

## **"The Seventy Heptads"**

### **Daniel 9**

The soul of a saint always finds establishment when it can truly repose upon the revealed will of God; when, amid the conflict of human thoughts and human actions, it can be brought simply to "God and the word of his grace." Those who are not so reposing may only look at the storm. But those who, like Paul in the tossed vessel, have had the word of God brought home to their ear, can take courage themselves and rely upon the promise of safety, even for the guidance of others.

This gives prophecy a peculiar value to the soul of the instructed Christian. He thus is warned of the coming events. But though he sees them he is not cast down, for he knows the issue beforehand. Our present calling is to walk in the midst of human things in the full practical recognition of the glories which have been made known to us, as belonging to us in Christ our head, above at God's right hand. Prophecy has been bestowed on us in order that we may know how, in the midst of confusion and the varied forms of Satan's working, we may stand and act as those who belong to Christ. We know as a simple fact how the Church has greatly overlooked this important portion of God's revealed truth. We know also how the enemy has sought to cast a kind of discredit upon every effort which is made, either for any to understand and use prophecy themselves or to give instruction to others therein. But this, instead of leading us to overlook this precious deposit of God's truth, ought to make us the more earnest in not neglecting that which is so important.

If discredit be cast upon such investigation, it ought to cause us to look the more to the God of all grace; that He may vouchsafe to us the teaching of His Spirit, that so we may use it aright.

In considering the ninth chapter of Daniel, we see at once the value which previous prophecy possessed in his soul. He had been favored with many direct communications from God, but here we find him using the prophecy which had been given through Jeremiah as the ground of his confession and prayer. "In the first year of Darius, I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem." The "books" to which Daniel refers were apparently the letters which Jeremiah had written to the captives in Babylon (Jer. 29:10), as well as his other mention of "seventy years" (25:11). The date does not commence from the destruction in the reign of Zedekiah, but from the former part of the captivity, when those persons to whom Jeremiah's letter was addressed were carried away to Babylon.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to see how Daniel connected hope resting upon promise with prophecy. The hope was that the captives should return from Babylon. But instead of this being vaguely held, he used the intelligence which God had given him through prophecy so that he hoped confidently (while waiting for God's time before appointed) for the hope to be accomplished. The knowledge of the detail connected with these things brought his soul into a healthy condition before God as to the exercise of his conscience about these matters.

And so, surely, the Spirit always teaches. We may either follow our speculations about the things which God has revealed, or else have our ears open to hear all His instruction. The latter is our only safeguard against speculation. Happy is that believer who holds what God has revealed, in

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<sup>1</sup>"Thus saith the Lord, that after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (Jer. 29:10).

dependence upon His grace and the power of His Spirit, to enable him to use it aright.

But the mind of Daniel did not merely lay hold of the fact of the restoration of his people. This was indeed an object of hope, but he saw God and the working of God in the matter. He saw God as the one who had laid on them this punishment of captivity, as the one who had promised to bring them back, and as the one who had a mind concerning the whole.

And very solemn were the thoughts of the prophet when his heart was thus brought before God. He saw the faithfulness of God in those things which told of judgment, for here was the proof--that they were in Babylon. And thus he was led to what God had said about restoration from captivity in the very places which in the Law of Moses denounced that punishment (Lev. 26:40, etc.)

If they shall *confess* their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they have trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me, and that I also have walked contrary unto them and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept the punishment of their iniquity--then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

So too in Deuteronomy 30 repentance is spoken of as that which God calls for as the prerequisite to His bringing back His people to their land. These promises of course belong, in their full application, to the future and final deliverance and restoration of Israel; but we find the principle of them taken up and used by Daniel. With regard to the return after the seventy years, God had distinctly said that the fulfillment of His absolute promise should be preceded by prayer: "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. . . . And I will be found of you, saith the Lord; and I will turn away your captivity," etc. (Jer. 29:12-14). God had promised to end the Babylonish captivity in seventy years. God had also said that repentance and the confession of their sin and the sin of their fathers were prerequisites. Daniel, instead of seeing these things in opposition to each other, looked at the seeming condition, not as taking away from the certainty of the promise, but rather as stating what God Himself would work and provide. He relies upon the promise of God; and doing this he takes himself [to] the place of confession and humiliation. He makes confession of the sin of all Israel, their fathers, their kings, and all. He consents to the righteous judgment of God in all that He had wrought; and thus, as it were, on behalf of all Israel "accepts the punishment of their iniquity." He pleads with God to work on behalf of his people, and his land, and Jerusalem the holy city, for His own name's sake; that he would now show his faithfulness at the close of the seventy years in ending the captivity: "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hearken and do! Defer not, for thine own sake, O my God, for thy city and thy people are called by thy name."

