

DANIEL

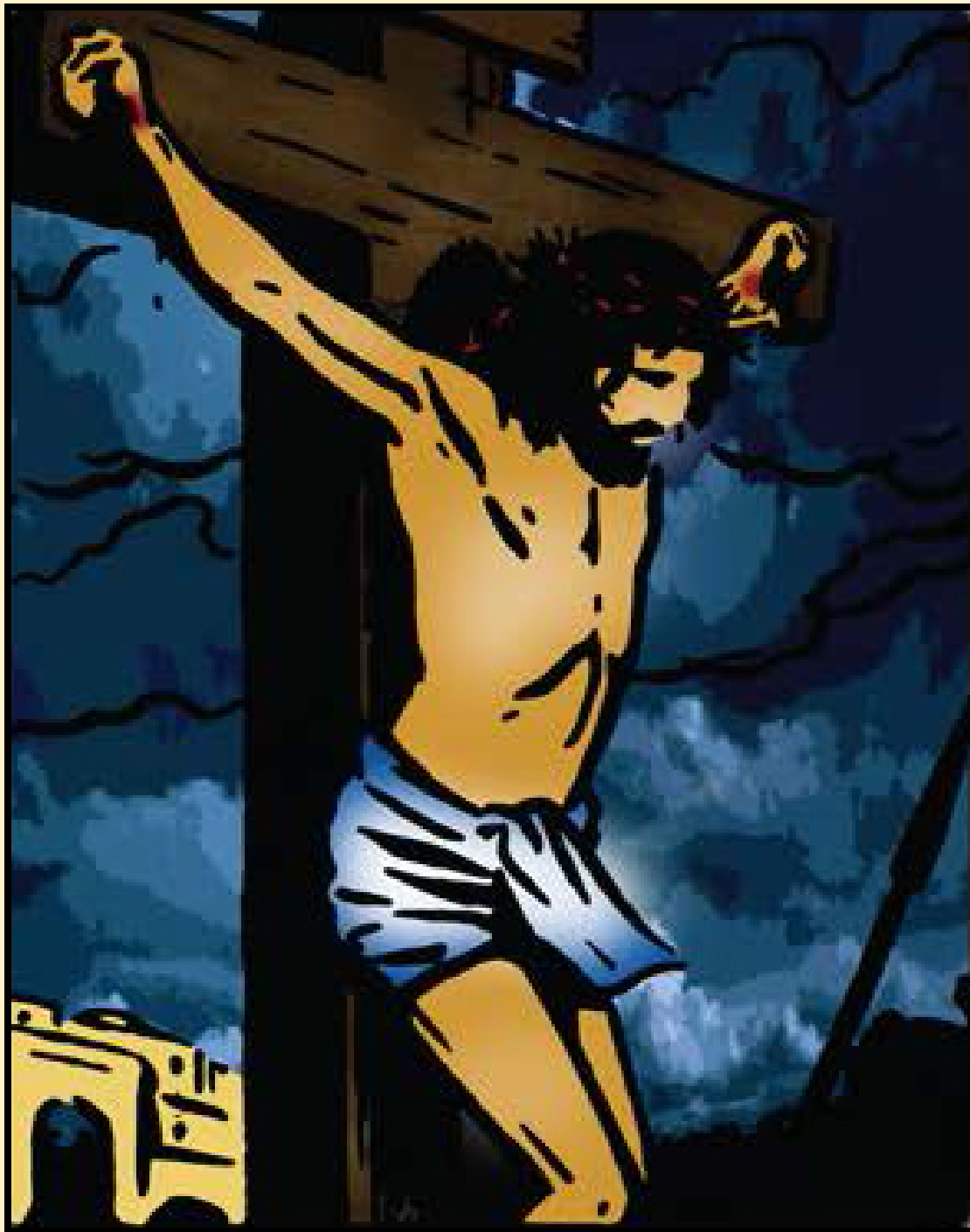
Chapter 9, part 1

70 Weeks

Basic and General Study
of the Book of Daniel

by Gaetan





PROPHECY OF Daniel's 70 Weeks

CHAPTER 9 PART 1

Basic and General Study of the Book of Daniel *compiled by Gaetan,
read by Anna*

As it progresses, the Book of Daniel becomes more and more fascinating, and in this chapter 9 we will learn about how Daniel was told some very specific timings regarding the sacrificial death of the Messiah and the length of the still-to-come reign of the Antichrist. But before receiving that revelation, Daniel had been studying the writings of his contemporary, Jeremiah, regarding the fate of the Jewish people and the duration of their captivity in Babylon.

