



The Seventy Weeks of Daniel.

BY
W. J. HOCKING.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

F. E. RACE,
3 & 4, LONDON HOUSE YARD,
PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C. 4.
1921.

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel.

PART I.

"Seventy weeks are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" (Dan. ix. 24, R.V.).

THE period of "seventy weeks" mentioned in the book of Daniel is a most important one in the general prophetic history of God's earthly people. And a careful study of the scripture in its context and of other passages which will elucidate its meaning is commended to our readers, who should in this study prayerfully seek that wisdom and understanding which God gives through His word to those that wait upon Him.

It is suggested that it would be helpful if the following translation by J. N. Darby of the above passage should be compared with that of the Revisers, and the Authorised Version with both. It will be noted that the main differences in J.N.D.'s rendering are indicated by the italics: "*Seventy weeks are apportioned out upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to close the transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make expiation for iniquity, and to bring in the righteousness of the ages, and to seal the vision and prophet, and to anoint the holy of holies.*"

THE OCCASION OF THIS PROPHECY.

The announcement that a period of "seventy weeks" had been prescribed of God in connection with Daniel's people and Daniel's city was made to the prophet by Gabriel in answer to special confession of sins and earnest prayer by Daniel, as recorded in this chapter. We find (1) that the date of the communication of the prophecy to Daniel was in the first year of Darius, the king of the Medes (v. 1); and (2) that the immediate cause of Daniel's abasement and supplication was that the accomplishment of the desolations of

Jerusalem as foretold by Jeremiah was at hand (*v.* 2). Gabriel was sent to the prophet in answer to this supplication (*v.* 23), and the communication which he brought had no assurance of a complete deliverance, but on the other hand contained a direct reference to the continuance of the desolations which had come upon the holy city and the sanctuary because of the transgressions of the people. Briefly, the further period assigned for the fulfilment of these judgments was "seventy weeks."

JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY OF SEVENTY YEARS.

Daniel, in his exile in Babylon, was a student of scripture. The prophecies of Jeremiah were specially sent from Judah to the Jewish people who were carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar (*Jer.* xxix. 1). The word of Jehovah contained in these "books" or rolls was for their particular instruction in respect of the chastisement that had come upon them and the duration of their captivity under that chastisement.

There are two of the prophecies of Jeremiah which have special reference to the extent of Judah's captivity under the king of Babylon. From being the head of the nations, Israel became the tail. When Jehovah abandoned the kingdom of David because of its idolatry, the place of supremacy among the nations was entrusted by Him to Babylon in the first instance. Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold in the symbolic image of his own dreams.

The first of these prophecies declared that the people of Judah and the surrounding nations should serve the king of Babylon for seventy years, and that then Jehovah of hosts would punish the king of Babylon and make his land desolate: "This whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nations, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and I will make it desolate for ever" (*Jer.* xxv. 11, 12).

This prophecy made it clear that at the expiration of seventy years the Babylonian empire would be destroyed, and the servitude of the people of God to that empire would come to an end.

The second prophecy was contained in a letter from Jerusalem by Jeremiah to the elders of the captivity in Babylon, and this also related to their deliverance from bondage in due course. "Thus said the LORD, After seventy years be accomplished for Babylon, I will visit you, and perform My good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (Jer. xxix. 10, R.V.).

This prophecy, as the former, alluded to the tenure of the headship over other nations by Babylon continuing for a term of seventy years, and promised the subsequent restoration of the Jewish captives to their own land.

WHAT WAS DANIEL'S DIFFICULTY?

Daniel was familiar with these prophecies, and no doubt the knowledge of what God had foretold through Jeremiah concerning the downfall of the Babylonian empire after seventy years enabled him to interpret to Belshazzar the significance of the writing on the wall of his palace. At any rate, he did not ask for time to ascertain the interpretation, as in the case of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. ii. 16-19). The meaning of "Peres" was clear to him.

The same night Babylon was captured; Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, was slain (Dan. v. 30, 31); and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom.

Now the displacement of this great empire by the power of the Medes was the appointed sign to the captives of Judah that the time of their deliverance was near at hand. They would in consequence be expecting that Jehovah would return to them and perform His promise. No wonder that Daniel habitually, three times a day, with his windows open towards Jerusalem, gave thanks and made supplication before his God (Dan. vi. 10, 11). This he did in spite of the king's decree to the contrary and the den of lions out of which he was delivered—a typical assurance that the whole people would also be delivered from their captivity to the Gentiles, if they would only be faithful to their God as Daniel was.

But Daniel received other light on the destiny of his people. Prior to the destruction of Babylon, in the first year of Belshazzar, its last king, the prophet had a dream which greatly troubled him (Dan. vii.), and even when the vision was interpreted to him he was still troubled, and like Mary with the words of the shepherds of Bethlehem, and of Jesus in the temple (Luke ii. 19, 51), kept the matter in his heart. Daniel, like every godly Jew, was hoping for the speedy fulfilment of the promises to Abraham and the establishment of Messiah's kingdom. By the vision on this occasion, however, he was instructed that four kingdoms or empires must pass away before the Son of man would set up His kingdom, which should never pass away nor be destroyed (vii. 13, 14, 27).

This dream corresponded in its general import with the dream which came to Nebuchadnezzar in the second year of his reign and which Daniel interpreted to the king (Dan. ii.). The great image of that dream portrayed a succession of four diverse Gentile empires which would ultimately be destroyed and succeeded by the kingdom set up by the God of heaven to stand for ever (ii. 44). Daniel therefore learned this relative order of events (1) at the beginning of the Babylonian supremacy through the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and (2) towards the close of that supremacy, nearly seventy years later, through his own dream in the first year of Belshazzar.

But in the third year of the reign of Belshazzar, a further vision appeared to Daniel, betokening much trouble and oppression for his people from the future Gentile kingdoms. The prophet saw the double-horned ram of Medo-Persia, followed by the rough goat of Greece with bitter persecution of the holy nation and the desecration of the sanctuary. Daniel fainted at the prospect unveiled before him. He was astonished at this vision of further tribulation for his people, and none understood it (viii. 27).

