



A. Artaxerxes' decree was issued to rebuild Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8); this is not to be confused with Cyrus' decree to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 1:1-2). The twentieth year of Artaxerxes is determined to be 445 BC (there is some variation, but the greatest number of sources favored this date - <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/36741/Artaxerxes-I>). Therefore, the 70 weeks, determined for "thy people" and "thy holy city" (Jerusalem), begins to countdown at this time (445 BC). The first period of time begins with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem: 7 weeks - "to restore and to build Jerusalem" (Daniel 9:25).

B. The second period identified is 62 weeks (Daniel 9:25) and immediately follows the 7 weeks; 62 weeks "unto the Messiah the Prince." The 69 weeks are 483 years in the Jewish calendar (69 X 7). The established date of 445 BC to start the clock is not based on Jewish calculations; to convert 483 Jewish years to our calendar years requires the following: 483 years X 360 days per year (our days are the same length, so this becomes the basis for reworking the 69 week period) ÷ 365.25 days/year = 476 years. From 445 BC, go forward 476 years and you come to AD 30 (reducing one year because there is no year zero).

C. Daniel 9:26 confirms what will transpire at the end of the 69 weeks (AD 30): then "shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself." This very succinctly describes the death of Jesus, the Messiah, Who gave His life to pay the redemption price for mankind.

D. Daniel 9:26 then goes on to say: "and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" This, again, describes a very specific event that would take place for the Jews; what we don't see in this verse is the time between Messiah being cut off and the prince coming to destroy Jerusalem. In February of AD 67, Nero commissioned Vespasian to restore control over Judea (<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/626856/Vespasian>). For many years the Jews had led revolts against Rome, but the zealots finally came together and began to do some damage to Rome's troops. Rome's tactic in conquering the world had always been to extract compliance from the people, and then leave them to carry on with life as they had known it (<http://iml.jou.ufl.edu/projects/Spring04/Tyler/LandR.html>). Vespasian, along with his son, Titus, used the same tactic when coming to Judea - those cities that surrendered were left intact; those cities that refused to surrender were destroyed.

E. By the time the Romans arrived at Jerusalem, Vespasian was called to Rome (Nero had died), and Titus was left to conquer this last Jewish holdout - even yet, he sought terms of peace rather than to simply destroy the city; however, the zealots were in control and they would not permit the people to surrender. In August of AD 70, Jerusalem fell and the temple was burned (http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/vespasian.shtml) - a period of 3 1/2 years (the recalculation of this period into Jewish years, makes a difference of only 18 days, which is negligible within the February AD 67 to August AD 70 time frame).

F. Revelation 12:14 - *Time* (Patristic Era) - the instruction by the Apostles was completed, NT was compiled, persecution was common (as promised), and the Body of Christ moved away from the growing established *church*. Those who remained faithful to the Lord were becoming a remnant who continued to face persecution, albeit from a different source (initially it came from the secular government, but this shifted to the recognized *church* of Rome [Roman Catholic Church] as it became increasingly political in its position).

G. Times A (Medieval Era) - This was a time when physical isolation from the Roman Catholic Church was the primary means of safety; persecution was severe when the faithful were found. The papal authority became well established and they sought to control the understanding of the Scriptures; the printing press freed the Scriptures into the common languages of the people. Islam came to control a significant part of the world.

H. Times B (Modern Era) - Roman Catholic physical persecution declined and a broader Ecumenical unity became the focus; likewise, early Protestant persecution of the faithful soon gave way to pressure for unity. Islamic political control began to waver; a rise in humanistic philosophy led to the contamination of the Scriptures.

I. Half a Time (Rule of Antichrist) - Still under the times of the Gentiles, this period of 42 months, or 3 1/2 years, will be launched when the Lord opens the first seal (Revelation 6:1-2), which brings the Antichrist onto the world scene. Together, the Antichrist and the False Prophet will bring great persecution against the Lord's faithful ones (Revelation 13:7,17).