

APPENDIX 3

THE FUTURITY OF THE SEVENTIETH WEEK OF DANIEL

(Written as a letter to another brother in Christ)

NOTE: The bulk of this material is taken from Robert H. Gundry's
*"The Church and The Tribulation – A Biblical Examination of Post
Tribulationism"*

(Heavily edited with comment)

"These were more fair-minded (lit. "noble") than those in Thessalonica, in that they researched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men" (Acts 17:11-12).

Dear Fair-minded Brother J.,

Knowing your earnestness on behalf of the Savior for the members of His One Body, I have decided to at least address (systematically) a brief, relative to what I affirm to be the "futuraity" of the entire Seventieth Week of Daniel's Prophecy and thereby clearly delineate the "issues" as I see them. And, lest I be misunderstood, I mean the full seven-year time frame, not just the latter half of the week—i.e., the last 42 months, or 1,260 days, or three-and-a-half years (i.e., three-and-a-half days, as in Daniel's Seventieth Week), or time, times and half a time.

I will NOT go into the Church's history (doctrinally) relative to this subject—although, I can assure you, no historical revisionism is needed on my part to affirm the premillenarian/post-tribulationism of the very early Church fathers—they are decidedly aligned with the foregoing presentation and convictions. Criticism of the early church, even as you noted that the Church in Ephesus, was getting off the mark; therefore, the early Church fathers and their writings could also be suspect, may hold some credence as to their eschatological worth; however, the historicity argument regarding the overall understanding of eschatology by the early Church fathers juxtaposed to those who came later, like Origen, is strikingly different. Origen, et al, has fully substituted the Church as the inheritor of all eschatological significance, whereas, Israel's immediate "kingdom manifestation" terminated at the commencement of the Church; and, most assuredly their "city and sanctuary" were destroyed by Titus of Rome (i.e., "*the prince who is to come*" in Daniel 9:26).

A “this worldly” eschatology within Christian theology evolved, which led to the gradual incorporation of the “Doctrine of the Two Swords” (coined around 1,000 A.D.) wherein the Church and the State sought a cozier arrangement in order to both maintain political, as well as ecclesial hegemony, and to PROFIT from that amalgamation of religio-politico associations.

Notwithstanding the vast majority of the Ante-Nicene writings of the early Church were overtly **postribulational**, as much as they were **premillennial**. Aside from Clement of Alexandria and Origen (the sad “Egyptian influence” and their hyper-allegorization of the Scripture and their disdain for anything of Judaism “hanging on to the Church”), and their “minority opinions” among the Ante-Nicene Church Fathers, anyone with theological objectivity must conclude that their relegation to the trash-bin of eschatological history was then, and is now, a foregone conclusion! Sad that their Weltanschauung has ingratiated itself within the “bless me-prosperity gospel” of today’s “left behind Christianity.”

At this juncture an historical accounting of the Church’s propensity toward anti-Semitism, while embracing these insidious teachings, deserves more than a casual recognition. Europe’s anti-Semitic pathologies could have been inoculated against these doctrinal diseases, and thwarted their periodic epidemics and scourges that inflicted the continent, but the political and economic aggrandizements, like an intoxicating drug, injected through the “doctrine of the two swords,” was insanely addictive—the Church overdosed on the potion, and the patient died. Throwing a sop of national salvation at the end of another holocaust, while the Church awaits Israel’s repentance in the heavens—aloof from all tribulation—smacks of “more of the same” and confirms to Jews the reoccurring nightmare of the Church’s legacy (only the packaging looks different).

The popularization of Amillennial theology by Augustine and the Catholic Church’s embrace of a “kingdom now” post-millennial theology reinforce that Apostasy. The spirit of Antichrist is very much at work in the building of his Great City, Babylon, even in the midst of those who affirm Christ. Indeed, after Constantine’s administrative embrace of Christianity, the Church’s imperative to spiritualize the millennial reign into the present age (which Augustine succeeded at doing) became and is to this very day, a foregone ecclesiastical-political necessity. Amillennialism’s stepchild, postmillennialism, was nothing more than the ascendancy of Roman Catholic influence—which doctrine, has utterly been discredited for more historical reasons than can be imagined (e.g., witness postmillennialism’s regression following World Wars I and II). Notwithstanding, more than ever before, **“the woman rides the Beast!”** The Church and the State, in America, are united as never before in their “crusade” to purge the world of “evil” in the so-called War on Global Terrorism, while its political ideological counterpart operates under the rubric of “Democratic Globalism.”

Now, I am keenly aware that you regard the Seventieth Week of Daniel as already fulfilled (or partially fulfilled—which, in point of fact is “neither here nor there” because if it be “partially fulfilled” it may as well be completely fulfilled). But, suffice it to say; the debate whether the Church will be raptured before, during, or after the Seventieth Week of Daniel, seems pointless (if one affirms that the Seventieth Week of Daniel is fully or partially fulfilled).

At this juncture, I would dare to interject that some well-meaning brethren contrive the 70th Week of Daniel to be the entire four thousand year history from Abraham to the Second Advent, with the midst of the 70th Week to have concluded at the demise of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Hence, they see in Daniel 9:27 that ***“he shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering”*** was accomplished on that fateful day in 70 A.D. For them, the antecedent of the ***“he”*** in Daniel 9:27 (throughout the verse) refers back, not to the “prince who is to come” in Daniel 9:26 who destroyed the city and the sanctuary (i.e., Titus of Rome) but to “Messiah the Prince” in Daniel 9:25). I will discuss this position later.

Those who believe that the Seventieth Week has already or partially concluded explain Daniel 9:24-27 as follows:

The finishing of the transgression, ending of sin, making atonement for iniquity, bringing in of everlasting righteousness, sealing up of vision and prophecy, and anointing of the most holy place (v. 24) all refer to Christ and to His redemptive work at His first Coming (i.e., “advent”). The sixty-ninth week expired when Jesus was anointed with the Spirit at His baptism (v. 25). The cutting off of the anointed one “after” the sixty-two weeks (added to the first seven, making sixty-nine *in toto*, v. 26a) refers to Christ’s crucifixion and occurred in the middle of the Seventieth Week. Verse 26b describes the destruction of Jerusalem under Titus in A.D. 70.

