

The Prince Who Is to Come, Part 2

Part of the God Over the Nations series

❖ Scripture – Daniel 9:25-27

❖ Prayer

❖ Introduction

- The date most likely was April 3, 33 AD according to our calendar
 - The gospel of Luke in the 24th chapter tells us that
 - Luke then immediately switches locations from Jerusalem to
 - 2 heartbroken men are walking on a road going from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus and talking because of what had happened 3 days earlier on Friday
 - They just couldn't believe that Jesus had been put to death
 - ◆ They were still sad and confused
 - Suddenly the resurrected Jesus approached them and began to walk with them
 - ◆ The text says that God prevented them from recognizing Jesus yet
 - ◆ Jesus began to engage them in conversation
 - They told him about Jesus and his ministry, about the crucifixion, about women Jesus' tomb empty earlier that morning
 - Then we read Jesus' response in Luke 24:25-27, *And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!"*²⁶ *"Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"*²⁷ *Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.*
 - Although the text doesn't give us specifics, I can't help but think that Jesus touched heavily upon Daniel 9:24-27
 - Every one of these verses is foretelling about him!
 - Now some would say, "Not v27. Jesus isn't mentioned there at all"
 - Let me say again: every one of these verses is about him!
 - ◆ I'll show you how so in a moment
- As the title of this message indicates, this message is the second half of my teaching on the 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel 9

- If you were not here last week and are interested in trying to better understand this text, I would strongly recommend you to listen to part 1 from last Sunday
 - CDs in the foyer
 - Online at westmainbaptist.com
- Quickly, here's what we learned last week as we covered v20-24 that will be very important in understanding today's text
 1. 70 weeks is actually 70 sevens or 7 sabbaticals
 - ◆ A sabbatical is 7 years
 - So what we have here is a week of years instead of a week of days
 - ◆ Therefore, 70 weeks is 70×7 years, which equals 490 years
 2. 490 years is literally 490 years the way we understand years
 - ◆ That number is neither 490 Jewish lunar years nor 490 "prophetic" years, which some say equal only 483 actual years
 - ◆ It's 490 years the way we understand years
 3. The biblical framework for understanding this prophecy is the Sabbatical & Jubilee cycle ordained by God for the nation of Israel, pointing us to the Ultimate Jubilee in Jesus Christ
 4. Every goal of the 70 weeks found in v24 is accomplished in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - ◆ In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, transgression is finished, sin is ended, iniquity is atoned for, everlasting righteousness is brought in, vision and prophecy are sealed up, and the most holy place is anointed
 - If you will keep these 4 things in mind today, you will be greatly helped
- Now, let me say again as I said last week that the way I approach this text is most likely different from how you've been taught
 - Why is that?
 - As I said last week, that's because the vast majority of interpretations of this text are coming from a viewpoint that God has two peoples (Israel and the Church) and two plans (an earthly plan for Israel and a heavenly plan for the Church)
 - That is the crux of what is called Dispensationalism
 - ◆ Again, I am not a Dispensationalist because I believe the Bible teaches one people of God and one plan, but many people who love God and love the Bible do believe that the Bible teaches two peoples

and two plans

- ◆ That's why my approach very well might be different from what you've been taught
 - Are y'all ready to dig into this?
 - Let's do it!

➤ **BIG IDEA: The 70 weeks timeline begins with the commission to Ezra and ends with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus**

- Already you might see a difference from what you've been taught
 - Perhaps you have been taught that the 70 weeks timeline begins with the commission to Nehemiah and ends at the end of the age with the 2nd coming or the return of Jesus
 - ◆ I do not believe the text supports this timeline
- So again, the 70 weeks timeline begins with the commission to Ezra and ends with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus

TRANSITION: First here in our text, we see that...

❖ **The 70 weeks are broken down into 3 phases**

- It's in v24 that we see the complete number of weeks prophesied here, *Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city*
- v25 gives us the first two phases, *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*
 - The 1st phase is 7 weeks = 49 years
 - The 2nd phase is 62 weeks = 434 years
- v27 gives us the final stage, *And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.*
 - The 3rd and final phase is 1 week = 7 years
 - That gives us a grand total of 490 years

TRANSITION: Let's look at each phase individually...

