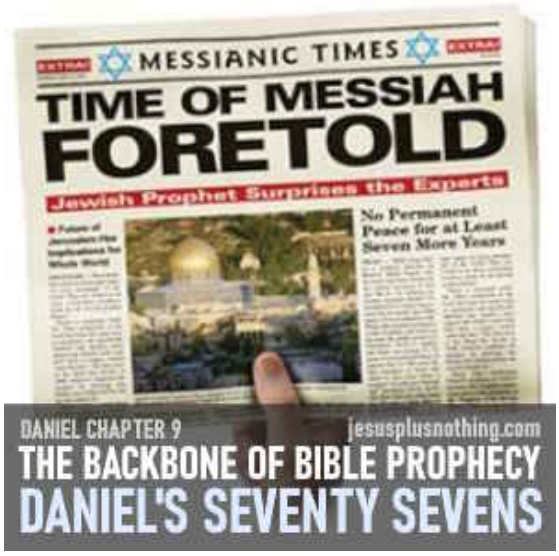
Bible Study Series: Daniel, Babylon and the End Times

Daniel 9 Lesson: The Backbone of Bible Prophecy: The Seventy Sevens

by I Gordon



Alright... we have a lot to get through so little dilly-dally in the intro this time! We saw in the last study that Daniel had been reading the prophecies of Jeremiah when he saw that Israel would be in exile for 70 years. Daniel also noticed that at the end of that time it was important for the Israelites to seek God and confess their sinful ways in order for God to restore them to the land of Israel. Well, that is exactly what Daniel did on behalf of his nation. So this study gives God's response. And what a response it is! The late Chuck Missler calls it 'the most pivotal chapter in Bible prophecy'. Others have called it 'the backbone of Bible prophecy'. It is certainly a remarkable prophecy. So... no pressure then! :) The actual prophecy is only four verses, yet people have written entire books on it! Me? Well, I'm foolishly trying to squeeze it into one message... so I get the feeling there will be a lot of footnotes! So we'll explore **Daniel 9:20-27** today looking at:

- The New Testament background to the passage - did the Gospel writers see this prophecy as important?
- The difference in God's and Daniel's thoughts concerning deliverance and restoration - in what way were God's thoughts much higher and greater than Daniel's?
- The 490 years ordained by God and the six prophetic fulfillments they contain
- The timeline to when the Messiah would come - Yes! The Bible tells us when the Messiah would present Himself to the people as their King!
- The death of the Messiah - Scripture clearly foretold that He came... to die... the first time!
- The coming prince - who is this one that will make a covenant with Israel for the last 7 years and how will that end?

I'll try to stay focused on the main points but get a coffee and strap yourself in! Before looking at this wonderful prophecy let's just start with a passage in the New Testament and the words of our Lord.

Background: Let the reader understand...

Matt 24:15-16 *'So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel - let the reader understand - then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.*

When the disciples questioned Jesus about the signs of His return, one of the things He pointed to was something called the 'abomination of desolation'. Jesus told us that this is from the prophet Daniel and it just so happens to be in this prophecy before us in chapter 9. But I want to draw your attention to something else in the passage above. And they are four little words that Mathew decided to put into the text as he wrote it... After Jesus spoke of the abomination of desolation, Mathew added his own advice saying 'Let the reader understand'[1]. So did you just read that? Well, you are now told, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to understand this prophecy in Daniel 9! So with no less an authority than God Himself telling us to understand Daniel chapter 9, that is what we are going to do.

Daniel 9:20-23 While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill - while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, 'Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision:

So we see that while Daniel is still praying an answer arrives. Quite literally actually, as the angel Gabriel turns up with an announcement for Daniel and his people. Gabriel is not said to be an archangel but is one of the highest ranking in the angelic realm. Michael, who is the only archangel mentioned in scripture, is always seen in a warrior/protector role in connection with the nation of Israel. But if you have got a big announcement, send Gabe. Gabriel is mentioned 4 times in the Bible and three of the four concern announcements concerning the coming of the Messiah (**Dan 9:21**, **Luke 1:19**, **26**). Notice also that Gabriel tells Daniel that he is 'highly esteemed'. For Heaven to feel that way about any man is pretty amazing. The word literally means 'precious' and just as Abraham is called the 'friend of God' and the Apostle John 'the beloved', so Daniel is the one 'highly esteemed' or 'precious'. Daniel is then told that he needs to understand this answer that Gabriel is about to declare. And so do we! This revelation that Daniel would receive is critical to a true understanding of Bible prophecy.

