

Sometimes we simple-minded Christians expect our sovereign God to be just as simple-minded. In no place is that more glaringly obvious than in our interpretation of Daniel's 70th Week. Many believe that week to be about a Seven Year tribulation at the end of the Christian Era, but it's about something else entirely.

Daniel's 70th Week

LOCATING the foundations of the Solomonic temple on the old temple platform in Jerusalem, about 300 feet north of the Islamic Dome of the Rock, may be one of the most important archeological discoveries of the last century. Since that discovery, some researchers, probably for doctrinal reasons, have been trying to prove that the temple of Solomon was once where the Dome of the Rock now stands. Those researchers are not farmers, or from the Scripture alone they would have seen their error:

2Ch 3:1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

The temple was built over a threshing floor. Note that Scripture calls it a "floor." Floors are flat. Anyone who knows anything at all about threshing grain knows that threshing floors have to be flat. *As-Sakhra*, the craggy stone over which the Dome of the Rock now stands is as prickly as a porcupine. No farmer in his right mind would have attempted to thresh grain there, particularly when there was an absolutely flat rock, just perfect for threshing, only 300 feet away. So rest assured, the temple was NOT built where the Dome of the Rock now is.

But since the discovery of the original foundations of the Solomonic temple (see *Biblical Archeology Review*, Mar 1983), the Moslems have tried to hide all evidence of its existence by cementing over the holes in the bedrock spaced on the sacred cubit. Some researchers have also written lengthy arguments defending *As-Sakhra* as the temple's location, but it's still an impossibility, both scripturally and agriculturally.

So who cares? Is knowing the exact location of the old temple that important? You bet it is. Recognizing that the Holy of Holies in the Temple of Solomon was actually 300 feet North of the Dome of the Rock¹ is the key to understanding the day-years of Revelation 11:2 and understanding those day-years enables us to understand Daniel's 70th Week.

UPON A WING OF WHAT?

Most students of Bible prophecy recognize the 69 Weeks of Dan 9:24 as sixty-nine weeks of years that were fulfilled at Jesus' crucifixion². But the 70th "week" doesn't fit the events surrounding the crucifixion, so in the late 1800s, John Darby of the Plymouth Brethren theorized that the 70th "week" was actually a *Seven-Year* tribulation that would take place at the end of the Christian Era. Darby then imagined a 2000 year gap between the 69th and 70th weeks to make it fit his prophetic scheme of things. Darby also figured that the day-years of both Daniel and Revelation were the first or last half of his so-called Great Tribulation.

It all sounds very reasonable, and many believe it, but the view is really unsupportable, both biblically and historically. As you have read in *The False Prophet*, all the day-years in the Bible were fulfilled during the construction of the Dome of the Rock in 688AD or in new Israel in 1948 and 1967.

So where do we go from here? Well, to view Daniel's 70th Week correctly we need to remember that the Dome of the Rock

¹ For details on the importance of knowing the temple's exact location, read Ch. 5 of *The False Prophet*. That book can currently be downloaded, free of charge, from www.EllisSkolfield.com

² As covered in *The False Prophet*, when Hebrew day-years are converted into solar years, they exactly fit from the decree of Artaxerxes I (444BC) that authorized Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem until the Cross of Jesus (32-34AD) 483 Hebrew years = 396 solar years - 444 = 32AD.

is Daniel's Abomination of Desolation. Once we acknowledge that fact, then the 70th "week" can be viewed in a more rational way.

Let's look at Dan 9:26-27 once again. For those who do not read Hebrew (and that includes me), Green's Interlinear, literal, word-for-word translation could be helpful. We need to see if there's a different sentence structure that makes the intent of the author more understandable. There are no punctuation marks in the quote below because none appear in the original Hebrew text:

Dan 9:26-27 (Green's) and its end with the flood and until end war are determined desolations and he shall confirm a covenant with the many week one and in the half of the week he shall make cease sacrifice and offering and upon a wing abominations a desolator even until end and that which was decreed shall pour out on the desolator.

The underlining is mine, but read the above quote carefully. What is Gabriel saying? If you hadn't already read the KJV or the NAS, or been told what those verses mean, what would "upon a wing abominations a desolator" mean to you?

