

## **Bible Gaps** (In the Fulfillment of God's Purposes)

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When studying Bible prophecy, one cannot overlook the fact there are gaps of time portrayed in Scripture, where two events are mentioned together, side by side, which are actually separated in relationship to their time fulfillment. Understanding these gaps of time and how they relate to God's dispensational and prophetic program is very important. In this study, we want to give an overview of these gaps of time, so we can better understand God's Word, as it unveils periods of time that exist between God's plan of the ages.

### **The Biblical Usage of Gaps**

Alva McClain comments on these gaps of time:

"Here we are faced with one of the characteristics of prophetic passages: events which appear side-by-side in the text can often be separated by long ages. This occurs because the prophetic vision has two characteristics which we need to be aware of. *First*, the prophets were only shown important highlights of the final development (1Pe. 1:10-11). *Second*, the full range of history was often collapsed in their view, much as when looking through a telescope. Somewhat as a picture lacks the dimension of depth, the prophecy often lacks the dimension of time: events appear together on the screen of prophecy which in their fulfillment may be widely separated in time."

There are numerous examples of this phenomenon of gaps. The First and Second Coming of Christ are juxtaposed in numerous passages (Isa. 9:6-7; 61:1-2; Zec. 9:9-10; Mal. 3:1-2; 4:5-6; Luke 4:17-19). Yet history has shown these events to be separated by at least 1900 years. The first and second resurrections are juxtaposed (Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29), yet they are separated by no less than 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4-6). It's these gaps and others that we want to investigate within this study.

## The Gap Between Christ's Two Comings

It's not unusual for Bible prophecies to contain gaps of time. In Isaiah 9:6 we read this about the Messiah:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

In this dual prophecy we see references to Christ's first and Second Coming all in the same verse. The prophecy starts with Christ's birth and ends with Christ's kingdom.

Zechariah 9:9-10

“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, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* from sea *even* to sea, and from river *even* to the ends of the earth.”

In this dual prophecy we see references to Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem and to His Second Coming to establish His Millennial Kingdom within the framework of the same verses. Everyone will agree that there are gaps of time between these prophetic events. These two events have a great parenthesis of time existing between them. It's not unusual for prophecies to leap through the centuries of time giving the reader the understanding that there are gaps of time between the two events and their fulfillment.

In Luke 4:16-21, we have Jesus reading in the synagogue at Nazareth. He quotes from Isaiah 61:1-2. It's of great importance and significance that Jesus did not quote the entire part of verse Isaiah 61:2. Isaiah 61:2 contains truth about Christ's first and Second Advent. In His first coming, Christ demonstrated His grace and mercy in His death on the cross. In His Second Coming to earth, He will show forth His vengeance. Isaiah 61:2 and the Lord's separation of

the two advents in Luke 4:16-21 indicates that there is a gap of time which exists between His grace and time of vengeance. How amazing it is! Jesus stopped at a comma to indicate there was a gap of time between His first and Second Coming. The point is this. The Bible does speak about gaps of time. The prophecies which leap from Christ's first and Second coming portray prophetic gaps of time between the two fulfillments of prophecy. Therefore, it's not out of the question to discover other prophetic gaps of time in certain key passages of the Bible that are related to prophecy.

### **The Gap Between the Two Resurrections**

According to Old Testament revelation God's resurrection program seems to consist of one general resurrection at Christ's Second Coming to earth.

Daniel 12:2

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Jesus picked up on this same general resurrection concept in John 5:28-29.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

Daniel and Jesus taught the universality of the resurrection program in connection with both saved and unsaved people in relationship to the End Times. The time designation of an "hour" does not refer to twenty-four hours in this context. Instead, it's an expression of time that is used in connection with some specific prophetic events. Elsewhere the Bible speaks of "the day of Christ" (Rapture - Phil. 1:6, 10), "the day of the Lord" (Tribulation Period - 1 Thess. 5:2), "and the day of God" (2 Pet. 3:12 - eternal state) as extended periods of prophetic time. The point is this; at God's appropriate prophetic times all (both saved and unsaved) will be raised and enter their eternal state in either Heaven or hell. The Old Testament clearly taught

physical or bodily resurrection. If a person were left with only the Old Testament revelation regarding resurrection, they would conclude there is only one resurrection event of both the saved and unsaved, which will occur simultaneously on the last day (John 11:24). However, the progressive revelation of New Testament Scripture actually reveals there are actually two resurrections separated by one thousand years. Hence, there is a gap of time between the first and second resurrection.

#### Revelation 20:4-5

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

The New Testament in Revelation 20:4-5 clearly teaches two resurrections that are separated by 1,000 years. The first group of regenerated saints is raised before the 1,000 years (vs. 4) and the second group of unsaved people is raised after the 1,000 years has expired (vs. 5). It's very clear that the first resurrection is speaking of the physical resurrection of the saved to enter the Millennium and not some kind of spiritual resurrection as Amillennialism contends.

Alva McClain observes:

“If the people involved were beheaded physically, and then lived again, common sense would suggest that they received back the same category of life that had been lost.”

When studying the New Testament Scriptures, we discover the two resurrections that both Daniel and Jesus spoke about in relationship to the End Times are actually two resurrections which are separated by one thousand years. We also discover in the New Testament epistles that a *secret* resurrection (secret from the standpoint of prophetic revelation) will occur which has not been previously revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:52-57). This resurrection will take place in connection with the Rapture of the

Church which Jesus predicted in John 14:1-2. There are gaps of time between God's resurrection programs. The New Testament teaches that people will be raised in their own order and not at the same time (1 Cor. 15:23).

### **The Gap Between The Old and Resurrected Roman Empires**

Daniel 2:41-42

“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.”

