

Revelation 6 - The Tribulation explained Part 2 - The Scriptural Basis for the Tribulation Continued

Last week in the “Revelation 6 - The Tribulation explained Part 1 - The Scriptural basis for the Tribulation,” we started looking at the biblical or scriptural basis for the tribulation being 7 years long and coming after the church age, based on Daniel 9:24-27. We answered the following questions:

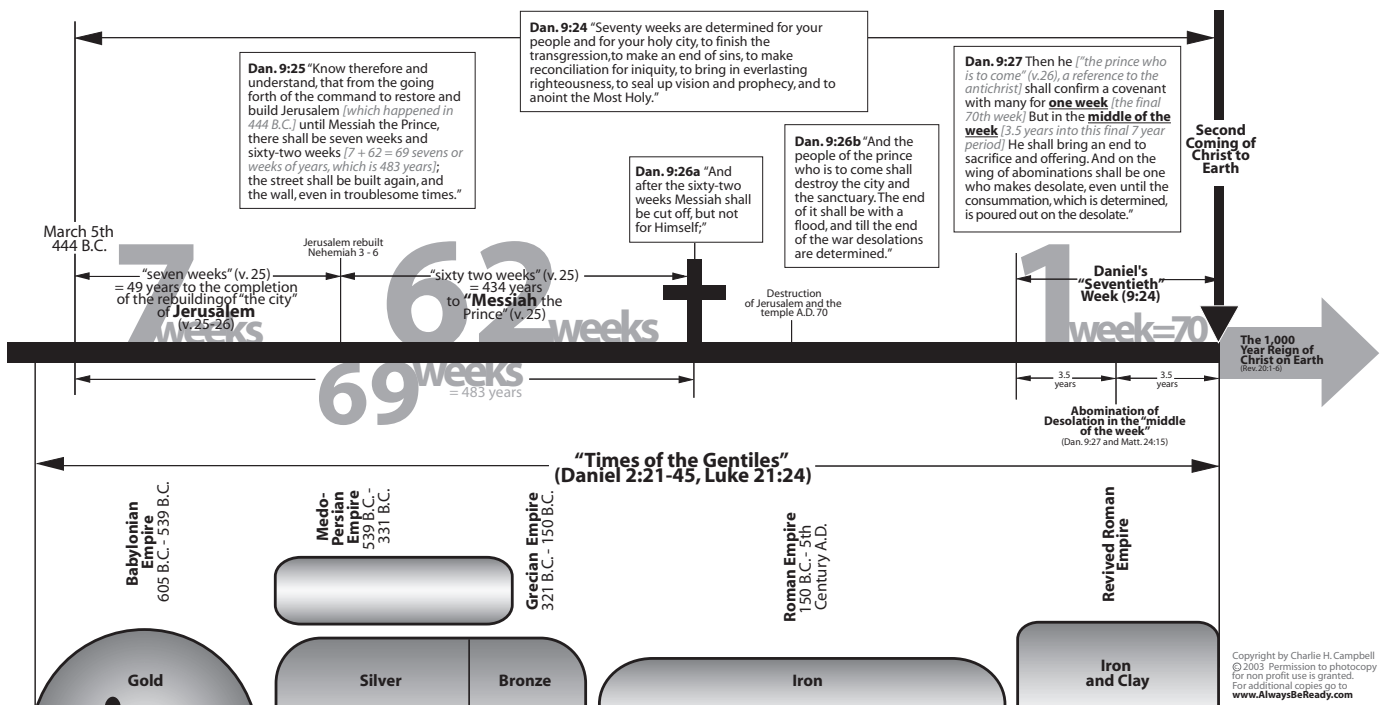
1. What key scripture refers to the tribulation? (Daniel 9, especially verses 24-27)
2. How long is the tribulation? (7 years, 1 “week” or “seven”)
3. When does the tribulation occur? (After the church age)
4. what does it have to do with Israel? (Everything—it has to do with Israel and Jerusalem)
5. what are the main prophecies that must be fulfilled before this seven year period? (The crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD)

To understand how we came to these answers, you’ll have to listen to the previous message, “Revelation 6 - The Tribulation explained Part 1 - The Scriptural Basis for the Tribulation,” where we covered the background and context to Daniel chapter 9 and why the “sevens” or “weeks” refer to sevens of years. We learnt about sabbatical or rest years. This week we will finish this background study of the tribulation. Listen carefully, because at the end there will be a quiz on what we cover today. What we learn today will build on what we studied last time, so it would be beneficial for you to catchup by listening the previous message.