DAN.9:1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

DAN.9:2 in the first year of his reign I Daniel **understood by books the number of the years**, whereof the word of the LORD came to **Jeremiah** the prophet, that he would accomplish **seventy years** in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Leaving Jerusalem during the Babylonian Invasion



There are two places in Jeremiah's writings where the Lord said that the Jews would go into captivity in Babylon for 70 years:



****Jer.25:1-2, 11-12** The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (which was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying: ... And this whole **land shall be a desolation** and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**.

****Jer.29:10** for thus says the Lord: **After seventy years** are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and **cause you to return** to this place.

These are specific and precise prophecies that were fulfilled in two significant ways: Firstly, the Babylonians invaded Jerusalem three times. Fed up with the continuing rebellions, Nebuchadnezzar desolated the city and the temple in 587/586 BC. Secondly, the Jews were uprooted and exiled to Babylon, serving the kings of that land for 70 years. This was called the captivity. Finally, King Cyrus of the Medo-Persian empire conquered Babylon. This was the man whom God had predicted by name years before, in 712 BC, who also permitted the Jewish people to return home.



*****ISA.44:28 That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built; and to the temple, thy foundation shall be laid.***



****ISA.45:1, 4, 13** *Thus saith the LORD to his anointed, to **Cyrus**, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him... For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, **I have even called thee by thy name**: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me... I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: **he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives**, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts.*

We must now consider what is regarded as a “year” in ancient terms. Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727) wrote:

“All nations, before the just length of the solar year was known, reckoned months by the course of the moon, ... and in making calendars for their festivals, they reckoned thirty days to a lunar month, and twelve lunar months to a year...”

In other words, the year of the ancients consisted of 360 days. Let's examine the dates: Nebuchadnezzar first took captives away from Jerusalem around 605 BC, and it seems this was regarded as the start of the 70 years. King Cyrus gave permission for the exiles to return in 538 BC, but that return didn't occur till 536 BC. In that year, 42,360 Jews returned (*Ezra 1:1-7; 2:64*). From 605 BC to 536 BC is 69 solar years or modern calendar years and is equal to 70 prophetic years of 360 days.

DAN.9:3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

Daniel, upon reading these scriptures from Jeremiah's writings, turned his face to seek God in prayer. Jeremiah had made it clear that Israel's troubles and Captivity were the result of their own misbehavior and departure from the ways and worship of their God. Perhaps this, together with the knowledge that the 70 years were almost finished, motivated Daniel to pray one of the most heartfelt prayers found in the Bible, confessing, and asking the Lord to forgive, both his and his people's iniquities.



Since our focus is on the prophetic message from Gabriel, we will jump ahead to verse 20.

DAN.9:20 And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and **confessing my sin and the sin of my people** Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

DAN.9:21 yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man **Gabriel**, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to **fly swiftly**, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

We read of Gabriel in connection with only three people in Scripture: Daniel, to whom he appears twice; Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist; and Mary, the mother of Jesus. Luke describes him as an angel of the Lord, and Gabriel himself says to Zechariah:

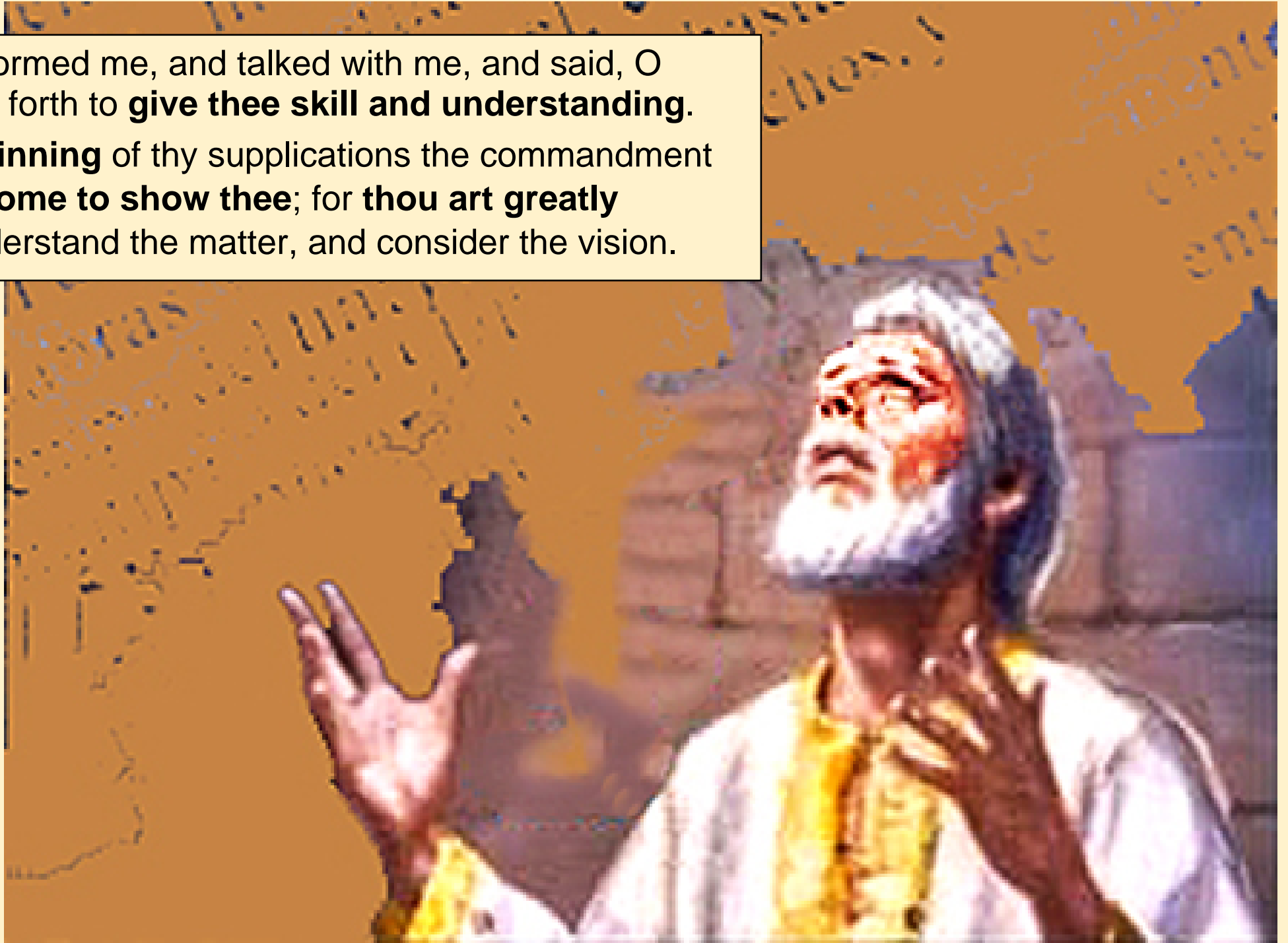
“I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news (Luke 1: 11, 19).”



DAN.9:22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to **give thee skill and understanding.**

DAN.9:23 At the **beginning** of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and **I am come to show thee**; for **thou art greatly beloved**: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

It is about 12 or 13 years since his first encounter with Gabriel, and now once again the archangel appears to Daniel to give him another revelation. Like Jeremiah's prophecy, this revelation also concerns the number 70, but this time it has to do with a period of "**seventy weeks.**"



The prophecy predicted among other things the time when Jesus the Messiah would make Himself known and be crucified. Besides these specific timings, other events are mentioned, whose fulfillment makes this prophetic message all the more amazing. At the time of Daniel receiving this prophecy (circa 538 BC), none of these events had occurred yet:

DAN.9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to **finish the transgression**, and to make an **end 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**.