Full of blessed instruction as all the former portion of this chapter is, I am only now regarding it as introductory to the response on God's part to the prayer of the prophet. In verses 20, 21 we find that the angel Gabriel was forthwith sent forth to the prophet: "O Daniel, I am now come to give thee skill and understanding" (verse 22). We find at the end of chapter 8 that the vision had not been understood, but now the teaching from God assumes a different form. God gives the instruction by direct statement, and not by symbol which required interpretation. It is also well to observe that the symbolic visions in this book and their interpretations do not run exactly parallel to each other. Each presents certain features which are omitted in the other, and each

helps to give definiteness and consistency to the truth taught.

Verse 23: "At the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee, for thou art greatly beloved." The margin has here "a man of desires," whence some have questioned whether it refers to the desire on Daniel's part to know the things, or to the desires being on God's part towards him. It is clear from the form of the word that the latter is correct: "Therefore understand the matter and consider the vision."

The following verses of the chapter contain the prophetic part of the vision. Much is comprised in them, but the things spoken of are stated so concisely that they require very particular attention. Daniel had made inquiry about seventy *years* of the captivity in Babylon. The answer speaks also of seventy periods, which in our English translation are called "weeks"; the word, however, does not necessarily mean seven *days* but a period of seven parts. Of course it is much more often used in speaking of a week than of anything else, because nothing is so often mentioned as a week which is similarly divided. The Hebrews, however, used a septenary scale as to time, just as habitually as we should reckon by tens. The sabbatical years, the jubilees, all tended to give this thought a permanent place in their minds. The denomination here is to be taken from the subject of Daniel's prayer--he prayed about years; he is answered about periods of seven years, i.e. the recurrence of sabbatical years.

His prayer had related to the deliverance of Israel from their then captivity. The reply goes much farther; for it sets out, not from the release of the people, but from the edict to restore and to build Jerusalem, and it reaches through events of varied kinds until the absolute and established blessing, on the ground of righteousness and forgiveness, is brought in.

I will now give the verses from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the end--departing in some places from our English translation--together with remarks interspersed; and the whole prophecy may be considered in detail. I retain the word "week" for convenience sake and not as implying seven days to be the import of the Hebrew word.<sup>2</sup>

Verse 24: "Seventy weeks have been determined (more strictly, *divided*) upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal vision and prophet, and to anoint the holy of holies." (This expression is used in no other place as signifying a person, nor ought it, I believe, to be so taken here.)

Verse 25: "Know then and understand, from the issuing of the decree to restore and to build unto Messiah the Prince (shall be) seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be again built, and the trench (or scarp rampart), even in pressure of times" (i.e. in times of straitness or pressure).

Verse 26: "And after the threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and there shall be nothing for Him; and the city and the sanctuary shall the people destroy of a prince who shall come; and his end shall be in the overflowing; and until the end (there is) war (even) that which is determined for desolations."

Verse 27: "And he (the prince who shall come) shall confirm a covenant with the many (or with the multitude) for one week; and at half the week he shall cause sacrifice and offering to cease;

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<sup>2</sup> See the Note on the "Year-day System" below.

and upon the wing (or pinnacle) of abominations (shall be) that which causes desolation, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the causer of desolation."

Here, then, we have the objects of hope placed first, just as we find in the Psalms and so many other portions of prophetic Scripture. The soul is first set in the place of strength by the apprehension of the blessings which are to be brought about, and then the intermediate trials become subjects of prophetic instruction.

In verse 24 the expression "are determined" is more strictly "are divided." This may relate to the seventy weeks being a period of time divided out, as it were, from the whole course of ages, for God to deal in a particular manner with the Jews and Jerusalem. Or it may refer to the period being itself divided into parts, as we see in the verses which follow.

Daniel in his prayer, in addressing God, had constantly spoken of Israel as "thy people," "thy holy city," etc. But the angel Gabriel in the reply takes them up simply as Daniel's people: "thy people, thy holy city," etc.--as though God would intimate that until the everlasting righteousness should be brought in, He could not in the full sense own them as His.