An answer greater than the prayer...

Daniel 9:24 'Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

Now, straight away you kind of get the impression that God is thinking about much higher and greater things than those that were in Daniel's mind! Daniel had been concerned with the sin of Israel and their current condition in the Babylonian exile and had prayed along those lines. Yet God's answer above is far higher and greater than anything that had entered into Daniel's thoughts or prayer. In prayer, we should always remember that His thoughts are so much higher than ours![2]

Daniel's thoughts versus God's thoughts

- Daniel is thinking about forgiveness for Israel's current sin and rebellion. God's thoughts are about eliminating sin and rebellion altogether!
- Daniel is thinking about getting Israel out of Babylon. God's thoughts about getting Babylon out of Israel once and for all!
- Daniel is thinking about getting back to Jerusalem to start rebuilding. God is thinking about establishing His own kingdom and Himself as King on earth!

So the message from God is given... '70 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city...' Some Bibles use the word 'weeks' instead of 'sevens' which is unfortunate. Messianic Jewish believer and scholar Arnold Fructenbaum writes:

> *One of the greatest tragedies in biblical interpretation is that the word has been translated here as 'weeks'. This would require the Hebrew word shavuot. But the word used here is shavuim which does not mean weeks, but simply means 'sevens'. As such it could refer to seven of anything just as the English word "dozen" simply means twelve and can be twelve of anything... In it's context it obviously must be seven of years because Daniel has been dealing with years. He has been counting up the seventy years of Babylonian captivity... Daniel is told that it is not seventy years but that "seventy sevens of years" must pass before the introduction of the Kingdom.*
> ***Dr. Arnold Fructenbaum***

So seventy sevens are decreed for Daniel people Israel. The word 'decreed' literally means 'determined' or 'cut off'. God is saying that He has assigned a 490 year period[3] cut off for Daniel's people Israel and their holy city. It needs to be clearly pointed out that this period of time is set aside specifically for God to deal with the nation of Israel and Jerusalem. These 490 years do not involve the church but relate, as Gabriel said, to Daniel's 'people and holy city'.

The six accomplishments of Daniel 9

Now Gabriel outlines 6 critical things that will have been fulfilled by the end of the 490 years.

Daniel's 70 Sevens will...

1. **Finish the transgression** - Dr Arnold Fruchtenbaum points out that the Hebrew word for transgression is a very strong word for sin and literally means 'to rebel'. If used with a definite article in the Hebrew meaning it is not general but a specific act of rebellion. In context, the specific act of rebellion is the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus. Israel will finish this specific rebellious act of rejecting their Messiah Yeshua!
2. **Put an end of sins** - The Hebrew for sins used here means to 'miss the mark'. The sins of daily life will be put to an end. It will also mean the end of the effects of sin upon this earth. The curse that came in with Adam and Eve's fall will come to an end.
3. **Atonement for wickedness** - This is the means by which the first two purposes are accomplished. This was achieved at the cross when Jesus made atonement for sin but the national fulfilment of this for Israel is still to come.[4]
4. **Bring in everlasting righteousness** - This is the age of righteousness that characterizes the Messianic Kingdom - the reign of Jesus on this earth. This will be set up at the end of the 490 year period and will last for 1000 years as shown in Revelation 20. It will be a glorious time when the knowledge of the Lord will abound on the earth as the waters cover the sea. We can also apply this to our own life. With the return of the Lord, all believers will be like Him for we shall see Him as He really is. Our fallen nature that drags us down will be gone forever! We will only know everlasting righteousness! If you know yourself well, that is truly a day to rejoice and look forward to!
5. **Seal up vision and prophecy** - The word seal up means to 'cause a cessation' or 'to bring completely to fulfilment'. The Hebrew prophets saw as far forward as the Messianic kingdom. They didn't prophecy of events in the New Heaven and New Earth. When Jesus' kingdom is set up at the end of the 490 years, their prophecy will have been fulfilled. The Old Testament prophecies of the coming glorious day will have come to fruition and their visions and prophecy will finally cease in the sense that it will now be all fulfilled.
6. **Anoint the most holy** - From the Hebrew this should read 'anoint a most holy place'. Daniel had been thinking of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple which lay in ruins. The Messianic Kingdom will have a temple built by the Lord Himself (**Zech 6:12-15**)

The timeline until Messiah!