DAN.9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the **commandment** to restore and to **build Jerusalem** unto the **Messiah the Prince** shall be **seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks**: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in **troublous times**.

DAN.9:26 And **after threescore and two** weeks shall **Messiah be cut off**, but not for himself: 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.



The word **“week”** is translated from the Hebrew word transliterated as *shabua*. Aside from having the meaning of a seven-day week, it also has the literal meaning of **“seven”** and **“unit of seven.”** In Genesis there is found a passage that also uses this word *shabua*: **Genesis 29:27** is a discussion about working for a time period of seven years, by which Jacob would earn the right to marry Rachel.

Laban said to Jacob **“fulfill her week,”** which both men understood to be a term of 7 years. Jacob certainly got the message, for in **Genesis 29:28**, it says Jacob **“fulfilled her week.”** He worked 7 years, that is, a **“week”** of years. In the ancient Hebrew, **“week”** could mean 7 days or 7 years, and by looking at the context, it was easy to tell whether the intended meaning was days or years.

When we add the 7 weeks and the 62 weeks (*Verse 25*), we come up with a total of 69 weeks. Then if we multiply 69 times 7, we arrive at a figure of 483 years. God was telling Daniel that 483 years would pass between the time that the command was given to return and rebuild Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, and would finish at some point before His Crucifixion.

Israel regathered
after Babylonian
Captivity

Going forth of
the command

“70 WEEKS”

Messiah
the Prince

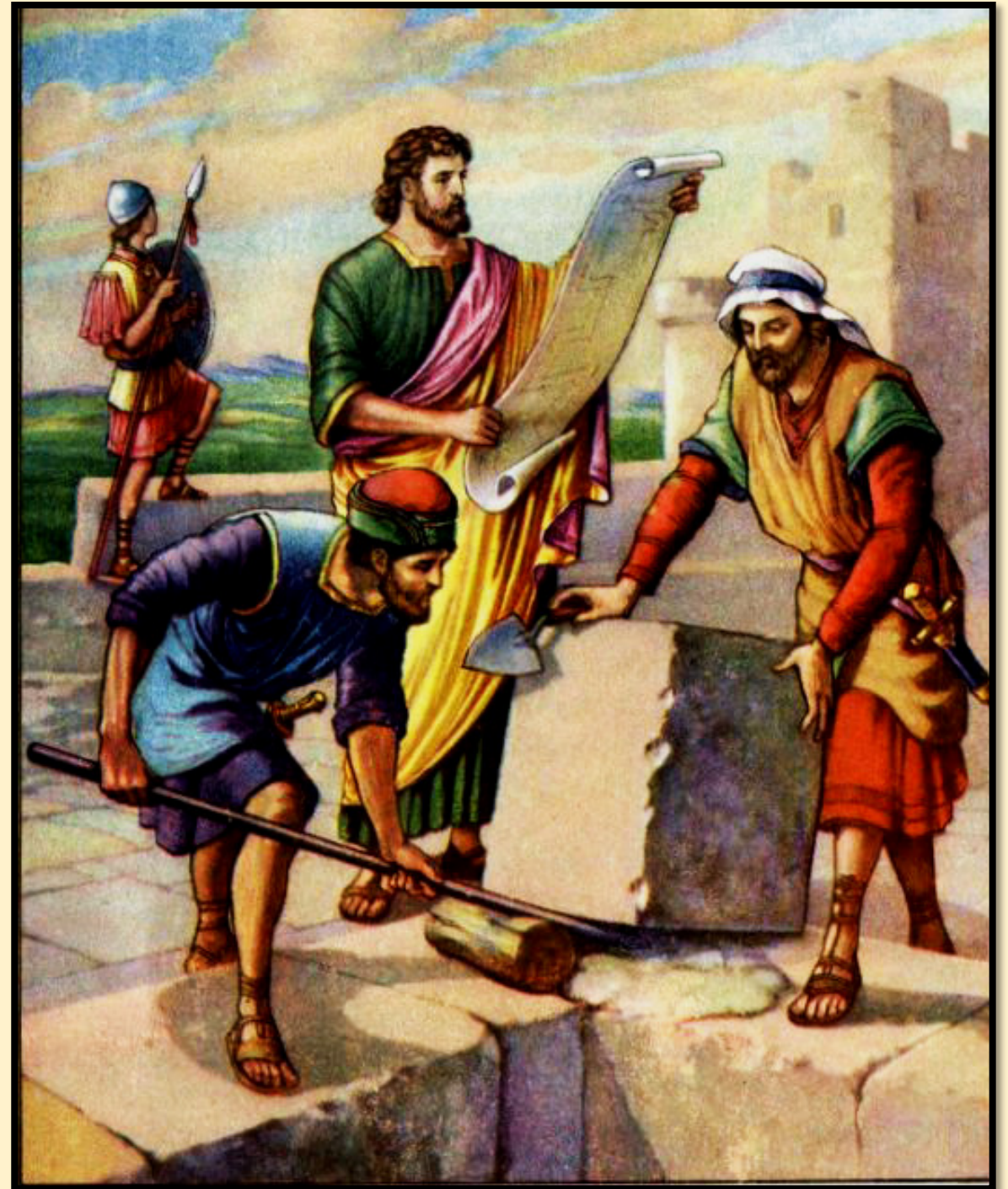
Messiah
“cut off”