Now the difficulty of the man of God after the fall of Babylon seems to have been to reconcile the prophecy of Jeremiah with the tenor of the various visions. Jeremiah had foretold the restoration of God's favour to the people of Judah on the expiration of the seventy years allotted

to the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar. Now (Dan. ix.) Babylon had fallen, and the supremacy had been assumed by the second world-empire—that of the Medes and Persians. Still Jerusalem was not restored, and, moreover, the second of Daniel's visions (vii.), that of the ram and the he-goat, showed that further desolations would come upon that city under the kingdom that would follow Persia, viz., Greece. Hope deferred makes the heart sick, and the effect of this prospect of prolonged oppression was to cast Daniel into the depths of despondency (viii. 27). But he was not altogether without resource, for he gave himself to the word of God and to prayer.

THE PRAYER OF DANIEL.

Feeling his inability to understand the times of which the Spirit of God had spoken in vision and prophecy, Daniel set his face unto the Lord God to seek instruction therein by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. Earnestly he confessed his sin and that of his people, including in his confession not only the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but also the ten tribes of Israel scattered near and far (Dan. ix. 4-19).

The principal petitions of Daniel on this occasion were :—

- (1) That the anger of the Lord might be turned away from His city, Jerusalem (*v.* 16);
- (2) That the face of the Lord might shine upon His sanctuary which lay desolate (*v.* 17);
- (3) That God would behold the desolations of the people and of the city called by His name (*v.* 18).

While Daniel was speaking in prayer the answer was sent. The sanctuary and altar at Jerusalem had been laid waste, and no sacrifices could be offered to Jehovah, but it was about the time of the evening oblation (*cp.* Ps. cxli. 2) that Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning, touched the suppliant and delivered his message. The commission of the angel was to make Daniel skilful of understanding in things to come.

THE DECREE RELATING TO THE PEOPLE AND THE CITY.

Daniel had besought the Lord to make His face shine upon the desolated sanctuary on Mount Zion and the holy city, Jerusalem. The seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy had now approximately run their course, and the first Gentile empire was overthrown. Was not Babylon to be succeeded by three other empires? How long would their supremacy last, and must the restoration of the nation wait until their rule was past?

These and other points of inquiry were met by the divine communication through Gabriel. This communication consisted of two parts, viz :—

- (1) The announcement in general terms that the God of Israel and the Disposer of times and seasons had apportioned a period of seventy weeks in connection with the nation and the holy city; and
- (2) The subdivision of the period of seventy weeks, with details of future events, before Israel should know the full and final removal of God's desolating judgments (*vv.* 25-27).

The latter part (2) of this prophecy will receive special consideration in separate sections of this paper (Parts II. and III.).

In the first part of this communication, Daniel was instructed briefly what was before his people. In former dreams and visions he had learned much concerning the rise, progress, and end of the four Gentile kingdoms, but now the subject-matter of Gabriel's message directly concerned Israel. The prescribed seventy years of chastisement of Judah and Jerusalem by the first of those kingdoms had passed, but there were still seventy weeks marked off in their future national history, in order—

- (1) To close the transgression;
- (2) To make an end of sins; and
- (3) To make expiation for iniquity; and
- (4) To bring in the righteousness of the ages; and
- (5) To seal the vision and prophet [or, prophecy]; and
- (6) To anoint the holy of holies.

From these words it would be clear to Daniel that much had still to happen to his people before the blessings of the millennial kingdom would be introduced, and before the promises made to the fathers of Israel would have their complete and glorious fulfilment.

Daniel had confessed to God the transgression and sins of himself and his people, but the cup of Israel's iniquity was not yet full. That climax would come about during the seventy weeks in the denial and crucifixion of their Messiah.

Expiation for iniquity could not be made until the soul of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah should be made an offering for sin (Isa. liii. 10).

In the millennial reign, Jehovah will perform His promises to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. He will cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David, who will execute judgment and righteousness in the land. Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely, and her name will be Jehovah our righteousness (Jer. xxxiii. 14-16; xxiii. 5). Then will be brought in the righteousness of the ages.

Vision and prophecy will cease in that day, for all will know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. The revelation of God in His word will be complete, the sufferings of Christ having been finished and His consequent glories accomplished according to the whole prophetic vision.

The anointing of the Holy of holies probably refers to the temple of the coming kingdom on which the glory of Jehovah will descend in a splendour exceeding everything known before. There the precious ointment will run down upon Aaron's beard and to the skirts of his garments. There the dew of Hermon will descend upon the mountains of Zion, when Jehovah commands the blessing of life for evermore (Ps. cxxxiii. 1-3. See also Ezekiel xxxvii. 26-28).

SEVENTY WEEKS OF YEARS.

The opening words of Gabriel to Daniel contained the statement of a definite period of time decreed or divided off, having special relation to the future destinies of the people of Israel. The times of the Gentiles began to run with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the exaltation

of Nebuchadnezzar to the place of supreme rule among the kingdoms of the earth. And Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (Luke xxi. 24). Meanwhile, as Daniel is instructed, a portion of these times is divided off, during which special events will occur in the history of the Jews. "Seventy weeks," the angel said to the prophet, "are decreed upon thy people and upon thy holy city." It will be noted that in these communications Israel is spoken of as Daniel's people, and Jerusalem as Daniel's city, never as the people or city of Jehovah. The people were Lo-ammi, that is, not His people, as Hosea had declared (Hos. i. 9).

We may now inquire briefly what period of time is signified by the term, "seventy weeks." And this inquiry should be prefaced by the explanation that a literal translation of the Hebrew words would be "seventy sevens." When referring to time-periods in the Old Testament, this word "sevens" is usually synonymous with weeks of seven days each. Indeed, this is its general usage, as in Exod. xxxiv. 22; Lev. xii. 5; Num. xxviii. 26; Deut. xvi. 9, 10, 16; 2 Chron. viii. 13; Jer. v. 24. The signification in these cases is clear from the context, as it is also in another place in Daniel (x. 2, 3).