Furthermore, the end of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, being undefined, either expired three and one-half years after the crucifixion or extended by divine grace until A.D. 70. The making of a firm covenant (or confirming or causing to prevail of a covenant, v. 27a) refers to Christ’s securing the benefits of the Abrahamic covenant of grace during His earthly ministry. (NOTE: The subject of the verse according to this view is not “the prince who is to come,” but another prince, “the Messiah.”) The causing of the sacrifice and oblation to cease (v. 27) has to do with the abrogation of animal sacrifices by Christ’s self-sacrifice. In verse 27b there appears another reference to the destruction of Jerusalem.

Now, the opposite view (which I fully embrace) regards the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy as a FUTURE prelude to the restoration of the kingdom to Israel at Jesus' return. The Seventieth Week will begin when the Antichrist confirms a covenant with the Jews, a covenant he will later break by stopping sacrifices in the temple and by setting up the abomination of desolation (although I have clearly detailed to you in the past that this is far more than the desecration of a "rebuilt Third Temple in the current land of Israel"—it is the very "embodiment" – the very "incarnation" of the Beast into the temple (body) of Antichrist (the antitype of the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus) who receives a "mortal wound" and is "miraculously raised before all" and takes on the title, mid-way through the Seventieth Week of Daniel, as THE BEAST). It is this Beast who will break, by stopping sacrifices in the temple, and will demand absolute fidelity to himself and hence will commence "the Worship of the Beast" (the anti-type of the Resurrected Christ), which will be orchestrated by the Second Beast (anti-type of the Holy Spirit) and the "Worship of the Image of the Beast" (which is the anti-type of the Image of Christ, the Church).

Now—if we can be objective, let me delineate to you the weaknesses of the historical view, which you embrace, and the advantages of the futurist view, which I embrace:

First of all, the seventy weeks have to do with the Jews. We cannot spiritualize the phrase "your people" (v. 24) into some form of "spiritual Israel" inclusive of the Gentiles without doing abject violence to the plain sense contained within the passage itself. For example, look at the destruction of Jerusalem, spoken of prominently in the prophecy—it deals with Israel THE NATION. And yet, since in the seventy weeks the goals listed in verse twenty-four were to be accomplished, the seventy weeks cannot have entirely elapsed, for the finishing of Israel's transgression, the purging of her iniquity, and bringing in of her everlasting righteousness have NOT reached completion. Paul writes of these as still in the future of Israel (Romans 11:25-27).

It is doubtful that the "most holy" which is anointed refers to Christ, for nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures does this expression refer to a person—hence the translation, "*the most holy place*" (NASB).

The extension of the sixty-ninth week to the Messiah does not necessarily fix the termination of the sixty-ninth week at the baptismal anointing of the Messiah. If the cutting off of the Messiah occurred in the middle of the seventieth week, it is very strange that the cutting off is said to be "after" the sixty-nine weeks (figuring the sum of the seven and the sixty-two weeks).

Much more naturally the text would have read “during” or “in the midst of” the Seventieth Week, as it does in v. 27 concerning the stoppage of the sacrifices. The only adequate explanation for this unusual turn of expressions is that the Seventieth Week did not follow on the heels of the sixty-ninth, but that an INTERVAL separates the two. The crucifixion then comes shortly “after” the sixty-ninth but not within the seventieth because of this aforesaid intervening gap. The possibility of a gap between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth weeks is established by the well-accepted OT (Old Testament) phenomenon of “prophetic perspective,” in which gaps such as that between the first and second advents were not perceived.

A “side note” to the termination of the 69th Week as the date of Jesus’ Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem and the four (4) day-interval prior to his “cutting off” (i.e., crucifixion) is the law’s requirement to examine the Pascal lamb (to be “without spot or blemish”) prior to its sacrifice at Passover; even so, our Lord was “examined” by the authorities during his four-day stay in Jerusalem’s environs.

Now, for the Seventieth Week to expire at an indefinite time some years after the culmination has been reached is highly anti-climatic, especially in view of the impressive goals laid out. The remaining years after the crucifixion become superfluous, with little intent, purpose, or meaning.

If the alternative of extending the Seventieth Week to A.D. 70 is taken, it seems far more strained to stretch the week five or six times beyond the usual length of seven years than to retain the normal length with a hiatus between the 69th and the 70th weeks.

Christ did not make or confirm a covenant for one week. He established the new covenant forever!

Efforts have been made by the writer, J. Barton Payne, who argues that the covenant by the Antichrist with the Jews would be a *new*—i.e., previously nonexistent—covenant. But the expression “cause to prevail” implies that the covenant already exists and therefore refers to the covenant of grace. “Thus Christ could announce at the last supper, ‘This is my blood of the testament, . . .’ For Matthew 26:28 does not say, according to the oldest manuscripts, ‘the new testament,’ . . .”¹

The accounts in Luke 22:20 and I Corinthians 11:25 DO use the term “NEW covenant” and the writer to the Hebrews twice quotes Jeremiah 31 (*vide*. Jeremiah 33) concerning the “NEW covenant” effective by Christ’s sacrificial death. Therefore I find it nigh impossible to accept the argument that the expression “cause to prevail” rules out a covenant made by the Antichrist, because

historicists themselves apply the phrase to a previously nonexistent covenant, the one inaugurated by Jesus' death. Besides, it is more natural to understand that a covenant is "put in force" when it is first made.

The redemptive work of Christ rendered the animal sacrifices obsolete, but did not "put a stop" to them. They did not cease being offered until A. D. 70 at the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple under Roman violence (*vide*. Hebrews 8:4).

Jesus speaks of Daniel's "abomination of desolation" as signaling the Great Tribulation, "immediately after" which will come heavenly portents and the Second Advent. The events in A.D. 70 may be percussive, but they cannot constitute the full and final fulfillment, for Christ did not immediately return. Moreover, to place the complete fulfillment of the Seventieth Week at A.D. 70 or before severs the obvious connection between Daniel 9, Matthew 24, and Revelation (NOTE: Please compare "in the middle of the week" (Daniel 9:27), forty-two months and 1,260 days (Revelation 11:2; 12:6; 13:5), and time, times, and half a time (Daniel 12:7; 7:25; Revelation 12:14)).

