

Daniel 9:26-27

Introduction

(NOTE: This introduction is identical to the previous sermon's [Dan. 9:26] intro.)

In the beginning of chapter nine, Daniel reads in Jeremiah about the fact that seventy years had been decreed for the desolations of Jerusalem (seventy years to give the land its sabbath rests). Daniel sees that the seventy years must be about up especially because Babylon has now fallen to the Persians. So Daniel prays this prayer in Daniel 9. He prays for the end of Israel's exile; but more than that he prays for all that the end of this exile would ultimately mean for God's people – the end of the constant covenant-breaking of God's people, the sealing up of sin, the atoning for iniquity, the bringing in of everlasting righteousness, the sealing up of vision and prophet, and the anointing of a most holy.

In response to Daniel's prayer, the angel Gabriel is sent to Daniel with this message: Israel's physical return to the land after the seventy years will only be the preparation for, and a foreshadowing of, the true spiritual salvation and gathering in of all God's sheep not after seventy years, but after seventy "sevens." Seventy sevens is the equivalent of ten Jubilees (ten times 49), culminating in the true Jubilee and Sabbath rest of God's people – the very thing Daniel was praying for. God is using the calendar He gave to Israel (with its Sabbaths and Jubilees) as a way of picturing that ultimate redemptive calendar that's fully known only to Him. In other words, the point was not to give Daniel dates and calculations, but to assure him that while there was still going to be what felt like a long "delay" ("seventy sevens") all was still progressing according to plan. The angel Gabriel continues in verse 25:

- Daniel 9:25 — Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven sevens, and then sixty-two sevens when the city shall be built again with square and moat, but in a troubled time.

The going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem was the decree of Cyrus in 538 BC (the very year that Daniel prayed this prayer) that allowed the exiled Jews to return home and begin rebuilding the temple and the city. We can read about this decree in 1 Chronicles 36 and Ezra 1. The "anointed one," the "prince," is Jesus Christ, who brings the seventy sevens to their fulfillment and completion. Between the decree to rebuild Jerusalem in 538 BC and the coming of this Messiah there would first be a period of seven sevens at the end of which the city would be completed ("built again with square and moat"). This period of about ninety-five years is symbolically pictured as a single Jubilee ("seven sevens") because it really did culminate in a wonderful and joyful—though still "shadowy"—Jubilee in the days of Nehemiah when the city walls were completed. You can read about this Jubilee in Nehemiah chapters 6-12. But this was still a "shadowy" Jubilee because it was followed not by Messiah's kingdom, but by 62 more "sevens" of "troubled times" when Jerusalem was still under the rule of foreign empires – the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans. Why "sixty-two" sevens? That's just the number of sevens that come in between the symbolic seventh seven (that still shadowy Jubilee of the restoration of God's people in the rebuilding of Jerusalem) and the symbolic seventieth seven (the ultimate Jubilee when the Messiah comes and establishes His kingdom).

Remember, the point here is not literal years or dates that we can calculate on a calendar. The point was to give Daniel “wisdom” and “insight” and “understanding” for the daily living of his life – and so also to give us wisdom, and insight, and understanding for the daily living of our lives. And so now the angel Gabriel continues in verse 26:

I. Daniel 9:26 — And after the sixty-two sevens [when the 70th seven has come], an anointed one shall be **cut off** and shall have nothing [here we see the Messiah suffering the curse of the covenant in the place of His covenant-breaking people]. And the people of the prince—the one who is coming—shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.”

Who is this *prince*? And who are the *people* of this prince? We might think at first that the answer is obvious. Verse 25 says: “Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to [the coming of] an anointed one, **a prince...**” So when Gabriel refers here to “the people of the prince—the *one who is coming*,”¹ it’s the most natural thing in the world to assume that this prince is the *same* prince as the one we saw in verse 24 – the anointed one, the Messiah. In fact, that seems to be the very point Gabriel wants to make.