In Daniel 2 there is a "time gap" between the old Roman Empire and the "Revived Roman Empire" in its 10 toe Stage. The ten toe Stage has no historical counterpart and can only be explained as a yet to be fulfilled prophecy. Daniel was prophetically unveiling the progression of world empires that would dominate the world scene. He starts with Babylon (Dan. 2:38), Medo-Persian Empire (Dan. 2:39a). Grecian Empire (Dan. 2:39b) and then the historical Roman Empire (Dan. 2:40). However, without giving any indication that he is leaping through the centuries to the End Times, Daniel envisions another form of the Roman Empire that would reemerge on the world scene and identifies it as “ten toes” (vv. 41-42).

Daniel's dream revealed a human form of an image, since this is true the image would necessarily have ten toes. Also, since the feet and toes were part of the representation of the fourth Roman kingdom, they portray the Roman Empire in its final stage of existence in contrast with the earlier iron leg state (vs. 40). Daniel later identifies these toes as kings that would arise on the world scene, control the world economically and politically, and be destroyed by Jesus Christ at His Second Coming (vs. 44).

Since the historical Roman Empire never existed in this ten-toe stage, Daniel's prophecy looks ahead to the end of the age (Tribulation Period) when ten nations in Europe and the Middle East will join

together under the Antichrist's leadership to rule the earth (Dan. 7:23-24; Rev. 17:12, 17).

Between Daniel 2:40 and 2:41 there is an obvious gap of time from the ending of the historical Roman Empire to the reign of the future Roman Empire, which will consist of ten European and Middle East nations under the leadership of the Antichrist.

### **The Gap Between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel**

In Daniel 9:25-27 we have the amazing prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks or 490 years ("seventy weeks" or seventy sevens or  $70 \times 7 = 490$  years). Daniel himself had been thinking in terms of years in the context or framework of this 70 weeks prophecy (Daniel 9:1-2). This prophecy speaks of the prophetic destiny of Israel. God certainly has a plan for national Israel that He is going to bring to pass according to His own timetable. Daniel prophesied in Daniel 9:24 that 490 years of time would elapse before Israel would come into her kingdom blessing. In other words, 490 years of time would pass before Israel would be brought into the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:1-3).

The wording of Daniel 9:24 speaks of the final blessing of Israel. After Israel's period of rebellion ("finish the transgression") and her salvation at Christ's Second Advent ("end of sins" and "make reconciliation for iniquity" – Zech 12:10; 13:1) she would experience her covenanted kingdom blessing ("bring in everlasting righteousness" – Isaiah 1:26; 11:1-5). During the Millennium there will be a termination or ending of God's prophecies concerning His covenants with Israel ("seal up the vision and prophecy"). God has said through the prophets that Israel would be established in the land during the Millennial Kingdom. When this happens God's prophetic covenants with Israel will be fully realized and there will be no need to use the prophetic gift of prophecy predicting Israel's future glory. The function of all prophecies will cease at the Second Coming of the Messiah, since the seventy weeks prophecy is fulfilled, and Daniel's people are experiencing the fulfillment of their covenant blessings. During this time prophecy will be sealed. In other words, when the prophecies related to Israel's future glory come to pass, they can be considered as being "sealed" and no longer waiting fulfillment.

The final goal of the 70 weeks or 490 years has to do with the millennial scene when Christ, who is the "most Holy," will be officially recognized as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the Millennium. The following verses in Daniel 9:25-26 speak directly of the Messiah ("the anointed one") Himself who is the "Most Holy" and "Holy One" of Israel (Psalms 16:10). In this kingdom day, the Lord Jesus will be the "Holy One of Israel" (Psalms 89:18-19, Isaiah 60:9). In the future Millennium, there may be an official service where Jesus will be recognized as the true Messiah and God of Israel ("to anoint the most Holy"). What a day this will be!

Daniel prophesied that there would be 490 years of time between the time Israel was summoned to rebuild Jerusalem under King Artaxerxes and the beginning of Israel's glorious destiny in the Millennial Kingdom. So, Israel could know that after 490 years they would be ready to enter the Millennial Kingdom. Daniel 9:25 states the starting point of the 70 weeks or 490 years. It says that the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem marks the actual starting point of this prophecy. This was the decree of King Artaxerxes given to Nehemiah authorizing the actual rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

Daniel then says that it would take 49 years ("seven weeks") to restore Jerusalem ("to restore and rebuild Jerusalem") and an additional 434 years ("threescore and two weeks") before a total of 483 years of the prophecy runs its course. During the next 434 years there would be 400 silent years which are the years between the Old and New Testaments. These were years when God was not communicating with His people by way of prophets and prophecies. The 434 years would end with the official presentation of Jesus as the Messiah ("unto Messiah the Prince" – vs. 25) to the Jewish nation (Luke 19:42).

The two time periods mentioned (49 years plus 434 years) total 69 weeks (sevens) or 483 years. This falls short of the 490 years that must come to pass before Israel would enter the Millennial Kingdom. Therefore, we must search for seven more years or one week consisting of seven years to fulfill the prophecy of "seventy weeks" (Dan. 9:24) or the 490 years when Israel will finally enter the earthly

theocracy of the kingdom. The final seven years of this prophecy is mentioned in verse 27.

“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.”

Here is our final week or period of seven years that must come to pass before Israel enters her prophetic destiny of the Millennial Kingdom. When will this time period occur? It will take place in the future Tribulation Period when Israel is given a seven-year peace covenant by the coming Antichrist. This is what verse 27 is referring to. Of course, some Bible interpreters of the covenant theology persuasion, who reject the literal fulfillment of God’s covenants to Israel, suggest that the “he” of verse 27 refers back to the Messiah (vs. 26a) and that the final period of seven years ended somewhere in the book of Acts.