Here, however, a term of seven days is obviously inapplicable. Seventy weeks of seven days each would be about a year and a half in extent only. And we know that the period from the edict to restore Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah (*v.* 25) was far more than this. By the same test, seventy times seven weeks as well as seventy times seven months are found insufficient to reach unto the coming of Messiah the Prince.

It is different, however, when the "sevens" are regarded as sevens of years. So reckoned, the interval is covered. Seventy times seven years is 490 years, and we learn from the context that until the coming of Messiah the Prince is sixty-nine sevens, or 483 years. This period is in accordance with the facts of history, as we hope to point out in more detail in the second part of this paper.

The following quotation may, however, be added to supplement the remarks already made. "Daniel had made in-

quiry about seventy *years* of the captivity in Babylon; the answer speaks also of seventy periods, which in our English translation are called 'weeks'; the word, however, does not necessarily mean seven *days*, but a period of seven parts: of course, it is much more often used in speaking of a week than of anything else, because nothing is so often mentioned as a week which is similarly divided. The Hebrews, however, used a septenary scale as to time, just as habitually as we should reckon by tens; the sabbatical years, the jubilees, all tended to give this thought a permanent place in their minds. The denomination here is to be taken from the subject of Daniel's prayer; he prayed about years; he is answered about periods of seven years, i.e., the recurrence of sabbatical years.

"His prayer had related to the deliverance of Israel from their then captivity; the reply goes much farther; for it sets out, not from the release of the people, but from the edict to restore and to build Jerusalem, and it reaches through events of varied kinds, until the absolute and established blessing on the ground of righteousness and forgiveness is brought in."

THE SEVENTY YEARS OF CHASTISEMENT.

It might prove helpful in this connection to point out the references to the dates covered by the seventy years of chastisement predicted by Jeremiah. This period of penal servitude was distinct from and preceded the "seventy weeks" apportioned to Daniel's people and city. The latter period forms a special section of the "times of the Gentiles," at the conclusion of which the Gentile kingdoms will be overthrown and the full blessings of the new covenant introduced for Israel.

A concise history of the period of this particular chastisement under the Babylonian power is given at the close of the Chronicles. In the brief summary there introduced it is shown that the punishment began with the burning of the house of God and the destruction of the wall of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, who carried captive to Babylon those that escaped his sword. There the captives remained until Babylon itself was overthrown, and the kingdom of Persia

set up. Meanwhile, the land lay desolate, "keeping sabbath" until the seventy years of Jeremiah had passed.

The passage in Chronicles is as follows in J.N.D.'s translation: "All the chiefs of the priests also, and the people, increased their transgressions, according to all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house of Jehovah which He had hallowed in Jerusalem. And Jehovah the God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending; because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked at the messengers of God, and despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the fury of Jehovah rose against His people, and there was no remedy.

"And He brought up [against] them the king of the Chaldees, and slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary and spared not young man nor maiden, old man nor him of hoary head: He gave them all into his hand. And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and the treasures of the king and of his princes, he brought all to Babylon. And they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, and burned all the palaces thereof with fire, and all the precious vessels thereof were given up to destruction. And them that had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they became servants to him and his sons, until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; to fulfil the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath, to fulfil seventy years.

"And in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, and he made a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also in writing, saying, Thus says Cyrus, king of Persia: All kingdoms of the earth has Jehovah the God of the heavens given to me, and He has charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whosoever there is among you of all His people, Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up" (2 Chron. xxxvi. 14-23).

PART II.

"Know therefore and understand: From the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah, the Prince, are seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks. The street and the moat shall be built again, even in troublous times. And after the sixty-two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing" (Dan. ix. 25, 26, J.N.D.'s Trans.).

IN the former part of this paper, dealing with verse 24, we saw that Daniel was first instructed by the angel Gabriel, that a period of time, called seventy weeks (heptads, or hebdomads), had been marked off in the calendar of future history, in which important events bearing upon Daniel's people would occur. The expiration of this period would see the fulfilment of the divinely-founded hopes of the people, an end being made of sins, and everlasting righteousness being established in connection with the kingdom of Israel set up with Jerusalem as its centre. After giving, in this preliminary statement, the general scope of this particular prophecy, the angel added certain details which would serve as landmarks of the highest importance in the understanding of the coming events.

After the introductory statement, three sub-divisions of the period of seventy weeks were enumerated. Gabriel explained that the whole span of this allotted time would consist of the following portions:—

- (1) Seven weeks;
- (2) Threescore and two weeks;
- (3) One week;

making a total of four hundred and ninety years, or seventy heptads.

Regarding this prophetic era of seventy weeks (heptads) as consisting of seventy sevens of years (70 sabbatical years, Exod. xxiii. 10, 11), then the intervening portions would be:

- (1) 49 years;
- (2) 434 years;
- (3) 7 years;

making a total of four hundred and ninety years, corresponding with the seventy heptads (*see also p. 10*).

THE SIXTY-NINE WEEKS.

It is necessary to observe carefully the language used with reference to the sub-divisions specified, since it indicates quite definitely what would be the starting-point from which the years composing the seventy weeks should be counted. Gabriel's words were, "From the going forth of the word to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah, the Prince, are seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks."

Here we find specified what event in the immediate future might be awaited, and its appearance regarded as the beginning of the deliverance of Jerusalem from her state of desolation, concerning which Daniel had set this inquiry afoot (*ver.* 2). That event was to be the issue of a proclamation to restore and to build Jerusalem.

This word or proclamation would come, not directly from Jehovah, but from the Persian monarch. And this circumstance of divine aloofness is in perfect keeping with the then condition of the people who had been cast off by Jehovah on account of their sins. The chosen nation are regarded as Lo-Ammi throughout the book of Daniel. The people are referred to as Daniel's people, not as Jehovah's. The prophetic unfoldings recorded in this book were given to Daniel at Babylon in visions, or communicated through an angel, and not direct from Jehovah, as in the case of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others. And the authority for the restoration of the desolate city would come through the Gentile sovereign, and not as Jehovah's expressed mandate. While God would work for the blessing of Jerusalem and the Jews, He would do so secretly, mediately, and in His providence.

