

The Rapture: Before Daniel's Seventieth Week

Introduction:

1. There are many today who teach that the church, the body of Christ, will have to endure part or all of the Tribulation time period described in Matthew 24 and the book of Revelation in detail.
2. One of the primary reasons for this is a lack of understanding concerning what God is doing today in the formation of the church, the body of Christ.
3. In this lesson, we will examine the prophecy of Daniel concerning the 70 weeks of Israel in **Daniel 9:24-27**. This will help us to understand why the church, the body of Christ, will not be involved in the Tribulation time period.

First, 70 weeks of years are determined upon Israel. vs. 24

1. This prophecy is very clear. Seventy weeks are determined upon Daniel's people. Who were Daniel's people? Israel. The next phrase makes this clear beyond doubt when the angel says, "...and upon thy holy city..." This is the city of Jerusalem.
 - This is 70 weeks determined upon a physical people and a physical city.
2. The word "weeks" simply means "seven." The idea is "seventy sevens."
3. When we look at the context of the passage it is clear that the prophet is referring to seventy weeks of years.
 - Each week is not seven days, but seven years.
 - Seventy weeks would equal 490 years.
4. What would happen at the end of the 490 years according to this prophecy in verse 24?
 - Neither Israel nor Jerusalem will ever be transgressed again.
 - There will be full reconciliation for iniquity.
 - There will be a bringing in of everlasting righteousness.
 - The most Holy (Jesus Christ) will be anointed as King.
5. This is the fulfillment of the New Covenant that God promised Israel.
Ezekiel 36:16-38, 37:21-28; Jeremiah 31:31-40

Second, these 70 weeks of years are said to begin with a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. vs. 25

1. The Persian King Artaxerxes made this decree in **Nehemiah 2:1-10**. He made a decree that Nehemiah could return and lead a rebuilding project in Jerusalem. Don't confuse this with the decree from Cyrus in Ezra 1. This decree dealt with the rebuilding of the temple.
2. When did King Artaxerxes make this decree to kick off the first of Daniel's 70 weeks of years? It came on March 14, 445 B.C.
3. In the first 49 years (7 weeks) the city would be rebuilt, including the street and the wall. vs. 25

Third, after 69 weeks (483 years), Messiah would be cut off. vs. 26

1. The Bible breaks it down this way:
 - Seven weeks (49 years) of rebuilding.
 - After 62 more weeks (434 years) Messiah would be cut off.

- This equals a period of 483 Biblical years.
2. This takes you exactly to the time period in which Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem and presented Himself as Israel's Messiah. **Luke 19:28-44**
 3. Only His disciples (the little flock) recognized Him as the Messiah. The leadership of Israel refused to acknowledge Him as their Messiah. **Luke 19:39-40**
 4. Jesus then proceeds to weep over Jerusalem (**Luke 19:41-44**) because they are oblivious to the fact that this day was the time of their visitation.
 5. This was Israel's decision day, but as a nation they chose to cut off their Messiah which culminated a few days later in the crucifixion of their Messiah.

What happened to the last week of years?

1. Just like Daniel prophesied, Messiah was cut off after 69 weeks of years, but Daniel was told that 70 weeks were determined upon Israel, and after 70 weeks Messiah would bring everlasting righteousness and the transgression of Israel and Jerusalem would be finished.
2. We are also told that during the 70th week, a prince will come and make a seven-year covenant with many, but at the mid-point of the seven years he will bring an end to the temple worship and commit great abominations. He will eventually (within the seven years) destroy Jerusalem and the temple.
vs. 27
3. None of these events happened in the seven years after the cross. Nor has Christ brought everlasting righteousness to Jerusalem or made an end of sins in Israel.
4. What happened to the 70th week?