This is a false assumption. Nowhere in the book of Acts do we see Christ making a covenant with His people (the Jews) for seven years, as the prophecy requires. Furthermore, goals that are related to this prophecy cannot possibly be fulfilled historically (Dan. 9:24). Out of necessity, the “he” of verse 27 refers to the coming ruler - the Antichrist and not to Christ or the Messiah. The rules of grammar teach us that the nearest antecedent (object nearest the subject being talked about) would point to the second person spoken about in verse 26, which is none other than the antichrist (“people of the prince that shall come” - 26) which refers to a Roman ruler coming out of the old Roman empire in Europe – not Jerusalem. This would refer to the future coming ruler who is the Antichrist - not Christ or the Messiah.

The point is this. The seven years is yet future. Since this is the case, we must conclude that there is a *gap of time* between the 483 years of this prophecy (69 weeks) that have already been fulfilled and the future seven-year fulfillment (70<sup>th</sup> week) in the Tribulation Period – the period of the final seven. Some of the events that would occur during this gap of time are mentioned in Daniel 9:26. Please note that these



events occurred “**after**” the finishing of the first 49 years and 434 years, or after the 483 years or 69 weeks. They are specific events that would not be included in the first 483 years (69 weeks) of the prophecy or the final seven-year period (70<sup>th</sup> week) of the prophecy. Therefore, they are intervening events that would occur between the 483 years and the beginning of the final seven years of this prophecy.

We know that the Messiah riding into Jerusalem would be the event that would end the first 483 years of Daniel’s prophecy (vs. 25 – “unto Messiah the prince”). This was the time marker ending the first 483 years. However, there would be several other events that would occur between the 483 years and final seven years of Daniel’s prophecy. First, Messiah’s death would occur (“Messiah be cut off” – vs. 26). Second, the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans would occur (vs. 26). These are two intervening events which were separated by some 37 years. The death of Christ occurred in A.D. 32 and Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 A.D. These events would occur soon “**after**” the ending of the first 483 years or 69 weeks. *They would occur in an intervening gap of time.*

Daniel 9:26 is then speaking of an interim period of time of at least 37 years. But much more would take place during the gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel. Third, the Church age would occur. This is a much longer gap of time that has passed in this intervening time period before the final seven years of Daniel’s prophecy begins. The Church age, the time when God has been forming His New Testament Church (Acts 2), has already been occurring for over 1,900 years.

We might call this a “prophetic parenthesis” of time when God has temporarily set aside Israel as His key people (Rom. 11:15-20) and is now working out a different program with a distinct group of people called His Church (Eph. 3:10). Harry Ironside used to call this “The Great Parenthesis” which relates to the gap of time between the ending of the first 483 years and the final drama of the 7 years of Daniel’s prophecy.

Thus, we can readily see that a gap of time has existed before the final seven years will commence. Many events would occur “**after**” the close of the first 483 years but before the final 7 years. This gap of

time is known as the “acceptable year of the LORD” which occurs before the day of God’s vengeance and wrath (Luke 4:19), which is connected with the Lord’s return to Judge the world. After the Church Age or intervening gap of time has expired, God will pick up His program with the Jews in the final seven years, or final week of Daniel’s prophecy (Jer. 30:7, 11; Mal. 4:5-6; Joel 2:28-32; Matt. 22:43-43). After the final seven years is finished the full 490 years of Daniel’s prophecy will have run its course. This will bring Israel to her final destiny – the Millennial Kingdom.

Acts 15:14-16

“Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, **After this** (the Church Age) I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up.”

In this passage, James also indicates that there would be an intervening gap of time (the Church Age) until Israel’s final blessings come with the Christ’s Second Coming and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.

There is then a gap of time that has exists between the fulfillment of the first 483 years of Daniel’s prophecy and the final 7 years that must occur before Israel enters the Millennial Kingdom. We can view the breakdown of these years and gap of time in this way.

### 70 Weeks or 490 Years Summary

1. **49 years** (seven weeks = 49 years) — Time it took to rebuild Jerusalem.
2. **434 years** (sixty-two weeks = 434 years) — Time includes the 400 silent years, the years between the Old and New Testaments, and the official presentation of Jesus as the Messiah to the Jewish nation (Luke 19:42).

The Bible says that “**after**” the 483 years has expired there will be a **gap of time** where other events transpire, such as Christ’s death on the cross, Jerusalem destroyed by the Romans (Matt. 24:1-2), and

the Church Age coming into existence, which has already lasted almost 2,000 years. These things take place before the final seven years begin.

- 3. 7 years** (70<sup>th</sup> week = 7 years) – points to the future Tribulation Period, which is divided into two separate time increments consisting of 1,260 days each, or three and one-half years each (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:1-3; 12:14; 13:5). This is figured from a 360-day Jewish calendar. After the final week of seven years, Israel will finally reach her prophetic destiny – the Millennial Kingdom

### **The Gap Between the Rapture and Tribulation Period**

There is another gap we must talk about that exists between the Rapture and the Tribulation Period. We must remember that there will be an unknown duration or gap of time between the Rapture and the official beginning of the Tribulation Period. *The Rapture will precede the Tribulation Period (Rev. 3:10) but it does not begin the Tribulation Period.* The signing of the seven-year covenant with Israel begins the Tribulation Period (Dan. 9:27). We don't know how long this time frame is between the Rapture and beginning of the Tribulation Period. Is it days, months, or years? We can't be sure; however, we know there will be a duration of time that exists between the Rapture and Tribulation Period. During this gap of time, some specific events will transpire that will *set the stage* for the Tribulation Period to begin.