Daniel 9:25 'Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

Again Daniel, (and you!) are told to 'know and understand this'. Just as Gabriel has said earlier and just as Mathew has instructed his readers, so the command goes out again to understand this prophecy! And we see here a remarkable statement - an exact time for when

the Messiah (the Anointed one) will come! The 70 sevens of the previous statement has now been divided into 7 sevens, 62 sevens and 1 remaining seven which will be discussed later. The first 7 sevens involved the time period where the city of Jerusalem was rebuilt. The 7 sevens and the 62 sevens combined constitute the time period until the Messiah comes. We are told explicitly that from the decree[5] to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah will be 7 + 62, or 69 sevens, totaling 483 years. This decree was given by king Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2 in 444 B.C. and the 483 prophetic years conclude on Nisan 10 (on the Jewish calendar), 33 A.D.[6]

Nisan 10? Is that significant? Yeah, according to God's decree in **Exodus 12:1-3**, it was on the 10th Nisan that all of Israel had to take a spotless lamb that would be sacrificed 4 days later on the 14th Nisan!

Exodus 12:1-3 *The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt, 'This month (Nisan) is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year. Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.*

The end point of this 483 year period is the very day that Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem, in fulfilment of **Zech 9:9** which says 'Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'[7]

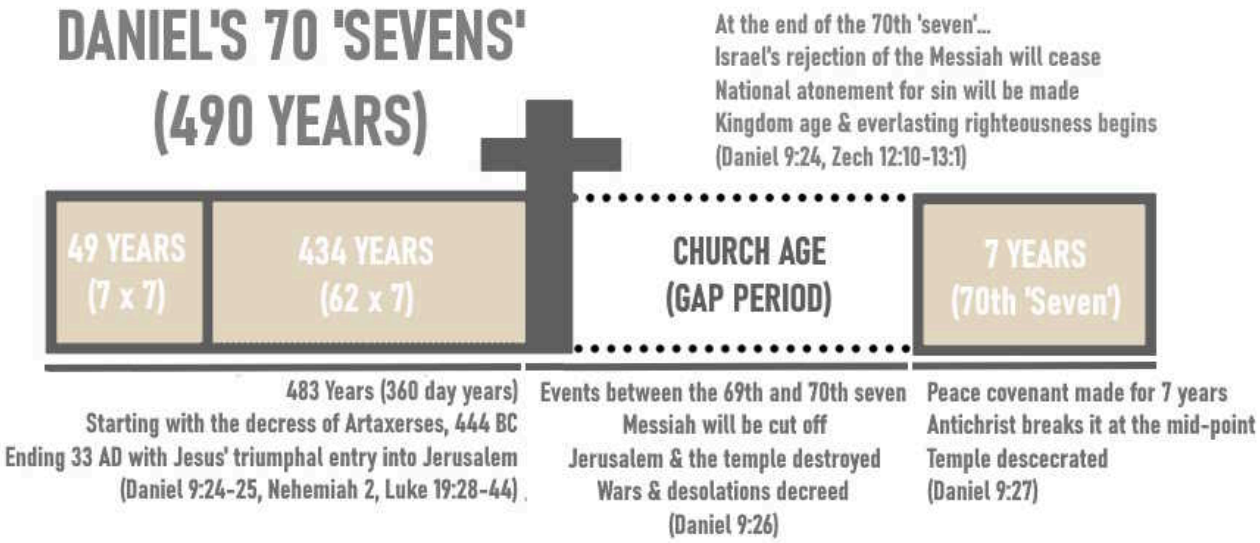
> *"There was only one occasion in our Lord's earthly ministry on which He is depicted as presenting Himself openly as Zion's King, the so-called 'Triumphal Entry,' recorded in each one of the Gospels and fulfilling* ***Zech 9:9*** *and* ***Psalm 118:26****."*
> ***William Newell***

And yet, knowing their heart and what would transpire in just four short days , we also read that on that same day...

Luk 19:41-44 *As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it (42) and said, "****If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace--but now it is hidden from your eyes.*** *(43) The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. (44) They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another,* ***because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.****"*
This leads us to...

A shocking announcement about the Messiah...

Daniel 9:26a 'After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing.'



Imagine if you were Daniel. Imagine the excitement in hearing that the Messiah is coming and that God had a plan to redeem Israel and bring in the everlasting righteousness! Wonderful news! But then Gabriel reveals something unbelievable... The Messiah would die!