The various things spoken of "to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness," are all, I believe, future. I do not regard any of them as referring strictly to the work of Christ upon the cross (although we, as believers in Him, know that many of these things have a blessed application to us). But it rather appears to me that they all belong to the time of Israel's blessing, when the preciousness of the blood of Christ shall be *applied* to those "who are spared of them"; when "thou shalt call me my Father, and shall not turn away from me" (Jer. 3:19).

I believe that "to seal vision and prophet" means this: to give the seal of confirmation to the vision by the issue of events as predicted, and in the same manner to confirm the prophet by the fulfillment of those things which God has spoken through him.

The expression, "to anoint the most holy" (or rather "holy of holies"), has often been taken, as I am well aware, as referring to our blessed Lord. This I believe to be an erroneous application of the words. The expression does not in a single case in any other passage apply to any person, but always to the most holy place of the tabernacle or temple, or else to things such as sacrifices which were "most holy." Here I believe that it simply refers to the most holy place--the sanctuary of God, which in the days of Israel's blessing will be set apart and owned by God as peculiarly His: "My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord [Yahweh] do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them forevermore" (Ezek. 37:27, 28).

These, then, are the objects of hope--circumstances which will be brought to pass when the seventy weeks have run to their termination. The point from which they commence is next stated: "from the issuing of the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem." This is not the decree of Cyrus (Ezra 1:1), for that was simply to build the house of the Lord God of Israel in Jerusalem. Neither was it the decree given to Ezra by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign (Ezra 7), for that related to the worship of God, etc. But it evidently must be the decree given to Nehemiah in the twentieth year of the same Artaxerxes in the month Nisan. This last is the only decree which we find recorded in Scripture which relates to the restoring and building of the city. It must be borne in mind that the very existence of a place as a city depended upon such a

decree. For before that, any who returned from the land of captivity were only in the condition of sojourners; it was the decree that gave them a recognized and distinct political existence.<sup>3</sup>

The twentieth of Artaxerxes gives us a starting point from which the reckoning of the seventy weeks begins. We have next to pay attention to the manner in which this period is divided into distinct parts. Two portions of the time are first spoken of: "From the issuing of the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"; i.e. two periods, the one 49 years, the other 434 years; the whole period of the 490 years being included, except seven years.

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3 *On The 20<sup>th</sup> of Artaxerxes.* - Some have found a difficulty in making out the chronology of the seventy weeks, because they have thought that the time from the 20<sup>th</sup> of Artaxerxes to the crucifixion of our Lord would not fully accord with that marked out in the prophecy. If it had been so, it need have surprised no one. Whatever be the result of chronological calculations, the word of God is the same. We know that it is certain, and everything else must bend to it.

But here I believe the difficulty to be wholly imaginary. It is true that we may find some from the date pointed in the margin of our Bibles; but the history of this date, as it there stands, is rather curious. Archbishop Ussher drew up a scheme of Chronology which is commonly followed, rather from convenience than from its absolute correctness being supposed. About a hundred and fifty years ago Bishop Lloyd undertook to affix Archbishop Ussher's dates to our English Bibles. But, *in this instance*, he made a considerable alteration and substituted another date of his own, so as to adapt the reign of Artaxerxes to his own theory.

The date which stands in our Bibles for the 20<sup>th</sup> of Artaxerxes is 446 B.C. This makes the commencement of his reign 465 B.C. But the authority of the best and most nearly contemporary historian will put the matter in a very different light. Thucydides mentions that the accession of Artaxerxes had taken place before the flight of Themistocles. This authorizes us to adopt Ussher's date and to place the commencement of the reign 473 or 474 B.C. This would give the date of 454 or 455 B.C. If we add to this the date of the crucifixion, it will just give us the exact period of the sixty-nine weeks. In doing this we must remember that the birth of our Lord was about four years before the common era, so that the 33<sup>rd</sup> year of His life, when He is supposed to have suffered, would correspond with the year 29 of our reckoning. I believe this to have been the true date--first because of the day of the week on which the passover commenced in that year, and also because of the consuls of that year (the two Gemini) having been mentioned by several writers as those of the year when our Lord was put to death.

This remark does not affect the instruction given us by God in this chapter. It is a point which I only notice for the removal of difficulties.

