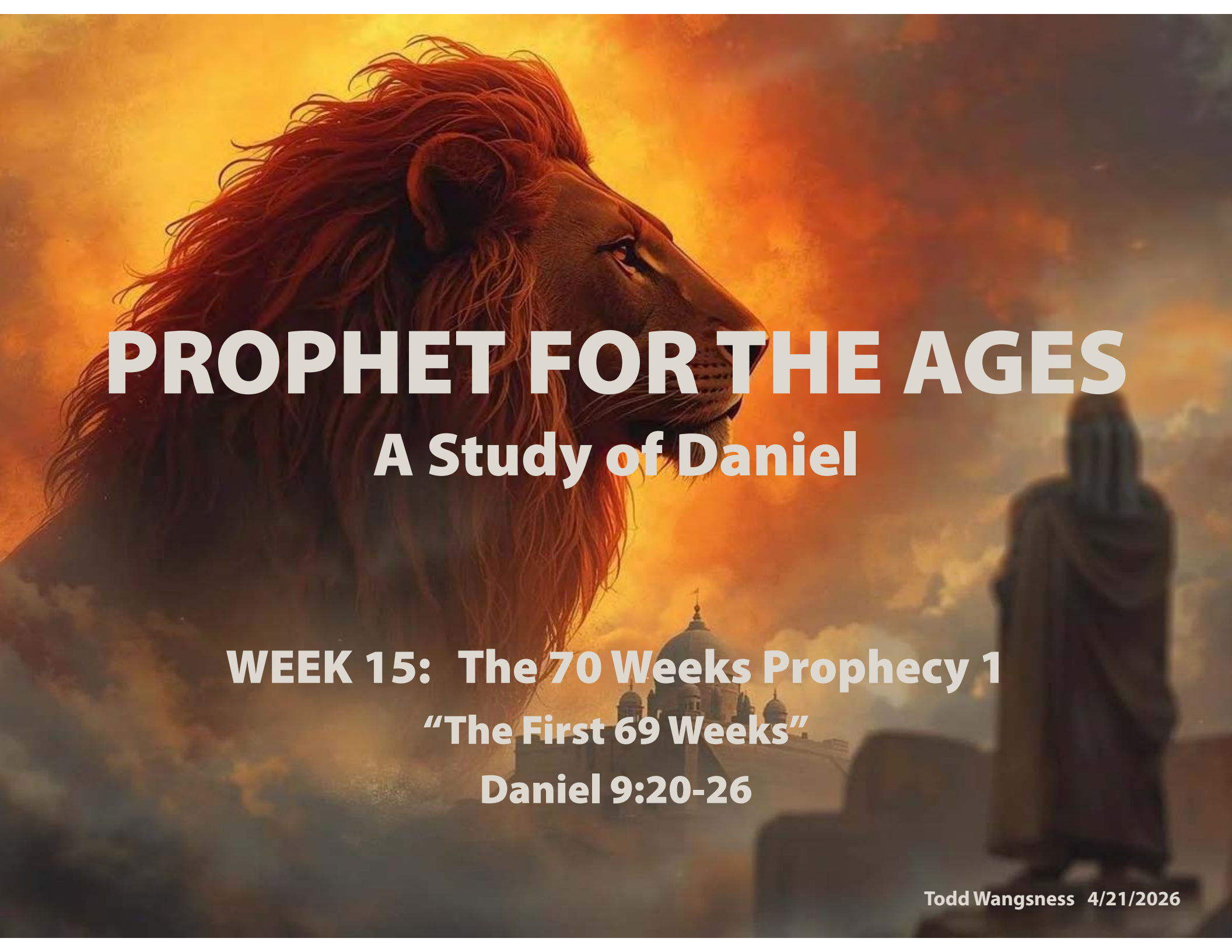




PROPHET FOR THE AGES

A Study of Daniel

WEEK 15: The 70 Weeks Prophecy 1
“The First 69 Weeks”
Daniel 9:20-26

Prophet for the Ages: The 70 Weeks Prophecy

Daniel 9:20-27 Overview

- There are several views of this passage, namely, the Futurist, Historicist and Preterist Views, which we have previously discussed in earlier studies
- We will be discussing the Futurist View in this study
- Futurist View:
 - The first 69 weeks (483 years) run from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the time of Christ (His presentation as Messiah and death).
 - There is a gap (the current Church Age) between the 69th and 70th weeks.
 - The final 7 years refer to a future Tribulation period involving a covenant (possibly with Israel)
 - This covenant shall be broken midway by a ruler (often seen as the Antichrist), leading to temple desecration, halted sacrifices, and ultimate judgment.
 - The six goals in v. 24 find full fulfillment in Christ's return and kingdom.

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Notable Quotes About Daniel 9:20-27

"The 70 Weeks prophecy is one of the most remarkable demonstrations of the precision of biblical prophecy, pinpointing the arrival of the Messiah to the very day." Missler's work underscores the mathematical accuracy of the prophecy, particularly the 69 weeks leading to Jesus' triumphal entry."