Now, under the historical view, if the relationship between Daniel and Revelation were retained, Revelation, which was written probably a quarter century after the destruction of Jerusalem, would be history instead of the prophecy it purports to be. (On account of this, the writer Payne feels forced to adopt a date for the Apocalypse prior to A.D. 70.)²

Syntactically, it is at least as good to make the subject of Daniel 9:27 "the coming prince," who is the nearer possibility, as it is to make the Messiah, previously mentioned, the subject. The entire passage is NOT Messianic, as some historicists would like to assert,³ for verse 26b speaks of another prince, Roman, whose people, the Romans, are to destroy the city and the sanctuary. Immediately after mention of this non-Messianic prince and his destroying people and without indication of a shift in reference, we read that "he" will "***make a firm covenant with the many for one week.***" Although the covenant is to be in force for one week, not till the middle of the week does he put a stop to the sacrifice and grain offering. **If the reference were to the covenant by the blood of Christ, which outmoded the Mosaic sacrifices, the covenant would have come into force three and one-half years before Jesus shed His blood to put that covenant into effect.**

It must be pointed out that the crucifixion of Christ (i.e., "***the cutting off of Messiah***") is considered by some to be the "***breaking of the covenant with the many***" in the midst of the week. The chronology is so abused and the grammar so convoluted to secure such an interpretation that one is mystified and must

conclude that the absurdity of this insistence is mandated by the theory of the partial three and one-half year fulfillment of the Seventieth Week of Daniel.

Any objective chronology of Daniel 9:24-27 would conclude the following:

- (1) Vs. 24 – The Seventy Weeks (or “sevens”) deal directly with the Jewish people—(i.e., **“are determined for your people”**).
- (2) Vs. 24 – The six items predicted to occur among Daniel’s people have not been completely fulfilled.
- (3) Vs. 25 – The decree to restore and build Jerusalem took place during the Medo-Persian reign of Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. with “Seven sevens” or 49 years wherein from Artaxerxes’ decree to the arrival of Nehemiah and the covenant renewal celebration at Jerusalem took place (cf. Nehemiah 2:1-8). Then, “sixty-two sevens” (or 434 years; or from 396 B.C. to A.D. 32) or from the dedication of the second temple to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (4) Vs. 25 – **“Until Messiah the Prince”** – this statement is connected with the 69 weeks which succeed it (Note: The “partialists” consider Jesus’ baptism by John as the beginning of the Seventieth Week of Daniel (and say this is also the **“covenant with the many”**); however, those who adhere to the absolute futurity of Daniel’s Seventieth Week calculate “Until Messiah the Prince” as the date of His Triumphal entry into Jerusalem or Palm Sunday), then Vs. 26 commences . . .
- (5) Vs. 26 – **“After sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off”** – this is the crucifixion of Christ. Note: The crucifixion occurs AFTER (i.e., 4 days after) the conclusion of the sixty-two weeks or after the conclusion of the full sixty-nine weeks.
- (6) Vs. 26 – AFTER the crucifixion of Christ, Titus of Rome destroyed Jerusalem (70 A.D.) (**“And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.**” Titus is a proto-type of the Antichrist who yet shall come.) (Emphasis upon **“the people.”**)
- (7) Vs. 26 – After the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. the Jewish people commence their dispersion throughout the Gentile world until the **“end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined”** (vide. Revelation 12).
- (8) Vs. 27 – **“THEN he** (the antecedent of this **“he”** does NOT refer back to the Messiah, but its syntactical, grammatical context must refer to that which immediately preceded it, i.e., **“the coming prince”** who destroyed Jerusalem (i.e., Titus of Rome, the prototype of the future Antichrist; here, in context, this **“he”** is the Antichrist) **“shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week;”** – this **“covenant”** is not the “new covenant” – its precise meaning in

Hebrew connotes a “treaty” and is more akin to that of a “defense pact” than any other connotation. Furthermore, “*shall confirm*” is an exceedingly forceful Hebrew phrase whose meaning in military parlance means: “Causes to bear” or “enforces.” The “week” referred to here is the very Seventieth Week of Daniel and this treaty commences that very week. (NOTE: To say that this phrase “*he shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week*” refers to the commencement of Jesus’ ministry at John’s baptism of Jesus is ludicrous. How could such a covenant be so confirmed when, in point of fact the Messiah has already been “cut off” (vs. 26) or crucified and Titus of Rome has already destroyed Jerusalem? It makes no “chronological sense” at all! It is altogether futuristic.

- (9) Vs. 27 – “***But in the middle of the week he*** (“he” again refers back to Antichrist) ***shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate***” (i.e., clearly a prediction of the “Abomination of Desolation” or the “incarnation” of Satan into the body of Antichrist in the “midst” of the Seventieth Week of Daniel and the commencement of the reign of the Beast upon the earth and the forty-two months of the “wearing down of the saints.”
- (10) Vs. 27 – “***Even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate***” (i.e., “desolator”). The ultimate judgment of Antichrist-Beast is predicted here and occurs at the close of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, i.e., the “***consummation***” and the “***pouring out on the desolator.***” (Cf. Revelation 19:17-21)

Although the lack of certainty regarding the exact dates of our Lord’s ministry demands some reserve, the futuristic view rests on a more exact chronology—to which I have alluded to on many occasion—best and fully set forth in Sir Robert Anderson’s “*The Coming Prince.*”⁴

Briefly, it is common ground that the “seventy sevens” are weeks of years. Anderson reckons a year at 360 days from the equation of 1,260 days with forty-two months (Revelation 12:6, 7, 13, 14; 13:4-7), from the equation of five months with 150 days (Genesis 7:11; 8:4; 7:24; 8:3), and from other evidence of unequal value. **By calculating from the only known decree to rebuild the CITY of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:1-11; 2:1-8)** sixty-nine weeks of seven 360-day years, we are brought to Palm Sunday, the only time Jesus was publicly acclaimed King, Prince, and Messiah and shortly after (i.e., four days) which He was “*cut off.*”

One could object that the short years of 360 days with which Anderson works make no provision for leap days and leap years. To make such provision, however, would involve the chronology in abstruse mathematical and

astronomical calculations and, more seriously, would push back the beginning of the seventy weeks to a decree regarding the rebuilding of the Temple, not of the city itself. This is a serious difficulty for the historical view. It must take as its point of departure a decree many years prior to the decree for the rebuilding of the city. It is true that the remnant built houses in which to live before Nehemiah's time. But the DECREE for **rebuilding the city** with its walls and streets was not issued and the actual reconstruction carried out until the time of Nehemiah, as his midnight ride through rubble and debris gives evidence.