It is great pity that Archbishop Ussher's date should in this particular have been misrepresented; it was a point to which he had paid particular attention. About the year 1613 he lectured on the subject at Trinity College, Dublin, resting on the testimony of Thucydides. He then discussed difficulties connected with the supposed length of the reigns of Darius and Xerxes so as to adapt other events to this certain date. From October 1615 he corresponded at various times on the point with Thomas Lydiat (the scholar most familiar with such subjects of any in England), until 1643. And in 1650, after 37 years of minute consideration, he published the result in his *Annales Veteris Testamenti*, where the date is 3531. This answers in Ussher's *Collatio Annorum* to 474 B.C., or the third year of the seventy-sixth Olympiad. His judgment in 1613 seems to have been doubtful. But in 1617 he says, "These things being laid together do show, that the expulsion of Themistocles from Athens fell no later than the beginning of the fourth year of the seventy-sixth Olympiad; to which time you (i.e. Lydiat) doubtfully refer the beginning of his troubles; how much sooner soever, my opinion is, that at that time Themistocles fled into Persia, as Eusebius noteth, whose testimony I have no reason to discredit, unless I have some better testimony or reason to oppose against it. The year before that, which is the third of the seventy-sixth Olympiad, I suppose Artaxerxes Longimanus to have begun his reign: to whom, as yet *νεωστιΩβασιλευοντα*, Themistocles fled, as Thucydides sufficiently proveth" (*Works*, xv, p. 111).

Ussher in thus laying down this date had no motive for bringing the space of 485 years from the 20<sup>th</sup> of Artaxerxes to A.D. 29; for his division of the seventy Heptads differs from mine, and he did not regard A.D. 29 as

There is next added, "the street shall be built again, and the scarp'd rampart, even in pressure of times." Then follows, "and after the threescore and two weeks," etc. Hence it is clear that the whole period from the decree to Messiah the Prince is 483 years, and that 49 of these years are appropriated to something peculiar; the only thing so mentioned has been the building of the street, rampart, etc. These things are, I judge, to be allotted to the first division of the time, namely, 49 years.

Some have thought that this same interpretation was supported by the expression "in pressure of times," which they would render "in the shorter space of time"--a rendering wholly destitute of ground, only supported indeed by its supposed fitness in this place. I quite agree with the explanation which allots the first 49 years to these events, but I could not support it by any such supposed rendering.

But it may be asked, What is the evidence that 49 years were spent in the restoration of the city? I answer, I believe it to have been so simply on the authority of this passage. No other portion of Scripture says anything about the length of time; and here 49 years are mentioned, and also the restoration of the city is so placed in juxtaposition that they appear clearly to belong together.

Verse 26: "And after the threescore and two weeks, shall Messiah be cut off." This period is marked by the definite article as identical with the threescore and two weeks of the preceding verse. The 483 years from the issuing of the decree run on "to Messiah the Prince." It becomes then important to inquire to what part of our Lord's earthly path the reference is made. He was "born King of the Jews," but this appears to be something more than the mere title. Now the only time in which we find the Lord Jesus taking this title in the presence of Jerusalem was six days before He suffered, when He came thither on the ass's colt. He was then presented as King, and six days afterwards was put to death as the King of the Jews. I should regard the limit "unto Messiah the *Prince*" as reaching on to His having been thus presented to Jerusalem. It is worthy of remark that the decree of Artaxerxes was issued in the month Nisan, the very month in which the passover was kept, and in which our Lord both rode into Jerusalem and was crucified.

I should not thus consider the expression "After the threescore and two weeks" as implying an interval, but rather as being just the same as "at the end of the sixty-two weeks," "when they are accomplished."

The words which stand in our English version "but not for Himself," have often been taken as if they spoke of the vicarious character of our Saviour's suffering. This would however be, I believe, placing a most true and important doctrine upon an insufficient basis. I believe that the words simply imply "and there shall be nothing for Him"--He will be rejected, and His earthly kingdom will be a thing on which He will not then enter.

The series of years has run on unhinderedly from the issuing of the edict to the cutting off of Messiah. But at this part of the vision there are various events spoken of before the one remaining week comes into notice at all. "And the city and the sanctuary shall the people destroy of a prince who shall come." This refers, I have no doubt, to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as was also foretold by our Lord in Luke 21: "When ye see compassed about with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." This destruction is here said to be wrought by a certain people; not by the prince who shall come, but by his people. This refers us,

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the date of the crucifixion of our Lord.

I believe, to the Romans as the last holders of undivided Gentile power. They wrought the destruction long ages ago. The prince who shall come is the last head of the Roman power, the person concerning whom Daniel had received so much previous instruction. It is most important to attend to the exact words of the passage; it is thus that we avoid the mistake of confounding the people and the prince who afterwards springs up.

