Albert Barnes' Commentary Daniel 9:24-27 (Focus Vs. 25-27)

In Context – Begin With vs. 24 (KJV):

"Seventy weeks are determined upon 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."

Explanation

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city"

- **Seventy weeks**: This term represents seventy weeks of years, totaling 490 years. This period is fixed by God for specific purposes related to the Jewish people and Jerusalem.
- **Determined**: The term implies being "cut out" or appointed by God for the fulfillment of specific events.

Key Events to be Accomplished

1. **"To finish the transgression"**
    - **Meaning**: This refers to restraining or ending the transgressions of God's people. This includes dealing with the sins they committed and the transgressions that were laid upon the Messiah,

who bore them and made them powerless.
   - **Accomplishment**: The ministry of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the apostles laid significant restraints on sin through their teachings.

2. **“To make an end of sins”**
   - **Meaning**: This signifies putting away and abolishing sins through Christ’s sacrifice. It indicates that sins will be forgiven, and the penalty for them will be removed for those who are covered by Christ’s sacrifice.
   - **Accomplishment**: Christ’s sacrifice on the cross made an end to the guilt and punishment of sin for believers.

3. **“To make reconciliation for iniquity”**
   - **Meaning**: This denotes making atonement for sin. Christ’s death provided the necessary sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and reconcile people to God.
   - **Accomplishment**: Jesus’ death and resurrection achieved reconciliation for humanity’s sins, fulfilling the law and justice of God.

4. **“To bring in everlasting righteousness”**
   - **Meaning**: This refers to the introduction of a lasting righteousness through Christ’s obedience and sacrifice. It is the righteousness that justifies believers and remains effective eternally.
   - **Accomplishment**: Christ brought everlasting righteousness into the world by fulfilling the law perfectly and offering Himself as a sacrifice.

5. **“To seal up the vision and prophecy”**

- **Meaning**: This means to complete and fulfill the visions and prophecies given in the Old Testament. Christ is the fulfillment of these prophecies.
- **Accomplishment**: The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ fulfilled the prophecies and visions concerning the Messiah, making further prophetic revelations unnecessary.

6. **“To anoint the most Holy”**
    - **Meaning**: This can refer to anointing a holy place, holy people, or the Messiah Himself. The term “most Holy” can denote the sanctuary, God’s people, or Christ.
    - **Accomplishment**: Christ, as the “most Holy,” was anointed by the Holy Spirit at His baptism and ascension. He sanctifies His people and prepares a holy place for them.

Focus Vs. 25 (KJV):

“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: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

Explanation

“Know therefore and understand”

- Pay attention and understand the details of the seventy weeks, their starting point, their divisions, and the events to be fulfilled within them.

“from the time of the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem”

- The seventy weeks (490 years) begin with a command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. This command is not the decree by Cyrus in his first year (which was about rebuilding the Temple, not the city) nor the decree by Darius Hystaspes (which also only confirmed Cyrus’ decree about the Temple).
- The decree referred to is likely the one issued in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, which explicitly mentions rebuilding the city’s walls and streets (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

“unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks”

- This period is divided into two parts: 7 weeks (49 years) and 62 weeks (434 years), totaling 69 weeks (483 years).
- This timeframe leads up to the appearance of the Messiah, who is Jesus Christ.

“the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times”

- Jerusalem would be rebuilt, including its streets and walls, during difficult times, which aligns with the period described in Nehemiah.

Additional Points from Barnes’ Commentary

- **Starting Point**: The starting point for the seventy weeks is crucial and is most accurately linked to the decree

in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (455 BC).
- **Duration**: Calculating from this point, the 69 weeks (483 years) bring us to the time of Jesus Christ, specifically around the time of His ministry and crucifixion.
- **Events**: The prophecy accurately predicts significant events, including the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who was "cut off" (crucified) as part of God's redemptive plan.

Interpretation of the Seventy Weeks

- **First 7 Weeks**: The initial period of 49 years is the time during which Jerusalem and its infrastructure were rebuilt.
- **Next 62 Weeks**: The following 434 years lead directly to the appearance of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.
- **Total 69 Weeks**: Together, these periods cover 483 years from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the arrival of the Messiah.

Focus Vs. 26 (KJV):

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."

Explanation

"And after threescore and two weeks"

- This refers to the time after 62 weeks (which, when added to the previous 7 weeks, totals 69 weeks or 483

years).

“shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself”

- The “Messiah” mentioned here is the same as “Messiah the Prince” in Daniel 9:25. This is not referring to Onias the high priest, who was killed unjustly many years before the prophecy’s timeframe. It’s also not referring to Hyrcanus, the high priest killed by Herod, nor King Agrippa, who wasn’t a true king of the Jews and wasn’t killed by Vespasian. Instead, it refers to Jesus, the true Messiah.
- Jesus was to die 483 years after the start of this period, which aligns with His crucifixion around 33 AD. He was “cut off” (killed) not for His own sins, but for the sins of His people, to provide redemption and salvation (refer to Isaiah 53:8).

“and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary”

- This part refers to the Romans, under their leader (or prince) Vespasian, who would come soon after the Messiah’s death. They would destroy Jerusalem and the Temple.
- Some interpretations suggest that “the prince” could also symbolize the Messiah coming in judgment, using the Romans as His instrument. However, most Jewish scholars and many others agree it refers to Vespasian and the Romans.

“and the end thereof shall be with a flood”

- The end of Jerusalem and the Temple will come suddenly and overwhelmingly, like a flood. This symbolizes the

large, powerful, and unstoppable Roman army that would invade and destroy the city.

“and unto the end of the war desolations are determined”

- From the start to the end of the war between the Romans and the Jews, there would be continuous devastation. This is a determined judgment by God for the sins of the people.

Focus Vs. 27 (KJV):

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

Explanation

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week”

- Out of the 70 weeks (490 years), 69 weeks (483 years) have already been accounted for. Now, the angel talks about the last week (7 years).
- This is not referring to the Messiah confirming the covenant of grace, which lasts forever, but rather it refers to the Romans. They made alliances and treaties with many nations (such as the Medes, Parthians, and Armenians) to help them destroy Jerusalem and its temple. This began at the start of this last 7-year period.

“and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”

- During the middle of this 7-year period, the daily Jewish sacrifices and offerings stopped. This happened towards the end of the 3.5 years (middle of the week) when Titus besieged Jerusalem.
- Because of the intense siege, internal conflicts, and lack of resources, the Jews could no longer perform their sacrifices, as noted by the historian Josephus. Since the destruction of the Temple, Jews have not offered sacrifices because they consider it unlawful outside their land.

“and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate”

- The Romans made Judea desolate due to their idolatry and abominations.
- This phrase could mean the Roman army’s ensigns, which had images of their gods and emperors, being set up in the holy place and worshipped, which was a great abomination to the Jews. Or it could refer to the bloodshed by zealots on the Temple battlements, polluting the holy place (as referenced in Matthew 24:15 and Luke 21:20).

“even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate”

- These abominations would remain until the complete destruction of the city and the Temple.
- The desolation would continue until God’s wrath was fully executed on the Jews, a punishment determined by God. This desolation still persists and will until the

"times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled (Luke 21:24).
- Some interpretations suggest that this vengeance will eventually turn against the Romans, the desolators.

Summary

The prophecy in Daniel 9:24 outlines a 490-year period determined by God to achieve significant redemptive purposes for the Jewish people and Jerusalem. These purposes include the end of sin, the establishment of everlasting righteousness, the fulfillment of all visions and prophecies, and the anointing of the Messiah. The prophecy highlights the comprehensive work of Jesus Christ in achieving these goals, thus bringing about God's plan for redemption and reconciliation.

The prophecy in Daniel 9:25 foretells the period from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the coming of Jesus Christ. The decree by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah is considered the starting point, and from this decree, a period of 69 weeks (483 years) leads to the time of Jesus Christ's ministry and crucifixion. This prophecy underscores the precision of the biblical timeline and the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan through Jesus Christ.

Dan. 9:26 passage predicts that after 483 years, the Messiah (Jesus) would be killed for the sins of the people. Following this, the Romans under Vespasian would come and destroy Jerusalem and the Temple, bringing extensive destruction and desolation as a consequence of the Jews' rejection of the Messiah.

In Dan. 9:27, the last 7 years (one week) of Daniel's prophecy began around 63 AD and ended in 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem. This time frame was given due to God's patience, allowing the Jews a chance to repent. However, when they continued to reject His grace, their ruin began and was

completed at the end of this period. This prophecy indicates that the Messiah, Jesus, must have come many hundreds of years ago.

The Jews are aware of the compelling nature of this prophecy. Some rabbis even cursed those who tried to compute the timing, showing their fear of its implications. Rabbi Nehemiah, who lived about 50 years before Christ, stated that the Messiah could not come later than those 50 years. Jewish tradition also indicates that the world is divided into six periods, with the last period from Daniel to the Messiah.

By understanding this, we can see the connection between the prophetic timelines and the events that unfolded in history, affirming that the Messiah, Jesus Christ, came as prophesied and fulfilled the divine timeline established in Daniel’s prophecy.