❖ Phase 1 (457 BC – 408 BC): Jerusalem is fully rebuilt

- We read in Daniel 9:25 that Phase 1 begins with *the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem*
- In 537 BC, King Cyrus of the Medo-Persian empire began issuing that decree
 - God stirred up Cyrus to allow the Jews to return and rebuild the temple and the city, and he decreed that Medo-Persia would pay for it all
 - His words are recorded for us in Ezra 1:1-4 if you want to read his Words after while
 - Cyrus basically says, “You Jews can go home and rebuild your temple and city, and send me the bill for it”
 - The book of Ezra goes on to tell us nearly 30,000 men plus their families left Babylon that year and returned to Jerusalem
 - ◆ That’s easily over 100,000 people
 - Once they arrived in Jerusalem, they soon rebuilt the altar of God and began sacrificing burnt offerings again in both the morning and evening
 - Within the 2nd year, they began to the work of rebuilding the temple
 - ◆ But the decree allowing the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem had to be reissued and expanded over the next 80 years because new kings would come to power and opposition continually rose up against the Jews
 - Remember, when Babylon conquered Judah, it also occupied it
 - These leftover people threatened the Jews, hired counselors to frustrate the work, wrote letters to the kings begging them to stop the work in Jerusalem
 - Cyrus the Medo-Persian king was succeeded by Cambyses, then Bardiya, and eventually Darius I comes to power around 522 BC
 - ◆ Early in his reign, the Gentiles convince him to put a stop to the Jews work, but eventually Cyrus’s decree is uncovered by Darius I, and he reaffirms and expands Cyrus’s decree so that work can begin again in 520 BC
 - ◆ We read of the outcome in Ezra 6:15, *This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.*
 - The year was 516 BC
 - Darius is succeeded by Ahasuerus or Xerxes, and Xerxes is succeeded Artaxerxes
 - ◆ Again, for the third and final time, Artaxerxes reaffirmed and

expanded Cyrus's decree in 457 BC when he commissioned Ezra to go to Jerusalem to reestablish the Law of Moses and bring further support to the temple

➤ So, this decree began in 537 BC and was fulfilled in 457 BC

➤ The Scripture itself counts these three decrees as one decree – Ezra 6:14, ...*And they finished building according to the command of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia.*

➤ So, which date is our beginning date for this prophecy?

▪ Is it Cyrus in 537 BC, or Darius in 520 BC, or Artaxerxes in 457 BC?

▪ Well, Daniel 9:25 tells us that from the *decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks*

• We know that 7 weeks and 62 weeks is 69×7 years, which equals 483 years as we understand years

• Looking back we also know that Jesus was and is the Messiah

• We also know that Jesus was born around 3 BC and died around AD 33

◆ So, we just take each of these decree dates and add 483 years to them to see which one gets us into that 3 BC to AD 33 range

➤ $-537 + 483 = -54$ (54 BC)

▪ So Cyrus's decree is too early a date

➤ $-520 + 483 = -37$ (37 BC)

▪ Darius's decree is also too early a date

➤ $-457 + 483 + 1 = 27$ (AD 27)

▪ Artaxerxes decree to Ezra gets us into the range of Jesus' life

◆ Now another date that gets thrown out there is Artaxerxes' commission to Nehemiah in 444 BC

➤ Let's put it to the mathematical test

➤ $-444 + 483 + 1 = 40$ (AD 40)

▪ Artaxerxes decree to Nehemiah is too late a date

➤ So, our beginning year for the 70 weeks prophecy is 457 BC

▪ The case for this date is even further strengthened when you take into account the fact that 457 BC is the beginning of Sabbatical

• Remember, I told you that the biblical framework for understanding this prophecy is the Sabbatical & Jubilee cycle ordained by God for the nation of Israel, pointing us to the Ultimate Jubilee in Jesus Christ

• Some very good work has been done by scholars researching the

Sabbatical cycle, giving us a solid idea as to what years the Sabbaticals began and ended

- ◆ Of these four dates—537, 520, 457, and 444—only 457 begins a Sabbatical cycle

- So, phase 1 of this prophecy is from 457 BC to 408 BC
 - During this time, the building of Jerusalem is completed through the efforts of leaders like Ezra & Nehemiah and spurred on by prophets like Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi
 - Jerusalem is finally completely restored, evidenced by the plaza and the moat being mentioned in Daniel 9:25
 - In that same verse, we also read that Jerusalem will be restored under times of distress
 - If you read the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, you'll see that's "under times of distress" is sort of an understatement
 - From the rebuilding of the temple to repairing the wall of the city, there was intense opposition
 - ◆ So, that's phase 1

TRANSITION: Let's look at phase 2...