It is further objected that the day of the decree in Nehemiah is not given, only the month Nisan. But according to Jewish custom, where the day was not specified, time was reckoned from the first of the month.

The accuracy is so remarkable that the objections seem paltry by comparison to the criticisms launched at these "immaculate calculations" of Sir Anderson. The best answer to the objections is the failure of the historical view to provide an exact and accurate chronology and the resultant substitution of chronologies dealing in wide approximations, with the result that the seventy weeks of years become half-literal and half-symbolic.

The futuristic view can be established apart from Anderson's calculations, but they endow the futuristic view with a chronology far superior to chronologies under the historical view (and, for me, a mathematics instructor, they certainly satisfy my "mathematical cravings" for accuracy beyond my wildest imagination).

Finally, the view that the 70th Week (all seven years of it) will be fulfilled immediately before Jesus' return, was held by the early Church, which received its doctrine from the apostles themselves. If one considers Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Lactantius, and others, one is astounded that someone like Payne calls patristic futurists "exceptions."⁵ The fact is that in the early Church these very writers had by far the most to say about eschatology.

Well, I am sure this will NOT completely suffice, but the preponderance of theological discussion is, I'm happy to say, in my court. Simply put, there is utterly no theological need to separate the 70th Week of Daniel from itself (i.e., with only the latter portion remaining) and it does great injustice to the Word of God and does not honestly deal with the excesses and abuses created by the "Constantinian Mindsets" which went about to justify the alliance between the Church and the State.

Furthermore, the futuristic nature of Revelation 11 commits the entire Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy into the future. Though many Premillenarians, especially those who espouse a pretribulational "secret rapture"

of the Church, and, *ipso facto*, a “split resurrection” of the righteous (i.e., the Church at the commencement of the Seventieth Week and the “tribulation saints” at the conclusion of that week) differ on the Seventieth Week’s chronology insofar as the Church and Israel and the “tribulation saints” and their participations within that week, they all concur that it is yet future.

What convinces me of the futurity of Daniel’s Seventieth Week, among other New Testament passages (especially Matthew 24) is the very clear wording given, not only in Daniel 9:24-27, but in Revelation 11. Here in Revelation 11 the very same “chronology terminologies” are used, to wit:

- (1) The “temple of God” is initially measured—and it is abundantly clear to this writer, that the heavy symbolism used in this chapter demands that this is far more than a rebuilt Jewish “tribulation temple” aspired by some pretribulation Premillenarians. Taken in context, one must conclude that the portion NOT measured, i.e., “the court of the Gentiles,” is not only given to the Gentiles (who may be interested in “Judaism” but refuse to pay the price of circumcision—using the symbols of commitment under the Law—and, therefore, are not allowed to approach the altar), but these same Gentiles “***will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months***” (vs. 2). Therefore, we are not talking about inanimate objects such as the “Court of the Gentiles” – but beyond this, we are referring to the Gentiles themselves; consequently, their immediate “treading down of the holy city underfoot” is more than an issue of inanimate physicality (i.e., wreaking havoc upon a rebuilt Third Temple in Jerusalem, Israel) but the very persecution of God’s people: The Holy City. And, again, taken in the “Revelation context” – one must conclude that the Holy City mentioned in this context refers to not only Israel but the Church (Revelation 21:10-14 – The Holy City, Jerusalem – with the names of the 12 Tribes of Israel for its 12 gates, and the names of the 12 Apostles of the Lamb (i.e., the Church) for its 12 foundations). Hence, the measuring of the Temple of God is directly related to PEOPLE (i.e., Israel and the Church). These are the people who will suffer under Gentile persecution during the latter half of the 70th Week of Daniel—not just Israel but also the Church.
- (2) Furthermore, the persecution of the Holy City is not only substantiated by the “underfoot for forty-two months” (i.e., the latter half of the Seven-Year Tribulation Period, or the portion entitled The Great Tribulation, the Time of Jacob’s Trouble), but the “open persecution” of the Two Witnesses (Israel and the Church) is seen

when ***“the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them*** (i.e., against the Two Witnesses), ***overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city for three-and-a-half days . . . now after the three-and-a-half days*** (or the close of the Great Tribulation, and prior to the ***“wrath of the Lamb”*** or the ***“wrath of God”*** or the coming of the Lord in judgment upon those who ***“destroy the earth”***) ***the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet*** (this is the FIRST resurrection at the close of the Tribulation Period of Seven Years, as well as the “rapture” of I Thessalonians 4 wherein ***“they that are alive and remain”*** from the persecution under the Antichrist-Beast, are “caught up” into the same cloud as the resurrected saints, to meet the descending Lord in the air).

- (3) The first half of the future Seventieth Week (for John’s Revelation of Christ was written decades after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. or ***“And the people of the prince (Titus of Rome in 70 A.D.) who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary”*** (Daniel 9:26)) will witness the JOINT TESTIMONY of the Two Witnesses for 1,260 days (or three-and-a-half years) with power (i.e., authority) and a call to repentance to the people of earth (***“clothed in sackcloth”*** - Revelation 11:4). The fact that they are untouchable (i.e., ***“And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies . . . and if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner”*** - Revelation 11:5), clearly shows that this 1,260 day time frame is NOT the same time frame as the forty-two months or the three-and-a-half days of their persecution under the Beast. This 1,260-day time frame is clearly the first half of the future 70th Week of Daniel’s Prophecy. The FACT that it is yet future is a major blow to the concept that the first three-and-a-half years of Daniel’s Seventieth Week have already taken place (in your case, between John’s baptism of Jesus or the commencement of His earthly ministry, and His crucifixion or ***“the cutting off of Messiah”***).
- (4) Furthermore, their identity is unmistakable: ***“These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth”*** (Revelation 11:4). This phraseology is taken from Zechariah’s fifth vision. However, there is but one Lampstand mentioned in Zechariah’s fifth vision and two Olive Trees on either side of the one “Universal Lampstand.” Here, in Revelation 11:4 we see the Two Olive Trees (Israel) but now we see the Two Lampstands (the Church) in absolute clarity. “Two” is the number

of witness and testimony; thus, Israel's "witness" and that of the Church's "witness" – two sets of two – Israel and the Church. The Lampstand of Zechariah's Vision with its 7-fold candelabra and the bowl and stem in its center, depicts our Lord Jesus in His fullness and is utterly revealed in Revelation Chapter 1 as the Son of Man in the midst of the Seven Golden Lampstands, i.e., the Seven Churches of Asia; thus, the Two Lampstands clearly stand for the witness of the Church (i.e., the "Seven Golden Lampstands" represent the "fullness of Christ" – or the Church) (Cf. Ephesians 4:13).

