

Daniel 06-03-05a

This is Sunday, the 5th of March 2006. We continue our study this morning in the book of Daniel. We will take another look at the 70 weeks prophecy in Daniel chapter 9. And our scripture reading this morning is going to come from that passage.

But let's take a moment as we begin to pause and exercise our individual priesthood to ensure that we are susceptible to the teaching ministry of God's Holy Spirit. It is not nearly as important what I say or what you hear as it is what the Holy Spirit says and what we learn from Him. His ministry transcends the preacher or the teacher or the pastor.

His ministry transcends our human intelligence. He takes the supernatural power of God's Word and applies it supernaturally to our hearts and our souls. And it's a wonderful thing.

And it enables anyone who is called and tasked with presenting God's Word to stand and to not quake at the thought. It took me a long time to ever make the decision to go to seminary because I thought it's too awesome a task. It's too big a responsibility to try to not only gain an accurate understanding of God's Word but then to stand up and present it.

But I gained great comfort and great confidence from the knowledge that God the Holy Spirit is our teacher. And it is He that does the real work just as He does in evangelism, just as He does in guiding us into all truth and in leading us in paths of righteousness for Christ's name's sake. And we all can exercise our gifts, whatever they may be, with great confidence knowing that the power and the guidance and the fruit of it all belongs to God.

Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful for another opportunity to gather and spend time together, blessing and being blessed through fellowship, through the assembling of ourselves together, the singing of songs and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts as we recognize the mercies and the grace that have been renewed for us this day. We thank You for the nation in which we live. We thank You for our leadership and those who are believers in high posts of government.

We pray a special blessing on our president, his cabinet and staff and those in the other branches of government who are believers and who seek to fulfill their duties in accordance with Your Word and to the reflection of Your glory. We pray that You will be with them. Many of them cannot assemble and are beset by the forces of evil on every hand.

And we pray that You will comfort and encourage, strengthen and bless them on this day and give them vision to see the way that they should go in the days ahead. We thank You for those who serve in our military and law enforcement and all of those who, especially as they function as believers, are seeking to preserve our freedom and our opportunity to gather, as we do this morning, and pursue our relationship with You without fear of persecution, without fear of the kinds of pressures that are rampant throughout the rest of the world. And we know that this is an opportunity granted to us and from those to whom much is given, much is required, and we

pray that we can rise to that challenge, that we will learn from Your Word this morning those things which will thoroughly equip us for every good work.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. As I said, our scripture reading is from our passage because this is a very famous passage, a very widely studied and interpreted passage, and the results of those interpretations and those studies are proliferated and multitudinous.

And we want to try to rightly divide this portion of God's Word. We are at the point of this communication from Gabriel to Daniel. 70 weeks, verse 24 of Daniel 9, 70 weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy.

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. The street shall be built again and the wall, or the open square and the perimeter, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself.

And the people of the Prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood. Until the end of the war, desolations are determined.

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week. But in the middle of the week, he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate.

Even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate. Well, you can spend a lot of time. You can write books, which many people have done.

We began last week by looking at the purpose that God has for this seventy-week period. Why is God communicating this to Daniel? What is his goal for the remainder of the age of Israel? Nobody is ever going to make sense of this prophecy unless they are dispensational in their understanding. Don't let anyone try to tell you that dispensations were invented by Darby in the 18th century and further elaborated upon and popularized by Schofield and Schaeffer and others.

Everyone likes to say, well, dispensations were invented and C.I. Schofield in his Schofield Reference Bible, if it wasn't for that, why we'd all be covenant theologians, all of the church fathers were covenant theologians, et cetera, ad nauseum, nonsense. I can take you to chapter and verse of early church fathers who understood that there is a distinction and a separation between the church and Israel. They didn't have the granularity.