When was that command given? There were three commands or decrees. The first was by Cyrus in 538 BC (*Ezra 1:1-4, 5:13-17*). This was limited to rebuilding the Lord's house (*Ezra 6*). The second was by Darius in 517 BC (*Ezra 6:1-12*), reaffirming the proclamation of Cyrus, as to the temple. Like the previous one, no mention was made of restoring the city and its walls. The third one was by Artaxerxes, in 445 BC, allowing Nehemiah permission to rebuild Jerusalem (*Nehemiah 2:3-8*), and this is the command that **verse 25** was referring to.

Now it is time to do some math. We need to convert 483 prophetic or Jewish years into solar years. A solar year consists of about 365¼ days. $(483 \times 360) \div 365\frac{1}{4} = 476$ solar years.

We know that the *“going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem ... and the wall”* was in 445 BC. Daniel predicted that after 69 weeks the *“Messiah shall be cut off.”*



Those 69 weeks translate into 476 years of our solar calendar, which, when added to 445 BC, comes close to the year 30 AD, the year of Christ's crucifixion, according to most sources. That exact year being predicted 476 years ahead of time in the Book of Daniel is a remarkable example of God's foreknowledge and oversight of human history!



"...shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times." The seven weeks could be the years it took them to rebuild the city and the wall. And after that came ***"three score and two weeks"***, that's 62 seven's. Add that to 7

and you have a total of 69 weeks or seven's. This is the exact length of time required - from the edict of Artaxerxes, which permitted them to rebuild the city, to the coming of Christ. So the Lord is merely foretelling the future and predicting that they were going to rebuild the city and the wall and then after that it would be another 62 times seven, until Christ the Messiah. Nehemiah and the Jews had to do the rebuilding ***"even in troublous times"*** because of their enemies.



****NEH.4:16-18** So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while **the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor;** and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that **with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built.** And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me.

Some scholars put Artaxerxes' edict to rebuild the city at the year 444 BC and still others put Christ's death from 29 to 33 AD. Suffice it to

say, the time span given was close enough. It lets us know that 476 years after the Persian king's edict, "*Messiah the Prince*" would come on the scene. Whether this time span lands us in a particular event (such as Palm Sunday), or just anywhere in the series of events in Jesus' public ministry, it shows remarkable accuracy, no matter how you figure it out!

