

From the words in which Daniel describes the second visit of Gabriel, it is plain that the angel had come to explain to him that part of the vision in the eighth chapter which he did not understand: "I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding," he said. Understanding in what?—Very clearly an understanding of the 2300 years,—that part of the prophecy not before made plain. Notice again: "I am come to show thee; . . . therefore understand the matter." From this statement it is obvious that there was something which Daniel did not understand and which Gabriel had come to show him; therefore, said the angel, "Consider the vision,"—recall the vision, bring it back to your mind. That thing, then, which Daniel did not understand was part of the vision.

In obedience to the command of the angel, Daniel recalled the vision. In his mind's eye he again saw the ram, which he understood was Medo-Persia; the goat, which he understood was Greece; the great horn between the goat's eyes, which he understood to be the first king of Greece; and the four horns, which he understood to represent the four divisions of Greece after the death of its first king; and then the little horn, which he understood was a great persecuting power that would attempt to destroy God's truth, God's people, and God's sanctuary. This was all clear to him. He understood it.

## GABRIEL EXPLAINS THE 2300 YEARS

The part of the vision that Daniel did not understand was the part concerning the 2300 years, at the end of which the sanctuary was to be cleansed. As he considered it, Gabriel began to explain it. The heavenly visitor did not again go over the meaning of the entire vision; all this had been explained on his former visit to Daniel, and he did not need to repeat it. He began his explanation at the exact point where he had left off, with the time period, the 2300 years. And of this great period, he says:

"Seventy weeks [of this 2300-day period] are determined [or cut off] upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy." Daniel 9:24.

## THE 2300 YEARS DIVIDED

In this explanation, the 2300-day period is divided into two parts, and there is an account of what would take place during the first part of it; but no time is given for the beginning of it.

The two parts into which the period was thus divided are: the first part of 70 weeks, or 490 days; the second part, or the whole remainder, which would be 1810 days. As these days stand for years, there are two periods: one 490 years in length, the other 1810 years,—2300 years in all.

## THE STARTING POINT OF THE 2300 YEARS

The following verse in the chapter gives us the starting point of the entire period and at the same



Artaxerxes writing the decree to restore and build Jerusalem in his seventh year, which was B. C. 457. See Ezra 7:7, 11-26. Here began the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, and the first seventy weeks of years of that period. (Daniel 9:24, 25.)

time divides the first period of 490 years into three smaller periods.

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” Daniel 9:25.

Here at last is the starting point of the 490 years, and consequently of the 2300 years. This long prophecy is to begin with some decree, or commandment, to restore Jerusalem; and from the time that that decree went into operation it would be just 2300 years until the time when the sanctuary would be cleansed.

#### THE 490 YEARS DIVIDED

Here, also, the first period of 490 years is divided into three smaller periods,—seven weeks, or 49 years; 62 weeks, or 434 years; and one week, or seven years (remembering that in symbolic prophecy a day stands for a year).

During the first period of 49 years, the city of Jerusalem was to be rebuilt. At the end of the second period of 434 years, the Messiah was to appear to His people; and the full end of the 490 years given to the Jewish people was to be reached at the end of the third period of seven years. After this, there would still remain 1810 years of the 2300; and at the end of this last period, the sanctuary would be cleansed.

It is plain that before the expiration of any of these periods of time can be determined, we must learn the date of the beginning of the whole period of 2300 years; and this, in the words of the angel, is at “the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem.” The date of this commandment must now be decided upon.

#### THE DECREE TO RESTORE JERUSALEM

Providentially, not only the date of this commandment, but the very commandment itself, has been preserved in the Bible. It is found in the



Nehemiah viewing the broken-down walls of Jerusalem before he began building. (Nehemiah 2:11-16.) In the last work of Nehemiah, B. C. 408, was ended the first seven weeks of years. (Daniel 9:25.)

seventh chapter of Ezra, and the date given in the margin,—a date which has been confirmed by exhaustive research,—is 457 B. C. The decree itself begins in the twelfth verse of the chapter, and reads as follows:

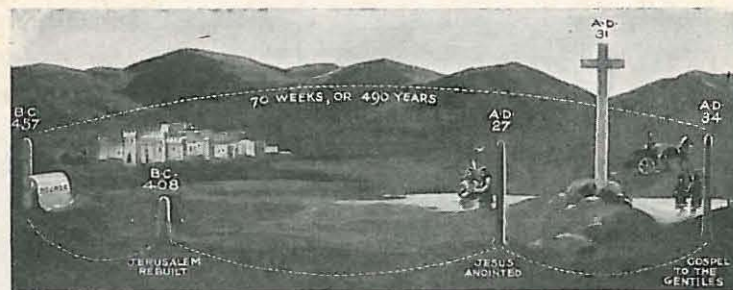
“Artaxerxes, king of kings, unto Ezra the priest, a scribe of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace, and at such a time. I make a decree, that all they of the people of Israel, and of His priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee.”

The decree conferred full authority on Ezra to do anything that was found necessary in the restoration of the temple and the city of Jerusalem.

The date 457 B. C. fixes the starting point of the 2300 years, the 490 years, the 483 years, and the 49 years of the prophecy. Forty-nine years after 457 B. C. Jerusalem was to be completely rebuilt and restored; 483 years, or “seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks,” from 457 B. C. was to reach to the appearance of “Messiah the Prince” to His people; 490 years from 457 B. C. would extend to the end of the time allotted to the Jewish people; and 2300 years from 457 B. C. would mark the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary.