But then it seems very strange to us to say that the people of this prince—the people of the Messiah—will destroy the city and the sanctuary (Jerusalem and the temple). So there are many who assume that what we have here is a different prince introduced suddenly and without any other sign or warning. They would say that this “prince” is the Roman general Titus and that the people of this prince are the Roman troops and legions who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD (cf. NRSV; NLT). This may be the correct interpretation, but I’m not convinced. If there’s any way to stick with the natural, instinctive assumption that the “prince” in verse 26 is the same prince and anointed one that we see in verse 25, then I think that’s what we should do.²

Gabriel doesn’t use any of the common Hebrew words for “army” or “troops” here (e.g. *sa-ba*, hosts/army; *ma-haneh*, camp/army; *ha-yil*, army³); he uses the word for “people” (*am*). Now that word *can* refer to troops and armies, but even when it does, the point is very often that of a “*people*” who are united together by the common bonds of ethnicity and religion⁴ who happen to be taking up arms together (cf. Deut. 3:1).⁵ In other words, the “people” may be functioning as troops and soldiers, but the emphasis of that word “people” is still on the ethnic and religious “connections” between those “people” who are fighting together. So why does Gabriel refer here to “the *people* of the coming prince”? When we see this expression, the “*people of*” in the Hebrew it almost always refers to Israel – the “people of Israel,” the “people of Judah,” the “people of the Lord,” the “people of God.” The emphasis in all of these places is on the “people” as a group to which one *belongs* (religious belonging; ethnic and ancestral belonging). The only other examples of this expression “people of” in the Hebrew are these: “people of Chemosh”

¹ The participle with the article (the one who is coming) makes the preceding “prince” and “people” both definite.

² Cf. Duguid and Young. Steinmann also believes that the prince is still the Messiah but contends that the people of the prince are the Roman troops.

³ In Daniel 11 military troops and forces are referred to with the Hebrew word for “arm” (11:15, 22, 31).

⁴ See the Hebrew Lexicons (Holladay, Gesenius, Sigrist, etc.)

⁵ There are rare exceptions to this. In Daniel 11:15 we see the unique phrase “people of his choice” apparently being used as an expression for elite military troops.

(Moab; Num. 21:29; Jer. 48:46), “people of Amaw” (Num. 22:5), “people of Ekron” (1 Sam. 5:10) and “people of Mordecai” (Esther 3:6). We read in Esther chapter three:

- Esther 3:6 — [Haman] disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone. So, as they had made known to him the **people of Mordecai**, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews, the **people of Mordecai**, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

So when we hear of “the people of the coming prince” it seems to me that the emphasis here is on the fact that this is the people to whom this prince belongs. Think of John chapter one:

- John 1:11 — He came to his own, and his own [people] did not receive him.

Indeed, this seems an unlikely expression to be used if what we’re really talking about here are the “troops” or the “armies” of Titus. In that case, why not just say that *the prince* will destroy the city and the sanctuary” (cf. Dan. 7:21, 24-26; 8:9-12, 22-25; 11:36-45)? Why emphasize that it is the “*people* of the prince” who will do this? So to sum up, the emphasis here is on the *people*—it’s the people *of* the coming prince, the Jewish people themselves, who will destroy the city and the sanctuary.⁶

But how can we say that the Jewish people destroyed their own city in 70 AD? First of all, during much of the siege of Jerusalem while the Romans sat outside the walls, inside the city there were three different Jewish factions all waging a bloody civil war against each other. The website Historynet.com sums it up like this: “Jerusalem was destroying itself.” Additionally, even though the city was given many opportunities to surrender, and even though Josephus even pleaded with the Jews to surrender, they very foolishly refused (cf. Jer. 27:12-15). Titus had desired to leave as much of the city intact as possible (not out of any love for the Jews) but in the end the city was basically leveled due to the fanaticism of the Jewish Zealots. We can see, in this, how there really is a sense in which the Jews destroyed their own city.⁷

⁶ The word for “people” (*am*) has already appeared six other times in this chapter, and every other time it refers to the people of Israel (9:6, 15, 16, 19, 20, 24). In three of these places the “*people*” and the “*city*” are joined together (9:16, 19, 24), so that now we see the terrible irony in the fact that it’s the people themselves who will destroy the city. The Hebrew *am* (people) appears nine other times in chapters 8-12 and in every case except one it refers to the people of Israel (8:24; 10:14; 11:14, 32, 33; 12:1, 7). The exception is in Daniel 11:15 where we find the phrase “people of his choice” functioning as an expression for elite troops. The Aramaic word for “people” appears three times in Daniel and is always indefinite (2:44; 3:29; 6:26).

