

The doctrine of the sanctuary should be understood by all who love the Sabbath. It is the prophecy of Daniel 8:14 with its corollary prophecy of Daniel 9, which proves that the weeks of the Biblical luni-solar calendar do not cycle the same as the continuous weekly cycle of the pagan/papal solar calendar currently in use. By pinpointing A.D. 31 as the only year in which Christ could have been crucified, Daniel provides evidence that there has been a change in the weeks. (See “When was Christ *Really* Crucified?” chapter six, *The Great Calendar Controversy*.)

The prophecies of Daniel, which are inseparable from the sanctuary, are the rock solid foundation upon which Seventh-day Adventist doctrine rests. Every Seventh-day Adventist should know the historical documentation, the dates and their interrelation. The following passage is taken from *The Story of Daniel the Prophet* by Stephen Haskell. It presents, in part, the historical interpretation of Daniel 8 and 9.

After Daniel received the vision of chapter 8, he was so upset that the Bible records: “And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; . . . and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it” (Dan. 8:27.) Chapter 9 records a beautiful prayer of Daniel’s, when he was praying for knowledge to understand the vision. Gabriel is sent in answer to his prayer:

Beginning with the twenty-fourth verse [of chapter 9] the angel explains the period of time, the two thousand three hundred days of chapter 8:14. There are no preliminaries. Gabriel knows the thoughts of the prophet, and hence he says, “Seventy weeks are determined upon [or allotted to] 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.” The entire future history of the Jews as a nation is contained in this one verse. No other history ever crowded so much into so few words. Here is given the exact date for the beginning of the work of Christ; the time allotted Israel as a nation for repentance, the time when type would meet antitype in all sacrificial offering; the period when probation would end for the Hebrew race, and everlasting righteousness would be

preached to the world at large. In this interview with Gabriel only that part of the two thousand three hundred days which applied to the Hebrew nation was given. To Daniel had already been revealed the history of the nations of the world; the two thousand three hundred days has to do more especially with God's people, independent of national governments.

The period of seventy weeks [ $70 \times 7 = 490$ ], or four hundred and ninety days of prophetic time, covers a period of four hundred and ninety years, during which Jewish history as such would continue. This four hundred and ninety years did not begin at once, for the angel said they should begin to reckon from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. The period of seventy weeks of Jewish history is thus divided by the angel: Seven weeks for building the walls and streets of Jerusalem; threescore and two (62) weeks till the work of Messiah; and one week, which would cover the period of his ministry, and the time following, until the gospel should go forth to the Gentiles . . .

In the well preserved historical record, we find extra-Biblical documentation of the dates when the commandment was given to restore and build Jerusalem.

Jerusalem was subject to the Persian government until the days of Ezra in the reign of Artaxerxes. In the seventh year of the reign of that king, 457 B. C., was issued the third decree concerning the rebuilding of Jerusalem . . . that it required the *three decrees* to constitute the commandment of Dan. 9:25, is evident from the words of inspiration in Ezra 6:14: "They builded and furnished it, according to the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes, the king of Persia." The three decrees are thus connected . . . .

It should be remembered that not only are the three decrees connected, but that the entire prophecy is cut off of the longer 2300 day prophecy of Dan. 8:14. The seventy week prophecy does not stand alone. The third decree that started the seventy week prophecy also was the beginning point for the longer 2300 day prophecy.

**“From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks” (7 + 62 = 69 weeks, or 483 prophetic days, or literal years). *Messiah*, in the Hebrew, and *Christ*, in the Greek, are the same as “anointed” in English. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost. This anointing took place at the time of his baptism. The sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years, reached to the baptism of Christ by John in the River Jordan.**

**From the decree of Artaxerxes, four hundred and fifty-seven years reach into the year 1 A.D., in the present dispensation. But twenty-six years remained of the sixty-nine weeks (483 – 457 = 26), which terminated with the baptism of Christ. Twenty-six years added to the year 1 A. D. bring us to 27 A. D., in the fall of which year Christ was baptized . . . .**

