

Dr. Wendy Widder, Daniel, Session 15, Views on the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:20-27) Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Widder, Daniel, Session 15, Views on the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:20-27), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on Daniel 9:20-27 explores various perspectives on the interpretation of the "70 weeks" prophecy. The lecture examines different views, including the Maccabean/Antiochian view, the Roman/historic messianic view, and eschatological views (symbolic and interval). **These differing views hinge on the starting point of the 70 weeks, the identity of the anointed ones (including whether the figures refer to Jesus), and the nature of the 70th week.** Some interpretations see historical fulfillment, while others anticipate future events like the Tribulation. **Widder also identifies commentators associated with each perspective**, noting nuances and variations within each viewpoint. Finally, the lecture contrasts views that are messianic with those that are not and identifies those that are typological.

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Widder, Daniel, Session 15 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Daniel).



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3. Briefing Document: Widder, Daniel, Session 15, Views on the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:20-27)

Okay, here is a briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on Daniel 9:20-27 and the various interpretations of the 70 weeks prophecy:

Briefing Document: Perspectives on Daniel's 70 Weeks Prophecy

Introduction: This document summarizes Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on the different perspectives regarding the interpretation of the "70 weeks" prophecy found in Daniel 9:20-27. Dr. Widder presents a framework for understanding these diverse views, highlighting the key issues that lead to varying conclusions. She emphasizes that there is no single, universally agreed-upon interpretation.

Key Issues in Interpreting the 70 Weeks: Dr. Widder identifies several critical issues that shape one's understanding of the 70 weeks prophecy. These are:

1. **The "Word" that Went Out:** What is the specific decree or prophecy that initiates the 70-week period? Possible answers include:
 - Jeremiah's prophecies of return from exile (605 or 586 BC).
 - Cyrus' decree allowing return from exile (539 BC).
 - Decrees from Darius I, Artaxerxes I (various dates).
1. **Identity of the First "Anointed One" (Messiah the Prince):** Who is the first Messiah mentioned in the prophecy? Potential candidates include:
 - Cyrus
 - Zerubbabel
 - Joshua the High Priest
 - Jesus
1. **Interpretation of the "62 Weeks":** How should the 62 weeks be read in relation to the preceding 7 weeks?
 - As a separate period of 62 weeks
 - As part of an uninterrupted 69 week period (62+7)

1. **Identity of the Second "Anointed One" (The one who is cut off):** Who is the second anointed one, who is cut off?
 - Onias III
 - Jesus
 - Antichrist
1. **The Covenant Maker of the "One Week":** Who is the individual making a covenant during the final "one week"?
 - Antiochus IV
 - Jesus
 - Antichrist
1. **Fulfillment of the 70th Week:** When is the 70th week completed and fulfilled?
 - Historical completion within the 2nd century BC or 1st century AD
 - Awaiting future fulfillment during a tribulation period.
 - Some see a gap in this final week.

Overview of Major Interpretive Views:

Dr. Widder outlines four main interpretive approaches to Daniel's 70 weeks prophecy:

1. **The Maccabean (or Antiochian) View:**
 - **Nature:** Historical; Sees the entire prophecy fulfilled during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (2nd century BC).
 - **"Word":** A prophecy of Jeremiah regarding the return from exile (605 or 586 BC).
 - **First Anointed One:** Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua.
 - **62 Weeks:** From 539-538 BC to 170 BC, 367 years total.
 - **Second Anointed One:** Onias III, who was assassinated.
 - **Covenant Maker:** Antiochus IV who makes a covenant with apostate Jews.
 - **70th Week:** The persecution by Antiochus (171-164 BC)

- **Commentators:** John Collins, Carol Newsome, and generally most non-evangelical scholars, along with some evangelical scholars (such as Widder herself, John Goldingay) who see it typologically.
- **Quote:** *"This is generally the critical view... It's all been fulfilled during the 2nd century BC."*