Hard to tell, isn't it? But when we put a pause after "wing," look at what happens. "Upon a wing . . . abominations a desolator." Now we can ask ourselves: "Upon a wing *of what* is an abomination that makes desolate going to be placed?" The translators of the NIV saw a very reasonable possibility and rendered the passage as follows:³

Dan 9:26-27 (NIV) ...And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. But He will confirm a covenant with many for one seven, but in the middle of that seven, he will put an end to sacrifice and offering, and one who causes desolations will

² Though it does not effect this passage, evidence is mounting that the NT of modern English Bibles like NIV and NAS were translated from Greek texts that were corrupted in the 3rd Century by Gnostics. Under UV inspection, it appears that codex Aleph, codex Bezae, and Papyrus 75 etc. (used in Wescott & Hort's edition of the Greek NT) were altered for doctrinal reasons. The KJV and the NKJV are still probably the most accurate translations available in the English language today.

place abominations on a wing of the temple, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

Again, the underlining is mine, but look; sometime in Daniel's future, an Abomination that makes Desolate could be placed "on a wing of the temple." Now that makes some sense. Sacrifices took place at the temple, so if sacrifices were going to be abolished, the temple site would be where that would happen.

SHIQQOTS HA SHAMEN

Now let's compare Dan 9:27 with Dan 12:11. In these two verses, the Lord not only identifies the Abomination that makes Desolate, but also gives Daniel the exact time frame of major events in Jerusalem's future:

Dan 9:27 . . . (NIV) and one who causes desolations (*shamen*) will place abominations (*shiqqots*) on a wing of the temple, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.

Dan 12:11 (KJV) And from the time *that* the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination (*shiqqots*) that maketh desolate (*shamen*) set up, *there shall be* a thousand two hundred and ninety days.

The Hebrew word for "abomination" is *shiqqots* (Strong's No. 8251), and the Hebrew word for "desolation" is *shamen* (Strong's No. 8074). *Shiqqots* and *shamen* appears in both verses and since they do:

*Both verses are about an Abomination that makes Desolate!
Since we already know that the abomination is the Dome of the Rock, then both verses are about the Dome of the Rock!*

Once we see that Daniel's 70th Week is really about the Dome of the Rock, then all support for a future *Seven-Year* tribulation collapses because Dan 9:27 is the ONLY verse in the whole Bible from which anyone could even conjure up such an idea. The identification of the Dome of the Rock as the Abomination of Desolation is confirmed by the day-years of Rev 11:2-3 and 12:6,

and 13:5. The dates are historically unassailable, and the mathematical fit incontestible. Which leads to the next point:

If the Dome of the Rock is the Abomination that makes Desolate, and Daniel's 70th Week is about that dome, then the 70th week has to stretch into the past and future from 688AD when the dome was constructed.

So how long can the 70th week be? Well, Daniel was placed in Babylon at the beginning of the time of the Gentiles for a particular reason. The Lord used Daniel to show the Jews and the surrounding nations a prophetic picture of the time that Gentile nations will control the Holy Land.

Since that was Daniel's mission, an interpretation of the 70th Week that fits the history of the Jewish people during the time of the Gentiles would be most appropriate. Unlikely as it may sound, Daniel's 70th Week may be a 57 word prophetic picture of the total time of the Gentiles. The key is hidden in the Hebrew word, *shavuim*. *Shavuim* is a unique plural form of the Hebrew word *Shavua*, which is defined as a seven or a week.

SHAVUOT AND SHAVUIM

What follows may be a bit technical, but it's a "one brick at a time" empirical argument. All the evidence needs to be in place before the conclusions we can draw from them make any sense.

Everywhere in the Old Testament, except in the book of Daniel, the Hebrew words *shavuot* or *shavua* are used to express a seven or a week. However, in Daniel an unusual word for seven is used: *shavuim*, the masculine plural form of *shavuot*. This plural form appears ONLY in Daniel and even here, *shavuim* is used only four times, three of which are in the 70 Weeks! So why is an unusual plural form of the word for seven used here?

Because it is meant to be a plural, that's why!

The 70th Week is not just one week of years -- it is a plural of weeks of years or a multiple of weeks of years. In *The Covenant, The Holocaust & The 70th Week*, Dr. David Lurie (a Messianic Jew and Hebrew scholar) concludes that since *shavuim* is plural, then the 70th Week must represent an unknown multiple of sevens. According to Dr. Lurie, the plural form of *shavuim* demands that it be multiplied by something. So if the 70th Week requires a multiplier, what is the multiplier? Let's look at the Scriptures Daniel knew and see what we can find out about biblical multiples in general.

All the way back to creation, there were weeks. The Lord created the Earth in six days followed by a Sabbath day of rest (Gen 2:2-3). Then in Exodus the Lord established a week of years. (Six working years, followed by a Sabbatical year, Exo 23:10). Daniel knew about both kinds of weeks. Being raised under the Levitical code, he was equally familiar with weeks of days and weeks of years.