Why take the time to do this? Because there is a lot of confusion concerning the tribulation — when it occurs, what happens during it, how long is it, and even if it happens. If we get this right now, we will understand the rest of the book of Revelation in its proper context and it will make a lot more sense as all the other related scriptures from other parts of the bible easily fit into place. All prophecy can be taken literally, of course taking into account the literal meaning behind the symbols.

“Daniel’s Seventy Weeks (or Seventy Sevens)”

Daniel 9:20-23: 20 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, 21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, ‘O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.’ 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision.



Basically God told Daniel in Daniel 9:24-27 that, concerning the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem, there would be seventy weeks or sevens of years or 490 years determined or decreed for them.

One “week”, or literally “seven” represents a period of 7 years.
There are seventy “sevens” or “weeks”
70 x 7 years = 490 years.

How God works with Israel

Last time we went into the background of why the “weeks” or literally “sevens” are sevens of years, representing sabbatical years. *The important point is that in Daniel 9:24 God promised that the nation of Israel would be His witness to the world for 490 years, and at the end of that 490 years Jesus would return, and all prophecy would be fulfilled.*

What I find very interesting is the way God set things up with Israel. Did you realise that, whether Israel obeyed or disobeyed, the nations would still know that God was real, that He is the Only True God? Why is this? Because God predicted exactly what the nation of Israel would do and what He would do in response. Therefore, when it came to pass, the nations understood that that was exactly what God had said would happen if they obeyed (God would bless them) or disobeyed (God would discipline them). Let’s have a look at some of those verses:

Exodus 19:6 NLT paraphrase

⁶And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.’ This is the message you must give to the people of Israel.”

So firstly, here is God choosing Israel to represent Himself to the nations. They were His priests, just like the church is a kingdom of priests today (1 Peter 2:9), who represent God to the world and the world to God.

When Israel obeyed, God did mighty works through them to show the other nations that He was the only true God. Here is an example:

Exodus 14:3-4 NKJV

For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They are bewildered by the land; the wilderness has closed them in.’ ⁴ Then I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, so that he will pursue them; and I will gain honour over Pharaoh and over all his army, that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.” And they did so.

But even when Israel disobeyed, they were still a sign to the nations because everything that God said that He would do to them if they disobeyed actually happened, and the nations or gentiles knew that God was the true God because what He said came to pass. Moses predicted this in:

Deuteronomy 29:24-27 NLT paraphrase

²⁴ “**And all the surrounding nations will ask**, ‘Why has the Lord done this to this land? Why was he so angry?’

²⁵ “And the answer will be [they will answer], ‘This happened because the people of the land abandoned the covenant that the Lord, the God of their ancestors, made with them when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. ²⁶ Instead, they turned away to serve and worship gods they had not known before, gods that were not from the Lord.

²⁷ That is why the Lord’s anger has burned against this land, bringing down on it every curse recorded in this book.

You see, because of the witness of the prophets, the surrounding nations knew about God's law and His expectations of the nation of Israel and what would happen to Israel if Israel disobeyed. God's prophets had an international ministry and message. So you see that Israel was a witness to the world for God whether or not they obeyed or disobeyed.

Keep this in mind. We will come back to this in a couple of minutes. For now, let's go back to the seventy sevens chart:

So remember that, according to Daniel 9:24-27 and other scriptures, at the end of the 490 years Jesus comes back—all prophecy is fulfilled and the Messiah reigns on the earth. This means of course that the last 7 years hasn't happened yet. We do not yet see Jesus ruling and reigning on the earth. So what's the story?

Last week we learnt that the first 69 sevens or 483 years finished on the very day that Jesus rode in on the donkey. We know the exact date that time period started in 444 BC, and the exact date it was completed when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the donkey. But what about the last 7 years? God said in Daniel 9:24 that 490 years or seventy sevens were determined or decreed for Israel and Jerusalem, and:

69 x 7 years is only 483 years.
490 years - 483 years = 7 years.

Therefore, there are still 7 years to be completed as decreed or determined for Israel according to Daniel 9:24.

Remember what we just talked about a couple of minutes ago? Israel was God's chosen instrument to be His witness to the world. But what happened at the end of the 69th week or seven? Do you remember? They rejected Jesus as their Messiah.