“And his end shall be in the overflowing.” I suppose that this speaks of the end of the prince who shall come. In the expression “the overflowing,” allusion seems to be made to some known event in prophecy. I suppose that it is the same overflowing as that which is alluded to in Isaiah 10:22 and 28:18. This would identify the time of this prince with the crisis of Israel’s history. This identification is (as we shall see) yet more decidedly brought out in the subsequent part of the vision.

The interval up to “the end” is only characterized by war and desolations. Just so our Lord teaches us in Matt. 24: “Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.” The expression, “that which is determined,” appears to be taken up from Isaiah 10:23.

The vision gives us no intimation about the times of events which belong to the interval. We only find at the cutting off of Messiah, one “seven years” is unaccomplished. This “reserved week,” as some have aptly called it, belongs to the time of the prince who shall come.

Verse 27: “And he (the prince who shall come) shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week.” In “*Remarks on Chapter 8*” I sought to show that the horn spoken of in the two chapters is identical, and here he again appears to come before us. In fact, the allusion seems to be made to known circumstances about him. He makes a covenant with the multitude--that of course means the multitude of Daniel’s people; they are leagued with him and he with them. This takes place three years and a half before he causes sacrifice and oblation to cease. Hence it is clear that they go on as under his patronage for some time. This will, I believe, throw some light upon the 2,300 days mentioned in chapter 8:14. We find him here making a covenant for one “seven years,” then breaking it at the end of three years and a half. And the removal of sacrifice, etc., is so spoken of as to connect it with the breaking of the covenant. This tends, I think, to show that one thing done in pursuance of this covenant had been the establishment of the temple worship. The period of 2,300 days is a few months short of the whole term of the seven years; enough being not included, it may be, to be allotted for those preparations which will be needful for the worship to be set up. Then follows the time during which it is carried on under his auspices, and then follow three years and a half of distinct persecuting and blasphemous power.

The character of this period of three years and a half is to be specially gathered from chapter 7, in which mention is made of “a time, times, and a half”; and also from the forty and two months, 1,260 days, etc., which are spoken of in the book of Revelation.

The identity of the time, times, and a half of chapter 7 with the last half week of this chapter might almost be taken for granted. The proof, however, is simple. The horn in chapter 7 acts in blasphemy and persecution until the Lord Jesus and His people take the kingdom; the three years and a half run on to that point. Here in this chapter the whole period of seventy weeks issues in the absolute and established blessing of Israel--Daniel’s people. The week of this covenant is the last portion of the seventy weeks, and the half week after the sacrifice is taken away is the latter portion of that week. Thus the period in chapter 7 and the concluding period before us run on to the same point; they are also equal in duration. Hence they begin at the

same time and are altogether identical. If we would form a just estimate of the events of the last half week, we must gather it from chapter 7. Here we have the same power in its local connection with Jerusalem.

The seventy weeks when distributed into portions will then stand thus:

1. From the edict to the building of the wall, etc., . . . . . 49 years
2. From the building to Messiah the Prince and his cutting off . . . 434 years

**(Then an interval of unmarked length)**

3. The period of the covenant of "the prince that shall come" . . . . 7 years

One of the blessings spoken of in verse 24 had been "to finish the transgression." This may be suitably compared with the expression in chapter 8, "when the transgressors are come to the full."

"And upon the wing of abominations (shall be) that which causes desolation." The phraseology of this passage is rather obscure, but I believe that this is the meaning of the words. "The transgression of desolation" had been mentioned in the previous vision. This appears to be a reference to what had been there said (there is further elucidation to be obtained from what we find in the subsequent vision). But all these passages have a solemn interest and importance for us when we remember what our Saviour said in Matt. 24: "When ye see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the Holy place; whoso reads, let him understand," then do so and so.

"The Holy place" is that in which this abomination will be set. This of course means the temple of God at Jerusalem. This place was once honored by His manifested presence. And, little as God can own or recognize the worship which the Jews may offer there in unbelief--whether in times past or future--yet the place is that which He looks upon as one with which His own honor is greatly connected; it is the Holy place still. An abomination, in Scripture language, signifies an idol--that on account of which God brings in desolation. This idol appears to be set in some most conspicuous place, the wing or pinnacle, which is thence called "the wing of abominations." Our Lord speaks of "the Holy place" as that in which the abomination of desolation is set; the place is here termed "the wing of abominations." In the one case the place is regarded according to the thoughts of God; in the other, according to the actings of man in matured evil against God.