I don't think that this would have entered into the heart of Daniel... that the one that Israel had waited centuries for would come... and be executed? Cut off? Have nothing? Why? How? 'The Messiah is to be our deliverer' Daniel would have thought. 'How can he be killed?' 'What does that mean for Israel?' Of course, this is precisely what Isaiah the prophet had declared by the word of the Lord. The incredible 53rd chapter of Isaiah is emphatic not only concerning the death of Jesus but also the reasons for it. Consider the following:

Isaiah 53:5-7 But he was pierced for our transgressions**, he was crushed for our iniquities;* ***the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. *(6) We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. (7) He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.*

And of course, Jesus Himself knew this was to be the cup that He would drink, even before entering Jerusalem:

***Mat 20:17-19** Now as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, (18) We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death (19) and will turn him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day he will be raised to life!"*

Three events between the 69th and 70th seven of Daniel

Daniel 9:26 'After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.'

So we have jumped the gun a little but **Daniel 9:26** gives us three specific events that have been decreed to occur AFTER the end of the 69th 'seven' (483 years) and BEFORE the start of the final 'seven'. It is important to note that the Messiah is cut off AFTER the 69th seven, yet before the 70th seven. Some believe that Daniel's 70th seven follows straight on after the 69th but there is a clear gap presented in scripture .[8] There is a divine 'timeout' called following the rejection of the Messiah and the following three events are given in this 'timeout' period:

Events after the 69th seven and before the 70th seven

1. The Messiah will be cut off

'The Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing'

While I have touched on this, please note a couple of extra things:

1. Firstly, the word for 'cut off' is 'karath'. It means to cut down or kill and is the same word used in **Lev 7:27** for the death penalty. There is no doubt that this prophecy tells us that the Messiah would be executed. But it is also related to 'cutting' a covenant where the same word is used. (**Gen 15:18**). Thus, the Messiah will die in order to establish a new covenant. And this is obviously what Jesus spoke of at the last supper, on the night before He died saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (**Luke 22:20**)
2. Secondly, the Bible says that He 'will have nothing'. The Hebrew can also mean 'but not for Himself' and that is how it is translated in many Bibles. The Messiah would die... but He wouldn't die for Himself. He was not the cause of His death - we were! He would die for others. Amazing prophecy!

2. The Destruction of Jerusalem

'The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood'

The second event decreed is the destruction of Jerusalem[9]. Remember, this occurs after the end of the 69th week yet before the start of the 70th week. And yet this event occurred 40 years after Jesus was crucified. Again this shows that God 'stopped the prophetic time clock' with Israel's rejection of their Messiah. The text says that the people of the coming ruler will destroy the city and the sanctuary. Note that it is the people, not the ruler who do this. The ruler's coming is said to be still in the future. We know from history that it was the Roman army that destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD after a 4 year

long siege on the city. In 66 AD the Jews revolted against the Roman reign and took Jerusalem. Titus then lay siege against the city to cut off all food and water. Josephus, the Jewish historian of the time, was used as a mediator. He records that 1,100,000 Jews died through starvation and war during this siege. The Roman army broke through in 70 AD and burned the city and temple to the ground. It was reported that later Titus refused to accept a wreath of victory for his 'achievement' saying that 'there is no merit in vanquishing a people forsaken by their God'.

3. Continued War

'War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.'

The third and final decree for the gap between the 69th 'seven' and before the start of the 70th 'seven' is ongoing war and desolations for Jerusalem. Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem! The most fought over city! From the time that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it in 586 BC it has been held by the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Moslems, the Crusaders at times... and the conflict goes on today. Israel is back in the land but is there peace? There have been significant wars already since they became a nation again such as the war of Independence in 1948-49, the 6-day war of 1967, the Yom Kippur war of 1973 and the current Gaza/Lebanon war. Add in the ongoing terrorism, suicide bombers, missiles from neighboring countries, ongoing resolutions in the United Nations and you get the picture. The decree given by Gabriel is that war would continue right to the time of the end and history has verified that to be true. And of course Jesus said the same thing, that Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles was complete (**Luke 21:23-24**).

The coming prince

Daniel 9:27 'He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.'