⁷ “When John of Gischala reached Jerusalem, the Zealots had already occupied the Temple and elected a rival high priest named Phanas. Coveting the leadership that Josephus had denied him in Galilee, John falsely informed Zealot leaders that the other high priest Ananus and his friends were about to hand the city over to the Romans. The Zealots called for an army from Idumaea, a land to the south, to help prevent the betrayal of the capital... Once inside the city walls, the Idumaeans went out of control. The Temple became a battleground and the city a blood bath. Ananus was killed and denied burial. Ordinary people struggled to stay alive. When the plot to betray the city proved to be a hoax, most of the Idumaeans left in disgust. Judging the moment to be right, John broke with the Zealots and formed his own party... During this time, turmoil reined inside the city. A rebel leader named Simon Bar-Giora had entered the city, and he, John and Eleazar were fighting a three-way civil war. The Romans’ year of inactivity had cost them nothing; Jerusalem was destroying itself... Victories like that raised the Jews’ confidence and reduced the Roman threat in their eyes — which only led the factions to resume their infighting. Simon controlled the Upper City and part of the Lower City with 10,000 adherents and 5,000 Idumaeans. John’s 6,000 followers occupied the Temple and fortress Antonia. Eleazar and his 2,400 Zealots later teamed up with

But even more importantly, it was the Jews' rejection of Jesus that ultimately brought about the destruction of their own city (cf. Mat. 23:34-36; Luke 23:28-31). So I'm reminded of expressions like this in the Old Testament:

- Jeremiah 2:17 — Have you not brought this upon yourself by forsaking the LORD your God, when he led you in the way?
- Jeremiah 4:18 — Your ways and your deeds have brought this upon you. This is your doom, and it is bitter.

In the book of Numbers, when Reuben and Gad asked to inherit on the east side of the Jordan River and Moses was concerned that they would abandon the rest of God's people who were to cross over the Jordan into the Promised Land, he said to them:

- Numbers 32:15 (cf. Prov. 6:32; 2 Chron. 22:4 [noun]; 26:16; Prov. 18:9) — If you turn away from following [the Lord], he will again abandon [the people] in the wilderness, and *you* will *destroy* all this people.

Of course, it would not be their *plan* to destroy their own people, but this is exactly what they would do. The Hebrew verb “to destroy” appears most often in the Hiphil stem and so in some places (whether in the Hiphil stem or not) it can have the idea of indirectly causing destruction or indirectly bringing ruin upon someone or something. When Moses says to Reuben and Gad, “and you will destroy [Piel] all this people,” it would probably be better to translate: “And you will bring ruin to all this people,” or, “you will cause the destruction of all this people.” We could translate some other verses in the same way:

- Proverbs 6:32 — He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself [Hiphil; brings ruin to himself; causes his own destruction].
- Isaiah 14:20 — You [the king of Babylon] will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed [Piel; caused the ruin and destruction of] your [own] land.
- Psalms 78:45 — [God] sent among [the Egyptians] swarms of flies, which devoured them, and frogs, which destroyed them [Hiphil; caused their ruin].

And so I would suggest that we should also translate here in Daniel chapter nine: “And the *people* of the coming prince shall cause the destruction of the city and the sanctuary,” or, “shall bring ruin to the city and the sanctuary.”

- John 1:11 — [Jesus] came to his own, and his own [people] did not receive him.

And then I think of the words of Jesus in Matthew 23:

John... To give the rebels a chance to consider their plight, Titus relaxed the siege for several days. He paraded his entire army in a display of Roman power, while Josephus circled the city delivering emotional appeals to surrender. The rebellious Jews had trusted in arms rather than God, he told them. They had made the Temple a fortress in a senseless battle of Jew against Jew. So, said Josephus, I am sure the Almighty has quitted your holy places and stands now on the side of your enemies. Their only sensible course, exhorted Josephus, was to stop fighting — for their families' sake if not for their own. Regarding Josephus as a contemptible traitor, the Jews again ignored his plea.” (historynet.com)

- Matthew 23:37–38 — O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate.

Now, then, we come to verse 27:

II. Daniel 9:27a — And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one seven, and in the middle of the seven he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease.