These things--the cessation of sacrifice and that which causes desolation standing on the pinnacle--continue "even until the consummation and that determined shall be poured upon the causer of desolation." The expression "the consummation and that determined" is quoted from Isaiah 10:22, 23. This connection is one of great interest; for on the one hand the return of the remnant of Jacob to the mighty God is spoken of, and on the other, faith is encouraged [in order] not to be afraid of the terrible power of Asshur.

In rendering the concluding word by "the causer of desolation," I believe that I follow the true sense of the original. I am quite aware that the verb, the participle of which is here employed, is used sometimes in a neuter and at other times in an active sense; sometimes implying that which is made desolate, at others that which occasions the desolation. I believe that the former of these

is the more common. But the latter is proved, I think, to be its sense in this connection by chapter 12:2, where it is clear that the abomination that *makes* desolate is spoken of, and not anything which has been *made* desolate.

It is indeed remarkable to see how Daniel was confided with the counsels of God in these things. The response to his prayer gave him instruction as to far deeper truths. *He* only thought of the past iniquity of his people. *God* thought of a deeper iniquity--when they will receive one who comes in His [*sic.*; "his"=antichrist?] own name after Messiah has been rejected; when He [*sic.*; "he"=antichrist?] makes a covenant with them, and it issues in awful idolatry. Grace and faithfulness would have been displayed in bringing the people back from Babylon, but how much more would God manifest these things when they stand in contrast to the ripened iniquity of man as found in Jerusalem! It was Daniel's place to look at all these things and to learn [of] God in them; to see Him as above the whole; and to apprehend something of what the full manifestation of this grace will be, and what the blessings in store for Jerusalem and for Israel are, when the seventy weeks have run their course. This might in some measure enable Daniel to enter into God's mind; and we must remember that Gabriel was expressly sent to give him skill and understanding.

These seventy weeks appear to me to relate to the period of God's defined dealings with the city of Jerusalem and the people there, from the time when it should be reconstituted *as a city* and onward. At the cutting off of Messiah the recognition ends. Then comes the interval, and the time is again taken up for one week at the close. There is one thing relative to this subject which it appears to me to be desirable to notice, though not exactly connected with the chapter. Some have thought from such an interval being found here, and from the Church having become a constituted body upon earth just at the end of the 69th week, that it [the Church] was no longer found on earth when the interval is past and the seventieth begins. Nothing [however] about the matter can be found from the vision, the Church not being mentioned in it.

But other parts of Daniel throw abundant light upon the matter. The horn of chapter 7 wears out the saints of the most high places, until the coming of the Son of Man and the taking of the kingdom. In fact, the time of their being persecuted is the same three years and a half as the last portion of time before us here.

But the whole question is rendered perfectly simple by such statements of the New Testament as "Let both grow together until the harvest" (Matt. 13:30). Thus there will be both tares and wheat upon this earth till then; [that is, there will be] true believers in Christ, and others who put on the semblance or profession, until the end of the age.

Also, "blindness in part has happened unto until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all shall be saved" (Rom. 11:25, 26). The issue stated in this passage is the same as that of the vision before us, namely, the established blessing of Daniel's people. That blindness in part--which was upon them when the Apostle Paul wrote, and which is upon them still--will remain until the fullness of the Gentiles--those whom God by His grace converts from among the Gentiles--shall have been brought in. And then what follows? The salvation of all Israel. If we suppose the Church to be taken away before the time of "the prince who shall come" of this chapter, then we must say that Israel's deepest and most awful blindness, instead of being until the coming in of the fullness of the Gentiles, is after it is completed altogether.

I do not go into more elaborate evidence as to this point. I merely suggest a few simple facts. I

only add that our Lord, in His use of the prophecy of Daniel and His whole teaching in Matt. 24, assumes that some of His beloved Church will continue to be cared for as His sheep upon earth, until He comes in manifested glory, until He destroys "*that* wicked" with the breath of his mouth.

Some may think these observations on this point to be mere digression. I think so myself, and I only add them because of statements having been not only connected with the ninth of Daniel, but even based upon it; statements which have no relation whatever to the contents of the chapter.

It is remarkable to observe the difference between the manner in which God reveals truth and that in which man would seek to gain knowledge. Those things which God reveals are not only profitable themselves, but the manner also in which they are presented is for profit. This we shall do well to bear in mind in reading God's word. It is easy for us to get our minds informed about truth and to hold it apart from God. But what we have to seek is that our hearts and consciences may be so exercised by all we read of God's revealed counsels that we may have deeper apprehensions of grace, and learn more of the glories of Jesus our Lord.