There are various *stage-setting events* occurring in our present day, and more specifically and in a greater way, specific events will occur during an interim period of time, between the Rapture and official start of the Tribulation Period, which will prepare the world for the Tribulation Period. During this gap, which is an undetermined period of time, all the preparations and planning will be made, and all the props will be put in place for prophetic events to be fulfilled during the Tribulation Period. For instance, the European nations will come together and have their talks; the Antichrist will be a player in the world ready to seize the opportunity to bring the ten kings and their countries together and establish a binding covenant with Israel and many other nations in order to make peace in the Middle East (Dan. 9:27). With these events beginning to take shape in the world, the

Islamic nations and Russia to the north will be getting very uneasy and filled with anger, since Europe and the Middle East is siding with Israel. All of these events will prepare the world for Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> and final week of seven years to begin.

It's apparent that the gap of time that occurs between the Rapture and the official beginning of the Tribulation Period, with the signing of the covenant in the Middle East (Dan. 9:27), will set the stage for the seven-year Tribulation Period to begin. However, it seems better to view the actual fulfillment of prophetic events, such as the resurrection of the Old Roman Empire ("the ten horns out of the kingdom" – Roman Empire - Dan. 7:24) and reunification of this empire (Rev. 17:12, 17), along with the rise and revelation of the Antichrist, the new world Caesar ("the prince that shall come" - Dan. 9:26), and the Islamic invasion of Israel (Ezekiel 38-39), to occur during the seven-year period of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week, since this is when the Bible actually predicts these events will unfold in the world.

Nevertheless, there will be some stage-setting events that will finally prepare the world for the Tribulation Period. These events will transpire during the gap of time between the Rapture and commencement of the Tribulation Period.

1. The preparation for a peace covenant.

This particular event actually begins the Tribulation Period. The Bible teaches that Antichrist will "confirm" or make a firm covenant (Dan. 9:27) with "many" (Daniel's people). This will be a covenant that is forced upon the Jews which contains strong guarantees. It will probably guarantee the Jews peace in the Middle East, protection, and public freedom to reinstate their ancient Jewish worship without Arab conflict.

The signing of this covenant with Israel is an important time marker. It is the key event that starts the Tribulation Period for the Bible tells us that the covenant will be made for "one week" (Dan. 9:27) which Daniel confirms is a week consisting of seven years. This time reference corresponds to the Tribulation Period (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:6). It officially begins the seven-year Tribulation Period.

Apparently, the plans for making and establishing this covenant will be in the making prior to the beginning of the Tribulation Period.

## 2. The emergence of the apostate church.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-3

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day (the Tribulation Period) shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

Paul says that a person could not be living in the Day of the Lord (seven-year Tribulation Period) until three events occur which are the total apostasy and the revelation of the man of sin in conjunction with the taking away of the Restrainer (the Holy Spirit – 2 Thess. 3:6). These three events must occur before the Day of the Lord can be in place. Since these three things have not occurred, the Church could not possibly be living during the Tribulation Period, or in the time period known as the Day of the Lord, as some were teaching.

The fact is this; the Church will be raptured out of this world (John 14:1-2) and kept from entering the Tribulation Period (Rev. 3:10; 1 Thess. 1:10; 5:1-11). The early church (Rom. 13:11; 1 Cor. 16:22; 1 Thess. 1:10; James 5:8; 1 John 2:28; Rev. 22:20) and Paul (Phil. 3:20; 4:5) taught the doctrine of imminency (Christ could return at any moment) in relationship to the Rapture. This means that no prophetic events must occur before the Rapture takes place.

Since the Rapture is a signless and imminent event (1 Cor. 16:22), it's necessary that these events mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-6 occur after the Rapture.
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Of course, this does not mean that these events cannot begin to take shape prior to the Rapture and more specifically during the interim period between the Rapture and commencement of the Tribulation Period. One such event is the gradual formation of the apostate

church. Paul said that the “mystery of iniquity” or lawlessness is already at work in the world (2 Thess. 2:7).

We do know that immediately after the Rapture, the true Church will be gone and only an apostate church will remain on earth. This apostate church will rally together creating an ecumenical End Time harlot system that is against God (Rev. 17:1-5). In essence, Paul says that the Church saints could not be living in that period of time, known as the Day of the Lord (Tribulation Period), until “a falling away” or more specifically “the departure” or apostasy occurs (2 Thess. 2:3). This is a specific apostasy awaiting fulfillment after the Rapture following the exodus of God’s people back to their homeland in Heaven. Of course, Paul is specifically looking at the Tribulation Period as the time when the apostasy will be literally fulfilled and realized, a time when many people come to faith in Christ (Rev. 7:9-14) and are persecuted by the harlot church (Rev 17:6).

Nevertheless, it is conceivable that the apostasy will begin to take shape in the interim period, or gap of time between the Rapture and start of the Tribulation Period, and then come into full ecumenical bloom, as the Tribulation Period begins. After the true Church is raptured the only system that will be left is the organized apostate church, and as the Tribulation Period begins, it will be already positioned to become the predicted harlot of the Book of Revelation. At the beginning of the Tribulation Period the apostate church will become officially tied together and ecumenically united for the end times, a specific period of time when Christendom will be fully leavened (Matt. 13:33 – “till the whole was leavened”).

