Sixty two “weeks” likewise can mean 62 years. So we have a period of seven years, and a period of 62 years. From Israel’s inception in 1948, there was war. The nation was born in a bloodbath as surrounding Arab nations immediately attacked.

In May, 1948, Israel had to fight the surrounding Arab nations which invaded her territory, and the following years were “troublesome times.” War again broke out in 1956, and in 1967 the “Six Day War” was fought, and the “Yom Kippur War” in 1973, then the invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and the subsequent Palestinian intifada, lasting to the present time.

“And after the sixty two weeks Messiah [anointed one] shall be cut off . . .”

62 “weeks” is also 62 Shavuot = 62 Shavuot or “years.” From 1948, counting 62 years, brings us to 2010 A.D.

After these “62” Shavuot, ending in 2010, the “anointed one” – a designation for the *anointed people of God, Israel* – shall be “cut off” – that is, begin to be “cut off” as a nation, as a people, and destroyed.

What happened in 2010? The Muslim Barack Hussein Obama became president of the world’s last remaining superpower, the United States, and began compromising Israel’s security, independence, and forcefully turning against America’s only true ally in the Middle East. Currying favor with the Arab oil producing nations, he has begun cutting Israel off at the knees. Denying them missiles and bunker-busting bombs. Threatening them with sanctions, and trade embargoes. Treating their diplomats and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with contempt, hostility, scorn and derision.

Israel has begun to be “cut off” – the anointed people are being persecuted by their supposed sole remaining “friend” and ally in all the world.

“And the people [army] of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. . .” (verse 26).

Israel will be invaded! Desolations and destruction will rage and follow till the end of the period of conflict and warfare.

“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering” (v.27).

If this “covenant” is the false “peace agreement” with Iran, then this agreement was signed in 2015 and went into effect in January, 2016, when the United States began to release the 100 billion it has withheld from Iran, and implementing the agreement.

The final “week” – THE FINAL SEVEN YEARS – would then be from summer of 2015 or January 2016 to summer of 2022 or January 2023 – this would be the *last week of years!*

In the middle of this final period of years, the world, under the United Nations, and the Secretary-General, perhaps Barack Obama himself, will cause the Temple sacrifices and prayers at the Temple of God to cease being offered. The “dark prince”, aka “Antichrist,” will force them to stop.

“And on the wing of ABOMINATIONS shall be *one who makes desolate*, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate [or, desolator, marginal reading]” (verse 27b).

This scenario would constitute a shocking, incredible new view of Daniel’s 70 weeks prophecy, as it applies to the END TIME, – a pattern of fulfillment beginning in 1948. It, like the original fulfillment, would be divided into 2 parts: 62 years, ending in 2010 and the beginning of the intifada and the “cutting off” of Israel; and part 2, the “final eight years” – the seven years of the final week, and the year of the coming of the Messiah. This period would possibly indicate the coming of Christ would occur in 2022 or 2023 – about seven years from *NOW!* Between the two parts of the prophecy would be an interregnum of years, from 2010 to 2016.

Could this be the final countdown to the coming of the Messiah?

Note that this incredible prophecy has many levels. It correctly predicted the first coming of the Messiah, as the Lamb of God who was sacrificed, to the *very year* He began His ministry – 27 A.D.!

This mind-boggling prophecy also may predict the SECOND and FINAL coming of the Messiah – 2022-23 A.D.!!!

The End of the Age

Now notice! The “prince” causes sacrifice and offering to cease in the “MIDST” of the final week – or middle. Half-way through a week is 3 1/2 days. Since this is a prophetic week, it refers to 3 1/2 years. Thus the prince and his forces will “rule” over the holy city and its environs for the last 3 1/2 years of this age. This coincides with the 42 months mentioned in Revelation 11 – for 42 months equals 3 1/2 years!

This desecration of the newly established Temple or Sanctuary is also mentioned in other prophecies in Daniel. Notice! Daniel 11 describes what will happen this way:

“Ships from Kittim will come against him. He will be checked, and will turn back, RAGING AGAINST THE HOLY COVENANT. Having done his pleasure, he will then attend to THOSE WHO FORSAKE THE HOLY COVENANT [apostate, renegade Jewish and Christian leaders]. Forces will be levied by him; they will DESECRATE THE TEMPLE, the fortress; they will ABOLISH THE REGULAR OFFERING and set up the appalling abomination [probably either a statue of the "prince" himself]. He will flatter with smooth words those who act wickedly toward the covenant, but the people devoted to their God will stand firm. The knowledgeable among the people will make the many understand; and for a while they shall fall by sword and flame, suffer captivity and spoilation. In defeat, they will receive a little help, and many will join them insincerely. Some of the knowledgeable will fall, that they may be refined and purged and whitened until the TIME OF THE END, for an interval still remains until the appointed time” (Dan. 11:30-35).