It's like looking, when I was a little kid, most of you, when you were little, you remember when the Sunday papers would come out and the front page, it was a big deal because they would have a color picture on the cover, but the technology was just barely there and so the registration of the three different colors wouldn't match and you'd look at that picture on the

cover and it was flashy, but you couldn't hardly tell what it was because it was just all blurry. Well, technology has advanced and now you have near magazine quality pictures all through your newspaper and on the front you have things that you can cut out and frame. I mean, they're gorgeous because time has passed and understanding and technology have improved.

Well, I think of the early church fathers wrestling with the foundational issues of the faith like was Jesus really God or not? You had the Montanists and you had, well, I won't even go into all the different kinds of heresy that you had in the early church and just establishing which books were inspired and which weren't. That was their fundamental task and they did not have a need to know about the specifics of the end of the age. Why? They were at the beginning of the age.

They were ironing out and studying and getting a good grip on the beginning of the age. It was a huge change. We talked about this Friday night in terms of why is there going to be animal sacrifice in the millennial kingdom? And for us in the church age, not under law but under grace, the re-institution of these bloody sacrifices is kind of shocking.

We think, well, isn't Christ the end of the law? One sacrifice, fulfillment of the shadows. And so this whole thing, and so many people have stumbled over this when they get to the latter six chapters of Ezekiel and the millennial temple and the sacrifices and the sons of Zadok Did I do that right? It's Zadok, right? Who's the other guy? Kohath. The Kohathites were the Levites who did the priesthood in the Old Testament days and the Zadokites, which I managed to reverse for a full half hour, will preside in the millennial worship.

So, this shocks us. You're going to start bringing these in and for a thousand years they're going to be brought to the altar and blood is going to spurt every which way and you get the same old thing and you think, why? Well, we addressed that on Friday night. But to us, it's a shock, the transition of dispensation from the church age to the millennial kingdom, which is Israel-centered.

It is all about Israel. You cannot understand the millennial kingdom. And this is the reason that people spiritualize the temple of Ezekiel.

They spiritualize the entire millennium. Oh, God has the kingdom. It's kingdom now.

Jesus is already sitting on the throne of his father, David. This insidious misunderstanding and distraction has crept in. It's in Dallas Seminary.

They teach it everywhere. Progressive dispensationalism is the wolf of covenant theology in sheep's clothing. And it has crept in and is being taught in classrooms all around.

Dispensational understanding is the only way you can make sense of the Word of God. And this is the passage. This is the sine qua non, if you want some Latin.

This is the pillar and the pivot. And this passage is dispensations in a nutshell. And we're going to see that this morning.

We're going to look at a little bit of history. We're going to look at a little bit of chronology. We're going to do a little bit of math.

And at the end, we're going to, don't be afraid, but we're going to do a little bit of math. It's spring break, so you can do a little math. So, let us begin.

We have already talked about the purpose. The purpose of this period of time is declared on whom? It is your people and your holy city. It's not the earth.

It's not the Gentiles. It's not the nations. It is the people of Daniel.

Daniel is a Jew. His people. I find it ironic that this is all looking to the future of Daniel's people.

And yet, how many descendants does Daniel have? Zero. Daniel is a eunuch. And Hananiah and Mishael and Azariah and Daniel were all made eunuchs at the point that they were brought in.

We saw that in the first chapter of this book. And yet, Gabriel comes to him and says, this prophecy is for your people. And there are times when people say, well, but I haven't made a contribution to the gene pool here.

Nonsense. It doesn't matter in the physical sense. What matters is the spiritual sense.

And look at the place that Daniel holds in Israel as a prophet and as the one through whom this word of God came. He is better than a grandpa. He is better than a father.

He is better than a scion of the clan or the tribe. Daniel has informed his people, Israel, for 2,500 years. That's his legacy.

That's his heritage. And they are truly his people. And by way of interpretation and application, it is not our physical progeny that established our legacy and our heritage.

It is the faithfulness that we have to the opportunities that God gives us. Daniel could have gone astray a lot of times in a lot of ways. Remember how old he is here at this point? How old is Daniel now? He didn't get here by waking up on his 79th birthday and saying, you know, I really ought to start living for God.