1. The Roman (or Historic Messianic) View:

- **Nature:** Historical and Messianic; Fulfillment occurs in history, and at least one of the "anointed ones" is Jesus.
- **"Word":** One of the four Persian decrees to rebuild Jerusalem (Cyrus, Darius I, or Artaxerxes).
- **First Anointed One:** Jesus
- **62 Weeks:** Read as part of the 69 week period beginning with the decree to rebuild.
- **Second Anointed One:** Jesus, who is cut off.
- **Covenant Maker:** Jesus, making the new covenant.
- **70th Week:** Culminates with the destruction of the temple by the Romans (70 AD).
- **Commentators:** Joyce Baldwin, modified, and some say Young; although these commentators often include additional typological fulfillment.
- **Quote:** *"It's historic, historical in that it's all fulfilled. It's messianic in that Jesus is one of the anointed ones."*

1. Eschatological Views: Symbolic

- **Nature:** These view see fulfillment entirely in the future.
- **Variant 1:"Word":** Cyrus's Decree (539 BC).
- **First Anointed One:** Jesus.
- **62 Weeks:** Jesus. The rest of the time is the Church Age, followed by the Tribulation.
- **Second Anointed One:** Jesus, during the Tribulation.
- **Covenant Maker:** Antichrist, with national Israel.

- **70th Week:** The Tribulation and is symbolic.
- **Commentators:** Dr. Widder could not find a commentator with this exact interpretation.
- **Variant 2:"Word":** Jeremiah's prophetic word (597 or 594 BC).
- **First Anointed One:** Cyrus.
- **62 Weeks:** An indefinite time from Cyrus until the end of time.
- **Second Anointed One:** Antichrist.
- **Covenant Maker:** Antichrist
- **70th Week:** The Tribulation.
- **Commentators:** Thomas McComiskey.
- **Quote:** *"This view, even though it's eschatological and it's awaiting fulfillment, it's not considered messianic because Jesus is neither one of the anointed ones."*

1. Eschatological Views: Interval

- **Nature:** Eschatological and Messianic; Fulfillment is primarily in the future, involving a gap in the 70th week.
- **"Word":** One of Artaxerxes' decrees (458 or 445 BC).
- **First Anointed One:** Jesus.
- **62 Weeks:** Read as part of a single 69 week period ending with Jesus' Triumphal Entry.
- **Second Anointed One:** Jesus' crucifixion.
- **Covenant Maker:** Antichrist, during the tribulation.
- **70th Week:** The Tribulation. A significant gap exists between Jesus' crucifixion and the beginning of the Tribulation.
- **Commentators:** Stephen Miller (NAC commentary).
- **Quote:** *"This view is pretty typical of the dispensational view."*

Additional Notes:

- **Prophetic Years:** Some interpretations consider "prophetic years" which are shorter than traditional years.

- **Typological Fulfillment:** Some scholars, while holding to a historical fulfillment, also see typological patterns that have implications for the future.
- **Ambiguity:** Dr. Widder emphasizes that the text is ambiguous, and the differing views often arise from trying to make sense of the text's difficult syntax, context, and the many unknowns related to prophecy.
- **Multiple Issues:** The interpretation of the 70 weeks relies on resolving multiple issues, and variations within each view exist.
- **Complexity:** The 70 weeks prophecy is a complex topic with a wide array of interpretations. Further in-depth study is encouraged for those interested.

Conclusion: Dr. Widder's lecture underscores the diverse perspectives on the 70 weeks of Daniel. By framing these viewpoints based on how the issues are addressed, it clarifies the source of the differences, and allows for informed analysis. No single view is universally accepted, and each view has varying strengths and weaknesses based on how one understands the key interpretive issues.

4. Study Guide: Widder, Daniel, Session 15, Views on the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:20-27)

Daniel 9:20-27: Perspectives on the 70 Weeks Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What are the five key issues in interpreting the 70 weeks of Daniel, according to Dr. Widder?
2. According to the Maccabean view, when did the "word" go out, and who is the first anointed one?
3. What does the Roman (historic messianic) view identify as the "word that went out," and how does it treat the 62 weeks?
4. How do the eschatological views differ from the historical views when interpreting Daniel's prophecy of 70 weeks?
5. What is a key difference between the two eschatological views presented: Symbolic and Interval?
6. In the symbolic eschatological view, who is the second "anointed one," and who makes the covenant in the 70th week?
7. How does the second symbolic view interpret the 62 weeks in relation to Cyrus and the end of time?
8. According to the interval view, what event concludes the 69 weeks, and who is cut off?
9. According to Dr. Widder, what is a "prophetic year" and why is it relevant to the study of Daniel 9?
10. Which of the four views presented is considered non-messianic, and why?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The five key issues are: the "word that went out" and its timing, the identity of the first anointed one, how to read the 62 weeks, the identity of the second anointed one, the identity of the covenant maker of the 70th week, and when the 70th week is completed.