- Chuck Missler

"The prophecy of the Seventy Weeks in Daniel 9:24-27 stands as one of the most stupendous predictions in all of Holy Scripture. It sets forth, with amazing accuracy, the exact time when the Messiah would appear to Israel, be cut off for the sins of His people, and bring in everlasting righteousness. The decree of Artaxerxes in 445 B.C., as recorded in Nehemiah 2, marks the beginning of the sixty-nine weeks, leading precisely to the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem in A.D. 32. The final week, separated from the others, awaits future fulfillment in the establishment of God's kingdom. This prophecy is not only a chronological marvel but also a theological cornerstone, revealing God's redemptive plan through Christ and His ultimate victory over sin and Satan."

- Alva J. McClain

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While Daniel was still praying ...

Dan 9:20-23 *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:*

- Daniel recognized Gabriel because he had seen him before in the earlier vision of chapter 8:16-27
- Though Gabriel is an angel, he appeared before Daniel in the form of a man
- Gabriel told Daniel, "You are *greatly* beloved!". What an amazing statement!
 - God doesn't play favorites, but He genuinely *loves* the faithful!
- Purpose of Gabriel's visit: To give Daniel "*skill to understand*"

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Interpretation of the Vision

Dan 9:24

“Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

- What is the timeframe of the prophecy?
 - Seventy “weeks” or ‘sevens’ (Heb ‘*shavuim*’. It can mean weeks, but primarily indicates groups of seven)
 - In Hebrew, the word ‘*shavuim*’ is like the English word ‘dozens’. The object is context dependent. ‘Weeks’ is a poor translation.
- To whom and what place was the prophecy concerning?
 - **“For your people”**: The prophecy pertained to Daniel’s people, the Jews
 - **“For your holy city”**: The prophecy references Jerusalem, the holy city

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- What does Gabriel tell Daniel will be accomplished in the prophecy?
 1. “Finish the transgression”
 2. “Make an end of sins”
 3. “Make reconciliation for iniquity”
 4. “Bring in everlasting righteousness”
 5. “Seal up the vision and prophecy”
 6. “Anoint the Most Holy”
- The purposes Gabriel mentions can be divided into two categories
 - The first three are all negative
 - The prophecy says the timeframe of the seventy sevens will eliminate these undesirable elements
 - The second group consists of three positive objectives
 - Gabriel states that the timeframe of the prophecy will bring them to fruition

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The First Three Negative Objectives

1. *"Finish the transgression"*

- This statement in Hebrew is emphatic; it is speaking of a specific transgression or rebellion
- According to Isa 53:1-9, a day will come when the nation of Israel will pray a national prayer of confession
- The prayer specifically acknowledges the sin of rejecting the Messiahship of Yeshua

2. *"Make an end of sins"*

- Refers to Jesus as the 'Last Adam' being the representative of all humanity dying on the cross
 - *1 Cor 15:45 And so it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.*
 - Jesus – in His humanity – gathered up all that was "in Adam" on the cross along with ALL of the judgment due Man because of Adam's fall
 - *2 Cor 5:14 ... if One died for all, then all died*

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3. *“Make reconciliation for iniquity”*

- Gabriel builds on the previous point
- “Identification” and “substitution” are two aspects of Christ’s sacrifice.
 - Those are accurate terms, but don’t necessarily capture the totality of what Jesus has done for humanity
 - The Believer’s “inclusion” in the death of Jesus Christ is what changes things
- It is through God’s inclusion of humanity “in Christ” that He accomplishes the identification and substitution with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ

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The Last Three Positive Objectives

4. “Bring in everlasting righteousness”

- Refers to Jesus as the ‘Second Man’ becoming the firstborn of a new race of Heavenly beings
 - *1 Cor 15:47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. 49 And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.*
- Jesus’s resurrection and ascension enables the Holy Spirit to indwell His people, giving us His own righteousness!
 - *2 Cor 5:21 or He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
- It is only through His sacrifice that His people are imbued with power for deliverance from sin
 - *Heb 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.*

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5. *“Seal up the vision and prophecy”*

- Gabriel explains to Daniel that the timeframe encompassed by the Seventy Weeks prophecy will include (and conclude) all events described within this prophecy

6. *“Anoint the Most Holy”*

- The prophecy points to Jesus the Messiah being anointed as the High Priest over all humanity
 - *Heb 9:11-12 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.*

Prophet for the Ages: The 70 Weeks Prophecy

Interpretation of the Vision

Dan 9:25-26a *“Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;*

- Gabriel reveals details about a very specific period, with a defined starting point and a defined end point
- He also describes the period of time for the initial part of the prophecy (the first 69 weeks)
 - Starting Point: *“the decree to restore and build Jerusalem ... and the wall”*
 - Interval: *“there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks”*
 - Ending Point: *“after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off (executed)”*