7 weeks + 62 weeks = 69 x 7 = 483 prophetic years

483 prophetic years or 476 solar years

7 weeks

62 weeks

One last week left

445 B.C.

30 A.D.

The order to restore and to build Jerusalem. **Neh.2:4-8**

... the street and the wall shall be built again, even in troublous time. **Neh.4:17**

...shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself. **Isa.53:8**



There are indications that the Jews of Jesus' day were expecting the Messiah to come around that time. The apostle Luke records that *"the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not"* (Luke 3:15). The Jews were well acquainted with their prophets' writings, so it's likely that their awareness of this prophecy from Daniel was the cause of this expectation.

DAN.9:26 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.
(Lk.23:27-29)

****MAT.24:2**
*And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall **not** be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.*



In verse 26, the prophecy announces that the forces of a prince who is going to come shall destroy the city, meaning Jerusalem, and the sanctuary or temple. This was fulfilled by the Romans under the then-future emperor, Titus, who razed Jerusalem and its second temple to the ground in 70 AD--marking the second time in Jewish history that Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the armies of ruling empires.

Both the sack of Jerusalem and the slaughter of its inhabitants by the Romans are related by the Jewish historian Josephus in his “Antiquities”.



***Appendix on Daniel 9:26: (from the book, ‘Against the Flow’ by the author and apologist John Lennox, section Daniel 9, “Jerusalem and the Future”)**

“In his Olivet discourse Jesus predicted its downfall and the destruction of Herod’s temple by the Romans. He warned of desolations and exile for the nation, leading far into the future up to his Second coming:

****Luke 21: 23-27 “For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled ... And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”**

“Here we have many allusions to Daniel. Chapters 7 and 8 mention the trampling; chapter 7, the coming of the Son of Man; and the series of beasts in chapter 7 are Gentile world powers spanning the times of the Gentiles until the time of the end. Just as Daniel 8 viewed the time of the end through the lens of the abominable deeds of Antiochus Epiphanes (the Greek empire, 168 BC), we find that our Lord viewed the time of the end through the lens of the destruction of the temple (by the Roman empire, AD 70).



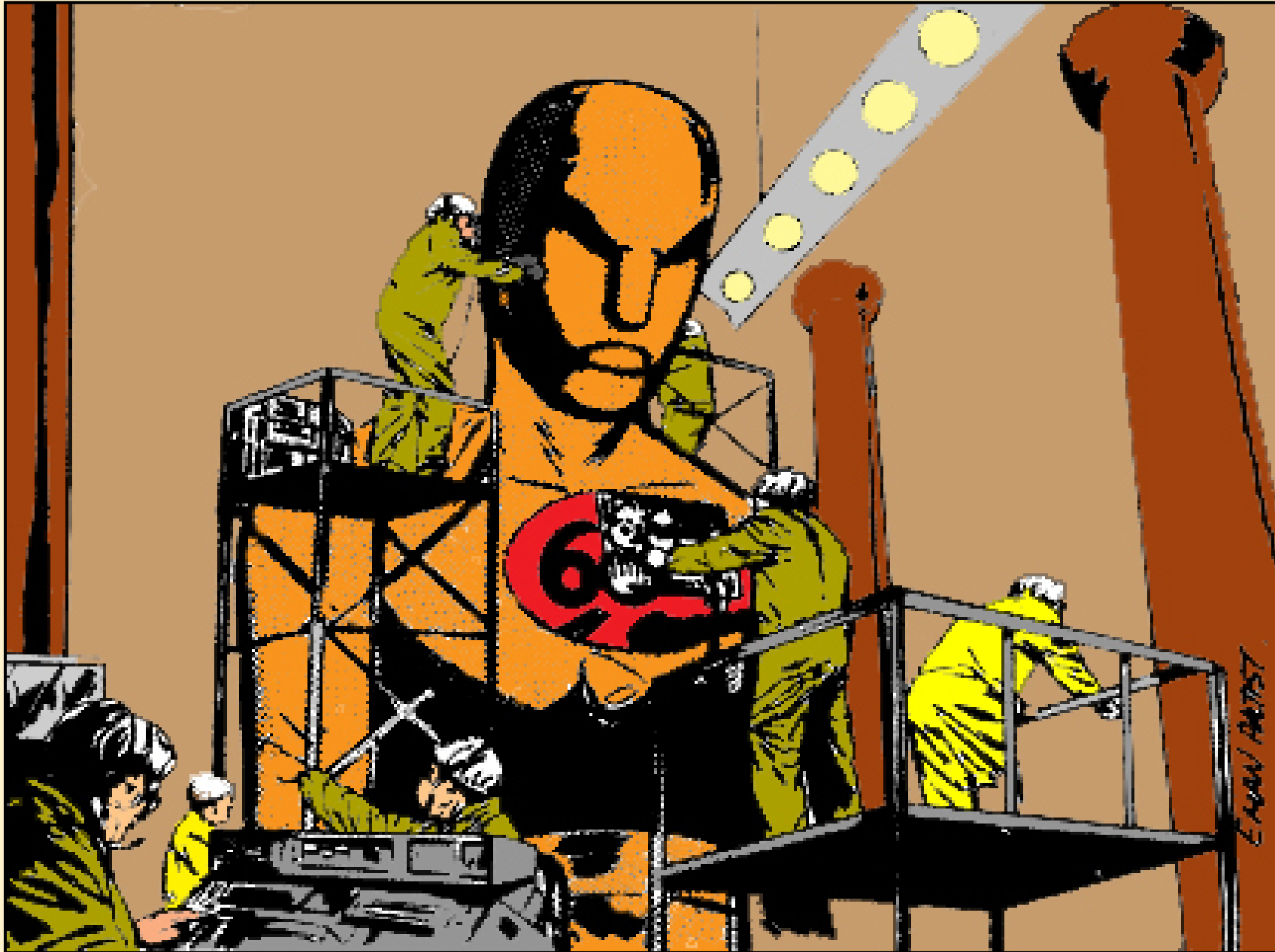
“Indeed, in the Olivet discourse, it is sometimes difficult to know whether you are reading about AD 70 or the end time, or both at once: It is because there are aspects of the first event in 70 AD that recur at the time of the end that the Lord’s answer to their questions was given in those terms, particularly the version in Matthew 24. In a private conversation, Jesus tells his disciples that the temple will be destroyed, and they ask him: *“Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?”* (Matthew 24:3)