Maybe I'll try to be a light here amongst the Gentiles. God could have given him, you know, God could have said, you know, there's going to be 530 weeks or there's going to be 629 weeks. God could have given him this when he was a young man, right? Why does he get it way down here at the end of his life? Daniel is qualified.

We saw this and we refer to it all the time in Ecclesiastes. Remember when Solomon says it is not the tall spirit? It's the long spirit. It's not how tall and proud you stand at the beginning.

It's how long you endure. It's the faithfulness and the pattern of life. All of us have mistakes.

All of us mess up. Daniel messed up. It's not recorded in the Word of God, but he messed up.

Everybody does. Moses messed up. Abraham messed up.

Joseph messed up. I have no doubt in my military mind that all four friends at different times messed up. But isn't the Word of God wonderful? Because Daniel established a pattern of faithfulness throughout his life and now when he's an old, old man, God says, and he's still praying.

He's down on his knees confessing the sins of his people and his own sins. And it is because of that consistent... How many times do you suppose you could count up the days? Daniel prayed three times a day for let's say 70 years. Just round off and say 300 days in a year and 70 years.

What's that work out to? 210,000 days or some enormous amount. 21,000. Three times a day.

Multiply that times three. That's how many prayers Daniel has prayed. Now he's down on his knees again as an old man and God sends the angel Gabriel.

This is the same person that is going to appear to marry the mother of the Lord Jesus. Because he is a long spirit. He is an enduring spirit.

And that is his pattern and that is his habit. And that's what he has done for a lifetime. So he is the one to receive this.

And Gabriel could have said, this is what's going to happen to Israel and this is what's going to happen to the holy city. But what does he say? Your people. Your holy city.

And Daniel is involved. God sends this word to Daniel and he says, this is your people and this is your holy city. This is Daniel's heritage.

This is Daniel's possession. And it goes far beyond physical progeny. Don't know if Daniel was ever married.

Being a eunuch, one would wonder. Being in the position that he was in the government and so on. The eunuchs, the whole reason they were up there is that they couldn't be diverted or subverted by wily feminine means.

So, your people. Your holy city. And then these seven things.

And we've looked at these six things actually. And we've looked at them in detail last time. We saw what the difference is between transgression and sin.

The same word is used here when it says to make an end of sins. That is the word that means to seal up. And it's the same one that is used in the second to last.

And we have sort of a chiastic structure here in these things. To finish transgression and to anoint the most holy. Those sort of are the antithesis of one another.

They complement one another. You make to finish the transgression and anoint the most holy.

That's a change in paradigm.

That's a change in what you look at. In the Old Testament age, all the way up until Christ, what was the purpose in Israel? The law came as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. By the law comes the knowledge of sin.

Well, we're going to finish that up. We're going to finish and make an end of sins. We're not going to be looking at sins anymore.

Now, keep in mind, it's hard for us to get ourselves out of our church age perspective. But take the church out and look at Israel. In the first 69 weeks before Christ, they exist.

God gives them the law and makes them a people and gives them the bloody sacrificial system to demonstrate the horror of sin and the necessity for judgment upon sin and penalty to be paid for sin and the need for cleansing so that there can be righteousness. Make an end of sins and anoint the Most Holy. Then you look at the next inside bracket there.

What's number two? To make an end of sins. You finish the transgression and anoint the Most Holy. To make an end of sins and to seal up vision and prophecy.

It's the same verb in both lines. It's the very same verb. To seal up sins.

To seal up vision and prophecy. Now, vision and prophecy always look ahead, don't they? And if somebody comes to you and says, this is what's going to happen. About this time next year, Sarah shall have a child.

That requires faith, doesn't it? Because it is something that's not seen. Something unexpected. In many cases, prophecy seemed counterintuitive.

God says judgment is coming. People didn't want to believe it. People in judgment.

God says deliverance is coming. People didn't want to believe it. Vision and prophecy require faith.

Well, once you make an end of sins, once you seal up sins and their purpose is accomplished and you anoint the Most Holy, you finish transgressions, seal up vision and prophecy. How much vision and prophecy is there going to be in the Millennial Kingdom? There won't be any. There's nothing in the Word of God that says there's going to be a single prophet.