Who is the “he”? Who is it that will confirm a covenant with many and cause sacrifice and offering to cease? Remember that the theme of these seventy sevens is the eschatological salvation of God’s covenant people. So we read in verse 24 that seventy sevens are decreed for **the anointing of a most holy**. And then in verse 25 we see “**an anointed one, a prince**” who arrives in the seventieth seven to usher in the Jubilee and Sabbath rest of God’s people. In verse 26 we see this **anointed one** “cut off” for the covenant-breaking of His people and then we see the people of this **prince** bringing final, eschatological destruction to their own city and sanctuary. Therefore, in verse 27, the “he” who confirms a covenant with many and causes sacrifice and offering to cease must be the very *same* person; He must be this anointed one and prince – the Messiah, Jesus Christ.⁸

So what is the covenant that this Messiah and prince will cause to be “confirmed” or “established”⁹ with many? On the one hand, we could say that it’s the Abrahamic covenant. That’s what Christ came to do. He came to confirm and establish the promises given to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

- Romans 15:8 — Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs [the Abrahamic Covenant].
- Galatians 3:8, 16 (cf. Acts 3:24–26) — The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” ... Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.

Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, rejoiced with these words:

⁸ Even if the “prince” in verse 26 is Titus we have to remember that the “prince” is still not the subject of the clause; the “*people*” are the subject of the clause. The emphasis is on the *people*. Grammatically, then, the last and best antecedent for the “he” of verse 27 is the “anointed one” in verse 26. However, if the “prince” in verse 26 is the Messiah, then the already conclusive thematic argument for the Messianic identity of the “he” in verse 27 is further strengthened beyond all doubt.

⁹ The ESV says that “he shall make a strong covenant with many” (cf. NRSV; HCSB; NASB; ASV; NLT). The problem with this is that the normal word Hebrew for “making” a covenant (*ka-rat*) is not used here and the word that is used (*hig-bir*) appears here (and only in one other place; Ps. 12:4) with the Hiphil stem. So the idea of the Hebrew word here is to cause something to prevail (see Psalm 12:4 and compare NCV, HCSB, and NIV). In this case, the Messiah will cause a covenant to prevail or be established/confirmed (cf. NIV; NET; NCV; YLT; KJV; NKJV).

- Luke 1:68–75 (cf. Heb. 6:13-20; Rom. 4) — Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our father Abraham...

In Christ, the promises of God are all “yes” and “amen” (cf. 2 Cor. 1:20).

But *how* did Christ confirm and establish the promises to Abraham? He did this by the making of a New Covenant (cf. Jer. 31:31). When we read that the Messiah will confirm a covenant with “many” (*rab*; Gr. *polus*), we’re reminded yet again (see last message) of Isaiah 53:

- Isaiah 53:11 — Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make **many** [*rab*; Gr. *polus*] to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

Jesus very likely had these exact words from Daniel in His mind (“he shall confirm a **covenant** with **many**,” [*rab*; Gr. *polus*]) when He said to His disciples at the Last Supper:

- Matthew 26:28 — This is my blood of the **covenant**, which is poured out for **many** [*polus*] for the forgiveness of sins.

Jesus said in another place:

- Matthew 20:28 — The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for **many** [*polus*].

And finally, we read in Hebrews chapter nine:

- Hebrews 9:28 — Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of **many** [*polus*], will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.

This New Covenant emphasis on the “many” is the very same emphasis that we have here in Daniel chapter nine.

So why does Gabriel say that the Messiah will confirm a covenant (ultimately the New Covenant) with many “*for one seven*”? Doesn’t Jesus confirm the covenant *forever*? The answer to this is very simple. How many sevens does the angel Gabriel say there are? *Seventy* sevens. So there’s a sense in which, in terms of redemptive history, there is no 71st seven – there are *only* seventy. And yet it’s not as though time ends with the conclusion of the 70th seven. The 70th and last “seven” is the one that ushers in the true Jubilee and Sabbath rest of God’s people (cf. v. 24). So the point is not to say that after this last “seven” is over the covenant expires, but rather that the Messiah will confirm the covenant with many *for this last “seven”* and therefore also for the Jubilee that this last seven ushers in and that’s contained within this last seven even as the full-grown tree is contained in the seed (cf. Lev. 25:8-10 and Wenham’s commentary on Lev. 25:8).