❖ **Phase 2 (408 BC – AD 27): Nothing happens**

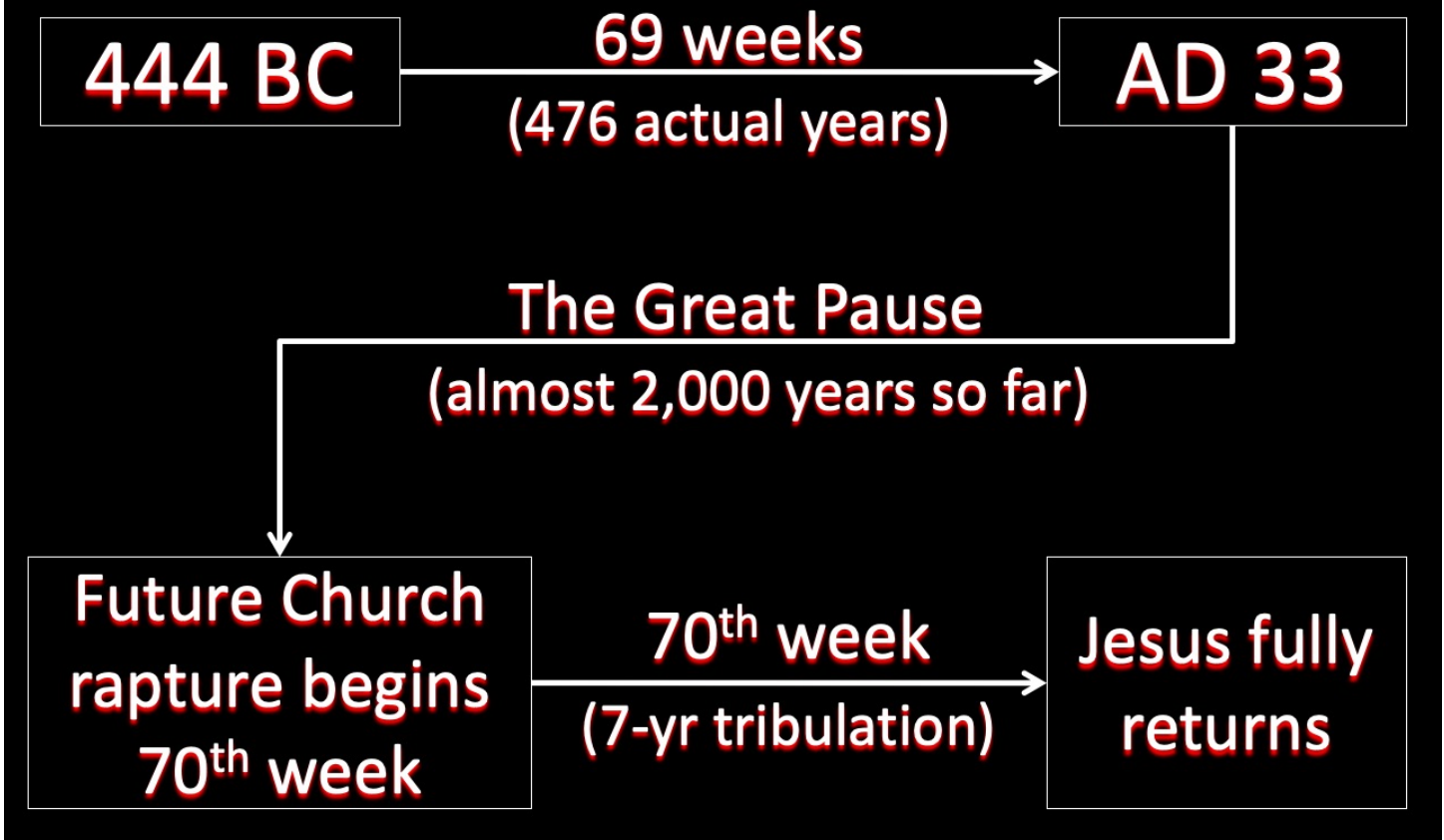
- Phase 2 would be 62 weeks, which 62 x 7 years, which equals 434 years
 - It stretches from 408 BC to AD 27
- Now, when I say nothing happens, I mean that nothing major happens concerning this prophecy
 - There were tons of things that happened during these years in Israel
 - Greece defeated Medo-Persia and became ruler over Israel, and later on Rome defeated Greece, becoming yet another ruler of Israel
 - Jesus was born during this time period
- But there is a reason why the prophecy is broken down in 7 weeks and 62 weeks until the Messiah
 - Most likely it's because those first 7 weeks saw intense activity reestablishing the temple, Jerusalem, and all of Israel that the following 62 weeks just didn't see
 - So, there's a good reason to divide the 69 weeks into 7 weeks and 62 weeks

TRANSITION: Finally, let's look at phase 3...