The angel in the course of his message to Daniel first
spoke of a period which would stretch
from
the edict to restore and build Jerusalem
to
Messiah the Prince.

This period was to consist of two unequal parts, viz., "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks." Hence we gather that sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years,

would elapse from the issue of the aforesaid edict unto the coming of the Messiah who was the hope of Israel's nationhood.

It follows, therefore, that this prophetic message giving the date when the Messiah might be expected to appear was as carefully and precisely expressed as the seventy years of the people's servitude to the king of Babylon were stated by Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 11, 12). Daniel and the faithful saints of God who followed him and cherished the words of this prophecy would be enabled to locate its fulfilment with accuracy. As Daniel "understood by books" in the first year of Darius that the close of the seventy years of desolation for Jerusalem was at hand (*ver.* 2), so Simeon, Anna, and others knew from this prophecy of the book of Daniel that the advent of the Messiah was at hand in their day (Luke ii. 25, 36-38).

THE FIRST SEVEN WEEKS.

It is a singular feature of the phraseology of the prophecy that the sixty-nine weeks should be separated into two parts of unequal duration, and that the shorter portion should be named first. Why was the sub-division made in this striking manner? And the following explanation, which is the most easy and natural, is the one that commends itself as being true.

Gabriel declared (1) that the word to rebuild Jerusalem was to be the initial event of this prophetic era, and (2) that seven weeks would follow that event, these weeks being distinguished by this separate mention from the sixty-two that follow and complete the sixty-nine up to Messiah the Prince. It is simple and unforced to conclude that the interval of seven weeks following the word to restore Jerusalem would be the time occupied in fulfilling the word concerning the restoration of that city. They form a special allotment of seven out of the sixty-nine weeks, appropriated for the particular purpose of re-building the city of the Great King.

This information concerning the immediate future of Daniel's city and people would allay his personal anxiety on this account which he had so feelingly expressed in his prayer (Dan. ix. 4-19) to which this message was sent as an

answer. During the first seven weeks (forty-nine years, or seven sabbatical years, *see* Lev. xxv. 8) thus specified, the street of the city and the moat should be built again, though the times would be troublous on account of many adversaries. The work of restoration would be accomplished, but in the face of great difficulties and opposition, as the book of Nehemiah shows.

Thus "we see these seven weeks are singled out that God might give us not merely a history but a prediction of the troubles. The derision, the hatred, the enmity, the endeavours to destroy, the continual intrigues and plottings in and around the land, the efforts to stir up the court of Persia against them, the carelessness of the people, the faults of the princes, the unfaithfulness of the priests—all these things counter-worked, the bitterest and most humiliating of all their sorrows being found among themselves—Daniel's people, not the Gentiles, nor even the Samaritans. Here then we have the prediction, not only the history of it; so much does God think of His people in the day of small things."

THE EDICT TO BUILD JERUSALEM.

A few words may be of service in determining the point of time from which the prophetic period began to run its course. The words of the angel are precise, and refer to the licence or firman relating to the re-building of Jerusalem, which would be issued by the Persian monarch. And our inquiry will be whether Scriptural history contains the record of any such permission.

On examination of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah we discover that three distinct decrees were promulgated by the kings of Persia in connection with the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity to which reference is made by the inspired writers.

(1) The first of these decrees was issued by Cyrus in his first year (B.C. 536), and it authorised the Jews in all parts of his dominions to return to Judah for the building of the house of the LORD God at Jerusalem (Ezra i. 1-3). This decree coincided with the conclusion of the seventy years of the Jews' captivity.

This decree of Cyrus was confirmed about seventeen years later by Darius, the son of Hystaspes, in his second year (Ezra iv. 24). The work of re-building the temple of God, which had in the interval been interrupted by command of an unfriendly king, Artaxerxes (Ezra iv. 19), was resumed seventy years after its destruction (Zech. i. 12), the people being encouraged in this work by the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah. Four years later, in the sixth year of this king (Ezra vi. 15), the house of God was completed and dedicated to the service of God with joy (B.C. 515).

Though sometimes regarded as a separate Persian edict, this decree is a ratification of the original one by Cyrus (Ezra vi. 3), and related to the erection of the temple-buildings only.

(2) The second decree or commandment (Ezra vii. 7-28) was issued by Artaxerxes Longimanus in his seventh year of rule (B.C. 468). In this case the commission was granted to Ezra the scribe, empowering him "to beautify the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem" (Ezra vii. 11-28). Permission was thereby given for the sacrifices to be re-established, for the temple furniture and its services to be restored, and for the people to be taught in the law of God.

Clearly, both these edicts (1 and 2) have reference to the restoration of the temple and the worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem rather than to the city itself. Indeed the Persian policy was to forbid the reconstruction of the city and its walls (Ezra iv. 16). These decrees, therefore, do not correspond with the chronological sign given to Daniel, which was a royal warrant to build and restore Jerusalem.

(3) The third decree was issued a few years later by the same king, and this applied specifically to the building of the city and its defences (B.C. 445). In the twentieth year of his reign (Neh. ii. 1), Artaxerxes gave letters, or warrants, to Nehemiah, authorising him to build the city of his "fathers' sepulchres" (Neh. ii. 5). In this "word" of the Persian monarch was found the appointed indication that the seventy weeks of Daniel were beginning.

A long time had elapsed since the overthrow of Babylon and the consequent release of the people of Israel from servitude to that Gentile empire. The authority of Artaxerxes

(B.C. 445) for the restoration of Jerusalem was granted about ninety years after the prophecy of the seventy weeks, and the commandment of Cyrus to build the temple (B.C. 536), and about seventy years after the dedication of the temple in the reign of Darius (B.C. 515).