Jesus came back and revealed Himself as the King right on time according to Daniel's prophecy, but Israel as a nation rejected Him as their Messiah when they demanded that He be crucified 7 days later. Then, exactly 50 days after the resurrection, on the day of Pentecost, the church was born. The Holy Spirit came into and upon people so that they could what? What was the purpose of the church?

Acts 1:8 NLT paraphrase

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be **my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere**—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

What happened was a temporary rejection of the nation of Israel as God's witnesses. God hasn't forgotten about them—the covenant promises given to Abraham concerning the nation of Israel will still be fulfilled. However, God's witness to the nations is today primarily through the church. The nation of Israel has no or very little desire to share the gospel with the world. As a nation they are still blind to the fact that their Messiah has come. But despite this, according to His great mercy, God is keeping His promises to Israel. God has blessed them by bringing them back into the land and protecting and prospering them just as He said He would in the last days, even though they are still spiritually blind. But remember that God will open their eyes again, but only when the church is gone. Romans 11 sets this out very clearly. We'll just read verses 11 and 25-29 from the Amplified bible:

Romans 11:11, 25-29 AMP

11 So I ask, Have they (Israel) stumbled so as to fall [to their utter spiritual ruin, irretrievably]? By no means! But through their false step and transgression salvation [has come] to the Gentiles, so as to arouse Israel [to see and feel what they forfeited] and so to make them jealous.

[NOTE: God's rejection of Israel is not forever, nor is it complete. They are still, and will always be, the recipients of the promises or covenants given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They are only rejected in the sense that they are temporally disqualified as God's witnesses because of their sin of rejecting their Messiah. But through God blessing the church, Israel will become jealous as they see God working in us and not in them.]

25 Lest you (the gentile church) be self-opinionated (wise in your own conceits), I do not want you to miss this hidden truth and mystery, brethren: **a hardening (insensibility) has [temporarily] befallen a part of Israel [to last] until the full number of the ingathering of the Gentiles has come in,**

[NOTE: Notice that the hardening or blindness is only temporary. It will only last until the last gentile person appointed to salvation is saved during the Tribulation.]

26 And so all Israel will be saved. As it is written, The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will banish ungodliness from Jacob. [Isa. 59:20, 21.]

27 And this will be My covenant (My agreement) with them (Israel) when I shall take away their sins. [Isa. 27:9; Jer. 31:33.]

[NOTE: God will still keep His covenant promises to Israel given to Abraham. God will eventually remove their blindness and give them new hearts that seek Him and Love Him.]

28 From the point of view of the Gospel (good news), they [the Jews, at present] are enemies [of God], which is for your advantage and benefit. But from the point of view of God's choice (of election, of divine selection), they are still the beloved (dear to Him) for the sake of their forefathers.

[NOTE: God still loves the Jews, even though they are enemies of the gospel (have rejected the gospel)]

29 For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable. [He never withdraws them when once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call.]

[NOTE: Once God makes a promise, He is obliged to keep it, because that is His eternal nature. God doesn't transfer promises from one person to another, or from one group to another.]

So you see that God has temporarily put aside Israel as His witness to the world. However, when the church will be removed from this earth (at the rapture), God will again use Israel as His witness, to bring the nations to repentance and saving faith in Him. God will do a mighty work through Israel, raising up 144,000 mighty evangelists who will go throughout the world to share the gospel of the kingdom. This happens during the last 7 years, or the last "week" as described in Daniel 9:27. Revelation chapter 7 tells us that they will be spectacularly successful. They will do in 7 years what they failed to do in their entire history.

So what has happened to the last 7 years determined for Israel, the last or 70th week? Well there is a gap. There is a gap between the end of the 69th “week” or “seven” and the 70th “week” or “seven”, between the end of the 483rd year and the start of the 484th year. The gap is the church age. (look at the chart) We are still in the gap now. But soon, Jesus will come back and snatch us up and we will go to be with Jesus in Heaven, complete with our glorified bodies. Then during those 7 years, God will use the events of the tribulation to cause Israel to come back to Himself.

Here is an analogy that will hopefully help you to understand. When I was at university I was studying biology and chemistry. The total length of the course was 4 years. However, I got a job at the end of the first 3 years and I worked for 8 years. My degree was unfinished. It was waiting for me to come back and finish it off, which I did 8 years later. After working 8 years, I went back to university and finished off the one year remaining, the fourth and last year, of my degree.

I had 4 years of study allocated to me. I studied biology and chemistry **from** 1990, **until** 1992, a total of 3 years. **After** the three years of study (1992) I worked for eight years. **Then** I went back to university and completed the final year of my chemistry degree.