### 3. The rise of the Antichrist.

Paul suggests that the Antichrist must also be clearly revealed and identified, as such, for a person to be living during the Tribulation Period (Day of the Lord). The actual revelation of the Antichrist will occur during the Tribulation Period, when Paul says, “and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition” (2 Thess. 2:3). The Antichrist’s revelation will occur after the Rapture or our “gathering together unto Him” (2 Thess. 2:1) and during the time of the Day of the Lord. Paul is careful to make this important time distinction. First the Rapture will occur (2 Thess. 2:1) and then the man of sin will be revealed during

Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week (2 Thess. 2:3). There is no Scripture that suggests the identity of the Antichrist will be known prior to the Rapture or even during a gap of time that exists between the Rapture and Tribulation Period. Instead, the rise of Antichrist to a place of significant power and prominence in the world will occur during the actual Tribulation Period, when prophecies are predicted to be fulfilled.

Of course, it's very possible that the rise of the Antichrist will occur in some measure, prior to the Tribulation Period, in the gap of time that exists between the Rapture and start of the Tribulation Period. He may even be alive today! During the Tribulation Period he is predicted to arise as a "little horn" (Dan. 7:8), but for this to take place, the Antichrist will in some measure have a position in the world prior to the start of the Tribulation Period.

Henry Morris writes:

"To some degree he must acquire a position of leadership at least among the Mediterranean nations even before the seven years of the tribulation itself actually begin."

John Walvoord writes:

"It is probable that the person who heads the revived Roman Empire comes into power before the beginning of the entire seven-year period of Daniel 9:2, and as such enters into covenant with the Jewish people."

Again, it's true that the Antichrist's *rise* to power can take place during the interim period of time, as he gains political clout in the world, but his actual *revelation* and the *reunification* of the Old Roman Empire must occur during the Tribulation Period, at some point following the signing of the covenant (Dan. 9:27), since the fulfillment of these Bible prophecies relate specifically to the Tribulation Period (Dan. 2, 7; 2 Thess. 2:3).

#### 4. The restraining influence of the Holy Spirit.

2 Thessalonians 2:7

"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth (holds back or restrains) will let, until he be taken out of the way."

We've mentioned this already. This verse teaches that when the true Church is raptured, the Holy Spirit's restraining influence in the world, through the residency of the Church, will be removed from planet earth. When the Church is removed the Holy Spirit will no longer have a restraining effect upon evil and sin through the presence of God's people. This means sin and deception will run rampant and be similar to the days before the Flood.

Genesis 6:5 says:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."

Please understand that the Holy Spirit's presence will not be removed from the world but His restraining of evil and wickedness will be "taken out of the way" (2 Thess. 2:7). Paul is saying that the Holy Spirit's restraining influence must be taken out of the world before a person could be living in that period of time known as the Day of the Lord.

Paul is teaching that the Church could not be living in the Day of the Lord since the Restrainer has not yet been taken out of the way. Paul is conveying the truth that the Holy Spirit's restraining ministry will cease in the world and this will be a signal that the Day of the Lord has begun on planet earth. The Holy Spirit is the Restrainer in this world. It is through God's people, the New Testament Church (1 Cor. 6:19), that the Holy Spirit restrains sin in some measure. However, when the true Church is raptured the restraining ministry of the Spirit will no longer be felt in this world, as it once was during this present period of time in which we live. The Holy Spirit will remain on earth but His restraining effect upon sin will no longer be operating in the world during the Day of the Lord.

Paul is careful to reveal the exact time when the Spirit's restraining influence will no longer be felt which is the period of time known as the Tribulation Period. Paul says that the effects of the Spirit's restraining influence will be lost during this time. Of course, it's likely that during the gap of time that is post-Rapture and pre-tribulational that the effects of the Spirit's removal will begin to be experienced throughout the earth. The absence of godliness in all government and



lands throughout the earth will begin to have its negative impact upon society. However, as planet earth moves into the Tribulation Period, this restraining influence will be experienced in an unprecedented way, as evil begins to mushroom and abound to the end of the age.

Nevertheless, the absence of the Spirit's restraining influence during the gap period of time will in some measure prepare the earth for what is about to come during the End Times. When the events of the Tribulation Period begin, with the Antichrist and all the lawlessness connected with this time period, it will be evident, as Paul states, that the Holy Spirit's restraining influence had been removed. This is the time period when the Spirit's absence in suppressing evil will be especially noticed and when this prophecy will be literally fulfilled.

Once again, we must understand that the specific events mentioned (the apostasy, restraining of the Holy Spirit, and revelation of Antichrist) are said to occur and be experienced specifically during the Tribulation Period (2 Thess. 2:3), when Bible prophecy, as it relates to the End Times, will be literally fulfilled. However, this does not cancel out any prior preparation to their fulfillment today and during the interim period of time.

##### 5. The plan to reunite the Roman Empire.

The Bible teaches that ten kings will eventually merge together in an attempt to bring together and reorganize the old Roman Empire (Daniel 2:41-44; 7:7, 24). Daniel 7:24 speaks of ten kings "that shall arise" which indicates an attempt to reunite and bring back to life the old Roman Empire. These ten kings will want to keep their individual policies and have their own personal authority. However, the Antichrist who arises on the scene will see to it that they yield their authority and military might to him (Rev. 17:12, 17). We see the groundwork of this formation taking place today in the consolidation of the European nations. These events are envisioned to take place during the Tribulation Period.

The Antichrist will unite the old Roman Empire (Daniel 7:8, 20, 24). He arises "after them" (the ten kings) according to Daniel 7:24 in order to become the sole leader of the ten kingdom and kings. The Antichrist will not be content to be just another rival. He will want to

control the other kings and their countries. These rulers will possess an alliance together but lack one thing – a Caesar to rule over them. Not until a Caesar rules over these countries can the Roman Empire be officially reunited together in strength and military power as it was in its original form.

Eventually all ten kings will come under the Antichrist's power, probably at the midway point of the Tribulation Period, and stand behind him for the duration of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 17:12 – “one hour”). These are kings and kingdoms that were once part of the original Roman Empire when it was at its zenith of power. These ten nations and kings will give their allegiance to the Antichrist during the Tribulation Period resulting in the reunification of the Roman Empire under one reigning Caesar – the Antichrist.