Why was there such a considerable interval as this? The answer appears to lie in the lethargy and indifference of the people to the divine claims. We gather from the exhortations of Haggai and Zechariah what was their prevailing spirit. The people said that the time had not come that the house of Jehovah should be built (Hagg. i. 2). Many did not even return from the land of their captivity when permission to do so was given by Cyrus. They had settled down in their place of exile, and were content to remain where they had acquired houses and lands. And when the house of the LORD was dedicated, there seems to have been little regard for the city of their fathers.

But God was gracious in spite of the apathy of His people, and He eventually overruled matters at the seat of the Persian Government so that Nehemiah was appointed Tirshatha or governor in the land of Judah (Neh. v. 14). Nehemiah was entrusted with the work of restoring a measure of civil order in Jerusalem, so that the repatriated Jews might dwell there in safety, even as Ezra had many years previously been commissioned to reinstate the worship of Jehovah in a newly-built temple.

Nehemiah set to work with great energy and organising ability to make the city secure from its enemies, and in fifty-two days the walls were completed (Neh. vi. 15), though the gates were not finished in that time (Neh. vi. 1). The prophecy of the seventy weeks foretold that the interior of the city (the street, or open places; *see* Ezra x. 9; Neh. viii. 1, 3, 16; Zech. viii. 4, 5) and the moat or trench outside the walls would occupy seven heptads or forty-nine years in all. The entire completion of Jerusalem as a habitable city is not recorded in scripture, but the Jews would learn from the prophecy in Daniel that the work of re-building the city would be more expeditious than the reconstruction of the temple, i.e., the anointing of the Holy of holies.

THE THRESCORE AND TWO WEEKS.

The next instalment of time after the seven weeks mentioned by the angel was sixty-two weeks, and this interval would bring the watchers among the people of God to the time of Messiah the Prince: "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." "It cannot be," the Lord Jesus said, "that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem" (Luke xiii. 33). Hence in the counsels of God it was to be that Jerusalem should be re-established as a city of habitations, so that there the promised Prince might come in the fulness of time, and present Himself to the nation as the Son of David.

It will be remarked with what care the Spirit of prophecy indicated by this break (1) the reparation of the city in seven weeks, and then (2) the stretch of a further sixty-two weeks until Messiah came to the place where God had set His name, where, alas, when He offered Himself to the Jews for their reception He would be rejected and slain.

Zechariah, who prophesied soon after this message was sent to Daniel, was full of allusions to the city and its future. In his short book, the name itself, Jerusalem, occurs thirty-nine times. And it was that prophet who foretold in exact terms the formal presentation of Messiah's claims to the people at Jerusalem: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass" (Zech. ix. 9). This was fulfilled, with the exception of the fourth clause which is omitted by Matthew in his quotation (Matt. xxi. 4, 5), with reference to the occasion when the Lord rode into Jerusalem a few days before His crucifixion.

It is further to be noted that the lengthy period named precludes the application of the prophecy to a Persian prince. The term, Messiah, means the anointed one, and it is used in scripture to distinguish those marked out in that manner for the kingly or other office. In one of his prophecies,

Cyrus, king of Persia, is spoken of by Isaiah as the anointed of Jehovah (Isa. xlv. 1). But this instance is an exceptional one, Cyrus being anointed for the special purpose of the subjugation of Babylon, and is mentioned by name. Ordinarily, the Messiahs or anointed ones were those called to rule in Israel, and pre-eminently the term is applied in promise and prophecy to Him who would be anointed by the Spirit of God to be the Prince of Peace.

This number of weeks carried the prophetic period up to the time of the Messiah which is stated generally. It is not specifically stated what exact point of time in the life of the Messiah would be their termination. The sixty-nine weeks might be regarded as extending—

- (1) Unto the date of His birth; or
- (2) Unto the beginning of His public ministry; or
- (3) Unto His presentation to the Jews as the King in Zion.

As, however, this prophecy relates to the Messiah as the Ruler of God's appointing and anointing whom He thus promised to raise up in substitution for the Gentile rulers who held sway over Israel, the last meaning (3) seems most appropriate to the scope of the prediction.

It is undeniable that the Lord was born King of the Jews, as the Magi acknowledged (Matt. ii. 2). After the Lord's baptism in Jordan, Andrew expressly confessed Him as the Messiah (John i. 41). But it was not until the close of His ministry that the Lord definitely presented Himself to Jerusalem and the Jews as the Anointed of Jehovah, and He was then crucified as the King of the Jews (*cp.* Acts x. 37, 38).

It would appear, therefore, though some reckon otherwise, that the sixty-nine weeks extended from the decree to re-build Jerusalem (the twentieth year of Artaxerxes) unto the date of the Lord's public entry into the city of David,

though the latter point of time is not so precisely stated in the prophecy as the former.

MESSIAH CUT OFF.

The next event foretold to Daniel by the angel's word of prophecy was the violent death of the Messiah when He should come at the pre-arranged time. Daniel in his prayer had besought the Lord that His anger and fury might be turned away from His city, Jerusalem, but by this communication he was instructed that the cup of Israel's iniquity was not yet full. He learned that though the city would be restored at the defined date, that work would be executed in troublous times, and, moreover, that though Messiah would also come at the defined date, the sinful hearts of His people would be unchanged, and the blessings of the kingdom could not then be introduced, for the Messiah Himself would be cut off. Gabriel's words were: "And after the threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, and shall have nothing."

The presence of the definite article before the "sixty-two weeks" identifies the period with the one named in the preceding sentence. As this term of years reached on to the Messiah, we must consider them to have been completed in the days of His flesh, and for the reasons already stated, they were completed at the public presentation of Himself as King to the daughter of Zion. Now, it was "after" the expiry of these weeks that Messiah was cut off, and while the prophecy did not state how long afterwards, the date must coincide with His crucifixion and death.

The word, "cut off," used by Gabriel to describe the result of the advent of the Messiah, frequently occurs in a judicial sense. It is employed throughout the Old Testament for the punishment by death of offenders in Israel (*see* Exod. xii. 15, 19, and a number of other passages). This penalty being prescribed by the law of Moses, the Jews pleaded the fact in their hatred of the Lord Jesus, saying to Pilate, "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 7). And as their King, therefore, He was crucified, His title, King of the Jews, being owned only on the cross, and there in derision by a Gentile.