The last seven—by virtue of being the last seven *and* the seven that ushers in our eternal Jubilee—must include within itself not only these days of imminence, but also all the days of eternity (the “already” and the “not yet”). There is no 71st seven that comes after the 70th seven. Therefore, the covenant that the Messiah makes with many for that “one seven” is, indeed, an eternal covenant – a covenant that will last for just as long as our Jubilee and Sabbath rest will last. So we read in Hebrews chapter 13:

- Hebrews 13:20–21 — Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, **by the blood of the eternal covenant**, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

III. Daniel 9:27b — He shall confirm a covenant with many for one seven, and in the middle of the seven he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease.

When is the middle of the last seven? Gabriel said that from the going out of a decree to build Jerusalem to an anointed one, a prince, there would be 69 sevens (7 and 62); therefore the seventieth seven must *begin* with the coming of that anointed one and prince – with the incarnation and birth of Jesus in the town of Bethlehem.¹⁰ The last event that Gabriel takes us to is the final, eschatological destruction of the earthly Jerusalem in 70 AD, so I believe the 70th seven “*ends*” at this destruction of Jerusalem. It’s in the middle of this “seven,” Gabriel says, that the Messiah shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease. And it was, indeed, in the approximate “middle” of this seven (somewhere around 30 AD) that Jesus’ death on the cross—when He was “cut off” for your sins and mine—brought an end to the entire sacrificial system at the temple.

The ESV translates, “he shall *put an end* to sacrifice and offering.” We have to be careful that this doesn’t imply to us something bad or negative. The Hebrew word for “put an end” is the word *sa-bat* (which is related to the word for “Sabbath” or “rest”) and it’s also in the Hiphil, or causative stem, so we could perhaps translate, “and in the middle of the seven he shall cause¹¹ sacrifice and offering to rest” – “He shall put to rest sacrifice and offering.” Isn’t this a beautiful thing? Isn’t it here that we see the true power of the Gospel? It’s true that the sacrifices continued at the temple until Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, but the point is that the final, once for all sacrifice of Christ (cf. Rom. 6:10; Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 26; 10:10) had rendered all of these sacrifices finally obsolete – forever null and void. So listen to the writer of Hebrews:

- Hebrews 7:18–19 — On the one hand, a former commandment [priesthood and sacrifices] is **set aside** because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.
- Hebrews 8:13 — In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one [with its temple and priesthood and sacrifices] **obsolete**.
- Hebrews 10:8–9 — When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to

¹⁰ Some see this coming in the baptism of Jesus and the beginning of His public ministry, but this is overly technical and assumes the legitimacy of trying to calculate precise numbers of years.

¹¹ Other examples of *sa-bat* in the Hiphil stem: Exod 5:5; Josh. 22:25; Psa. 46:9; 89:44; Jer. 48:33; Ezek. 16:41

the law), then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He **does away** with the first [the first covenant with its sacrifices] in order to establish the second.

- Hebrews 10:18 — Where there is forgiveness of [lawless deeds], **there is no longer any offering for sin.**

Jesus truly did confirm a covenant with many for one seven, and in the middle of that seven He truly did cause sacrifice and offering to cease. Jesus truly did bring the seventy sevens to their fulfillment in the “fullness of time.”

As we come, now, to Gabriel’s last words to Daniel (here in this vision), we need to see the parallel between the first and second halves of verses 26 and 27.

- Verse 26a — After the sixty-two sevens, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.
Verse 27a — He shall confirm a covenant with many for one seven, and in the middle of the seven he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease.

Do you see the connection between the Messiah “cut off” in His substitutionary death and the Messiah confirming a covenant and causing sacrifice and offering to cease? And now let’s compare the second half of verses 26 and 27.

- Verse 26b — And the people of the coming prince shall bring ruin to the city and the sanctuary. Its **end** shall come with a flood, and to the **end** there shall be war. **Desolations** are **decreed.**”

The earthly city and sanctuary are no longer needed because they’ve served their purpose and been brought to their fulfillment in Christ. The earthly city was always just a shadow of the Jerusalem that is above – the real Jerusalem that is the fulfillment of the earthly Jerusalem. Therefore, the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem in 70 AD was the final evidence that the old age had passed and the new had come. So the second half of verse 27 returns, now, to this theme of the final end of the Old Covenant age with its earthly city and temple as proof that the eschatological salvation of God’s people has finally arrived.