2. The Maccabean view sees the "word" going out in either 605 or 586 BC (Jeremiah's prophecy) and identifies the first anointed one as either Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua, figures associated with the return from exile.
3. The Roman view identifies the "word" as one of the Persian decrees to rebuild Jerusalem. It treats the 62 and 7 weeks as one unit (69 weeks) leading up to a point in the life of Jesus.
4. The historical views (Maccabean and Roman) see the prophecy as having been fulfilled in the past. The eschatological views see the prophecy as being yet unfulfilled, casting the fulfillment into the future.
5. The Symbolic view interprets the 70 weeks as symbolic, not necessarily requiring an exact 490-year timeline. The Interval view sees a significant gap in the 70th week, generally after the 69 weeks have been completed, but before the tribulation.
6. In the symbolic eschatological view, the second "anointed one" is Jesus during the Tribulation, and the covenant maker in the 70th week is Antichrist, who makes a covenant with national Israel.
7. The second symbolic view interprets the 62 weeks as an indefinite time period starting with Cyrus and continuing to the end of time, with the remaining events awaiting future fulfillment.
8. According to the interval view, the 69 weeks conclude with the triumphal entry of Jesus, and Jesus is the Messiah who is cut off.
9. A "prophetic year," as used in some interpretations, is a year of a different length than a traditional year, a concept used by some to make the 490 years of Daniel's prophecy fit more precisely within historical timelines.
10. The second symbolic view is considered non-messianic because Jesus is not identified as either of the anointed ones; rather, the anointed ones are Cyrus and Antichrist.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Answer each question in a well-developed essay format. Do not answer the questions below, but rather, practice formulating answers.

1. Compare and contrast the Maccabean and Roman views on the fulfillment of the 70 weeks prophecy in Daniel 9:20-27. Discuss the historical and interpretive differences that lead to their distinct conclusions.
2. Analyze the role of the "anointed one(s)" in each of the four interpretive views presented by Dr. Widder, focusing on how these views identify who the anointed ones are and the significance of those individuals in each view.
3. Discuss the implications of the "gap" concept in the interval eschatological view. How does the presence of this gap affect the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy, and what are the theological consequences of such an interpretation?
4. Explore the relationship between the historical views (Maccabean and Roman) and typological interpretation. How do some scholars integrate typology into historical readings of Daniel 9, and what does this approach contribute to their understanding of the text?
5. Examine the various ways different views interpret the 70th week of Daniel, including the events, characters, and timelines involved in the interpretations. How do these different interpretations impact understandings of biblical eschatology?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Anointed One (Messiah):** A title given to individuals who were consecrated or chosen by God for a special purpose. In Daniel 9, it specifically refers to figures associated with significant historical and prophetic roles.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times or the ultimate destiny of humanity and the world, often involving a focus on future prophecies and events.
- **Historic Messianic View (Roman View):** An interpretation of Daniel's 70 weeks that sees the prophecy as fulfilled in historical events surrounding the life, death, and ministry of Jesus Christ, and the destruction of the temple in 70 AD.
- **Maccabean View (Antiochian View):** An interpretation of Daniel's 70 weeks that sees the prophecy fulfilled during the 2nd century BC, in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabean revolt.
- **Prophetic Year:** A concept suggesting a year of different length than a literal, solar year, sometimes used in interpreting prophetic timelines, particularly in Daniel and Revelation.
- **Typological Interpretation:** A method of biblical interpretation where people, events, or things in the Old Testament are seen as foreshadowing or prefiguring those in the New Testament or later history.
- **Tribulation:** A period of great suffering and hardship, often associated with the end times, frequently referred to in the eschatological interpretations of Daniel's prophecy.
- **Covenant:** A formal agreement or relationship, often between God and humanity. In the context of Daniel 9, it refers to agreements made by key figures within the 70-week timeline.
- **Dispensationalism:** A theological system that divides history into different periods or "dispensations" in which God relates to humanity in distinct ways, often informing the interval eschatological view of Daniel 9.
- **Hellenization:** The spread of Greek culture, language, and customs to other areas, particularly during the Hellenistic period. This is relevant to the Maccabean view as this view ties the prophecy with the events under Antiochus IV.