Remember, Israel is on the earth, in the land, all over the place. They've got everything else. They've got the monarchy.

They've got the priesthood. What are the three elements of spiritual life in Israel? Prophets, priests, and kings. Jesus himself is prophet, priest, and king.

But in the Millennial Kingdom, you only have two out of the three. You have the priesthood and

you have the kingship. No prophecy.

Why? It's been sealed up. It is not an age of faith anymore. Faith is not an issue in the Millennial Kingdom because everything is visible.

What is it that you don't see? You've got David sitting on the throne in Jerusalem. You've got the Lord Jesus Christ surrounded by his bride ruling the earth. You have got the bloody sacrifices looking back and reminding everyone of what happened on the cross.

And God is manifest. You've got the river flowing forth from under the temple in Jerusalem. Half of it going to the east and half of it going to the west.

You've got the overcoming Israelites living in the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You've got the fulfillment of all of God's covenant, the vindication of everything in the Bible that everyone doubts and says, oh, that will never happen. How many fulfilled prophecies are people in the Millennium going to be able to see in the Word of God? All of them.

Every prophecy, with the exception of the ones for the kingdom of the Father, which are relatively few, are fulfilled. How can you not know that there's a God? Here's David, who can tell you all about life. 3,000 years ago, 4,000 years ago, when he was killing bears and slaying giants and so on, he's sitting on the throne.

He's telling stories, singing his psalms. We're going to get to hear all the tunes to all the psalms. Want to be great? When he says, dedicated to the choir director, and they start cranking up, we're going to hear them.

David will give concerts, be playing his harp and singing for a thousand years. So, what's the need for faith? You don't need prophecy, and you don't need faith, because it is all open and in view. And that's why the judgment at the end of the Millennial Kingdom is not about faith.

They're not going to be running around saying, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. What are they going to be saying? Accept God, and accept His authority, because the disobedient are going to be weeded out. The terrors are going to be gathered in bundles and burned.

And that's exactly what happens at Gog Magog. Well, we've seen all this in our Revelation study, but look at this. On the outside, finish transgression and anoint the most holy, because now you have the holy of holies.

And Daniel raised a good question. Not the biblical Daniel. Our Daniel raised a good question.

Is there an Ark of the Covenant in the Millennial Kingdom? And I have come to the conclusion that the answer is no. There is no mention. I cannot find a single reference to an earthly Ark of the Covenant anywhere in the Word of God.

And this is one of the differences between the Temple of Solomon and the Second Temple. The

Second Temple didn't have an Ark of the Covenant either, because nobody knows what happened to it after Jeremiah and the destruction of the city in 586. There's no further mention of the Ark of the Covenant.

Is it under the Temple Mount? Are they going to bring it back and make some kind of a use of it in the reconstructed Temple? Time will tell. But what have we seen in Revelation? What is the Ark of the Covenant that's operative during the Tribulation period? There's no scene from Raiders of the Lost Ark where the lid flies off and the horrible gap-faced angels fly out and incinerate everyone. It's not the earthly Ark of the Covenant, is it? Two or three times the Ark is visible in heaven.

That's the operative Ark. And you get the idea that those realities of which the Tabernacle and the Temple were an earthly shadow become operative. And the Millennial Temple, all of those chapters in Ezekiel that we studied verse by verse, where did you see a mention of the Ark of the Covenant? Or any cherubim? Or anything in the Holy of Holies? Nothing.

This is remarkable for its absence, isn't it? We have detail in the Tabernacle. We have detail in the Temple of Solomon. Solomon did different things with the cherubim than they remember.

And they took the poles out when they put the Ark in the Holy of Holies in Solomon's Temple. Because it's not on the march anymore. It's staying in one place.

There's not a word said about the Ark of the Covenant in Ezekiel's Temple. And I would submit to you that we don't need it. Why? Shadows are gone and the reality is here.