“[The Messiah] shall confirm a covenant with many for one seven, and in the middle of the seven he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease...”

IV. Daniel 9:27c — And on the wing of abominations [shall come] desolation, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolate.¹²

¹² The ESV translates the second half of this verse: “until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator” (cf. NASB, NIV, NET, NRSV, HCSB). With Duguid and Young I prefer the translation of the NKJV (cf. ASV, YLT, NCV). Both translations are legitimate in and of themselves. The Hebrew *sa-mem* is a qal, part. masc. sing. abs. Examples of other places where this same form of the word is translated as “the desolate (one/thing/place)” can be found here: 2 Sam. 13:20; Isa. 49:8; Isa. 54:1; 61:4; Lam. 1:4, 13, 16; 3:11; Ezek. 36:4. While this form of the word does refer twice to the *causing* of desolation or “the desolating thing/one” (Dan. 8:13; 12:11) the thing that desolates is in both cases explicitly identified with a grammatical subject (“the transgression/abomination that causes desolation,” or “the desolating transgression/abomination”). In every other case, when *sa-mem* (qal., part., abs.) appears as a substantive it always refers to the one who is desolate (or the thing or place that is desolate). In the only other clear

It's these words from Daniel 9:27 that Jesus sees fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. He said to His disciples:

- Matthew 24:15–16 (cf. 23:37-38; Mk. 13:14) — When you see the abomination [that brings] desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

Luke puts it this way for his Gentile readers:

- Luke 21:20 — When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near.

And so we see, again, that the temple and the city that were rebuilt after the *seventh* seven (that first, “shadowy” Jubilee) are finally destroyed at the conclusion of the 70th seven (at the ushering in of our everlasting Jubilee and Sabbath rest) when we have come, finally, to that heavenly city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God.

Conclusion

Remember Gabriel's words to Daniel: “Know therefore and understand.” The point of revealing these “seventy sevens” was to give Daniel “wisdom” and “insight” and “understanding” for the daily living of his life – and so also to give us wisdom, and “insight, and understanding for the daily living of our lives. Have you seen the *beauty* of these “seventy sevens”? Have you seen in these “seventy sevens” God's redemptive plan consummated in the Gospel of Jesus Christ—in the fullness of time?

place where *sa-mem* refers to a desolating thing it appears with the Poel stem and once again the thing causing desolation is explicitly identified with a grammatical subject (“the abomination that makes desolate”/“the desolating abomination”; Dan. 11:31). The translation suggested here maintains the thematic parallel with verse 26. In verse 26, “desolations are decreed [for the city].” Here in v. 27, “the decreed end” is to be “poured out on the desolate [city].” There are actually two occurrences of *sa-mem* in v. 27. Both are masc. sing. participles in the absolute state, but the second occurrence is in the Qal stem and the first occurrence is in the Poel stem (*sa-mem* appears only four times in the Poel stem). The first occurrence of *sa-mem* in v. 27 can also be translated in one of two ways: “And on the wing of abominations [shall come] desolation” (cf. Ezra 9:3-4), or, “and on the wing of abominations [shall come] a desolating thing/one.” In light of the parallels in Daniel 8:13 and Daniel 12:11, it seems most likely that the abomination in 9:27 is itself the thing that causes desolation (cf. NRSV; HCSB; NIV; NLT; Mat. 24:15-16; Mk. 13:14). (I am not aware of any persuasive explanation for the use of the two different stems [Poel and Qal] in verse 27 and I'm not sure that such an explanation is even needed.)

Seventy sevens are decreed about your people and your holy city,
to make an end of the transgression,
to seal up sin,
and to atone for iniquity,
to bring in everlasting righteousness,
to seal vision and prophet,
and to anoint a most holy.

Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven sevens and then sixty-two sevens, when [the city] shall be built again with square and moat, but in a troubled time.

And after the sixty-two sevens [when the 70th seven has come], an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing.

And *the people of the prince*—the one who is coming—shall bring ruin to the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.

And he [the anointed one and prince] shall confirm a covenant with many for one seven, and in the middle of the seven he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease.

And on the wing of abominations [shall come] desolation, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolate [the earthly city and temple].

“Seventy Sevens”

Daniel 9:24-27