We come now to the last verse in Daniel 9 and it thrusts us into the future. Verse 26 spoke of three things that occurred leading up to this final seven years (known generally as Daniel's 70th week). Now we see from the text how this final seven years will begin. It says that 'He will confirm a covenant with the many for one 'seven''. The 'He' takes us back to the last person mentioned which was the 'ruler who shall come' in verse 26. This is the coming ruler proceeding out of the area that was formerly the Roman Empire[10]. In Christian circles this coming one is generally called by a different title - the antichrist. From verse 27 above, we learn the following four points:

1. He shall make a covenant with the many for one 'seven'

While some see the 'many' to include neighboring countries, in the context of Daniel's prophecy 'the many' are more likely to just refer to the nation of Israel. So Daniel's 70th seven begins then when a coming ruler will make a covenant with the nation of Israel for 7 years. Not all will go along with this covenant but 'the many' will accept it. This coming ruler must then be in a position of high power at this time to be able to establish and guarantee this peace agreement. In the Hebrew the word translated 'make' has the idea of 'be strong' or 'strengthen' so it could well be that He strengthens an existing covenant or agreement. This is what makes current events in the Middle East so interesting as we see the pressure just continually building and Israel (and Jerusalem!) constantly the focus of the United Nations plans.

2. He will break this covenant at the mid-point

In the middle of the seven years (or after 3 1/2 years) the coming ruler (antichrist) will break this agreement and put a stop to the Jewish sacrifice and offerings. Jesus spoke specifically of this event warning all in Judah to flee for their lives at this point. (**Matt 24:15-22**) This event is also recorded in more detail by the Apostle Paul who wrote exactly what will happen at this time:
*'He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.' (**2 Thes 2:3-4**)*
This coming ruler, this man of sin, will no longer allow any worship of any God or person other than himself! He will literally put himself in a rebuilt Jewish temple and declare himself to be God. How deceived can one be? He will start off politically and then acquire military power but even this won't satisfy him. His overall desire is that of Satan his master who desired to place himself above God's throne and to be worshipped as God. (See **Isaiah 14:12-15**)

3. He will set up the 'abomination of desolation'

> *'Abominations translates an ancient Hebrew word (shiqquwts) that is connected to horrific idolatry (Deu_29:17, 1Ki_11:5-7, 2Ki_23:13). The idea is that the coming prince breaks the covenant and brings an end to sacrifice and offering by desecrating the holy place of the temple with a horrific idolatry.'*
> ***David Guzik***

Specifically, the abomination refers to an image or idol that is setup in the temple to take the place of God. At the midpoint of the 7 years the antichrist will set up such an abomination and desolate the coming Jewish temple. This image is mentioned in **Revelation 13:14-15** *'Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honor of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived. (15) He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image to be killed.'*

And as mentioned earlier, Jesus said that when this occurs, there is one thing that the Jews should do - run.[11]

4. The desolation lasts until the coming ruler is destroyed

This period of wrath will only last for a limited period of time. We know from Daniel that this ruler will have power only for the final 7 years - of which the last 3 1/2 years is the period of intense persecution for the Jewish nation and all those that worship the true God. This period of time in which the antichrist is given power is confirmed in other scriptures such as **Rev 11:2-3**, **12:6**, **13:5**, **Dan 7:25**, **12:11**. In all cases the scripture is clear that there are two 3 1/2 years periods that comprise the final 7 years - Daniel's 70th week. But thank God that the antichrist's time is limited and this one who will cause such desolation *'the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.'*

Conclusion

Ok... so there was a lot packed into a few verses there but what amazing prophecy Daniel chapter 9 gives us! This remarkable prophecy gives us an exact date that the nation of Israel could expect their Messiah. It is concrete proof for those that long to know who the Messiah is and when He came. No wonder we are told on multiple occasions to know and understand this prophecy!

I haven't been able to do it justice and entire books could (and have!) been written on it. Yet even in this study we have seen a prophecy that stretches from the time of Nehemiah and comprises the exact day of the coming and execution of the Messiah, the destruction of the second temple, the ongoing wars surrounding Jerusalem, and even includes events still future for us with the final coming world leader who will use the cover of 'peace' to desecrate the third temple and proclaim himself to be God. And best of all it tells us that when it is all complete, the Messiah will reign in everlasting righteousness! No wonder Gabriel told Daniel to understand this prophecy. No wonder Jesus spoke about it. No wonder Mathew told his readers to understand it!

As I said, I haven't done it justice here but I do hope that you will continue to study and understand this key portion of prophetic truth!
God Bless!