- (5) The Two Olive Trees and Two Lampstands are given 1,260 days in the Seventieth Week of Daniel to testify and to prophecy in a most powerful and anointed way both to the heavens ("*these have power to shut the heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy*") and to the earth ("*they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire*") (Revelation 11:6). That they are CORPORATE beings is absolutely clear in that the "*beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war* (The Greek word for "war" here connotes a major conflagration of immense proportions—not a singular skirmish) *against them*" (Revelation 11:7). The misunderstanding of their "Holy City" status vs. the "Great City" of Antichrist is dealt with by Revelation 11:8 wherein it says: "*Their dead bodies will lie in the street of the Great City (my caps and emphasis) which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*" It is clear that Sodom and Egypt, the Great City, never refers to the Holy City, Jerusalem. Furthermore, the Romans crucified our Lord OUTSIDE the environs of Jerusalem proper—outside the gate. His crucifixion was done *by* the Great City, not by the Holy City—*in* the Great City, not *in* the Holy City. That the entire world will behold and participate in the open persecution of the Two Witnesses is clear: "*Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see* (or just "see" NU, M) *their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves . . . and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth*" (Revelation 11:9-10). Also, make no mistake about it—the "*beast that ascends from the bottomless pit*" goes after them and persecutes them. The chronology is absolutely clear—they tormented the people on the earth with the TRUTH of their prophecy; now, immediately following their witness, it is they who are persecuted. It is chronologically mandatory that the succession

of their witness and testimony, and then of their persecution, and ultimate resurrection follow in that order with no gap, no interlude—the context and grammar demand it.

- (6) Finally, it is abundantly clear again, that after the latter half of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, that the First Resurrection (Revelation 20:5) takes place, to wit: ***“Now after the three-and-a-half days (i.e., the 42 months of being “tread” upon by the Gentiles), the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them . . . and they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them”*** (Revelation 11:11-12). This is the First Resurrection and the Rapture of those ***“who remain and are caught up”*** I Thessalonians 4:16-17). What takes place next is the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet and the Proclamation of the Kingdom: ***“Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, ‘The kingdoms (or “kingdom”) of this world have (has) become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”*** (Revelation 11:15). The chronology is ironclad—at the conclusion of the 70th Week of Daniel is the First Resurrection of the righteous, and the Rapture—the National Salvation of Israel will take place immediately at this time, for it is the time of the Second Advent (Zechariah 12:8-14; Romans 11:25-27; Psalms 14:7; Isaiah 59:20-21; Isaiah 27:9; Hebrews 8:12; Luke 13:35; Zechariah 6:9-15). I would submit to you that there is no problem with the interjection of the 42 months of persecution or “treading underfoot” of the Two Witnesses prior to the mentioning of their 1,260 authoritative days of witness during their “harmless” state. In point of fact, those “who have been measured” are worthy to suffer for His Name’s sake. Also, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit has placed the 42 months of their persecution ahead of their vibrant 1,260-day testimony for a reason. I believe that reason to be that far too many believers aspire to greatness (the power) without ever counting the cost—know full well that, ***“that if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him!”*** (II Timothy 2:12). Paying the price to follow the Lamb is definitely in view here—they, who will not bear the Cross and the shame, will not bear the Crown and the glory!

I would submit that within the “pre-mil” camp, our “spirituality” and our “theological integrity” have been under assault for other reasons—not because we do not embrace the “half-truth” of the Amillenarian point of view (i.e., only the last half of the 70th Week of Daniel remains yet future). Perhaps the most

insidious device used against the Premillenarian view has been the preposterous embrace of the pretribulational rapture of the Church and its alleged “imminence.” This has led to a form of “evangelical Christianity” which has made Premillenarians look like theological numbskulls and, furthermore, has predisposed them to all manner of aberrant teachings and practices—even finding common cause (as is the case today) with “Kingdom Now,” “Post-mil,” and even “A-mil” proponents, along with those Calvinists who aspire to a Geneva-like Theocratic State.

Also, I would caution my brethren who adjudge all who embrace the futuristic aspects of Daniel’s 70th Week (so described) to be part and parcel of the old “dispensational school” and, ipso, facto, in the company of C. I. Scofield, et. al. One would be wise not to paint with such a broad-brush stroke!

The “Epic Approach” to the Seventieth Week of Daniel and 70 A.D. as the Middle of the Week.

Now, concerning the novel “epic” or “era” interpretation of Daniel’s 70th Week as overlapping the entire period from Abraham to the Second Advent (i.e., 4,000 years) with Messiah the Prince who “*shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering*” **through** “the prince who is to come” (i.e., Titus of Rome) and of the “midst of the 70th Week of Daniel” being the destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of the sanctuary (i.e., temple) in 70 A.D. . . . let us consider.

I will attempt to divulge the salient aspects of this eschatological system bit by bit throughout this brief encounter. Firstly, what is immediately problematic about such an interpretation is the elimination of the literal years within the 70th Week of Daniel’s prophecy (i.e., switching from literal days which equal years in the first 69 weeks or 483 days which equal to 483 years), to an “epic” of 4,000 years (approximately 2,000 years from Abraham to 70 A.D. and another 2,000 years from 70 A.D. until the Second Advent, for the final half of the 70th Week). An argument can be made from “consistency” – Daniel started with day/years (69 weeks (7-day weeks/7 years per week) or 483 years and ends with day/years (i.e., one week = 7 days or 7 years) for a total of 490 years. (Side Note: Interestingly enough, this **490** may have some theological implication associated with it in so far as its numeric configuration is similar to that of the “7-7’s” found in Zechariah 4, wherein there are 49 conduits which provide eternal light to the seven lamps surrounding the central bowl atop the central stem of the Universal Lampstand.). It clearly states in Daniel 9:24 that these are “*Seventy weeks*” or “*Seventy sevens* are determined” (or **49 weeks**).