MESSIAH TO HAVE NOTHING.

It will be observed that the phrase which follows in our ordinary version, "but not for Himself," is rendered, with greater correctness and propriety, in the Revised and other versions, "and shall have nothing."

The former phrase implies that Messiah was cut off for others, and suggests a reference to the atoning death of our Lord. But while it is undeniably true that atonement was involved in the death of Christ, there is not sufficient ground for assuming it to be in view in this connection, nor for assigning this sense to the original text.

Here the immediate subject of the prophecy is the reception of the Messiah when He shall come. Strange as it would appear to the prophet sorrowing over the miserable condition of his people, the declaration to him was that when the One anointed to rule should come to the city and people of God, He would be subjected to the death penalty prescribed by the law of Jehovah for civil and religious offenders. Messiah would be cut off, and have nothing.

And historically this was the result after the sixty-two weeks. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. After His crucifixion His very garments were claimed by His executioners, and His sepulchre was another's: He had nothing. It is written that His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth (Psalm lxxii. 8). Yet, in Jerusalem, He found no throne, no temple, no priesthood—nothing that was His by right of inheritance, as the Anointed of the Lord, was accorded to Him by the people of the Jews and their rulers.



PART III.

"And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with an overflow, and unto the end, war—the desolations determined. And he shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and because of the protection of abominations [there shall be] a desolator, even until that the consumption and what is determined shall be poured out upon the desolate" (Dan. ix. 26, 27, J.N.D.'s Trans.).

WE now come to the concluding portion of the prophetic time decreed upon Daniel's people and city. Seven sevens and sixty-two sevens of years extended to the introduction of the Messiah, and His rejection by the people, leaving one seven of years to be fulfilled. To this period the angel next refers.

It should be carefully noted at the outset of this part of the paper that during the whole of the seventy weeks the anomalous condition of the people in Daniel's day would remain. The nation of Israel would be Lo-Ammi throughout, disowned of Jehovah, while the sovereignty of the Gentiles over the Jews would also continue throughout. In conformity with this policy towards the nation the angel calls them, in speaking to Daniel, "thy people," and shews him that the answer to his prayer would be deferred; for the desolation of Jerusalem and the temple of God were to abide until the seventy weeks have expired.

The language of the angel Gabriel is much compressed, and is couched in general terms. There are in consequence some difficulties in the interpretation of the details of this part of the prophecy especially. But it seems clear that the following events are therein foretold to occur after the sixty-nine weeks and the cutting off of the Messiah :—

- (1) The destruction of the city and the sanctuary ;
- (2) A flood of judgments and further desolations up to the end ;
- (3) A Gentile prince will make a treaty with the greater part of the Jews for one week (seven years) ;

- (4) This prince will suppress the Jewish sacrifices in the midst of this week;
- (5) Because of the abominations (idolatries) in Jerusalem a desolator will come;
- (6) Judgments will continue to be poured out upon the desolate (Jerusalem) until the full penalty is paid.

It may be appropriate to make a remark or two in connection with each of these heads.

THE PEOPLE OF THE COMING PRINCE.

(1) The event named to follow first after the cutting off of the Messiah the Prince is a further destruction of the city of Jerusalem and of the holy place by the people of the prince that shall come: "And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." Now we have seen that the starting-point of Daniel's seventy weeks was the Persian edict to restore and to build Jerusalem. It is now revealed that after the sixty-nine weeks Jerusalem would again be destroyed. Nebuchadnezzar was the agent of its first destruction; who would be the agent in the second case?

This the word of the angel answers in precise terms—"the people of the prince that shall come." Who is this prince? Gabriel had previously announced the advent of Messiah the Prince and His untimely death. If Messiah were in view in the second clause, it would imply that the people of Messiah, that is, the Jews would destroy their own city and the sanctuary. This, however, cannot be the meaning, for no scripture even suggests that the Jews will turn against the city of the sepulchres of their fathers. The prince that shall come, therefore, if not the Messiah nor indeed a Jew at all, will be a Gentile prince.

Since this destruction was to occur after the crucifixion of the Messiah, we must conclude that the people of that prince would be of the fourth empire, under whose jurisdiction and by whose civil authority the Lord Jesus was slain. It was indeed an act of righteous retribution that the Romans into whose hands the Jews delivered their Christ to be crucified should come and take away their place and nation

(John xi. 48). The Lord Himself foresaw the imminent doom of the guilty city even as He offered Himself to them as the King of Zion. Weeping at the prospect, He lamented, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke xix. 41-44). The Lord spoke also on a subsequent occasion of the future demolition of the temple (Luke xxi. 5, 6).

The fulfilment of this clause of the prophecy seems to have been when Jerusalem was compassed by the armies of Titus, the Roman general, in A.D. 70, captured by them, and burned. This act is ascribed to the *people* of the coming prince, and not to the prince himself. It is therefore to be understood that the prince is a notable personage yet to come. He will be the head of the Roman empire when it is revived in its last days, and he is spoken of in other parts of the prophetic word under other descriptive titles. For instance, he is the beast whom John saw rising out of the sea (Rev. xiii. 1-10).

Here in Daniel no distinctive features of the prince are mentioned, but it is gathered that he will be eminent as such. He is not himself associated with the sack of Jerusalem, though his people are. As the great head of the Gentile civil power he is a contrast with as well as an enemy to Jesus Christ who is the true Prince of the kings of the earth—the Prince of princes (Rev. i. 5; Dan. viii. 25).

THE END.

(2) The angel spoke of the end, and of what would be the character of the painful experiences of the Jews up to the end. "And the end thereof shall be with an overflow, and unto the end, war,—the desolations determined" or "the determined [portion] of desolations." The end would be with a flood, or overflow, and until the end war would continue and also the desolations, which Daniel hoped might cease in his day.