It's likely that the world will be prepared, during the gap of time that exists between the Rapture and the start of the Tribulation, for the reunification of the Roman Empire. The powers in Europe and the Middle East will be having serious talks and be seeking to finalize a ten nation confederacy of European powers in order to have economic stability and power throughout Europe and Middle East. Then, at some point after the Tribulation Period begins, these ten kings will officially merge together (Dan. 2:41, Dan. 7:23-24) and eventually discover a brilliant military Caesar that will unite and rule over them (Rev. 17:12, 17). As a result, the ancient Roman Empire will have been reborn.

## 7. The Russian/Islamic goal to invade Israel.

The Bible predicts that Russian and Islamic allies will invade Israel in the future (Ezekiel 38-39). When “Gog shall come against the land of Israel” (vs. 18), God will destroy them in the mountains of Israel (vv. 19-23). When God verses Gog – God wins! Russia with her Islamic allies will invade the land of Israel and be destroyed by God in the mountainous terrain surrounding Palestine.

The key to understanding when this invasion occurs is a seven-year time reference regarding the clean-up and fuel generated from their destruction (Ezek. 39:9). Both prophecies that mention the seven-year time frame of the Tribulation Period are linked to Israel's final

salvation and restoration (Dan. 9:24-27; Ezek. 39:7, 22). This tells us that both of these time references are speaking of the Tribulation Period and the kingdom glory that follows. It would appear that Israel will bury the dead for seven months (Ezek. 39:12) and then use the weaponry as fuel fire throughout the seven-year Tribulation Period (Ezek. 39:9). As Jews flee to the mountains for refuge (Matt. 24:16), during the second half of the Tribulation Period, this fuel fire will be helpful to them, as they seek to maintain life.

It's very possible that the Russian/Islamic invasion from the north will take place just as the Antichrist signs the covenant with the Jews (Dan. 9:27). It is another event that transpires immediately when the Tribulation Period get underway. *The preparation for this event will occur during the interim time or gap between the Rapture and start of the Tribulation Period.* News will certainly be out that the signing of this Middle East covenant is going to occur, and the armies will be waiting in the wings to attack Israel. Out of hatred for the Jews, the material wealth of Israel, and a desire to obtain a strategic military position on earth, the Islamic hordes will take aim at Israel but then suffer defeat at the hands of God.

It's best to see this battle occurring at the very beginning of the seven years, as a reaction and protest to the signing of the covenant. Then, Israel will use the weaponry as fuel fire throughout the seven-year Tribulation Period (Ezek. 39:9). It seems the best scenario is that both the signing of the covenant and invasion of Israel become *sign markers* or clear indications that demonstrate the earth has entered the "End Times" of the Tribulation Period. These two events will occur very close together. The one (signing of the covenant) will trigger the other (the invasion of Russia and Islamic nations).

The signing of the covenant with the Jews and nations (Dan. 9:27), along with the destruction of the armies in northern Israel (Ezek. 38:19-23-39:1-6), sets the stage for seal one (peace and safety) to begin at the offset of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 6:1-2; 1 Thess. 5:3). The rider on the white horse (Antichrist) gallops on to the world scene promising peace and no more threats of war in the Middle East. An invasion and supernatural destruction of Islamic soldiers at the beginning of the Tribulation Period also provides the backdrop for a time of promised peace (Rev. 6:1-2), the rise of a one world church

without any threat from radical Islam (Rev. 17:1-5), the freedom to reconstruct the Tribulation temple (Rev. 11:1-2), and the eventual rise of Antichrist to a place of world dictatorship and worship (Rev. 13:3-18).

This opens up the meaning of 1 Thessalonians 5:3, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety." This worldwide message of peace will occur at the start of the Tribulation Period. It will be a message of hope in view of the destruction of Islamic armies and the threat of militant Islam out of the way. It will be a time of euphoria as an historic peace covenant was signed in the Middle East (Dan. 9:27).

Hampton Keathley states:

"Because of fear of a nuclear holocaust, population explosion, environmental destruction, etc., the world will be crying for "peace and safety." This man (Antichrist) will come on the scene with great persuasive power, personality magnetism, craft and oratorical skill, and he will persuade the West (Europe and probably the Americas) that he has the answer for peace. The Americas are likely to be included because they are a part of the harlot system which he controls. He will gain his ascendancy to power as a peacemaker (Dan. 8:25; 1 Thess. 5:3; Rev. 6:2; Dan. 9:27)."

The world will seem like it's entering a time of peace and utopia. People will think that the dawning of the "Age of Aquarius" has finally arrived. But the false sense of peace and security will be short lived. The world's sense of security will be shattered by the seal judgments of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 6). When the people of the world will be talking about peace and safety ("when they shall say, Peace and safety" – 1 Thess. 5:3), the destruction of the Tribulation Period will suddenly hit with a devastating force and vengeance upon all earth dwellers ("then sudden destruction cometh upon them"). The world will be thrust into a time of terrible judgment described as birth pangs (Matt. 24:8, 21) and "try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10).

It's very conceivable that the plans and props will be in place for the Russian and Islamic invasion of Israel in the interim period of time between the Rapture and beginning of the Tribulation Period. In fact, it's likely that this military machine of the End Times will be ready to go and immediately contest the signing of the covenant with Israel.