Do you notice the 4 prepositions I used to describe my four years of study?

1990 Start university (**from** 1990)

1991

1992 Stop or pause university (**until** 1992)

First 3 years of course

1993 Work (**after** 1992)

1994 Work

1995 Work

1996 Work

1997 Work

1998 Work

1999 Work

2000 Work

Gap or break in 4 year university course

2001 Back to university to finish final year. (**Then** in 2001) Fourth year of course

Again:

From 1990 indicates the start time of my degree.

Until 1992 described a *stop* or a *pause* after of the first three years of study, even though the degree was not complete.

After the three 3 years (1993-2000) I worked - degree delayed (gap)

Then in 2001 back to university for one year—my degree was restarted and completed

Review: I started in 1990 (**from** 1990) and stopped or paused in 1992 (that is my study continued **until** 1992). But that wasn't the end of my degree. I had 4 years decreed or determined for me to complete the degree. So **after** I worked for 8 years, I **then** went back to university to finish the one year remaining.

Now compare this to:

Daniel 9:24-27

Seventy weeks (*sevens of years*) are determined for your people and for your holy city,...

(70 x 7 years = 490 years)
490 years are determined for Israel and Jerusalem

...**from** the going forth of the command
To restore and build Jerusalem (*The clock starts ticking once this command is given*)

Until Messiah the Prince,
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks (*The clock stops ticking with only one "week" or "seven" to go*)

First 69 "weeks" or "sevens"
(7 + 62 = 69)
(69 x 7 years = 483 years)

...**after** the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Gap or break in the 490 years. During this time
Jesus is crucified and the temple destroyed in
70 AD.
God's witness is the church - the church age.

...**Then** he shall confirm a covenant with many
for one week;

The last or 70th "week" or period of 7
years. As predicted Jesus comes
back to earth as King at the end.

The Israel clock has stopped ticking. Why? Because God is now using the church as His witness to the world. Remember Pentecost? The Holy Spirit came in and upon believers for the purpose of empowering them to be His witnesses. The church has temporally replaced Israel, but only as God's witness to the world. God will never leave Himself without a witness. It will either be Israel or the church. Since Pentecost, and until the rapture, the church is God's witness to the world. We are God's holy people, a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). But when the rapture happens, and the church departs, then for the last 7 years of world history before Jesus returns, Israel will once again be used by God to be a witness to the world, to share the good news to all who will hear. This is another reason why it's important to understand that the church will not go through the tribulation.

Revision of the Scriptural evidence that there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.

Remember that the Holy Spirit revealed to us in Daniel 9:24 that all prophecy, including the second coming of Christ, would be fulfilled by the end of the 70th week or the end of the 490th year. Obviously this hasn't happened yet. We looked last time at the evidence for a gap between the end of the 69th week (69 x 7 years = 483 years) and the start of the 70th week or period of seven years. Here is a summary of the evidence for there being a gap between the 69th week of years and the 70th week of years (between the end of the 483 year and the start of the 484th year):

1. The language of the text itself —
from - starting point
until - stopping point
after - what happens in the break or gap
then - the continuation of the time

2. *Now for the second evidence that there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.* Romans 11 clearly says that Israel will be blinded to the truth of the Messiah, but only temporarily. It's only until the fullness of the gentiles comes in.

Romans 11:25 NLT paraphrase

I want you to understand this mystery, dear brothers and sisters, so that you will not feel proud about yourselves. **Some of the people of Israel have hard hearts, but this will last only until the full number of Gentiles comes to Christ.**

Again, I just want to point out that God has not abandoned His people Israel, He has simply temporally disqualified them from being His ambassadors because of their rejection of Him as their Messiah. But Jesus promises to change their hearts. In the meantime, all the covenant promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are still intact. They have not been transferred to the church. The church is not spiritual Israel. Israel and the church will always be two different entities.

3. *Now for the third evidence that there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.* Daniel 9:24 says that all prophecy, including the second coming, will be completed or fulfilled by the end of the 70th week. *This only makes sense if the 70th week (period of 7 years) is still future. According to Revelation, Jesus comes back at the end of the tribulation, the end of the 70th week. The tribulation is the 70th week described in Daniel 9:27*

Daniel 9:24, 27 NLT paraphrase

²⁴ “A period of **seventy sets of seven (weeks of years)** has been decreed for your people and your holy city to finish their rebellion, to put an end to their sin, to atone for their guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness (Millennial kingdom), to confirm the prophetic vision, and to anoint the Most Holy Place.