❖ **Phase 3 (AD 27 – AD 34): The Messiah ends sacrifice**

- This brings us to the final week
 - So far, so good
 - Perhaps you've not heard anything so far that is really different from what you've heard before, but we now come to the dividing line of interpreting this passage
 - The question is this: is the 70th week in the past or in the future?
 - ◆ Your answer depends upon whom you believe the "prince who is to come" is
 - ◆ Do you see that phrase there in v26?: *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*
 - Is the prince who is to come the Messiah, or is the prince who is to come the Antichrist?
 - If it's the Antichrist, then the 70th week is future, but if it's the Messiah, then the 70th week is past
 - I'm guessing that you've been taught that the prince who is to come is the Antichrist and that the 70th week is still in future
- The futurist timeline basically looks like this

Futurist Timeline



- The first 69 weeks bring our prophetic timetable to the crucifixion of Jesus AD 33
 - So, in v26 when it says *after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off*, that means that Jesus dies at the end of the 69th week
- Then God puts this prophetic timetable on pause
 - It's been on pause now for almost years
 - Why in the world would God do that?
 - ◆ The basic answer given is that these last almost 2,000 years is the Church Age or the Age of the Gentiles
 - ◆ They would say God hit the pause button because this prophecy only concerns the people of the nation of Israel and since God is not dealing with the Jewish people at this time, the timetable has been paused
 - Again, the doctrine behind this understanding is that God has two

different peoples—one called Israel and the other called the Church—and after Israel rejected and crucified the Messiah, God turned from Israel to His other people, the Church (God turned from the Jews to the Gentiles)

- So from a futurist view, we are in what is called by some “The Great Pause”
- ◆ Those who see the Scripture this way believe that 70th week will begin sometime in the future when the Antichrist is revealed and the church is raptured out
 - At this point, God hits the play button and unpauses the prophetic timetable revealed here in Daniel 9
 - This is the beginning of the 70th week, which is the 7-year tribulation that only the Jews and nonChristians will have to endure
 - At the end of those 7 years, Christ will fully return to earth
 - That’s the futurist view and the reasoning behind it
- I know that many understand the Scripture this way, maybe even many of you, but I do not believe this is the best way to interpret the Scripture
 - Thankfully, we can respectfully disagree on this timetable and still get along just fine in the same church because this is not a primary doctrine
 - So there’s lots of charity on this doctrine
 - But let me show you why I believe “the prince who is to come” is the Messiah, making the 70th week in the past
- 4 reasons Jesus is “the prince who is to come” of Daniel 9:
 1. Jesus is the prince who is to come of Daniel 9 because notice that in v25 that the Messiah is called the Prince, *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks...*
 - We know from this side of the cross and resurrection that Jesus is clearly the Messiah, and it’s plainly established right here that the Messiah is also the prince
 - ◆ So, Jesus is the Messiah and the Prince
 2. Jesus is the prince who is to come of Daniel 9 because v26 doesn’t mean that the Messiah dies and then the prince who is to come comes
 - There’s absolutely nothing here in the text that says the prince who is to come comes after the Messiah dies
 - In fact, when it says in v26 that *after the 62 weeks the Messiah will be*

cut off and have nothing, that simply means that sometime after the 69th week, the Messiah will die

- I feel really safe in saying that that phrase does not mean that Jesus dies at the end of the 69th week
- How do I know it doesn't mean that?
 - ◆ I know because two things are supposed to happen *after* the 69th week
 - v26, *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*
 - 1. the Messiah will be cut off
 - 2. Jerusalem and the temple will be destroyed
 - However you understand Daniel 9, we certainly know that Jerusalem and the temple were not destroyed for approximately 40 years later in AD 70
 - So, Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed after the 69th week but not right after
 - Therefore, the cutting off of the Messiah can also mean *after but not right after* the 69th week
 - In fact, we'll see in a moment that it's actually during the 70th week when the Messiah is cut off
 - So, v26 doesn't exclude the Messiah from being the prince who is to come
- 3. Jesus is the prince who is to come of Daniel 9 because it's already been established in v25 that the Messiah is the Prince here in our passage and from Daniel's perspective, the coming of the Messiah Prince was in the future or still to come
 - So, the prince who is to come in v26 is Jesus the Messiah
 - ◆ Again, there's nothing in the text to indicate that there are two different princes
 - But if the prince who is to come is Jesus, you might ask: how do we understand the part of v26 that says, *the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary?*
 - ◆ Is this phrase talking about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Rome in AD 70? Yes