The end refers to the close of the age which commenced with the supremacy of Nebuchadnezzar and which will go on so long as the Gentile rule remains in the ascendant and Israel is servant to the nations. Daniel, like every godly Jew of his day and of succeeding days, anxiously sought for light upon the termination of this servile condition. So the disciples asked the Lord, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the age? And Jesus answered . . . then shall the end come" (Matt. xxiv. 3-14). And after His resurrection they said, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6). In Daniel the phrase, "the time of the end," recurs noticeably (Dan. viii. 17; xi. 35, 40; xii. 4, 9). The end therefore means the conclusion of that period called elsewhere "the times of the Gentiles."

In the Revised Version we find the reading, "and his end shall be with a flood," making the end to refer to that of the coming prince (*cf.* xi. 45) instead of that of the period. Even if this rendering be accepted, the general result will be unaltered, since the end of the seventy weeks will coincide with the destruction of the Roman prince, the beast who is destroyed with the false prophet by the Lord Himself as the Warrior King from heaven (Rev. xix. 20). But internal considerations appear to favour the translation given by J. N. D.

The end, however, will be accompanied by a flood or an overflow. This is a figure well-known in the prophets, and used to signify overwhelming destruction by invading hostile armies. See, for example, Isaiah viii. 7, 8; x. 22; xxviii. 2, 15; Jer. xlvii. 2; Dan. xi. 22, 26. It may also be allusive to the deluge of Noah's day, when the overflowing flood of waters swept away the corrupt and the ungodly, and thus purified the world that then was. No doubt the overflow or flood mentioned by Gabriel has reference to the invasion of the holy land by the Assyrian, or the king of the north in the last days, and we learn therefore that the final deliverance of the Jews from their troubles will be deferred until this predicted invasion has been accomplished.

Until that time war will continue. This state corresponds with the warning by the Lord of the wars and rumours which

will prevail until the end comes (Matt. xxiv. 3-14). Desolations upon the guilty city will also remain until the end. Their extent and their intensity are, however, fully pre-determined. The uttermost farthing of the great debt of the people must be paid, but nothing beyond this will be exacted from them.

THE COVENANT FOR ONE WEEK.

(3) The outlook indicated in verse 26 was as far as the end of the age and of the seventy weeks. The following verse relates to the final week of the series, immediately preceding the end, as it does. The angel first says, "And he shall confirm a covenant with the many for one week."

Who is the person now mentioned? He confirms a covenant, or in the words of the R.V., makes a firm covenant, with the many. Only two persons are mentioned in this prophecy, viz.: (1) Messiah, the Prince, and (2) the prince whose people destroy Jerusalem. The person named cannot be the Messiah, since we nowhere read that the new covenant which He will introduce for the houses of Israel and Judah will be for one week only. On the contrary, His covenant will be an everlasting one (Jer. xxxi. 31-34; xxxii. 40). The easy natural interpretation of the passage is that the treaty-maker is the prince that shall come, that is, the future prince of the fourth or Roman empire who will grant facilities to the Jews for the re-establishment of their national worship, with protection from their adversaries, the term of this league or covenant to be for one week or for seven years.

This compact is to be made, not with the whole of the Jews, but with "the many," that is, with the majority of the people in contrast with the minority, or the "little flock." Reference to the many as distinct from the remnant of faithful ones is also made in xi. 33 and xii. 3.

It will be observed that the new translations do not support the rendering in the Authorised Version of "the covenant," which has led some to suppose Jeremiah's covenant is meant in the passage.

THE BREAK IN THE CONTINUITY OF THE WEEKS.

From the construction of this prophecy it is clear that an interval exists between the expiration of the sixty-nine weeks and the commencement of the last of the seventy. It ought to be no matter of surprise to us that the crucifixion of

their Messiah by the Jews should be the occasion of a vast disturbance in the calendar of prophecy. Jews and Gentiles being alike guilty, God was pleased to exercise the sovereignty of His grace and call out a people for the heavenly kingdom of His Son. This is proceeding in the present interval of His long-suffering, the consummation of the earthly dispensations being deferred in consequence.

There has therefore been already a period of nearly two thousand years between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week. The delay is due to the awful sin of the Jews, although God has turned even this to account through the preaching of the gospel of His grace. Although deliverance seemed so near at the advent of the Messiah, the mighty work could not be wrought because of the unbelief and animosity of the nation. There was similar delay at the end of the seventy years of Babylon's supremacy when to Daniel deliverance seemed so near (ix. 2). The prophet was shown, however, that there must be postponement of this deliverance on account of the iniquity of the people. Accordingly while under Ezra and Nehemiah the temple was restored and the city rebuilt, the Jews still remained subservient to Gentile rule. They remained too the same stiff-necked and perverse generation; and this unchanged obduracy of the people was again proved when the Day-spring from on high visited them, for they even made use of the lawless hands of the Gentiles to which they themselves were in bondage to secure His crucifixion.

“If the Jews, and Jerusalem in that her day, had repented, all was ready for her re-establishment in glory. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could have been raised up, as Lazarus had been. But she knew not the day of her visitation, and the fulfilling of the seventy weeks, as well as the blessing that should follow had necessarily to be postponed. Through grace we know that God had yet more excellent thoughts and purposes, and that man's state was such that this could not have been, as the event proved.”

There are other instances in scripture of unnamed intervals occurring between events named in juxtaposition. Thus, the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance are mentioned together by Isaiah (Isa. lxi. 2), but only one of the

two is fulfilled (Luke iv. 19-21). So also Peter quotes the verse of the Psalm which states that the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (1 Pet. iii. 12), but he does not add the remainder of the verse which predicts summary vengeance upon them (Ps. xxxiv. 16). The latter clause has yet to be fulfilled.

THE FINAL WEEK.

As the commencement of the seventy weeks was to be marked by the issue of the edict to restore and build Jerusalem, so the commencement of the seventieth week will be marked by the alliance of the Roman prince with the Jews for their help and protection. Both of these acts of the Gentile rulers were outwardly of a friendly character towards the outcast people.