²⁷ The ruler [antichrist] will make a treaty with the people **for a period of one set of seven (1 “week of years” or 7 years),...**

Let's look at some of the things that will be accomplished by the end of the 490 years: I've borrowed from David Guzik's commentary for these definitions.

To finish the transgression (their rebellion): This says that transgression itself will be finished. Taken literally, this means establishing an entirely new order on earth, with an end to man's rebellion against God. (David Guzik)

“The culmination of appointed years will witness the conclusion of man's ‘transgression’ or ‘rebellion’ against God—a development most naturally entered into with the establishment of an entirely new order on earth. This seems to require nothing less than the inauguration of the kingdom of God on earth.” (Archer)

To bring in everlasting righteousness: One might take this in an individual sense, but there have always been righteous individuals. Taking the statement at face value, this means a new order of society brought in by the Messiah. (David Guzik)

To seal up vision and prophecy: This speaks of both the ending and fulfilment of prophecy, concluding the final stage of human history and culminating with the reign of the Son of God. (David Guzik)

Again, the seventieth week is still future. These things have not literally happened yet. In the meantime, we are in the church age.

4. *Now for the fourth evidence that there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.* There are two events listed in Daniel 9:26 - the crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem—which happen after the end of the 69th week and before the start of the 70th week. The destruction of the temple by the Romans occurred in 70 AD, 27 years **after** the end of Daniel's 69th week. *The only way this works or makes sense is if there is a gap between the Daniel's 69th and 70th weeks, as you can see on your charts.*

Daniel 9:26 NKJV

And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;
And the people of the prince who is to come
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

5. *Now for the fifth evidence that there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week.* *The events in Daniel 9:27 are still future.* *Since the events which take place during the seventieth week are still future, it means that the seventieth week is also still future.*

Daniel 9:27 NLT paraphrase

The ruler [antichrist] will make a treaty with the people **for a period of one set of seven [1 “week of years” or seven years]**, but after **half this time (3 1/2 years)**, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings. And as a climax to all his terrible deeds, he will set up a sacrilegious object that causes desecration, until the fate decreed for this defiler is finally poured out on him.”

There has never been an evil leader who has made a covenant with Israel and the many for 7 years, allowing them to rebuild their temple, and then breaking his promise half way through the 7 years, goes into the temple and desecrates it by sacrificing a pig in the holy of holies and proclaiming himself to be God. Revelation describes how all this will play out. Let's have a look at Matthew 24:15 and 2 Thessalonians 2:4 to see what Jesus and Paul said about this:

Matthew 24:15-22 NKJV

“Therefore when you see the **‘abomination of desolation,’** spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ 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. ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake (those who believe during this time) those days will be shortened.

The abomination of desolation is explained by Paul in:

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 NKJV

Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come [the tribulation]* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

So basically, Paul is saying that the man of lawlessness, the son of perdition or destruction, aka the antichrist, will sit in the temple of God and claim to be God. That is the abomination that causes desolation. This is a technical Jewish phrase, and it's only happened a couple of times in history, and it means to desecrate the Holy of Holies. So, that will be the ultimate desecration, when the Roman antichrist declares himself to be God in the Holy of Holies in the temple. Daniel said in Daniel 9:27 that this event will happen during the mid point of the final week or 7 year period.

So all this to point out that this prophecy, the abomination of desolation, predicted by Daniel, Jesus and Paul, hasn't happened yet. The tribulation, the last week or seven year period of Daniel 9:27 has to be future. Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians around AD 52, and no one since that time has fulfilled this prophecy. So what has to happen for this to be fulfilled? Well, the the Jews need to become a nation again—that's already done. Then, the temple needs to be rebuilt in its original location, and the sacrificial system restarted. This will be made possible because of the covenant that the antichrist, this so-called man of peace, confirms with Israel and the many at the start of the tribulation. As we read earlier, Revelation 11 tells us that the temple of God will be rebuilt during the last week or 7 years of the 490 years allotted to Israel in Daniel 9:24 (seventy sevens are determined for your people).

