**Does Daniel 9:26-27 Have a Gap?**

# Introduction

Dispensationalists insist on a gap between the 69th and 70th prophetic “weeks” (Dan. 9:26-27). This is the present church age when God has set aside Israel during the “times of the Gentiles” until the last “week” for Israel resumes at the Tribulation. This issue is of great importance as it touches upon whether the seventieth week still remains future.

# Doubt About the Gap

All non-dispensational scholars maintain that the weeks follow consecutively. For example, Rose, a posttribulationalist, asserts the historical fulfillment of Daniel's Seventy Sevens:

All the evidence of the New Testament, and of Christian experience agree with the greatest teachers of the Christian church that, the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy has all been fulfilled more than 1900 years ago. This leaves no future seventieth week yet to be fulfilled in "the great tribulation after the rapture.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

He therefore maintains that there is no gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks:

If there were "gaps" and "intermissions" the prophecy would be vague, misleading, and deceptive . . . The "62 weeks" joined immediately unto the "7 weeks," and their combined "69 weeks" reached "UNTO MESSIAH." Beyond His birth, but not to his "triumphal entry"; only "UNTO" His public anointing. There was no "gap" between the "69th, and the 70th weeks." . . . The "one week" of prophetic "seventy weeks" began with John the Baptist; from his first public preaching the kingdom of God, the gospel dispensation commenced. These seven years, added to the 483 years, completes the 490 years . . . so that the whole of the prophecy from the times and corresponding events, has been fulfilled to the very letter.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Mauro also objects to a gap in an extended discussion.[[3]](#footnote-3)

# Support for the Gap

Support for the "Gap" Interpretation is actually extensive. Although it is the minority view, at least six lines of evidence suggest a separation between the 69th and 70th weeks.[[4]](#footnote-4)

1. It is impossible that the fulfillment of the six prophecies in Daniel 9:24 have been historically fulfilled at Christ's first advent. Has Israel finished sinning? Has the nation experienced atonement for her sins or seen everlasting righteousness? Paul still saw this as future for Israel (Rom. 11:25-27). Has vision and prophecy culminated? Also, has the holy of holies been anointed yet?[[5]](#footnote-5) Obviously not.

All six of these prophecies are still unfulfilled.[[6]](#footnote-6) Furthermore, they relate not to the church but to Israel. Therefore, we still await the culmination of the 490 years, meaning that the final seven years are still future due to a gap after the first 483 years.
2. The first word of verse 26, "after" (yrej}aæw“), indicates a gap. This gap occurs after the culmination of the sixty-ninth week at the cutting off of Messiah, or following the Triumphal Entry at Christ's crucifixion. Those of the traditional-historical school see Christ's baptism ending the sixty-nine weeks and His death at the middle of the seventieth week. However, verse 26 says that several events must occur before the beginning of the 70th week, such as Jerusalem’s destruction and many wars.
3. While the idea of gaps may seem strange to the 21st century mind, this was not true of the Jewish mindset. For example, Isaiah 61:1-2 records the two advents of Christ in a single context. Christ quoted the portion of this passage relating to His first advent in Luke 4:18-19, thus revealing that a separation of many years appears. On the Jewish mindset Gundry notes, "The possibility of a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks is established by the well-accepted OT phenomenon of prophetic perspective, in which gaps such as that between the first and second advents were not perceived."[[7]](#footnote-7)
4. The person who confirms the covenant in Daniel 9:27 cannot be Christ.[[8]](#footnote-8) The "He" in this verse looks back at "the prince who is to come" in the previous verse (Titus in AD 70) as its antecedent. Also, if Christ is the confirmer of the covenant, then what covenant did He confirm and then break?
5. As already noted in point 1, since Christ's death did not "put an end to sacrifice and offering" (Dan. 9:27), a gap must exist between these two events. The Jews continued the sacrificial system until God stopped their abhorrent practice with Titus' destruction of the temple.
6. Comparisons with parallel prophecies also reveal a gap. (1) Our Lord declared in Matthew 24:15 that the abomination of desolation will occur *after* His earthly ministry. (2) The wicked person of Daniel 9:27 has striking parallels with the future wicked man described in Daniel 7:25; Revelation 12, 13, 19. (3) The events of the second half of the seventieth week (Dan. 9:27b) correlate with those of the latter half of the future Tribulation period described in Revelation 13:4, 6, 12, 14-15.

# Conclusion

Therefore, there are sufficient reasons to establish a separation between the 69th and 70th weeks. Since these weeks are not consecutive it may now be determined what is referred to by the end of the 69 weeks. The end of the 69 weeks is given in Daniel 9:25, which is the most remarkable prophecy of all time. The prophecy was given shortly before 539 BC and predicted two dates. One date was a royal decree nearly 100 years from that time (March 5, 444 BC) and the second date was 483 years later on the very day of Christ’s official presentation to Israel at the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (March 30, AD 33)! This is substantiated on the three charts on the next two pages.

1. George L. Rose, *Tribulation Till Translation* (Glendale, CA: Rose Publishing Company, 1943), 62; cited by J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1955), 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Rose, 46-47; cited in Pentecost, 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Philip Mauro, *Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation*, 91-99; Walvoord has an extended and rather pointed critique of Mauro's book in "Is the Seventieth Week of Daniel Future?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 101 (January 1944): 30-49. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Harold W. Hoehner's treatment of this issue (*Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 131-33) is most helpful. The following comments summarize some of his key points. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Although the phrase "most holy" has been sometimes interpreted to mean Christ's anointing (e.g., Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel*, 201), these are technical words always translated in the Old Testament as "holy of holies."

The clear referent is the consecration of the millennial temple (cf. Ezek. 40–46). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For a dispensational interpretation of each of these six phrases see the exegetical outline of Daniel 9:24 on page 540 of these OT Survey notes. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Robert H. Gundry, *The Church and the Tribulation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 190. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. This covenantal perspective finds support by Meredith G. Kline, "The Covenant of the Seventieth Week," *The Law and the Prophets. Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis*, ed. by John H. Skilton (Nutley, NJ, 1974), 452-69, esp. 461-69; cited by Hoehner, 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)