And this is one of the clues we have that the Temple in Ezekiel was not a wishful thinking for the restoration of an earthly fulfillment and so on, as many have alleged. So, you have that on the outside. You have make an end of sins and seal up vision and prophecy.

Right in the middle, make reconciliation for iniquity and bring in everlasting righteousness. We get out of the red and into the black. We get out of iniquity.

And iniquity is the pattern of sins. It is the pattern of disobedience. And we get into righteousness of the ages.

Righteousness that partakes of eternity. Everlasting, as we have seen, is not really the best translation here. Righteousness that partakes of.

It is tzaddik olamim. Righteousness that transcends time. It's God's righteousness.

Now, how do you appropriate righteousness if it is not by faith? We've said faith doesn't seem to be an issue. The judgment at the end of the millennium is a judgment of works. The sheep and goats judgment is a judgment of works.

Nothing said about faith in Revelation chapter 20. Nothing said about faith in the sheep and goats judgment. Nothing said about faith between the wheat and the tares.

Between the good and bad fish. Why? Righteousness is expressed in obedience. When Jesus told His disciples, Lift up your eyes and look at the fields.

They are white for harvest. Pray the Lord of the harvest that He will send in workers. What's He talking about? That is a harvest of righteousness.

He will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire, but the wheat He gathers into His barn. It is righteousness. The righteous deeds of the saints that make up those white robes.

You don't pray to God to send people to go out and bring in the harvest of lost people. Jesus never gave evangelistic instructions of this nature. What is He talking about? The wheat is righteousness.

The chaff is wood, hay, and stubble. And the axe being laid at the root of the trees that John talked about. The winnowing fan that is in His hand.

If Jesus is sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and His winnowing fan is in His hand, what is He doing? He is winnowing those who produce righteousness in obedience. The law is all about obedience. And guess what? The millennium is an age of law.

The millennium is an age of law. Everyone has the Holy Spirit. You have no need that anyone teach you.

Taking out your heart of stone, giving you a heart of flesh. Every man will teach his neighbor. Everybody is going to speak the truth.

It's not a far off. It's not above. It's not down below.

It's in your heart. It's on your lips. And so, what do you do with the truth? What do you do with the truth? It's the same issue for us, by the way.

It isn't that we learn the truth. Remember our Jeremiah passage? We don't glory in might or riches or wisdom. Let Him that glories glory in this.

That He understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. These are the things in which I delight. Loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness.

We tend to think, well, God delights in loving kindness. God delights in judgment. Because that is the means by which iniquity is removed.

Sins are made an end of. Transgression is finished. And God delights in that.

God doesn't want a polluted universe. God doesn't want us waiting about in the sewer of sin. And that judgment is necessary to remove it.

So, we have this statement. Then in verse 25, Gabriel goes on. And he says, Know therefore and

understand.

It's not enough to know. It's not just knowledge. Knowledge isn't going to get people through the judgment at the end of the millennium.

It's not what you know. It's what you understand. And understanding implies you can know a theorem.

I help the girls with their math. I used to teach algebra and geometry. They're taking algebra and geometry now.

They bring me their homework. And I look at it. Here's a trapezoid.

And they say, find the height of the trapezoid. Here's a parallelogram. Find the area.

Find the perimeter. Well, there are formulas. And so, you memorize the formula.

And you know it. What's the area of a triangle? One-half BH, right? One-half base times height. So, you know that formula.

They give you a homework worksheet. You take it home. You look at it.

Here's a triangle. And they say, find the area. Well, okay, one-half base times height.

I know that formula. And here's my triangle. But how do I get the area? I have to understand triangles.

I have to understand what the base is. I have to understand what the height is. And I have to apply my formula.

I have to look at the problem and cope with it. I have to ingest the information and digest it and understand it and put that knowledge into practice by way of understanding. It's knowledge and understanding.

That's why just attending Bible class is not enough. We can gain knowledge of God's Word. But it is the understanding and the application that flows from understanding that is required.

So, Gabriel says, Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince. There are going to be seven weeks and 62 weeks. This is a total of 69 weeks.