It has been thought by some that this final week will begin its course directly the church is removed at the rapture. If this were so, then the church being caught up to-day, the covenant would be signed with the prince of the revived Roman empire to-morrow. This is not possible, and is inconsistent with the series of preparatory judgments which are foretold in the Apocalypse (Rev. vi. etc.) as preceding the appearance of the beast which emerges from the sea (Rev. xiii.). The seal-judgments have no connexion with the events of Daniel's last week, except so far as they are prefatory to the coming of the head of the resuscitated Western empire. Then at his appearance the unbelieving mass of the Jews will be in their own land with a polity of their own, organized to the extent that they can enter into an agreement with this prince for their own protection. Thus they will resume their subjection to that Gentile power under which they crucified their Messiah, that power which is now non-existent, but which will re-appear for the fulfilment of this prophecy.

There is good ground, therefore, for expecting an interval to occur between the translation of the church and the beginning of Daniel's seventieth week. As there was a transitional and uncounted period between the death of the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem, so there may be a transitional and uncounted period between the rapture and the final week of the desolations of Jerusalem.

THE BREACH OF THE COVENANT.

(4) "And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." The patronage of the Roman prince continues for three and a half years only, then he uses his authority over the Jews to forbid the offering of further sacrifice. From this clause we understand that the people will have returned to their own land and their ancient ritual restored. As these sacrifices will be offered and the feasts kept in unbelief, they will not be acceptable to Jehovah, and the people will in point of fact prepare themselves to receive the abominations of idolatry in a degree never known before, and thus ripen themselves for the unsparing judgments of the Lord.

The covenant with the head of the Roman empire appears to be referred to by the prophet Isaiah as a covenant with death and an agreement with hell (Isa. xxviii. 18). We gather from this prophecy that the covenant will be undertaken by the Jews for political reasons. They are in dread of a threatened incursion into their territory of the northern Assyrian power of that day. They seek therefore the protection of the Roman imperial power against the overflowing scourge, that is, the Eastern nations, who will then be massing against the Western. But the covenant will be disannulled by the Roman Prince, and in concert with Antichrist the nominal worship of God in Palestine will be proscribed, and the abomination of desolation set up in the temple (Dan. xii. 11; Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark xiii. 14).

THE DESOLATOR.

(5) The next clause presents difficulties of translation, although its general significance is undoubted. J. N. D. translated it, "Because of the protection of the abominations [there shall be] a desolator." In the R.V. we have, "Upon the wing of abominations shall come one that maketh desolate."

The original word, translated "overspreading" in the A.V., is so rendered in that place alone. It signifies wing, which is often used figuratively for shelter or protection, such as a bird affords to its young (Ps. xvii. 8; xxxvi. 7; lvii. 1; lxi. 4; lxiii. 7; xci. 4). This, as will be seen, is the sense given to the word by J. N. D.

The translation of the Revisers seems to convey the sense that as a bird is carried on its wings to its destination, so the desolator is brought to Jerusalem because of the abominations. This is true in itself, but perhaps is not the correct turn of the passage.

The abomination will be set up in the temple at Jerusalem under the power of the Roman beast and the Antichrist jointly, and men will be forced into idolatrous worship under the pain of death (Rev. xiii. 15). For idolatry of the very worst type will then be practised in the holy city under the auspices of the Roman prince that shall come and of the Antichrist or the false Messiah, that Jewish prince and prophet whom, coming in his own name, the Jews will accept. Because of this protection of abominations in Jerusalem, there shall be, said Gabriel, a desolator, that is one who makes desolate.

This desolator will be a foreign power used of God as a scourge upon the guilty city. It will be a descendant of an ancient enemy of the people, in the Assyrian king of the north (Dan. xi.), who will attack the "pleasant land" as the executor of the vengeance of God upon Jerusalem and the Jews. Fear of this power drove them three and a half years before to make an alliance with the Roman prince which will prove unavailing. Their "refuge of lies" will be swept away, and the waters will overflow their hiding-place.

It has been suggested that the clause might be translated, "Because of the protection *by* the abominations, there shall be a desolator" instead of, "Because of the protection *of* the abominations, etc."

The interpretation of the passage which has already been given is that on account of the shelter and encouragement of idolatry at Jerusalem by the Jews as the responsible religious power, and by the Romans as a power of civilization, God will send upon them a desolator, that is, another world-power which will inflict desolation upon them, because of their protection of the abominations.

The alternative meaning suggested is that because the Jews will in that day forsake the protection afforded by the Lord God Almighty for that by the abomination, that is, the

wing of Jehovah for the wing of the idol, God will send the desolator upon them. The desolation that will follow will show them how vain a thing it is to trust in the shelter of such a wing.

We invite our readers to consider both suggestions very carefully. Whatever is the exact nature of the sin, the desolator is the executor of God's providential judgment upon that sin.

THE CONSUMMATION.

(6) Again, as at the close of verse 26, the angel refers to the end, to that time to which Daniel with such eagerness looked forward, when the anger and fury of the Lord would be turned away from His city Jerusalem and His holy mountain: "Until the consumption [or, consummation], and what is determined shall be poured out upon the desolate."

The word rendered consumption, or consummation, is used elsewhere to express the execution of Divine judgments to the full. Thus we read in Isaiah, "For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, [only] a remnant of them shall return: the consumption determined shall overflow in righteousness. For a consumption, and [one] determined, will the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, accomplish in the midst of all the land"; "I have heard from the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, a consumption, and [one] determined, upon the whole land" (Isa. x. 22, 23; xxviii. 22; J.N.D.). In Jeremiah the same word is translated "full end" in several passages (Jer. iv. 27; v. 10, 18; xxx. 11; xlii. 28). The meaning of the prophecy is that the avenging judgments executed by the desolator will form the consummation or climax of God's governmental retribution.

At this point, the judgments decreed upon the nation will be entirely exhausted, although the nation itself will not be fully consumed. All that was fore-ordained will then have been poured out upon the desolate, that is, upon Jerusalem (see Isa. xl. 2; lii. 1; liv. 1; lxii. 4).

Then the desolations of Zion will be finished, and that prophecy will be fulfilled which says to her, "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah; for the LORD delighteth in thee" (Isa. lxii. 4).