- ◆ Is the people of the prince who is to come talking about the Romans?
No
- ◆ Is the people of the prince who is to come talking about Christians?
No
- ◆ Is the people of the prince who is to come talking about the Jews?
Bingo! Yes
 - Was Jesus a Jew? Absolutely
 - Did the Jews destroy Jerusalem and the temple?
 - While it was the Romans who actually put the torch to Jerusalem, the destruction of the city was blamed squarely on the Jewish people themselves by historians
 - The Jewish Zealots repeatedly rebelled against Rome, trying to win Israel's freedom, and Rome was forced to respond with devastating force
 - In this sense, Jesus' people, the Jews, did destroy the city and the sanctuary
 - They were really to blame

4. Jesus is the prince who is to come of Daniel 9 because the prince who is to come confirms the covenant with the many and puts a stop to temple sacrifice
- *v27, And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.*
 - ◆ So, who is the "he" here?
 - The closest referent before *he* is *the prince who is to come* there in v26
 - So the "he" is the prince who is to come
 - But we must go further than that because again, v25 tells us that the Prince and the Messiah are the same
 - So, the *he* here in v27 is actually Jesus the Messiah
 - Did Jesus make or confirm a covenant with the many in the 70th week?
 - ◆ He absolutely did
 - ◆ He brought in the New Covenant through His own blood, which was the fulfillment of the covenants God had made with both Abraham and Moses

- Did Jesus put a stop to sacrifice in the midst of the 70th week?
 - ◆ Absolutely he did
 - ◆ You see, the 70th week followed right after the 69th week
 - There was no pause
 - So, the 70th week covered AD 27 to 34
 - Jesus was cut off and crucified *in the midst of the week* as the KJV says
 - In fact, it was most likely April 1, 33
 - And on that day, sacrifice was put to a stop
 - ◆ Oh, the Jews continued to sacrifice in the temple for 37 more years until the temple was destroyed, but on that day in AD 33, God no longer recognized their sacrifices
 - ◆ They were null and void because the ultimate sacrifice in Jesus Christ had been offered
 - ◆ The lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world had been sacrificed
 - ◆ Therefore sacrifice ceased
 - ◆ That's what the writer of Hebrews is trying to get across to us in Hebrews 10:10-14:

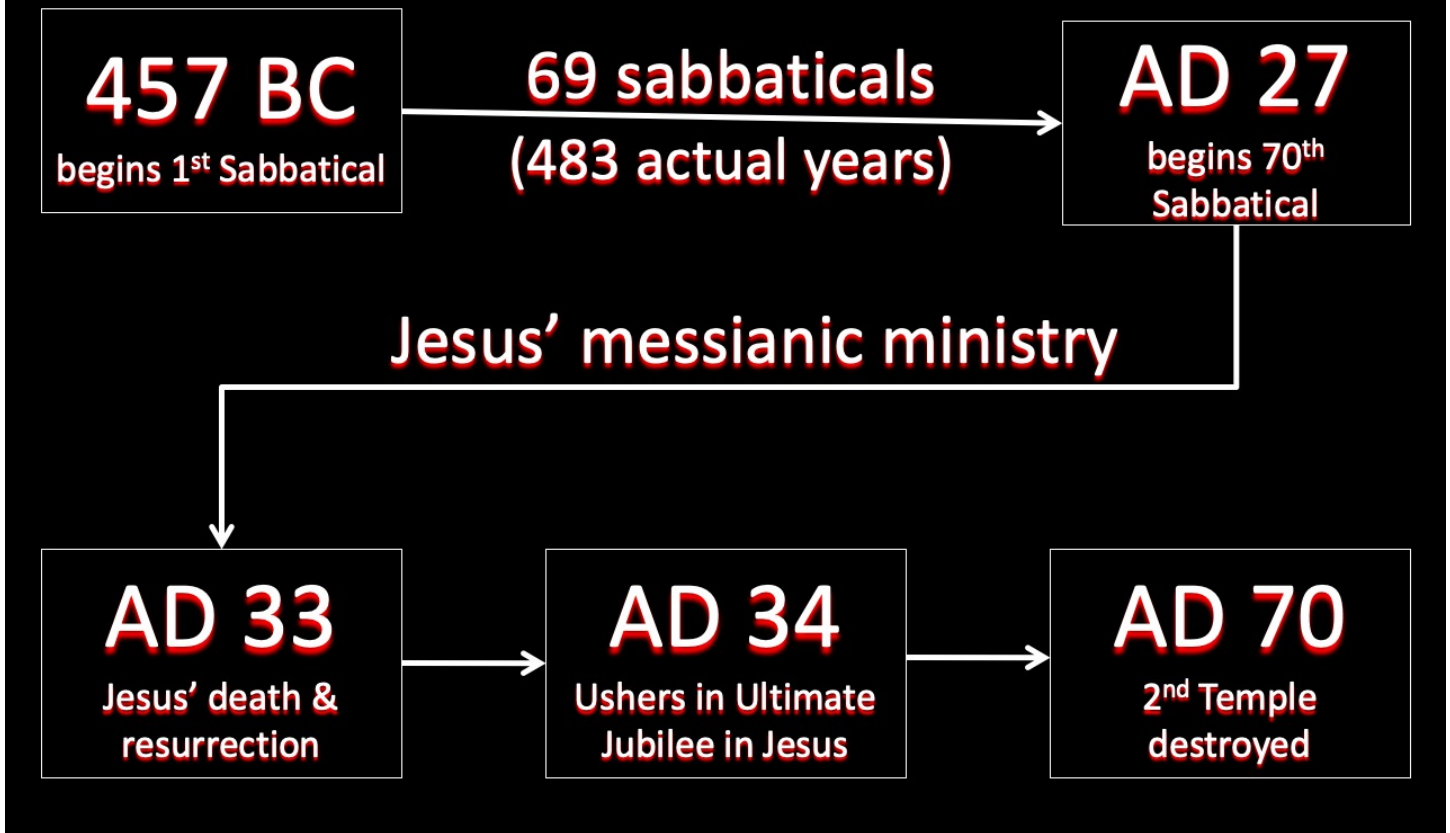
By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; ¹² but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, ¹³ waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