Secondly, to conjecture that the “he” (Daniel (9:27a) who is confirming or “causing to bear” a covenant (i.e., “treaty”) with the many for one week is

“Messiah the Prince” (Daniel 9:25); and, that the one (i.e., **“the prince who is to come”** in Daniel 9:26) who is the instrument utilized by Messiah the Prince to **“bring an end to sacrifice and offering”** in 70 A.D. appears to stretch the theological mantle beyond its capacities. In other words, there is simply no complimentary Scripture found that allows this “private interpretation” legitimacy.

John Walvoord comments on the pronoun “he”:

“The interpretation of ‘he’ which begins verse 27 is crucial to understanding this prophecy in its fulfillment. In normal laws of reference a pronoun refers back to the last preceding person mentioned. In this case it is the ‘ruler who will come’ of verse 2 rather than ‘the Anointed One’ of the earlier portion of that verse. Because the fulfillment was never literally accomplished by Christ in His first coming, and even the New Covenant which they (i.e., Amillennarians) claim is referred to here cannot be related to a seven-year covenant because it is eternal, leaves the identification of the covenant-maker as the future world ruler, or Antichrist of the end time, a Roman related to the people who destroyed the city.”⁶

To conclude that the 70th Week of Daniel is a four thousand year time frame and involves “your people” (i.e., Israel), from Abraham to the Second Advent) is nothing more than a will-o’-the-wisp stretch of one’s eschatological imagination! How one could conclude the termination of the sacerdotal rites were orchestrated “past tense” by Messiah the Prince through the confirmation of His Original Abrahamic Accord, is a convolution of hermeneutics par excel lance.

They, who affirm this “epic belief” in the 70th Week of Daniel, have gone “back to the future” in their hermeneutic. The “progression of events” in Daniel 9:25-27 is just that—it is “sequential” in time: **“Then he shall confirm a covenant . . .”** It is convenient that the American Standard Version of the Bible is used to translate Daniel 9:27 by the epic approach because it omits the adverb **“then”** as in **“Then he shall”** which lends more credence to the sequential argument of the text. It is apparent, given the grammatical context, that the event in vs. 27 is yet future (not something orchestrated in the past, and catapulted into the future Second Advent of Christ).

In vs. 26 of Daniel 9 the 70 A.D. destruction of the city and the sanctuary has taken place, and the “flood” has also accomplished its end (**“desolations are determined”**). Immediately following the “midst” of their so-called 70th Week of Daniel, the account of Messiah the Prince making a covenant **“with the many”** for one week is made, **“but in the middle of the week he** (Messiah the Prince) **shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering** (which has already taken place in vs. 27

when *“the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary”* and, obviously, the *“sacrifice and offering”* was terminated prior to vs. 27), so say the “epic approach.”

Furthermore, this “epic approach” takes Revelation 10’s account of *“another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud . . . and a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire”* who *“had a little book open in his hand”* and who *“set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land,”* to be an “insert” into the eschatological chronology of Revelation (inserted after the Sixth Trumpet, yet prior to the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet). The “eating” of this little book by John, and the subsequent exhortation by this angel for John to *“prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings”* (Revelation 10:8-11), along with the accounts recorded in Revelation 11, 12, 13, are somehow contrived to elongate the 70th Week of Daniel into the aforementioned epic of time.

Revelation 11 is viewed by the “elongated 70th Week of Daniel” to be the Almighty’s dealings with those from Abraham to the terminus of 70 A.D. Their first 1,260 days (i.e., from Abraham to 70 A.D.) was “prevailing” (i.e., *“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth . . . if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies . . . these have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire”* Revelation 11:3, 5-6) BUT then the Great City for the next 42 months or 3 ½ days persecuted the Jews (*“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”* (Daniel 9:27b)).

Complementing Daniel 9:27b would be Luke 21:24 which the “epic week” expounds:

“And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”

Thus, *“the court which is outside the temple”* (i.e., “the Court of the Gentiles” in Revelation 11:2, wherein *“they* (i.e., the Gentiles) *will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months”* commences the final 3 ½ days of Israel’s dispersion and desolation; therefore, the “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, occurred in 70 A.D.

What is problematic about this sequence regarding the “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, and its alleged occurrence in 70 A.D., is the account in Matthew’s Gospel, to wit:

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened . . . immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Matthew 24:14-22, 29-31).

What concerns here is the immensity of the “***great tribulation***” or “***the tribulation of those days.***” The “epic approach” would have us believe that this period of “***great tribulation***” or “***the tribulation of those days***” or “***then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be***” and so forth, took place at the time of the “***abomination of desolation***” which they say occurred in 70 A.D. However, and although over one million Jews were killed by “***the people of the prince***” (i.e., by Rome’s legions under Titus) the next eschatological event did not, to wit:

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened . . . and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:29 and 30, excerpts).

The conundrum faced by the epic approach is simple: The **“great tribulation”** apparently to them commenced in 70 A.D. at the destruction of the city and sanctuary (i.e., the time of the **“abomination of desolation”**) and has continued for 3 ½ days, 42 months, 1,260 days, times, time and half a time and culminates in the coming of His Second Advent. Thus, for the past 2,000 years of history, “your people” (*vide*. Daniel 9) have endured nothing but great tribulation, such **“as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.”** (Note: This does not sound like a “shortening of days.”)

Frankly, the aforementioned “great tribulation time frame” is simply too intense to be spread out over a 2,000 year period of time. Furthermore, the recorded history of the Jewish people during the past 2,000 years, though at times chaotic, and the nations who hosted them have had from time to time acrimonious relations (to say the least) with them, they, nevertheless, did have prolonged periods of peace. Also, their persecution was never simultaneously global in nature (e.g., the Holocaust took place in Europe; however, Jews throughout the Americas, and other allied nations, did not experience “great tribulation”).

Revelation 12 is seen by those who embrace this “epic approach” to substantiate their “insert” (i.e., from Revelation 10’s account of John’s eating of the “little book”) by demonstrating the birth and ultimate resurrection and ascension of the “Male Child” to God’s throne; again, approximately in the midst of the 70th Week of Daniel. Then for the next 3 ½ years (commencing at the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and of the Temple’s Sanctuary in 70 A.D.) or 1,260 days (Revelation 12:6) this Woman (i.e., Israel) **“fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days”** (again, for forty-two months as in Revelation 11:2; or the final half of the 70th Week of Daniel’s epical “seven days”).