**When Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism, the 69 weeks ended.**

**The sixty-nine weeks had closed. Those who were at that time studying the prophecies of Daniel were looking for him, and believed the words of John when he said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Christ also said, “The time is fulfilled,” referring to the prophetic period of the sixty-nine weeks of Daniel. But the nation as a whole was blind. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” They might have known. The book of Daniel was for them to study. The same book, together with the book of Revelation, proclaims the hour of God’s judgment, and his second coming, but men will be taken unawares because they heed not the prophecies.**

**As the baptism of Christ was one sign given by Gabriel by which the Jews might know the Messiah, so his death was a second token. [At Christ’s baptism], one week [in prophetic time] – seven years – remained of the allotted time for the Jewish nation. During one half of that time – three and one-half years – the Son of God walked among the people . . .**

**“In the midst of the week,” said the angel to Daniel, “he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” [Dan. 9:27.] At the time of the passover feast in the spring of 31 A. D., three and one-half years after his baptism, Christ was crucified by the very people whom he had tried to save. As his life went out, the inner veil of the temple was rent from top to bottom . . . The knife fell from the hand of the priest, and the sacrificial lamb escaped. God had withdrawn his presence from the temple. The Lamb of God himself had been slain, and sacrifice and oblation were forever done away . . . This was in the midst of the last week of the prophetic seventy.**

**Mercy still lingered over the Jewish people; there was yet a little time in which to repent. What was not accomplished in the person of Christ, God, sending his Holy Spirit, sought to accomplish through his disciples. Humble fishermen imbued with the power of God taught the people concerning a crucified and risen Saviour. In one day three thousand accepted the message. But as many believed, the enmity of Satan was again aroused. In 34 A. D., Stephen was stoned, and as the result of the sever persecution which followed, the believers were driven from Jerusalem and “went *everywhere* preaching the word.” Israel had withdrawn from God, and his Spirit could no longer protect them. In less than forty years the city was captured by the army of Titus, the temple was burned, and the Jews were scattered to the ends of the earth, there to remain until the consummation of all things at the time determined.**

**There can be no question as to the accuracy of the date 457 B. C. as the beginning of the seventy weeks, for it is established by four events: The decree of Artaxerxes; the baptism of Christ; the crucifixion; and the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles. History established the date 457 B. C. as the seventh of Artaxerxes by more than twenty eclipses. The four hundred and ninety years can be reckoned backward from the New Testament history, or forward from the decree to restore and build Jerusalem.**

**Of the two thousand three hundred days of Dan. 8:14, the angel has given the events for the first four hundred and ninety years. Eighteen hundred and ten years remained,  $2300 - 490 = 1810$ .**

The four hundred ninety ended in the year 34 A. D. [with the stoning of Stephen.] To this add eighteen hundred and ten years, and we have the year 1844 A. D. Daniel had been shown the event which would mark this year. It was the investigative judgment, and the giving of the message of the first angel of Revelation fourteen.

. . . About twenty years before the expiration of the prophetic period of the two thousand three hundred days, the attention of some men was called to a study of the prophecies. Foremost among these students was William Miller, who became thoroughly convinced that the prophetic period of Dan. 8:14 would close in 1844. The expression, “unto two thousand and three hundred days then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” was interpreted to mean that at the end of that stated period the earth would be destroyed by fire at the second coming of Christ. Consequently between 1833 and 1844 the personal coming of the Saviour was preached throughout the world. Men were warned according to the wording of the first angel’s message of Revelation 14, that the judgment was at hand, and thousands prepared to meet the Lord.

When the year 1844 passed, and Christ did not appear, many lost faith in the prophecies, but others, knowing that the word of God abideth sure, were led to search more diligently for the event which did take place at the close of the prophetic period. Further study corroborated the truth of the interpretation of the time, and revealed also the light on the sanctuary question.

For the first time men saw that the “sanctuary” spoken of in Daniel’s vision referred to the work in heaven rather than upon earth. An investigation of the typical service instituted in the wilderness revealed the work of cleansing on the day of atonement. It was seen that the work of the high priest in the earthly tabernacle was but a figure of the service upon which Christ, the great High Priest, entered in 1844 . . . William Miller and others who preached the second advent in 1844 were mistaken in the event, but not in the time of the period mentioned by Daniel.

**Stephen N. Haskell, *The Story of Daniel the Prophet*, pp. 122-133, emphasis original.**