So, both Jesus and Paul present this "abomination of desolation" as being yet future. The "abomination of desolation" is when the antichrist goes into the temple, sacrifices a pig, and proclaims himself to be God. This has not happened yet (Antiochus's desecration of the temple was hundreds of years prior, and he didn't fulfil this as written—see Daniel 8:8-14). *It's important to realise that this future defilement of the temple by the antichrist cannot happen until the temple is rebuilt. This lines up perfectly with the events in Revelation.* Daniel 9:27 is like a summary of what the antichrist does and what his end will be, with Revelation giving further details.

Summary of the evidence that there is a gap between Daniel's 69th and 70th week:

1. The language used in the text.
2. Israel will be restored to their position of being God's ambassadors—the blindness of Israel and their rejection is neither complete nor permanent.
3. All prophecy must be completed by the end of the 70th week.
4. The crucifixion and the destruction of the temple by the Romans both occur between the end of the 69th week and the start of the 70th week.
5. The events in Daniel 9:27, the 70th week or last 7 years, are still future (the desecration of the temple by the antichrist)

Quiz Questions:

1. How long is a "week" or "seven" in the context of Daniel 9? *7 years.*
2. What was one of the main purposes of the nation of Israel? *To be a witness for God, to be God's ambassador.*
3. In what way has God rejected the nation of Israel? *Only as far as being His ambassadors or witnesses.*
4. How long will God reject the nation of Israel from being His ambassadors, His witness to the world? *Until the Rapture of the church, when the church is taken to Heaven.*
5. According to Revelation 7, what is one of the reasons why the church will not go through the tribulation, but will instead be raptured before the tribulation?

****Revelation 7:4b, 9-10, 13-14**

4 One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:...

**9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,
10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"...**

13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know."

So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

During the tribulation, the church is not mentioned and it is clear that Israel has been reinstated as God's ambassadors, fulfilling Daniel 9:27, the last 7 years determined for Israel. Remember that the 144,000 Jewish evangelists will have a spectacularly successful ministry, with a multitude that cannot be counted believing during the 7 year tribulation period.

6. Has God transferred all the covenant promises that He gave to Israel to the church? (Land, many descendants, a great nation, victorious over their enemies, a blessing to the whole world and the nation from whom the Messiah would come)
No! They will all be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom. There are many passages that point to the future glory of Israel being ruled by Christ.
7. There are those who believe that God has done away with Israel completely. What is this dangerous and incorrect doctrine called? *Replacement theology.*
8. Do those who believe in replacement theology interpret prophecy using a literal or an allegorical or figurative method of interpretation? *Allegorical or Figurative. A literal understanding of prophecy leads to a dispensational world view, where the tribulation and the Millennial kingdom are still future and are real.*

Next week, I will give you a chapter by chapter overview of the entire 7 year tribulation starting in Chapter 6 and show you how to read the book of Revelation before continuing our verse by verse study of the book of Revelation in Chapter 6. Some chapters carry the story forward chronologically, and some chapters explain the main characters, the main events and the main organisations; where they come from and how they fit into the story. Like the rest of the book of Revelation, they draw heavily from other parts of the bible. But that's next week. In the mean time I encourage you to read the entire book. It should only take you about an hour. Become familiar with it. I would like to leave you with this thought.

Matthew 7:8 NLT paraphrase

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

Anything worthwhile in the spiritual realm only comes by persistence. A correct and literal understanding of prophecy will open your eyes to God's great master plan and allow you to see just how great God is, speaking things before they happen. It will also give you confidence as you look around the world and see God's plan unfold. It will replace your fear with wonder and hope.

Remember that Revelation was written to give hope to people who were suffering intense persecution by the Roman empire. Prophecy, especially the book of Revelation, gives us a clearer vision of who Jesus is and what our purpose is in life. So study hard. Make the effort to understand. I thought I had it all figured out until I started teaching Daniel and Revelation. There was so much I still didn't really understand. Now, there is still so much I don't understand, but, in investing the hours to study and read the scriptures I have a better understanding than I did before. I have been blessed, because the more I learn about prophecy, the more I learn about Jesus.

Hebrews 10:5-7 NLT paraphrase

⁵ That is why, when Christ came into the world, he said to God,
“You did not want animal sacrifices or sin offerings.

But you have given me a body to offer.

⁶ You were not pleased with burnt offerings
or other offerings for sin.

⁷ Then I said, ‘Look, I have come to do your will, O God—
as is written about me in the Scriptures.’ ”

The key to really enjoying studying prophecy is to be looking for Jesus in it, just like we should be in the rest of the Scriptures. Be asking, what does this tell me about Jesus, both who He is and what He will do and when and why.