FOOTNOTES

1. It is totally unique as far as I know for one of the gospel writers to interject their own little instruction into the text. As Mathew wrote the gospel he believed that this sign of the

coming of Jesus was so important that he should write something directly to the readers of his gospel and tell them that they needed to understand this! Note also what Mathew wrote - He didn't write 'Let the teacher understand' or 'Let the scholar understand' or 'Let the end times prophecy buff understand'... No, the Bible says let the reader understand. And that, my dear friend, means you!

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2. This is obviously an example of a couple of scriptures that we should remember when praying:
   Isaiah 55:8-9 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the LORD. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.'
   Eph 3:20-21 'Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.'
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3. Why do we take this as years? Daniel had seen from the prophecies of Jeremiah that Israel would be exiled for 70 years. So the whole context of this prophecy is years. But now God seems to be saying that the total fulfilment for Israel's restoration isn't going to be 70 years but 70 X 7 years! Where does God get these numbers from? Does He make them up? We know that 7 is God's perfect number and is the seal of God throughout scripture but is there anything else to this? Why would God multiply the whole length of the exile period by 7? One answer could be **Lev 26:14-21** which lays out the punishment for disobedience as stated in the law of God. It is important to notice vs 18-21 which states:
   'If after all this you will not listen to me, ***I will punish you for your sins seven times over****. I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. Your strength will be spent in vain, because your soil will not yield its crops, nor will the trees of the land yield their fruit. If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve...'*
   So the question is, did Israel repent after the 70 years in exile? We know that Daniel did on behalf of his nation but even in his prayer Daniel stated (**Dan 9:13**) *: 'Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us* ***, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD*** *our God* ***by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth****. '*
   It seems to me that Israel as a nation didn't repent but actually got quite comfortable living down in Babylon and while God would fulfil the prophecies of Jeremiah to bring them back after the 70 years, the entire punishment and restoration for that nation was not going to be 70 years but 70 X 7 years - 490 years!
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4. How many holy feasts did the nation of Israel have? That's right, 7. So how many were in the spring and how many in the autumn? That's right, 4 in the spring and 3 in the autumn. How many of the spring feasts did Jesus fulfil at his first coming? That's right, all of them. Passover, Unleavened bread, Firstfruits and Pentecost were all fulfilled spiritually. But how

many of the autumn feasts were fulfilled? That's right... none of them. They all await their fulfilment with the return of Jesus. My point? Well, Jesus fulfilled Passover at His first coming by dying as the Passover lamb for our sins. And yet, there was an entirely different day that Israel celebrated as the day when their sins were atoned for. This was one of the autumn feasts called the 'day of atonement'. It was their holiest and most solemn day. This will be fulfilled for the nation of Israel when, as a nation, they look to Jesus as the Messiah and have their sins atoned for. This will occur at the end of the tribulation (Daniel's 70th seven) when Jesus returns. Read all about it in Zech 12 & 13.

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5. David Guzik writes concerning this decree:

> *The Bible presents four possible decrees that might fulfill this description:*
> *- Cyrus made a decree giving Ezra and the Babylonian captives the right to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple in 538 b.c. (Ezra in 1:1-4 and 5:13-17)*
> *- Darius made a decree giving Ezra the right to rebuild the temple in 517 b.c. (Ezr_6:6-12)*
> *- Artaxerxes made a decree giving Ezra permission, safe passage, and supplies to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple in 458 b.c. (Ezr_7:11-26)*
> *- Artaxerxes made a decree giving Nehemiah permission, safe passage and supplies to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the walls in 445 b.c. (Neh_2:1-8)*
> *Only the last of these four decrees was a command to restore and build Jerusalem. The first three each focused on the temple, not on the street or on the wall.'*

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6. It should be noted that some scholars believe in a 445BC decree resulting in a 32AD fulfilment. It is beyond the scope of this study to go into the specific details for calculating this 490 year prophecy, but if you would like to do so I would draw your attention to the following studies of Dr. Thomas Ice:
   On where to start the 490 years from: **https://www.raptureready.com/2011/02/09/the-seventy-weeks-of-daniel-part-v-by-thomas-ice/**
   On where the 483 years ends: **https://www.raptureready.com/2011/02/09/the-seventy-weeks-of-daniel-part-vi-by-thomas-ice**/
   On the division of the 7 sevens and 62 sevens:
   https://www.raptureready.com/2011/02/09/the-seventy-weeks-of-daniel-part-vii-by-thomas-ice/
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7. When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey the crowds proclaimed 'Hosanna, hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'. This was a Messianic title from Psalm 118 which they were quoting. It is interesting to see what else Psalm 118 tells us. Right before this