Israel’s witness is thus completed (within the confines of this “insert” in the Revelation), to wit:

“When they finish their testimony (i.e., Israel’s testimony from Abraham until 70 A.D.), **the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them** (This was accomplished in 70 A.D. by Titus of Rome.). **And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified** (They believe this to be a clear description of “Jerusalem” as the “great city” and therefore this refers to Israel or the Jews.). **Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days** (i.e., from 70 A.D. until the Second Advent of Christ), **and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves. And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make**

merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth” (Revelation 11:7-10).

To substantiate this epical time frame as the last half of the 70th Week of Daniel’s prophecy they insist that the entire prophecy of Daniel’s 70th Week is exclusively the purview of the Jews (i.e., Israel) and confirm this by using Daniel 9:24:

“Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city.”

Finally, they (i.e., the Two Witnesses or “Israel”) are resurrected:

“Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, ‘Come up here.’ And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them” (Revelation 11:11-12).

This accounting is the Second Advent of Christ and corresponds (so say the “epical approach”) to those portions found in Daniel 12:1-8; and, specifically, verses 6 and 7:

“And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, ‘How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?’ Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time (or 3 ½ days or 42 months, or 1,260 days or the latter half of the 70th Week of Daniel’s “epic week”).

The “times, time and half a time” is further corroborated (say the “epic week”) by Revelation 12:13-17:

“Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman (i.e., the “dispersion”), and

the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

The issue of the “flood” is validated; so say the “epic week” by Daniel 9:26’s account of the same “flood” . . .

“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, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.”

I belabor this “epical 70th Week of Daniel” because it does have many appealing features; however, it has many glaring discrepancies.

If the woman constitutes the entirety of Israel in her dispersion, then, who are “the rest of her offspring?” Their identification is bewildering, or must be to the “epic approach.” Why? Because her “*offspring*” are said to “*keep the commandments of God*” and “*have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*” This sounds like they are both Jews and Christians. And, these same “tribulation saints” are described again in Revelation 15:2 and 3:

“And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire, and those who have the victory over the beast, over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, having harps of God. They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, AND the song of the Lamb.”

Other discrepancies include the fact that the entire accounting of the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11 is skewed. We have previously pointed out that these Two Witnesses are most assuredly corporate beings (which the “epical approach” concurs with, but declares that they represent only Israel as the “Law and the Prophets”). However, Revelation 11 itself declares them to be:

“These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth” (vs. 4).

Both dispensationalists (Dwight Pentecost) and those of the “epic approach” consign the testimony of the Two Witnesses (be it within the 7-year/7-day futuristic 70th Week of Daniel, as most dispensationalists claim, or within the 4,000-year epic week of Daniel’s 70th Week, as we have so outlined) to Israel (avoiding any mentioning of the Church).

Neither one wishes to address the problem of the Two Witnesses and the use of the phrase ***“The Two Lampstands.”*** That phrase to them possesses within it a most difficult issue. The Revelation’s accounting of Seven Golden Lampstands in Revelation 1 is clearly the Church, and the Church as a Testimony would be given ***“two”*** as its “testimonial designation.” The “olive trees” clearly stand for Israel (Note: They are not literally “two olive trees” and “two lampstands!”) Do you see two “speaking olive trees and two speaking lampstands?” I don’t think so; but I do see Israel and the Church together as the Two Witnesses in the final 70th Week of Daniel’s prophecy! Also, to emphatically assume that the bodies of these Two Witnesses ***“lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified”*** and to adamantly claim that their three-and-a-half year “open persecution” takes place in Jerusalem proper, and, therefore, these 3 ½ days are indicative of their Jewish character (having nothing to do with the Church), again stretches the hermeneutic. The presupposition is faulty. Jesus, as we have previously pointed out, was NOT crucified in Jerusalem proper—He was crucified “outside the camp” or “outside the gate.” Again, the place of His crucifixion is fixed:

“For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp (Note: He is our "whole burnt offering"). Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come” (i.e., the “Holy City”) (Hebrews 13:11-14).

The “great city” throughout Revelation (including Revelation 21:10 where the word “great” in both NU and M is translated ***“holy city, Jerusalem”***) is decidedly connected to Babylon, the Great, not to Jerusalem, the Holy. Indeed, the Lord Jesus was crucified by the same Great City that is described in Revelation 17, 18 and 19. Apostate religion, Rome and Mammon contrived to crucify the Lord of Glory, My Servant, the Branch. It is the same Great City which ***“will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months”*** (Revelation 11:2). Jerusalem is never referred to as a “Great City” in the Revelation.

Also, this 4,000-year Seventieth Week of Daniel views portions of Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21 that deal with the “Abomination of Desolation” spoken of by Daniel the Prophet to be solely the desolation of the Temple in 70 A.D. (i.e., there will be no future “abomination of desolation” as shared elsewhere in this tome, and, we believe, validated by Paul in II Thessalonians 2:3-12). Naturally,

this would necessitate, according to this thesis, that John's Revelation would have been written prior to the destruction of the Temple under Titus of Rome (i.e., "the prince who is to come"). However, it is hotly contested that the Revelation was written during the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81-96), after John had fled to Ephesus; therefore, this "epical approach" to the Seventieth Week of Daniel would have extreme difficulty in establishing its credibility in that it affirms that the measurement of the physical Temple in Jerusalem, found in Revelation 11, was possible because it occurred prior to 70 A.D. (i.e., but if Revelation were written after 70 A.D., there would be no temple to measure).

Problems arise, as well, in both Matthew 24 and Mark 13 wherein phrases relative to "*in those days*" or "*those days*" (e.g., Matthew 24:22, 29; Mark 13:19, 20, 24) are used to connect the time of the "*abomination of desolation*" not only with the destruction of the Second Temple, but a future fulfillment wherein the Antichrist, the "*man of lawlessness*" becomes the Beast of Revelation 13.

"So when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains . . . for in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days . . . but in those days, after that tribulation (Matthew 24:29 states: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . .") the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory" (Mark 13:14-26).