“The disciples associated the destruction of the temple with Christ’s return. Jesus cites the fulfilment of one of Daniel’s predictions as a key event in the future:

“...when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place ... then there will be great tribulation... Immediately after the tribulation of those days ... will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man ... and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Mt.24: 15-30)



“In the book of Daniel there are three references to an abomination of desolation. Of this future evil power, he writes:



1. And ... 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 (9: 27).

2. Forces from him shall appear and profane the temple and fortress, and shall take away the regular burnt offering. And they **shall set up the abomination that makes desolate** (11: 31).

3. And from the time that the regular burnt offering is taken away and **the abomination that makes desolate** is set up, there shall be 1,290 days (12: 11).

“We are not told in detail what this abomination is but (as mentioned in the Daniel 8 class) the root idea presumably comes from the desecration of the temple by Antiochus, when he dedicated it to Zeus and offered a pig on the altar. That incident was a foreshadowing of the time of the end. Thus, Daniel 9 has the same ultimate focus as the visions of Daniel 2, 7 and 8 and points us to the future and the Lord’s second coming.” (End of the excerpts from John Lennox)

There is one verse left, Daniel 9:27; don’t miss the amazing interpretation of this last verse in part 2 of this chapter 9.

Have you personally received Jesus into your heart? I hope you have so that you can look forward to these future events, **not with fear and trembling, but with hope, faith and assurance** that God's going to see you through, He's going to rescue you out of it all and take you to be with Him, to live with Him forever!

If you haven’t done so yet, please pray this simple prayer to receive the One who sacrificed Himself that you might thrive and flourish, both now and in the Afterlife:

"Dear Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank you for Your forgiveness of all my faults. I accept that You are the Son of God and that You died for me. I invite You into my heart and life. And I invite Your Holy Spirit to fill me with Your presence, guidance, and comfort. Thank you for your free gift of eternal life. Amen."

Compiled and edited by Gaetan from multiple sources.

gaetan.goye@gmail.com