passage it says *'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone.'* Though these people proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, the nation had already rejected the capstone of Israel. Again, after saying 'blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord' it carries on to say ' *bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.'* Though on this day, the 10th Nisan, the people proclaimed Him king, yet within 4 short days they would be calling for His death and the Lamb of God would be bound and sacrificed.
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8. Ever watched the last part of a basketball game? I watched one the other day. I turned on the TV and saw that there was only 10 minutes to go in the game so I thought I would sit down and watch the remaining 10 minutes. Well, 20 minutes later I was still watching that same game! How does that work? Well, as things get down to the nitty-gritty the coaches tend to use quite a few 'timeouts'. This is especially true if the game is close. What that means is that even though there may be only 5 minutes left on the official clock the coach can call a time out and the time is stopped. They can then discuss the next play with the team and then the team will go back on the court and the time will be started again. God's prophetic time clock stopped after Jesus rode into Jerusalem. That was the end of the 69th 'seven' and Jesus told them in **Luke 19:39** that they had missed the time of their visitation and that judgment now lay ahead for that nation. God stopped Israel's prophetic time clock. He introduced the church so that the gospel could go to all nations. But there is still time to be run on Israel's clock! There is one 'seven' that still remains (7 years) in which God will again deal specifically with the nation of Israel to fulfill all that He has promised them in this Daniel 9 prophecy and in many other prophecies. But that time is going to be the most difficult time ever known to the Jewish nation (and they have known a lot of hard times!) Jeremiah called it 'the day of Jacob's trouble… but he will be saved out of it' (**Jer 30:7**)

> *'According to Dan_9:26 the Anointed One was not 'cut off' in the 70th 'seven'; He was cut off after the 7 and 62 'sevens' had run their course. This means that there is an interval between the 69th and 70th 'sevens.' Christ's crucifixion, then, was in that interval, right after His Triumphal Entry, which concluded the 69th 'seven.' This interval was anticipated by Christ when He prophesied the establishing of the church (Mat_16:18). This necessitated the setting aside of the nation Israel for a season in order that His new program for the church might be instituted. Christ predicted the setting aside of the nation (Mat_21:42-43). The present Church Age is the interval between the 69th and 70th 'sevens.'*
> *Amillenarians teach that Christ's First Advent ministry was in the 70th 'seven,' that there was no interval between the 69th and 70th 'sevens,' and that the six actions predicted in Dan_9:24 are being fulfilled today in the church. This view, however, (a) ignores the fact that Dan_9:26 says 'after the 62 'sevens," not 'in the 70th 'seven," (b) overlooks the fact that Christ's ministry on earth was three and one-half years in length, not seven, and (c) ignores the fact that God's six actions*

> *pertain to Daniel's 'people' (Israel) and His 'Holy City' (Jerusalem), not the church.'*
> ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

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9. Several amazing events are recorded in the Jewish Talmud that tell us that the Jewish leaders knew for 40 years before the destruction that the temple was going to be destroyed. Several supernatural events occurred that pointed and spelt out the coming doom for the city and the temple. One example concerning the temple doors opening of their own accord is recorded below:
   'The next miracle, which the Jewish authorities acknowledged, was that the Temple doors swung open every night of their own accord. This too occurred for forty years, beginning in 30 CE. The leading Jewish authority of that time, Yohanan ben Zakkai, declared that this was a sign of impending doom, that the Temple itself would be destroyed. The Jerusalem Talmud states:
   *"Said Rabban Yohanan Ben Zakkai to the Temple, 'O Temple, why do you frighten us? We know that you will end up destroyed. For it has been said, 'Open your doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour your cedars' " (**Zechariah 11:1**)' (Sota 6:3).*
   Please read the entire document here:
   http://www.windowview.org/hmny/pgs/talmuds.30ce.html
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10. This ruler or prince is the coming antichrist. He will come from the area of the Roman Empire. We generally think of the Roman Empire as Western Europe today but it should be noted that historically the Roman Empire had both a western and eastern leg. The eastern leg comprised of countries now known as Iraq and Syria.
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11. And a place will be set up for the Jews to flee to. This is recorded in **Rev 12:6** where it says
    'The woman (Israel) fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days (3 1/2 years - the second half of Daniel's 70th week).
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