#### THE DATE OF THE MESSIAH'S APPEARANCE

We begin our consideration of this time prophecy with the period of 483 years, which were to reach to the appearance of the Messiah. The words of the angel to the prophet are:



A pictorial diagram of the seventy weeks of years (490 years) of the 2300, reaching from 457 B. C. to 34 A. D.

“From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.”

In all, this would be 69 weeks, in which period there are 483 days, each day representing a year of actual time, or 483 literal years. To state it another way: Four hundred and eighty-three years after 457 B. C. the Messiah was to appear to His people, the Jews.

To what year would this point? Four hundred and eighty-three full years from the first day of 457 B. C. would reach to the last day of 26 A. D. Therefore, if the decree to restore Jerusalem did not go into effect until the autumn of 457 B. C., which is the time it did become operative, the 483 years would reach to the autumn of 27 A. D. In this way the prophecy points directly to the year 27 A. D. as the year when the Messiah would appear to His people. This does not point to the birth of Christ, for the wording of the prophecy is, “Unto the Messiah the Prince.”

What is the meaning of the word "Messiah"? —It means the same in the Hebrew as the word "Christ" does in the Greek. "Messiah" means "the Anointed"; "Christ" means "the Anointed." (John 1:41, margin.) Therefore the date of the anointing of Jesus of Nazareth must be sought for.

This anointing took place at His baptism (Matthew 3:13-17), and the date is given in the margin of the Bible at this place as 27 A. D. This is verified by Bliss's "Sacred Chronology"; "The New International Encyclopedia," Art. "Jesus Christ"; and Weiseler's "Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels," page 183.

**"THE TIME IS FULFILLED"**

Immediately after this anointing, Jesus was in the wilderness of temptation for forty days. After this He "came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, *The time is fulfilled*, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Mark 1:14, 15.

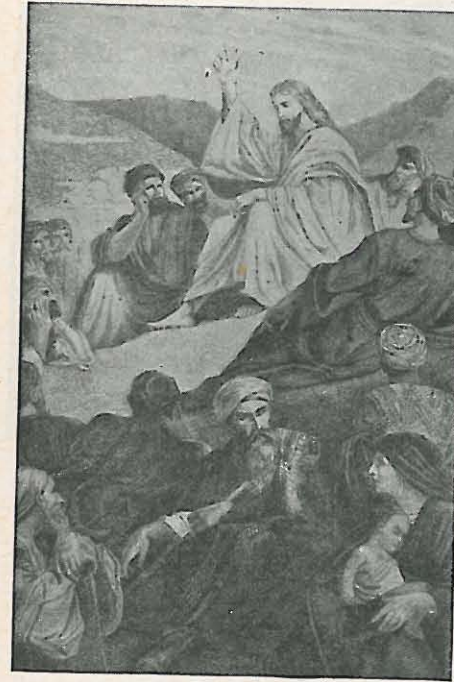
The attention of the reader is directed to the significance of this expression of Christ's, "The time is fulfilled." It was at this point that the 69 weeks, or 483 years, of the prophecy of Daniel ended. It is at this point that the Messiah, the Anointed, was to appear to His people; and it was at this very time that the Messiah did appear, being anointed at His baptism, and then preaching the message, "The time is fulfilled." He directed their attention to the very prophecy that proves His Messiahship.

There is one more week of the seventy that were given to the Jewish people to be accounted for. The sixty-nine weeks ended in 27 A. D.

There is now another week of years; and when this is added to the 69 weeks, which ended in 27 A. D., the year 34 A. D. is reached,—the close of the seventy weeks.

In the midst of this last week, something takes place which is especially noted in the prophecy:

"He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Daniel 9:27.



"Jesus came . . . preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled." Mark 1:14, 15. This was the time prophesied by Daniel (9:25), "unto the Messiah, the Prince," 69 weeks of years,—434 years.

In the "midst" of the final week given to the Jewish people, "the sacrifice and the oblation" were to cease; and during the entire week (seven years), from 27 to 34 A. D., the covenant was to



In the midst of the week, our Lord died, and the typical ministrations ended.  
(Daniel 9: 27)

be confirmed with many; that is, with the Jewish people, for this period was given specially to them.

#### IN THE MIDST OF THE WEEK

The "midst" of the week was just three and one-half years from the baptism of Christ. At that very time Christ was crucified, thus causing the whole system of "sacrifice and the oblation" to cease. This sacrificial system was all typical of Christ, the great Sacrifice; and when Christ died on the cross, type met antitype, and the typical system came to an end. This was shown by the rending in twain of the veil of the temple at the time of the death of Christ. (Matthew 27:51.)

#### THE END OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS

The full period of seventy weeks, or 490 years, given to the Jews,—the peculiar people of God,—terminated in 34 A. D.; and at this point the prophecy meets its fulfillment by the official rejection of the gospel of Christ by the ruling body of the nation, the Sanhedrin, in its persecution of the disciples and the martyrdom of Stephen. From this date onward the apostles turn to the gentiles. It was about this time, too, that the great apostle to the gentiles, Paul, was converted.

The first division of the 2300 years, which was 490 years long, ended in 34 A. D. Adding to this the 1810 years remaining of the 2300, we find that the year 1844 A. D. stands out as the great terminal point of the entire period of the 2300-year prophecy. And it should be added that the accuracy of this date can not be successfully challenged; it is based on the central facts of the gospel of Christ,—His baptism, His ministry, and His crucifixion.

In accordance with this prophecy, then, the cleansing of the sanctuary was to begin in 1844. And with this fact determined, the way is open to pass on to the consideration of what the sanctuary is, and what is meant by its cleansing.