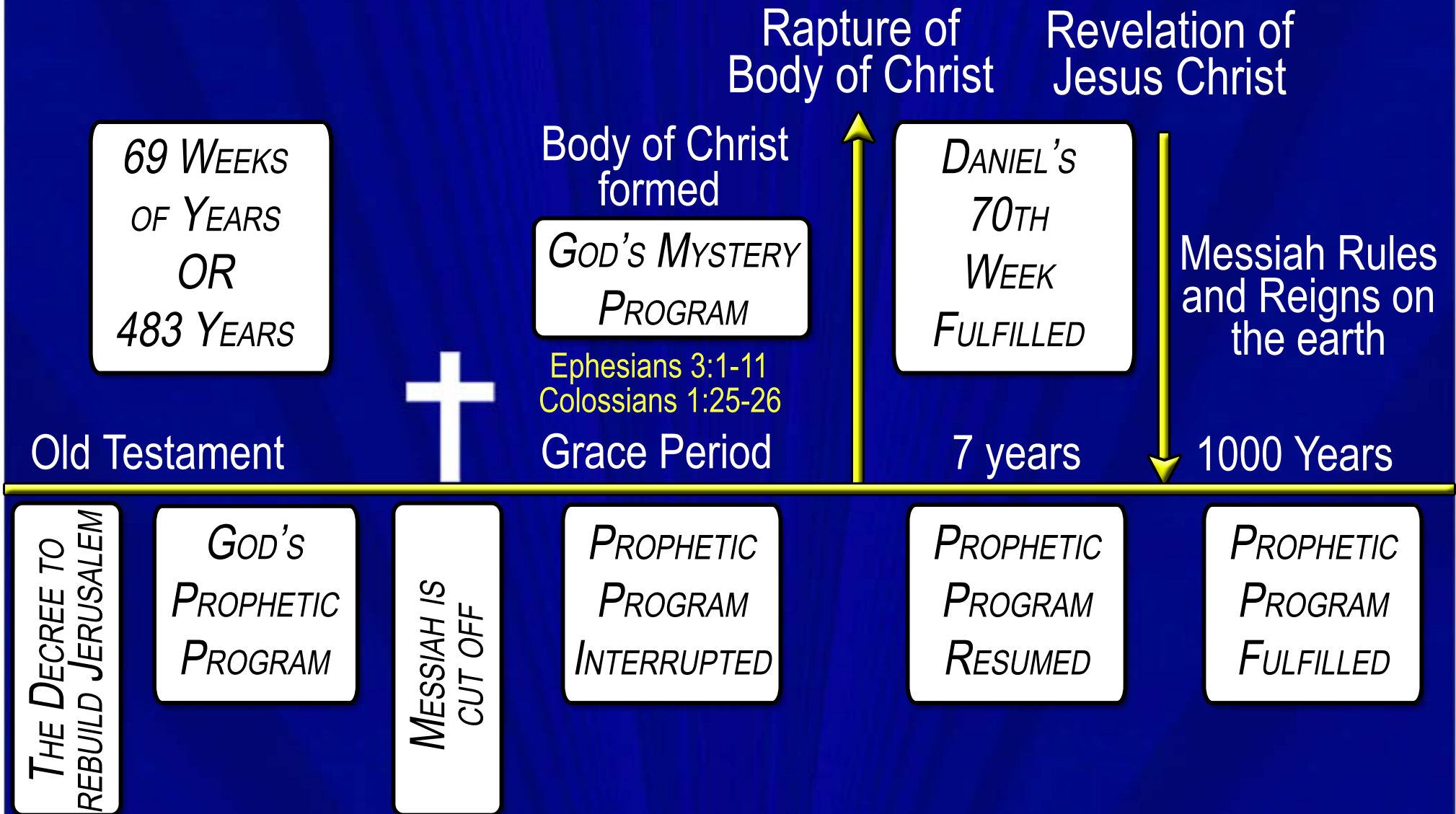
Fourth, the 70th week of Daniel still awaits its fulfillment.

1. After Israel cut off their Messiah, God's wrath was supposed to come on the nation of Israel. Christ (the rejected King) would ascend to heaven and begin to make His enemies His footstool by opening up the seal judgments that would kick off the 70th week. Revelation 5-6
2. This was the prophesied program (Psalm 2), but hidden in God was a secret purpose that He did not reveal to anybody until the "*due time*."
3. Instead of bringing wrath on Israel, Christ appeared suddenly to the ringleader of Israel's rebellion (Saul of Tarsus) and saved him in sheer grace. **Acts 9:1-9**
4. He then revealed to Paul the mystery that He had kept hidden from the foundation of the world. There would be a time of unprecedented **grace** for the world in between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel.
5. During this time God would form a new creation, a new organism called the church, the body of Christ. Paul called it "the dispensation of...grace." **Ephesians 3:2; Colossians 1:25-26**
6. We are living in a grace time period in between Daniel's 69th and 70th week. The prophetic program for Israel has been temporarily postponed and suspended. The prophetic time clock has stopped.
7. Daniel's 70th week is determined upon Daniel's people - Israel. The body of Christ was not in the first 69 weeks, nor will it be in the 70th.

8. Daniel's 70th week **will** happen, and God will have a little flock to witness to Israel and the world (**Revelation 7:4-8**). God **will** complete the prophetic program.
9. But prior to Daniel's 70th week, God will bring this dispensation to a close by means of the Rapture (**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**). The body of Christ will take its place and fulfill its purpose in the heavenlies (**Ephesians 2:6-7**).

(Please scroll down to view timeline chart.)

DANIEL'S 70 WEEKS (DANIEL 9:24-27)



70 weeks are determined on Daniel's people (Israel) and the holy city (Jerusalem).