- ◆ Ladies and Gentlemen, mission accomplished
 - Transgression is finished, sin is ended, iniquity is atoned for, everlasting righteousness is brought in, vision and prophecy are sealed up, and the most holy place is anointed
 - Oh, during the 70th week, the Messiah ministered marvelously
- In fact, I would argue that the Antichrist isn't even mentioned in this prophecy
 - ◆ The end v27 says, *...and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is*

decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.

- ◆ That Scripture could have the Antichrist and the end of the age in mind, but most likely, the Roman general Titus is in mind here who laid siege to Jerusalem in AD 70 and destroyed the city and temple
- So, the 70th week was from AD 27 to AD 34
 - And let me just add that AD 27 begins a Sabbatical cycle and 33/34 ends the 490 year timetable, leading us into the Ultimate Jubilee in Jesus Christ
 - Our time line would look something like this:
 - 70 Sabbaticals were prophesied
 - The commission to Ezra in 457 BC begins the 1st Sabbatical
 - 69 Sabbaticals, which is 483 years, brings us to AD 27, which begins the 70th Sabbatical
 - During this 70th Sabbatical, Jesus performs his Messianic ministry on earth and dies in AD 33
 - AD 34 through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ ushers in the Ultimate Jubilee for all who believe on the Messiah Jesus
 - Finally, the 2nd temple is destroyed in AD 70, never to be rebuilt again

Fulfilled Timeline



❖ Conclusion

- If there's one thing that you must know: Jesus died so that you could be saved
 - v26 tell us that the Messiah Christ Jesus was cut off and had nothing
 - That literally means that Jesus died, but not for himself
 - You see, Jesus died for all who will believe on Him so that if you will believe on Him, you shall not perish but have everlasting life
 - All who will believe on Him will be saved and experience the Ultimate Jubilee that is found in Him
 - ◆ In light of Isaiah 61, that means that through Jesus Christ, the afflicted have good news, the brokenhearted are mended, captives to sin are liberated, prisoners of the devil are freed, the mourning are comforted with a crown and the oil of gladness, and the faint are given a mantle of praise
 - ◆ In light of Leviticus 25, through Jesus Christ, you can be released

from slavery to sin; the earth is returned to its rightful and original owner, namely the children of God who you can be a part of; you can be relieved from the debt to God your sin has racked up; you can rest from working to get to heaven forevermore by receiving heaven by grace through faith in Jesus Christ

- ◆ If you'll only repent of your sin and believe on Jesus, the Jubilee is yours
- May you receive the Prince who was to come & who is to come again and rejoice in the Jubilee of salvation!