

DANIEL 9:26: "AND HAVE NOTHING"

Tom's Perspectives

by Thomas Ice

*Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and **have nothing**, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

—Daniel 9:26

About fifteen years ago I did a 25,000-word series over a two-year period on the seventy weeks of Daniel (Dan. 9:24–27).¹ In those essays I took the phrase, "and have nothing" as a reference to the kingdom. "Certainly Christ gained what was intended through His atoning death on the cross as far as paying for the sins of the world," I wrote. "What was it that He came for but did not receive, especially in relationship to Israel and Jerusalem, which is the larger context of this overall passage? It was His Messianic Kingdom! Indeed, it will come, but not at the time in which He was cut off."² My stated view at that time is the standard view of literal interpreters at that time, and still is today. Many have stated this view over the years.³

Arno Gaebelein stated the kingdom view when he says: "We believe it means that He did not receive then the Messianic kingdom. He was rejected by His own and received not that which belongs to Him."⁴ I agree with the overall concept regarding the fact that at the end of the seventieth week of years (also known as the seven-year tribulation), Jesus Christ, the Messiah will return and set up His kingdom. However, I also believe one should find in the passage itself a prior reference to which the phrase "and have nothing" refers. The Kingdom is not specifically mentioned and is an idea that must be imported into this passage.

AND HAVE NOTHING

Charles Ray points out: "The term 'have nothing' can be literally rendered 'and (or 'but') not to (or 'for') him."⁵ The King James rendered the phrase "but not for himself," which is not an acceptable translation as recognized by virtually all Hebrew scholars and more recent translations. Stephen Miller explains: "'And will have nothing' (similar to NASB, NRSV) is a translation of the Hebrew *we'en lo*, which could be rendered literally 'and [but] not to [for] him' . . . or 'and [but] nothing to [for] him.' The KJV's translation would signify that Christ's death was for others, which is certainly a scriptural truth. But the phrase *'en le* is in Hebrew an idiom for 'not have' (cf. Gen 11:30; Isa 27:4). . . . Thus when Christ died, his earthly ministry seemed to have been in vain. His disciples had deserted him, and from all appearances he had not accomplished what he had set out to do."⁶

After I wrote the 25,000-word essay on the seventy weeks of Daniel, I read and graded about a thousand papers by students while a professor at Liberty University on the topic of the seventy weeks in a Daniel/Revelation class. As I read and graded these papers I began to think about the phrase "and have nothing" and what it refers to. Somewhere in that process I realized it referred back to verse 24 and the six infinitival purpose clauses that would be fulfilled by the end of the seventy weeks of years. While I agree "and have nothing" includes a reference to the kingdom, however, I also believe it must grammatically refer to something in its context. This is why I think "and have nothing" should be understood as referring back to verse 24.

“Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy *place*” (Dan. 9:24). When I first started studying this passage I thought the first three items in verse 24 were fulfilled at Christ’s first coming and the last three will be fulfilled at His second coming. This view is wrong! None of the purpose clauses have yet been fulfilled, especially if “and have nothing” refers back to verse 24. A brief summary of the six purpose clauses is as follows: 1) “to finish the transgression” relates to national Israel’s apostasy of unbelief, especially in relation to Jesus as their Messiah. This will be fulfilled at the second coming. 2) “To make an end of sin” speaks of the removal of Israel’s sins at the second coming. 3) “To make atonement for iniquity” is the picture of Israel’s pro-active rebellion against the Lord and this will be accomplished at the second coming as well in relation to national Israel. 4) “To bring in everlasting righteousness” is a reference to the millennial kingdom that will be brought to pass at the second coming as well by Jesus the Messiah. 5) “To seal up vision and prophecy,” means all of the unfulfilled prophecy relating to the nation of Israel will have been brought to pass by the time of the completion of the seventy weeks of years. 6) “To anoint the most holy *place*” addresses the initiation of the millennial sacrifices that begin at the start of the millennium. None of these have yet been fulfilled and await future fulfillment at Christ’s return.