Then further in the Levitical code, the Lord initiated a cycle of 50 years. Seven weeks of years (for 49 years) followed by a special year of the Jubilee. Within that cycle, each seventh year was a sabbatical year. The Jubilee year followed the 49th sabbatical year *as an extra sabbatical year!* The Jubilee year was an additional 360 days of rest, Lev 25:8-10. Without question, Daniel knew about this 50 year cycle, and the year of the Jubilee:

THE LEVITICAL CODE

1st: Seven years.

2nd: Seven weeks of years.

3rd: One unique year of the Jubilee.

Seven years, seven weeks of years, and the year of the Jubilee, were plainly spelled out for Daniel by Moses. That 50 year cycle repeated itself on down through Jewish history. Now compare that Levitical code with the new cycle that Gabriel gives Daniel in the 70 Weeks:

DANIEL'S 70 SEVENS

1st: Seven weeks of years, seven *Shavuim*.

2nd: 62 more weeks of years, 62 *Shavuim*.

3rd: One unique multiple week, one *Shavuim*.

Note the similar structures. Of course that resemblance was obvious to Daniel. Seven *shavuim*, then a multiple of *shavuim*, followed by one *shavuim* – all requiring multipliers. This new series of weeks was just like the Levitical code that Daniel knew, but now it was a series of 70 Weeks not just 50 years.

As Daniel saw it, first there was the well understood seven weeks of years, for 49 years. But instead of those 49 years being followed by a Jubilee (as he would have expected), the Jubilee was deferred while the Lord gave Daniel 62 more weeks of years.

Those 69 weeks of years were then followed by one special kind of week, a *shavuim*, or plural week of years. What could that mean? Though the numbers are different, the numeric progression in the Levitical code and in Daniel's 70 Weeks are identical. Please look at the comparison below:

1st: A Seven.

2nd: A multiple of sevens.

3rd: A unique Jubilee.

1st: Seven Sevens

2nd: 62 Sevens

3rd: A plural of Seven. The Jubilee was a unique year
so this 70th Week would also be a unique plural!

Daniel would have recognized the 70th Week as being unique, different *in kind* from the prior 69, but still similar to the Jubilee. Daniel was a brilliant man, and the Lord had given him the gift of interpreting dreams. If we slow Christian folk can see this parallel progression 2500 years down the line, then Daniel would have seen it with his eyes shut.

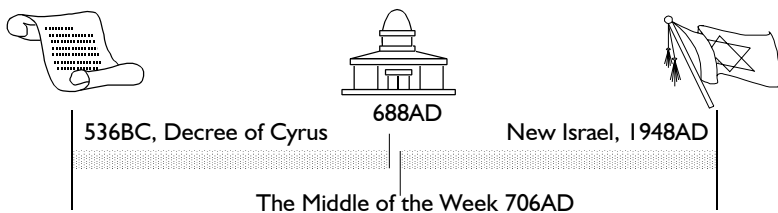
The next question is this: In what way was the 70th Week similar to the Jubilee? Well, what was the year of the Jubilee like? It was a special sabbatical year for every living thing in the land:

Lev 25:10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout *all* the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family. A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather *the grapes* in it of thy vine undressed. For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

Besides the forgiving of debts, Jubilee was treated as a year of complete rest for every man and beast, a special kind of super Sabbatical year. *For all practical purposes, Jubilee was an additional year of rest with 360 Sabbaths!*

Since the 70th Week linguistically suggests a multiplier of some kind, could every day of this 70th Week actually represent a year? If the 360 day Hebrew Year is our multiplier, then $7 \times 360 = 2520$ Hebrew Years. Since our history is written in solar years we convert $2520 \times .9857 = 2484$ (2483.95).

Dan 9:26-27 (NIV) ...And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. But He will confirm a covenant with many for one seven, but in the middle of that seven, he will put an end to sacrifice and offering, and one who causes desolations will place abominations on a wing of the temple, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.



The Dome of the Rock is “on a wing” of the temple. The “Middle of the week” is not a precise time. When used to describe 2484 years; 706AD is also in the “middle of the week.”

$$2484 - 536BC = 1948AD$$
$$\frac{1}{2} \text{ of } 2484 \text{ is } 1242 - 536BC = 706AD$$

1. From Cyrus' decree to return to the land in 536BC to new Israel in 1948AD is exactly 2484 solar years!
2. The exact middle of that time is 706AD, one year after the completion of Islamic work on the temple mount!

From the above, it appears that the Lord intended the 70th week of Dan 9:27 to be an overview of the time that Gentiles would control the Holy Land. If that is correct, then the 70th Week is over, and all support for a future Seven-Year Great-Tribulation disappears into thin air!⁴

⁴ This is not the only place in prophecy where the Lord used imprecise terms to describe general areas of time. In Dan 7:12, God used "a season and a time" to describe 1260 years. This unusual usage is documented in Ch 8 of *The False Prophet*.