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Identifying the Starting Point:

- The starting point for this prophecy has sparked millennia of debate among scholars
- The confusion arises as there were four separate decrees issued that could possibly fulfill this prophecy
- Only one decree pertains to rebuilding Jerusalem and the walls as required by the prophecy (in bold below)

Overview of the Four Decrees

Date	Decree	Content	References
538/537 BC	Decree of Cyrus	Permission to rebuild the Temple	2 Chr 36:22-23, Ezr 1:1-4, 6:1-5
521 BC	Decree of Darius I Hystaspes	Re-affirmed previous decree	Ezr 6:6-12
458/457 BC	Decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus to Ezra	Permission to proceed with Temple Service	Ezr 7:11-26
445/444 BC	Decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus to Nehemiah	Permission to rebuild walls of Jerusalem	Neh 1 – 2:8

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The Interval – Seven Weeks and Sixty-two Weeks → 69 Weeks of Years

- **Seven Sevens**: The walls of Jerusalem and the city would be rebuilt during this period
- **Sixty-two Sevens**: The remaining items mentioned in verse 25 were to be accomplished by the end of this initial interval of time (Total: 69 Sevens)
- **Verse 25 states the following:**
 - Jerusalem and its walls would be built
 - The Messiah would appear prior to the conclusion of the 69 Weeks
- **Verse 26 states that the Messiah would be executed “after” those days**
 - The context indicates it would be immediately after

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- A 'Prophetic Year' has a duration of 360 days
 - *Daniel 7:25 "time, times, and half a time," is interpreted as 3½ years*
 - *In Revelation 12:6, this same period is described as 1,260 days*
 - *Dividing 1,260 days by 3½ years yields 360 days per year*
 - $1,260 \div 3\frac{1}{2} = 360$
- Day for a year principle
 - *Num 14:34 "According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection."*
 - *Eze 4:4-6 "And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year."*

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- So we have a total of 69 Sevens of 'prophetic years' of 360 days per year
 - $69 \times 7 = 483$ Years
 - 483 Years $\times$ 360 days/year = 173,880 days
 - Therefore, the 69 Week Interval lasts 173,880 days
- When do we start counting the days?
 - From the decree to Nehemiah from Artaxerxes Longimanus
 - *Neh 2:1 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes ...*
 - Most historians, archaeologists, and biblical scholars date Artaxerxes Longimanus ascending the Persian throne as August 465 BC
 - Therefore, the 20th year of his reign would start in August 446 BC
 - The month of Nisan following that would have been in March 445 BC
 - Using a Proleptic Gregorian Calendar calculator:
 - March 18, 445 BC + 173,880 days = April 6, 32 AD
 - Which is believed to be the exact date of Jesus's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem which started the Passion Week!

Prophet for the Ages: The 70 Weeks Prophecy

What happened after the Messiah was “cut off”?

Dan 9:26b *“... 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.”*

- Titus destroyed the Temple in 70 AD
- Titus and his father, Vespasian, were Roman generals who besieged Jerusalem
 - They were neither kings nor princes at the time of the siege
- During the siege of Jerusalem, Caesar died and the Roman senate voted Vespasian in as the emperor and he returned to Rome
- The very day Titus and his troops broke through the walls of Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple, he had become a prince
- Another amazing testimony to the pin-point accuracy of Bible prophecy!

Prophet for the Ages: The 70 Weeks Prophecy

And then ... The Gap (aka The Church Age!)

- What Gabriel did not disclose to Daniel, was that there would be a long gap of time between the end of the 69th week and the start of the 70th week
- The Jews assumed the timeframe of the 70 Weeks prophecy was contiguous and uninterrupted
 - This is the primary reason they completely misunderstood Jesus' First Coming
- They were looking for a Prince that would come and deliver them from Roman tyranny
 - The Essenes called this the coming of "Messiah Ben David"
- They were NOT looking for the coming of a 'Suffering Servant'
 - The Essenes called this the coming of "Messiah Ben Joseph"
- We will study the gap of the Church Age and the final 70th Week during next week's study!

Prophet for the Ages: The 70 Weeks Prophecy

Questions To Ponder

- Gabriel arrives "in swift flight" while Daniel is still praying!
 - What does this reveal about God's timing and attentiveness to prayer?
 - How might it challenge our assumptions about when or how God answers intercessory prayer today?
- The vision was given to give Daniel "skill and understanding" in response to his confession of national sin.
 - How does this passage illustrate the connection between repentance, prayer, and receiving prophetic insight?
 - Does it suggest that deeper understanding of end-times prophecy requires a similar posture of humility?
- Why did Gabriel not disclose to Daniel the presence of a long interval of time between the 69th and 70th week?
- Does the destruction of the temple in 70 AD fulfill or foreshadow the statement in verse 26, *"the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary"*?