*"The tribulation of those days" and the immediate appearance of the Second Coming of Christ, provides the "futurity of the Seventieth Week of Daniel" the greater standing for the literal week as years (not a 4,000-year epic). The "tribulation in those days" and the shortening of "*those days*" by the Lord, is immediately followed by the "*sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken . . . then they will see the son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.*" After the "*tribulation of those days*" in 70 A.D. the sun was not darkened, the moon continued to give its light, the stars did not fall from the heaven, nor were the heavens shaken, and most certainly, the Son of Man did not return! It would be a massive hermeneutical leap to conjecture that the "*immediately after the tribulation of those days*" (i.e., "*those days*" currently*

being nearly 2,000 years) alludes to the final 3 ½ days of Daniel's Seventieth Week (the last half of that week)!

Luke 21:20-28 clearly defines that the "*abomination of desolation*" (per se) is NOT mentioned; however, the "*desolation*" of Jerusalem is:

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near" (vs. 20).

Furthermore, it is altogether certain that the references in Luke 21:20 through 24 refer to the immediate desolation/destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary (i.e., the Temple) in 70 A.D. However, upon the termination of the "*times of the Gentiles*" and their fulfillment, "*they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*" (vs. 27). Thence, the eschatological pattern is repeated: First, the immediate destruction/desolation of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. and then much later, the Second Coming of Christ. To equate the "*times of the Gentiles*" from the destruction of the "Second Temple" (i.e., from the return from the initial Babylonian captivity until the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D.) in 70 A.D. until the "coming of the Son of Man" as the final 3 ½ days of the Seventieth Week of Daniel is, again, stretching the eschatological envelope. Many Bible scholars (e.g., John Walvoord) commence the "*times of the Gentiles*" from Nebuchadnezzar's destruction of the First Temple (605 B.C.) until the coming of the Son of Man. Yet, even then, if one were to grant the commencement of the "*times of the Gentiles*" to be from 70 A.D. until the coming of the Son of Man, that still does not permit this time frame to be adjudged as the latter half of Daniel's Seventieth Week.

Both Matthew 24 and Mark 13 clearly mention "*the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet.*" In both cases the "*abomination of desolation*" is catapulted into the future into "*those days*" and "*immediately after the tribulation of those days . . . the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven*" (Matthew 24:29). And, I would hasten to add, that "*those who are in Judea*" were not only able to flee to the mountains prior to Titus' destruction of Jerusalem, but, prophetically, and since the ingathering of the exiles is upon us, that fleeing's physicality in our day is altogether an eschatological reality. Therefore, "*those days*" are yet future, wherein the "*abomination of desolation*" will yet take place within the middle, I affirm, of the Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy.

Robert Gundry, in his arguments against the alleged "Postmillenarian" Robert Payne in his book entitled, "*The Imminent Appearing of Christ*" adds further light on the aforementioned verses of the Olivet Discourse.

“Holding that Matthew 24:4-22 concerns the destruction of Jerusalem, Payne notes that harmonies of the gospels place Luke 21:24 (concerning A. D. 70) after Matthew 24:22 and Mark 13:20. Matthew 24:23-31 then refers to the Second Advent and an immediately preceding period of tribulation so short that it does not materially affect imminence. Here again Payne is working on the basis of his denial of **double fulfillment** (i.e., the “desolation” of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., and the “abomination of desolation” in the midst of the Seventieth Week of Daniel’s prophecy, yet future). The very fact that the verses which follow the shift from A.D. 70 to the second advent speak of the tribulation which has been described before the shift and state that the second advent will take place immediately afterward—this fact requires a double fulfillment.”⁷

Indeed, the “epic approach” sees no double fulfillment in these passages. In sum then, how the “epic approach” can justify its accounting of the 70th Week of Daniel is beyond one’s reasonable theological faculties. John’s ingestion of the “little book” is a prelude to the Two Witnesses and demonstrates the experiential commitments of testifying, even under duress, to many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings—as will be the case in Revelation 11 of the Two Witnesses.

The futurity of the Seventieth Week of Daniel’s prophecy is conclusive. It is neither epical in nature, nor is it one-half accomplished (from the baptism of Jesus until His crucifixion or “cutting off of Messiah”), having devolved to a time frame of three-and-one-half years (not seven full years) as a result of the earthly ministry of Jesus. Both views do away with at least one-half of the future 70th Week of Daniel’s prophecy and the epical view entirely dismisses the literal nature of the days as literal years, though admitting that the first 483 days or 9 weeks are literal years. The gap between the 69th and the 70th Week of Daniel’s prophecy occurs between the “cutting off of Messiah” (i.e., 4 days after the triumphal entry or after Palm Sunday) and commences (i.e., the 70th Week) at the future “treaty with the many” by the future Antichrist who bears the Roman character of the fourth Beast, the epitome of all that is Western Civilization. The body of Antichrist (i.e., his “physical temple” – II Thessalonians 2:4) shall be made desolate (i.e., inhabited by the Beast, as Satan “entered into Judas” and became the “son of perdition” or “destruction” – John 17:12, Luke 22:3; II Thessalonians 2:3 wherein man’s spirit becomes an “uninhabitable dwelling” and utterly devoid of fellowship with God—i.e., filled with “destruction” or “damnation” or “without hope of salvation”).

The imposition of the “Treaty with Death and Hades” (Isaiah 28:14, 18) will commence the 70th Week of Daniel (Daniel 9:27) and initiate the prevailing testimony of the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11 who are the affirmative

“players” within the Seventieth Week. They shall be brought forth to give their final testimony against the Great City before the heavenly court. In the “midst of the week” the “abomination of desolation” will take place and the termination of the re-instituted sacerdotal rites will commence the Great Tribulation, the latter half of the Seventieth Week of Daniel’s prophecy (“***But in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering***” – Daniel 9:27).

Again, the Two Witnesses are not simply Israel, neither are they simply the Church: “***These are the Two Olive Trees (Israel) and the Two Lampstands (the Church) standing before the God of the earth***” (Revelation 11:4). Their “open persecution” (i.e., their “corporate bodies”) “***will lie in the street of the Great City***” for “***three-and-a-half days***” (Revelation 11:8), the final 3 ½ years **or** the duration of the Great Tribulation of the seven-year “Tribulation Period” (i.e., the Seventieth Week of Daniel’s prophecy). Yet, after the “***three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God***” (Revelation 11:11) will enter them--this is the resurrection and the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, and the Second Advent, the conclusion of the Seventieth Week of Daniel (I Thessalonians 4:15–18).

So—I leave you with these thoughts—may the Lord direct us and cause us, as Jeremiah declared, to be “***VALIANT FOR THE TRUTH***” (Jeremiah 9:3).

