

• *The salvation to come*

The coming of an anointed prince

• *Two ways to understand the timing*

• *Sooner –after 7 units of time*

• *Later –after 69 units of time*

• *The first – earlier –is correct*

1. *It follows the scribal accents*

2. *It is supported by the structure of the Hebrew text – each section starting with ‘and’*

Gabriel has given an overview of the salvation that is to come in what (from Daniel's viewpoint) would be the distant future. ‘Seventy times seven’ periods away from Daniel's time, salvation would come in the sixfold manner that Gabriel has described.

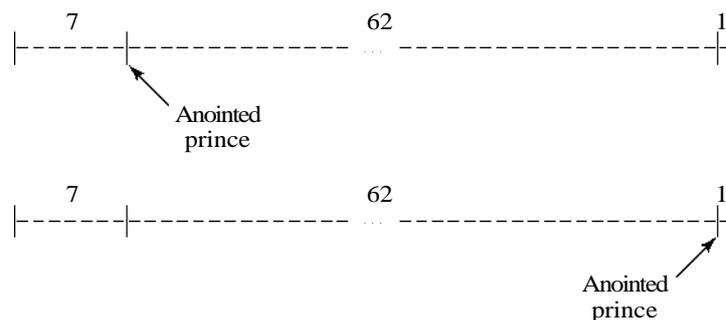
Now the angelic revelation comes with fuller detail. Verse 24 covers the whole period. Then verses 25–27 break the total period down into its smaller parts. **Consider verse 25.** There are two ways in which it is generally set out. One way – the one I prefer – is:

‘Know therefore and discern. From the going forth of a word about restoring and building Jerusalem, until the anointed one, the prince, there shall be seven sets of seven. Then for sixty-two sets of seven it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.’

Another possibility is:

‘Know therefore and discern. From the going forth of a word about restoring and building Jerusalem, until the anointed one, the prince, there shall be seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven. It shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.’

Diagrammatically the two possibilities can be laid out as follows:



The point at which the ‘anointed prince’ comes on one interpretation is after seven units of seven, but on the other interpretation it is after sixty-nine units of seven.

I believe the first view is right. (1) It follows the Hebrew accents, but the second view ignores the Hebrew accents. The accents are not original; they were added much later. Yet the scribes who edited our Hebrew text and put in the vowels and accents were scholarly men who inherited the traditional Hebrew text (which had no vowels or punctuation) and then added the vowels and accents to show how it should be read. Generally speaking we would do well to follow their ‘pointing’ of the text.

There is a more important reason for following the first view. (2) The first view is supported by the structure of the Hebrew text. We could set it out like this:

‘And know therefore and discern that from the going forth of a word about restoring and building Jerusalem, until the anointed one, the prince, there shall be seven sets of seven.

And for sixty-two sets of seven it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.

And after the sixty-two units of seven, an anointed one shall...’

It can be seen that the units of the Hebrew text each start with the word ‘and’. This signals the three parts of the Hebrew text. On the second view, the layout is:

• The second way of understanding has no clear structure

'And know therefore and discern that from the going forth of a word about restoring and building Jerusalem, until the anointed one, the prince, there shall be seven sets of seven, **and** for sixty-two sets of seven.

It shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.

And after the sixty-two units of seven, an anointed one shall...'

It can be seen that the clauses no longer have any clearly marked structure in them. One would expect the second clause to have begun, '**And** it shall be built again with streets and moat, but in a troubled time.' (In fact Theodotian's ancient Greek text which takes the text in the second way inserts the 'And', but in doing so it is not following anything in the Hebrew text!)

A smaller deliverance followed by a larger deliverance

The time from Daniel's day to the time for redemption in Jerusalem is broken down into two stages, after seven units and after sixty-nine (7 + 62) units. This is a way (I suggest) of telling us that there will be a **smaller** deliverance before the coming of a **larger** deliverance. Verse 25 tells us that what will happen is that there will be a relatively brief but also complete period (seven sevens!) and then a partial deliverer will come. Then there will be a much longer period and full salvation will come.

• The beginning of the seven sevens – from the going forth of a word about the restoration of Jerusalem – Jeremiah

A key question is: what points are the beginning and ending of the 'seven sevens'? Verse 25 says it is 'from the going forth of a word about restoring and building Jerusalem' and it continues until the coming of an 'anointed prince'. There are many different opinions on the subject. I can only say I believe the going forth of a word about restoring Jerusalem is to be found in the prophecies of Jeremiah. They have just been mentioned in Daniel 9:2. The 'going forth of a word' is found in Jeremiah 29:10, 'I will ... fulfil my gracious promise to bring you back'. This is the very thing Daniel has been considering and praying over.

• The anointed prince – Cyrus the Persian – a lesser political and geographical deliverance

I believe the 'anointed prince' was Cyrus the Persian who brought a small and limited rescue to Israel. It is the teaching of the Old Testament, especially in the Book of Isaiah, that Cyrus was a deliverer for Israel. Isaiah 45:1 refers to 'his anointed, Cyrus'. It is the only time a person is called 'God's anointed' in precisely the same way as in Daniel 9:25 and again it refers to Cyrus! The teaching of Isaiah 40–55 is that Cyrus brought a **political** and **geographical** deliverance of Israel from Babylon. But he did not deal with Israel's sins, so a greater and higher Deliverer was needed. God sent 'his anointed' to take Israel out of Babylon, but then there had to be another and greater 'Anointed King' to take Israel out of its captivity in sin. The 'arm of the Lord' (Isaiah 53:1) had to do what Cyrus could not do. The Spirit of the Lord had to come upon One who would proclaim liberty to captives in a greater way than ever¹. Cyrus the anointed came before the LORD, the anointed. The seven came before the seventy.

• A second and greater anointed king bringing spiritual deliverance and liberty would follow

¹ Isaiah 61:1



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