## 9. The final plans to rebuild the Jewish temple.

The signing of this Jewish covenant will evidently result in the reinstatement of Jewish worship, since during the middle of the Tribulation Period, Daniel teaches that the Antichrist will break his covenant with Daniel's people (Dan. 9:27). For this to occur a Tribulation temple must be rebuilt and this will probably take place rather rapidly with the use of modern equipment (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4). It's likely that all the plans and implements will already be prepared and ready during the interim time, or gap between the Rapture and start of the Tribulation Period. In fact, even today Israel has plans to resurrect her ancient temple. As talks begin in the Middle East and word gets out that Israel will be given a peace covenant, protection, and the opportunity to reinstate her ancient Jewish worship, the Jews will quickly finalize and officially plan to rebuild the temple in the near future.

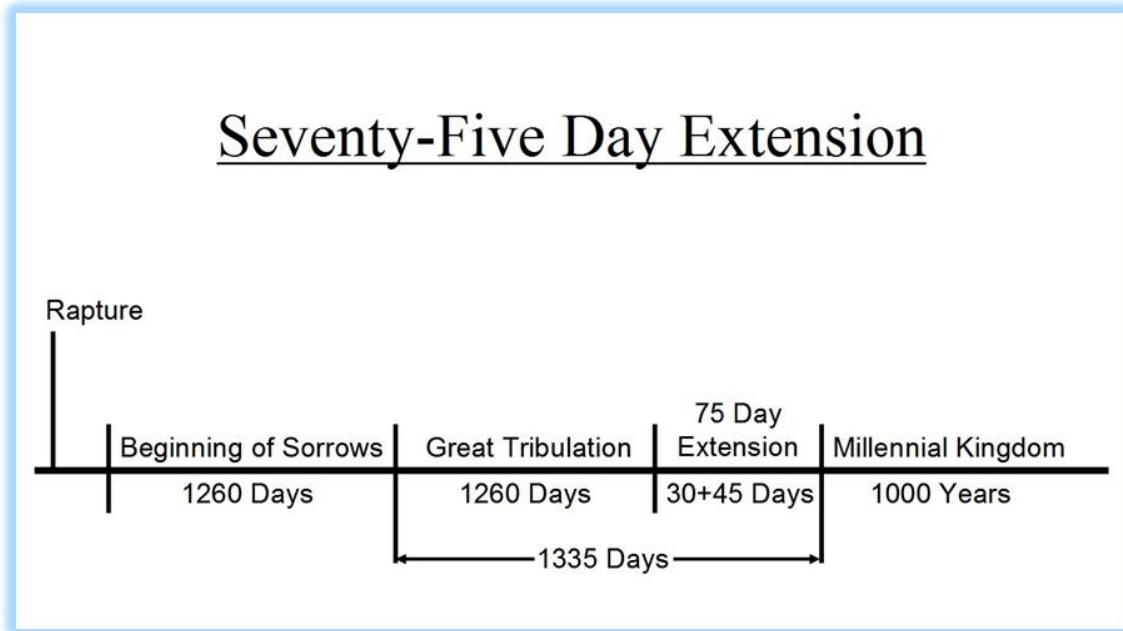
The temple will be completed by the middle of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 11:1-2); however, according to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, which occurs during the Tribulation Period, the building project cannot begin prior to the signing of the covenant. Both the signing of the Covenant and permission to erect the temple (Dan. 9:27) are seen as part of the end time scenario (Tribulation Period). Therefore, not until the Antichrist signs the official covenant with Israel will the Jews be allowed to actually rebuild the structure.

The Jews will begin to sacrifice immediately, perhaps in a makeshift type of tabernacle. The Jews could very well begin sacrificing without having the temple fully completed, but then quickly finish the temple, which will be used for the duration of the first three and one-half years of the Tribulation Period. This keeps the rebuilding of the temple during the Tribulation Period. We do know that by the middle of the Tribulation Period the temple will be fully functional (Rev. 11:1-2) and that it will be overtaken by the Antichrist during this same time (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 25:15).

Using modern equipment, the Jews will in a short time erect their beloved temple structure under the protection of the new Middle East hero and return to their ancient Jewish worship. The signing of the covenant will ensure their freedom of worship for three-and-one-half

years (Dan. 9:27). Preparations for the temple are already being made today and the stage is being set for the Tribulation temple to be erected under the authority of the End Time Antichrist

### The 75-Day Gap Between the Tribulation Period and Resurrection of Old Testament Saints



Daniel 12:11-13

**“And from the time (second half of the Tribulation Period) that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days (1,290 days = last 3.5 years of Tribulation Period or 1,260 days + 30 more days). Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days (1,335 years = last 3.5 years + 1,290 days + 45 more days). But go thou thy way till the end be (the end of the stated time period totaling 1,335 days): for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot (resurrection to the Millennium) at the end of the days (the end of the 1,335 days which includes the extra 75 days that follows the second half of the Tribulation period).”**

The Bible teaches there will also be a 75-day extension that follows the seven-year Tribulation Period. We might view this as a gap of time that exists between the official ending of the seven-year Tribulation Period (Daniel 9:27) and the beginning of Daniel's resurrection and blessings during the Millennium, a resurrection that takes place in conjunction with the Second Coming (Daniel 12:2-3; 13).

The 3.5 years figured according to the normal 360-day Jewish calendar, would total 1,260 days. However, the Bible presents a 75-day gap of time between the ending of the Tribulation Period and the start of the Millennium, the timeframe when Daniel's glorification will occur (Daniel 12:11-12). We might view this as another gap presented in Scripture. It's a gap of time that exists between the official closing of the seven-year Tribulation Period and the resurrection of the Old Testament saints into the Millennium (Dan. 12:2-3), which may be the final event that occurs in conjunction with the Second Coming. The meaning of the phrase "till the end" (Dan. 12:11) has reference to the ending of the 1,335 days (the seven years = 75 more days). Daniel's resurrection would occur AFTER these days have run their course, which means after the seven years have expired and the 75 days that follow wind down.