This evil end-time tyrant, the head of a coming “New International Order” or modern version of the ancient “Holy Roman Empire” of the Middle Ages, will “do as he pleases; he will *exalt and magnify himself* [he has a terrible case of inflated vanity and supreme egotism!] above every god, and he will speak awful things against the God of gods. He will prosper until wrath is spent, and what has been decreed is accomplished” (Dan. 11:36).

Do we know any world leader today who is so wrapped up in himself, cloaked in vanity and supreme ego?

This flattering, insincere, very savvy “king,” this end-time political figure, is also referred to in Daniel’s prophecy as a “contemptible man” (Dan. 11:21), or “a vile person” (NKJV), a “despicable creature” (Moffatt translation), who will “come in unawares and seize the kingdom through trickery” – “intrigue” (KKJV) – he will gain the leadership of the coming New World Order by cunning wisdom and sleight-of-hand, using deceitful, underhanded and devious means (Dan. 11:21). Moffatt translates, “by means of specious promises he shall *pervert* those who bring guilt upon the nation” (Dan. 11:32).

Does this not sound like the way Barack Obama became president of the United States? Trickery, deceit, blandishments, smiles, charisma, promises, chants, slogans, songs, spell-binding mass hypnotism, illusion, magic, perversion, fraud! Born in Kenya, yet claiming birth in Hawaii, despite the available evidence. The world has been

deceived. Satan has inspired his servant and prophecy will show the conclusion of the diabolical hoax.

Our present world is an age of savage and vehement apostasy. It will be unmatched in all the annals of the history of mankind. Blood will flow in rivers. Billions will die in thermonuclear and chemical-biological warfare that is soon to rise up in our faces.

Moffatt translates Daniel 9:27 as follows: “For a week of years *the main body of the people shall cease to practice their religion*; for half of that time sacrifice and offering shall cease, and instead of this there shall be an *appalling abomination*, till finally the appointed doom falls upon the sacrilegious abomination.”

This upcoming final week of years on the earth will be ‘HELL WEEK’!

This would suggest that 2016 and the peace agreement with Iran could be the beginning of the final SEVEN YEARS OF WOE of this age, the antithesis of the peaceful, wonderful “7 years of Adam and Eve in the garden” before they were kicked out. Instead of being seven years of bliss and happiness, however, these final seven years will be seven years of unimaginable, unparalleled WOE and SUFFERING on the earth, the “times of Jacob's trouble” (Jeremiah 30:6-8), and corresponding to the final “seven times” or seven years of punishments God will inflict on His people for their rebellion against His covenant – His laws (see Lev.26:18, 21, 24, 28).

This final period of time corresponds to the “crisis at the close” spoken of by Daniel – a “time of trouble” such as has never been upon the earth in all its gory, bloody, sanguinary, cruel history (Daniel 12:1). Daniel was told, “And now, O Daniel, keep all this a closed secret and keep the book shut as a secret, *till the crisis at the END*; err then many shall give way and trouble shall be multiplied on earth” (Dan.12:4, Moffatt).

The revelation was to be hidden away; stashed secretly. Daniel, fascinated, was told, “Ask no more, Daniel, for the revelation is to be kept secret and close, **TILL THE CRISIS AT THE CLOSE**. Many shall purify themselves and make themselves white and be refined, but the evil shall do evilly; none of the evil shall understand things, it is the pious who understand” (Dan.12:9-10, Moffatt).

No man knows the exact day or hour of the Messiah's coming. Yeshua declared, “Now no one knows anything of that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father” (Mark 13:32). In fact, Messiah went on, “Take care, keep awake and pray; you never know the time. It is like a man leaving his house to go abroad; he puts his servants in charge, each with his work to do, and he orders the porter to keep watch. Watch then, for you never know when the Lord of the House will come, in the late evening or at midnight or at cock-crow or in the morning. Watch, in case he comes suddenly and finds you asleep. Watch: I say it to you, and I say it to all” (Mark 13:34-37).

We must never assume that we know all the answers. But could it be possible that for those of us who live at this special time, that God has given us special new insight into the year and time of His return? World troubles are escalating rapidly and the time is drawing near – it is even at the doors!

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
 The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
 Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
 Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
 The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
 The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
 The best lack all conviction, while the worst
 Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
 Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
 The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
 When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
 Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
 A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
 A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
 Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
 Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.

The darkness drops again; but now I know
 That twenty centuries of stony sleep
 Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle,
 And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
 Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

-- W. B. Yeats