One scholar notes concerning the phrase: “As an expression of existence it is unexpected. A more likely understanding is that expressed in most English translations, as an idiom of possession. The problem there, though, is that such an expression normally has an object of possession, and there is apparently none present in v. 26.”⁷ This phrase should have an antecedent according to Hebrew grammar. While grading the hundreds of papers on Daniel 9:24–27, I came up with the thought that the phrase “and have nothing” must have an antecedent to which it refers in the actual text of the passage, not just the kingdom idea which most conservatives import into the text. As I looked for the referent it became clear that it has to refer to the six purpose clauses in verse 24. I have never seen a commentary thus far that takes my view, although a few have come close. John Walvoord said, “Nothing that rightly belonged to Him as Messiah the Prince was given to Him at that time. He had not come into His full reward nor the exercise of His regal authority.”⁸ William Kelly declares, “The week terminates in full blessing; but the Jews are meanwhile rejected for their sin against their own Messiah.”⁹ But none of the interpreters within our futurist camp connect the phrase “and have nothing” back specifically to verse 24.

CONCLUSION

It appears to me the crux of this passage is saying that after the completion of the first sixty-nine weeks of years ($7 + 62 = 69$) the Messiah (Jesus) would be cut off or killed. That 483-year period ended exactly on Palm Sunday, also known as the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem (March 30, A.D. 33). The day after that event took place the interval or gap of time between the sixty-ninth week of years and the seventieth week of years began. Four days later Jesus the Messiah was cut off or crucified (April 3, A.D. 33), which fits the statement: “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off . . .” This passage provides one of the many reasons why Jesus of Nazareth must be the promised Jewish Messiah. Jesus showed up in Jerusalem and presented Himself as Israel’s prophesied Messiah on the very day this prophecy in Daniel predicted He would. Jesus’ death took place just four days after the completion

of the first sixty-nine weeks of years, during the early part of the gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth week of years.

The significance of the next phrase “and have nothing,” as I have been pointing out refers to verse 24. Verse 24 says very clearly that at the end of the seventy weeks of years those six purpose statements will have been fulfilled in history in relation to Israel and Jerusalem. The point of the first part of verse 26 is that sixty-nine of the seventy weeks of years will have passed and not only had none of the six items of verse 24 not been fulfilled, but the Messiah was cut off and had nothing, with only a single week of years to go. I always like to say, “God may be slow but He is never late.” This is the point! Thus, the seventieth week of years will be postponed, and it has been almost 2,000 years and the final week of years has yet to take place. But it will be fulfilled right on time, because the first sixty-nine weeks of years were literally fulfilled. Maranatha!

¹ Thomas Ice, “The Seventy Weeks of Daniel” at <http://www.pre-trib.org/data/pdf/Ice-TheSeventyWeeksofDani.pdf>.

² Ice, “The Seventy Weeks,” p. 26.

³ For example note the following: Charles Lee Feinberg, *Daniel: The man and his visions* (Chappaqua, NY: Christian Herald Books, 1981), p. 132. J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel” in John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1985), p. 1364. Robert Culver, *Daniel and the Latter Days* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), pp. 156–59. Clarence Larkin, *The Book of Daniel* (Philadelphia: Erwin W. Moyer Co., 1929), p. 207. Harry Bultema, *Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1988), p. 287. S. P. Tregelles, *Remarks on the Prophetic Visions in the Book of Daniel* (London: The Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony, 1965), p. 103. Paul Benware, *Commentary: Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come* (Clifton, TX: Scofield Ministries, 2007), p. 205. G. H. Pember, *The Great Prophecies of the Centuries Concerning Israel and the Gentiles* (Miami Springs, FL: Conley & Schoettle Publishing, 1984 [1909]), p. 344. Stephen Miller, *Daniel*, Vol. 18 of *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), p. 267–68.

⁴ Arno C. Gaebelein, *The Prophet Daniel: A Key to the Visions and Prophecies of the Book of Daniel* (New York: Publication Office “Our Hope,” 1911), p. 141.

⁵ Charles H. Ray, “A Study of Daniel 9:24–27,” Part III, *Conservative Theological Journal* (Vol. 6, No. 17; March 2002), p. 77.

⁶ Miller, *Daniel*, p. 267.

⁷ Tim Meadowcroft, “Exploring the Dismal Swamp: The Identity of the Anointed on in Daniel 9:24–27,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, (Vol. 120, No. 1; 2001), pp. 445–446.

⁸ John F. Walvoord, *Daniel: The Key to Prophetic Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971), p. 230.

⁹ William Kelly, *Lectures on Daniel*, 3rd edition (Oak Park, IL: Bible Truth Publishers, n.d.), p. 182.