We'll talk about the break in that here shortly. But it says there are going to be seven sevens and 62 sevens. Now, this has been called heptads, by the way.

If you read old commentaries, you might find something called heptads because they're trying to cope with this Hebrew word that means sevens or weeks. Seven, of course, is an important number in Israel. You've got the Sabbath.

You've got the years of Jubilee and so on. If this was actual days, 490 days, sevens of days, that would only give you about a year and a third, a year and four months. Well, obviously, these events can't fit into that.

If you make them weeks of seven days each, that gives you about nine and a half years. That doesn't work. Everlasting righteousness and so on wasn't brought in in less than ten years from this vision.

So, when it is days, Daniel says days, and we saw that in Daniel 10, 2 and 3. If they are weeks of days, you have it specified, sevens of days, as in Daniel 10, 2 and 3. So, we know that this is weeks of years, and that's pretty well established. So, with this span of time, on your people, which is also a phrase found in Daniel 10, 14, where he says, I've come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision refers to many days yet to come. And in chapter 11, verse 14, when the king of the south rises up, violent men of your people shall exalt themselves in fulfillment of the vision, but they will fall.

So, we're not looking at world history, and we're not looking at church history, we're looking at Israelite history. But Daniel is to know and understand these six things having to do with sin, the first three. The second three have to do with the kingdom.

Because sin is dealt with, these first three things, the first three in that chiasm, you have the fulfillment of God's promises in the millennial kingdom. The first three are necessary to bring in the second three, and each of them corresponds. All of them are going to be finished and in place at the beginning of the millennial kingdom.

So, these things are going to be finished, brought to an end, concluded, sealed up, atonement for wickedness. We talked about that last time. God seals up vision and prophecy, anoints the most holy.

Is that the most holy in the temple of Ezekiel, or is it the Lord Jesus Christ? Yes. They are two halves of the same concept. The Lord Jesus is the most holy.

The Holy of Holies is all about the Lord Jesus. So, when was the Lord Jesus anointed? When is He the Mashiach? Sit thou at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Sin has to be dealt with, then righteousness comes in.

Iniquity has to be finished, then the Lord Jesus will rule. I would submit to you that the Lord Jesus Christ is not yet the anointed one. He will be anointed.

He will be the Mashiach when He returns with His bride, with those riding on the white horses wrapped in the robes of righteousness. That is when He is anointed. That is when He is crowned.

But you remember, on the other side of that coin, David was anointed long before he took the crown, wasn't he? All of the years in the cave of Adullam, Samuel had poured the anointing oil

on him when he was still at home with his father Jesse. And he was the anointed one, but he didn't come into the fulfillment of that anointing and that kingship for many, many years. There was another king on the throne, and yet here's David anointed.

And that, I think, speaks of this period in which we live, the church. The Lord Jesus Christ reigns in our hearts. He is the head of all things to the church, the fullness that fills all in all.

And those who followed David recognized him as God's anointed, recognized him as God's leader, and yet he was not victorious. He was not ruling in the national and political sense for many, many years. And so there is an already not yet aspect to the anointing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God will anoint the most holy. And I think this speaks not only of the beginning where the Lord Jesus Christ is the head of all things to the church and the church comes in, but also when he becomes the head of all things to Israel and is in fact the overall ruler with David as Prince Regent on the throne. So this can speak of the holy place.

It can speak of the Holy One, the Lord Jesus Christ, His enthronement as the anointed one, and the worship that continues to go on for a thousand years in the temple. So you have these six accomplishments. Now, I want to do a little bit of math here.

Let's talk about prophetic years. I have had some doubts about the 360-day prophetic year, but my doubts have been alleviated and I'm about to give you the reason why. If you have a piece of paper, you're going to want to write this down.

The Jewish calendar is a 360-day year. So you have seven sevens plus 62 sevens. So you can make a column on the left and say Jewish calendar, 360 days per year.

That's a total. Those first 69, that's 483 years. Right? Just seven shy of 490.