5. FAQs on Widder, Daniel, Session 15, Views on the Seventy Weeks (Dan. 9:20-27), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions About the 70 Weeks Prophecy in Daniel 9:20-27

1. **What are the primary issues that scholars debate when interpreting the 70 weeks prophecy in Daniel?** The major issues include: the starting point of the 70 weeks (the "word that went out"); the identity of the first "anointed one" or Messiah; how to interpret the 62 weeks (whether to add it to the initial 7 weeks); the identity of the second "anointed one" who is "cut off"; the identity of the covenant maker in verse 27; and the timing and fulfillment of the 70th week (whether it's a continuous period or contains a gap).
2. **What is the "Maccabean" or "Antiochian" view of the 70 weeks, and who typically holds it?** This historical view posits that the entire prophecy was fulfilled in the 2nd century BC during the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. The "word that went out" is associated with Jeremiah's prophecies about the return from exile. The first "anointed one" is one of the figures involved in the return from exile (Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua). The second is Onias III. The covenant maker is Antiochus IV and the 70th week refers to his persecution of the Jews culminating in the Maccabean revolt. This view is common among critical scholars, as well as some evangelical scholars who see a typological pattern extending beyond the historical fulfillment.
3. **What is the "Roman" or "historic messianic" view of the 70 weeks, and how does it differ from the Maccabean view?** This historical view understands the "word that went out" to be one of the Persian decrees to rebuild Jerusalem. It identifies Jesus as the first "anointed one," and the one who is "cut off." It reads the 62 and 7 weeks together as 69, fulfilled up to the time of Jesus's life. The 70th week is associated with the Roman destruction of the temple in 70 AD. This view, unlike the Maccabean view, sees at least one (if not both) anointed ones as Jesus.

4. **What is the difference between the "symbolic" and the "interval" views of the 70 weeks, and how do these differ from historic views?** Both the "symbolic" and "interval" views are eschatological, placing the primary fulfillment of the 70 weeks in the future rather than the past. The "symbolic" view sees the numerical values of the weeks as symbolic and not necessarily literal, with fulfillments associated with the Tribulation and figures like the Antichrist. The "interval" view, while still future-oriented, maintains a more literal reading of the time periods but posits a gap in the 70th week between the death of Messiah and the Tribulation, and often uses "prophetic years" which differ from standard years to make the math work. These contrast with the historical views which see a full historical fulfillment.
5. **How do the different views identify the "covenant maker" of the 70th week?** The Maccabean view identifies the covenant maker as Antiochus IV. The Roman view identifies it as Jesus establishing a new covenant. Some symbolic and interval views see this figure as the Antichrist, making a covenant with Israel, particularly during the Tribulation.
6. **How do different views deal with the 70th week and the "gap" concept?** Some views, like the Maccabean and Roman view, treat the 70th week as a continuous period of fulfillment tied to specific historical events, or fulfilled by 70 AD. However, some interval views interpret the 70th week as discontinuous, featuring a gap between the 69th week which ends with Jesus and the events of the 70th week occurring during a future period of tribulation.
7. **What does the term "messianic" mean in the context of interpreting the 70 weeks?** In this context, "messianic" refers to views that see at least one, and often both, of the "anointed ones" mentioned in Daniel 9:20-27 as being Jesus Christ. If no anointed one is Jesus, then the view is non-messianic.
8. **Why is it so difficult to agree on a single interpretation of the 70 weeks?** The difficulty stems from several factors including: ambiguous language and syntax, different ideas about how to calculate the time periods and relate them to specific historical events, differing assumptions about the literal vs. symbolic nature of prophecy, and varied understandings of how prophecy is fulfilled (e.g., single fulfillment vs. typology). The text offers several interpretative choices about historical referents which leads to the diverse perspectives.