If you multiply that times 360 days, 483 times 360, hang with me, don't glaze over, 493 years of 360 days each, you get 173,880. 173,880. That's the number of days in 69 prophetic weeks.

173,880 days. Now, over on the right, let's talk about the Gregorian calendar. 365.25-day years.

Let's first just talk about a 365-day year. We'll add in the rest later. From 444 B.C., which is the going forth of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, to 33 A.D. is 476 standard years.

Now, if you do some subtraction, you'll come out one different because there is no year zero. You go from 1 B.C. to 1 A.D. and you miss year zero, and that throws the count off. So, it's 476 years, not 477.

476 years. Multiply that times 365 days and you get 173,740 days. Now, that doesn't match 880 days, does it? 173,000 is okay, but we're off.

173,740 days. Now, during that time, you have, in our calendar, leap years. There are 119

additional days because of leap year.

Every four years, you've got to throw in February 29th. So, you would think, okay, I add in 119 for the leap year and that keeps my solar calendar exactly balanced. However, if you know your leap year rules or if you look them up, like I had to do, you have to take three days out of that because centennial years, years that are an even hundred, are not leap years, even if they're a multiple of, you know, they fall under four years and they're not a leap year.

We just had one of those here recently. Centennial years are not a leap year. So, you have to take three years, three days back out of that.

So, that's 116 days in leap years. I mean, that's how precise this is. 116 days plus from March 5th to March 30th, which is the number of days to fill out that last month because the decree is in the middle of the month and the triumphal entry of Christ, the tragic entry of Christ is partway into a month and you add those days in, you get 173, 880 days.

Exactly. I mean, to the day from the giving of the decree to the crucifixion of Christ, it's 173, 880 days and the math just cannot be argued with. I mean, there's no wiggle room in that.

It is exact and it is precise and that is, in fact, 483 prophetic years. So, it's too compelling to ignore. Now, others have tried to make sense of these 70 weeks by saying they were literal and that all of this took place within the timeframe of the Maccabees and that sort of thing that this came down and to try to get this to fit, they move it back and say, well, the decree about Jerusalem was really when Jerusalem fell and they back it up and they try to squeeze it in that way.

No literal interpretation of these 69 weeks hits. You can't make it hit Antiochus Epiphanes. You can't make it hit Hyrcanus or any of the Maccabees.

No matter how you strain and stretch and twist and try to cram this in, it doesn't make sense. People who say, well, Daniel was written after the fact. He was written after Antiochus Epiphanes and was purportedly a prophecy beforehand.

You can't make it work. The guy had to be a complete idiot who wrote it after the fact and didn't get the math to come out right because it's off by 173 years. Nobody has ever successfully shoehorned this and that's why there's this great smoke screen because they can't make it fit.

So it only works and it works to the day in terms of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. There were actually four decrees and we'll look at those here in a second after the break. But this was the fourth decree.

It's mentioned in the Bible. We'll see which one it is. We'll see what the others were.

And this tells us the first 69 weeks. All we have to figure out now is what about that 70th week? What does it mean when Messiah was cut off but not for Himself? Is there any other way to take

that? Have the 70 weeks all expired or not? But God has a timetable. God has a purpose.

And in every age, God expects His people to lay hold of righteousness. We lay hold of righteousness by faith. We have a confident expectation that what God has said, He will do.

And that knowledge has to reflect itself in understanding and understanding reflects itself in application. And it's not what we know as we walk through our day. It's what we understand.

We look at our conversations. We look at our activities. And we understand that if we are to have a robe of righteousness, if we are to mount one of those white horses so that we can return with Christ and end the battle of Armageddon, we have to do something now.

We have to pay attention now. We have to be motivated now. God gave His prophecy to Daniel and it was a motivation for Him.

It was something to lift Him up from His depression and His discouragement in looking at the iniquities of the people. We do the same thing. We forget those things which are behind and we press toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We have such a great potential in these few days that remain to us. Let's pause here and take our break. When we come back, we will look at the decrees and see where exactly this 70th week fits in.