Daniel had earlier spoken about a seven-year covenant that the Antichrist would make with the Jewish nation and how the Antichrist would break this covenant during the middle of the seven years,

Daniel 9:27 records:

"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."

Daniel 12:11 now adds this time information:

"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

The abomination of desolation is an event that involves the Antichrist erecting a statue of himself in the temple of Jerusalem (Rev. 13:14-15). It occurs during the middle of the Tribulation Period (Dan. 9:27). However, we discover something from Daniel's later writings. Instead of the statue remaining in the temple for 1,260 days (a Jewish 3.5 years), it will actually remain in the temple for a period of 1,290 days. This adds thirty days which follow the official ending of the Tribulation Period. So, the total period of time when the Antichrist's statue is seated in the temple will be 1,290 days. This is an interesting observation.

Daniel 12:11 declares that there will be 30 extra days that follow the 1,260 days (last three and one-half years) of the seven-year Tribulation Period. Daniel is informed that there would be a 30-day extension to the original timeframe of 3.5 years.

The total number of days would be 1,290. Evidently the additional thirty days, totaling 1,290 days, explains the amount of time the statue will be erected in the temple.

Daniel 12:12

"Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

- Daniel 12:12 adds another 45 additional days that will follow the already 30-day extension of time (totaling 1,335 days). This makes the total time extension, or gap of time that exists between the ending of the Tribulation Period and the resurrection of Daniel to be 75 days.

The normal Jewish calendar of days in 3.5 years is 1,260 days which is based on a 360-day calendar year (Rev. 11:3; 12:6). But now Daniel says that 30 additional days (1,290 - Dan. 12:11), and then 45 additional days (Dan. 12:12) will come to pass, following the seven-year Tribulation Period, making the total number of additional days to be 75. In essence, there is a 75-day gap of time that exists between the ending of the Tribulation Period and the resurrection of Daniel and the Old Testament saints ("till the end *be*: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" - Daniel 12:13, see also Dan. 12:3).





The math looks like this:  $1,260 + 30 + 45 = 1,335$  (“the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days” of Dan. 12:11-12). This is a time extension of 75 days which comes after the normal Jewish calendar of 1,260 days.  $1,335 - 1,260 = 75$  days.

The Jews figured their year according to a **360-day** calendar totaling 1,260 days in 3.5 years (the second half of the Tribulation Period).  $1,260 + 30$  more days = **1,290**. Next,  $1,260 + 30 + 45$  more days = **1,335**. The two figures of  $30+45 = 75$  extra days (a 75-day gap of time) between the Tribulation Period and Millennium which is the timeframe of the Second Coming, when Daniel will be resurrected (Dan. 12:2, 12).

**360** (days in a Jewish year)  
**x 3.5** (years – second half of Tribulation)  
**1,260** (the total days in the second half of Tribulation Period)  
**+ 30** (more days) – Dan. 12:12  
**1,290 days** (30 days after the Tribulation)

**1,335** (second figure Daniel mentions)  
**- 1,290** (the previous number of days)  
**45 more days** IN ADDITION to the 30 days

**30 + 45 = 75 days more after the Tribulation**  
 (The timeframe of the Second Coming)

What events are going to occur during this gap of time? Here is a general idea of what might occur to get planet earth into the Millennium. Please understand that I'm not trying to give an inspired chronological order. We don't possess all the details, but these events must occur after the Tribulation Period in the 75-day gap of time.

- The resurrection of the Two Witnesses occurs, if we espouse the view that they prophesy exactly 1,260 days during the second half of the Tribulation Period (Revelation 11:7-11).
- The astronomical signs (Matthew 24:29). These will begin to occur during the 30-day gap of time and no one knows how long they will continue before the Second Coming begins to happen (Matt. 24:36).

It should be noted that Christ returns to earth following the astronomical signs which occur immediately "after the tribulation of those days" (Matt. 24:29). Since no person knows the exact time when Christ will return to earth in His revelation (Matt. 24:36), He will obviously return during the time extension that follows the Tribulation Period, or during this 75-day gap of time that exists between the official closing of the Tribulation Period (after the 1,260 days or second 3.5 years have expired) and before the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom (1,000-year reign of Christ).

It should be restated that the abomination of desolation will still be set up 30 days after the 1,260 days of the Tribulation Period has officially ended (Dan. 12:11).

This can indicate several things, none of which we can be dogmatic about. First, Christ may return somewhere during the 30-day gap of time and then finally remove the statue on day 1,290. Second, the Jews fighting in Jerusalem may also remove the statue 30 days after the Tribulation Period has expired (Dan. 12:1-9; 14:1-3). This would mean that Christ could conceivably return somewhere in the extended 45-day period of time, which follows the first 30-day extension, in order to rescue the Jews (Zech. 14:4-5).

Here is what we need to remember. The *season* of Christ's return will be known (Matt. 24:33) but the exact day or hour no person will know (Matt. 24:36). The signs that accompany Christ's return will occur "immediately after the tribulation" (Matt. 24:29) but the exact timing of His actual coming cannot be calculated, due to the 75-day gap of time that exists, between the official closing of the Tribulation Period and Daniel's glorification.

- The abomination of desolation is removed from the temple on the thirtieth day (Daniel 12:11).
- The Jews continue to hold on to the city of Jerusalem while the armies continue to advance upon them and their beloved city (Zech. 12:1-9; 14:1-3). This may extend beyond the 30-day period into the 45-day gap of time depending on the timing of Christ's return.
- The Jewish remnant eventually calls for Messiah's return (Hosea 5:15; 6:1-3). This could conceivably take place during the 30 or 45-day extension depending on the timing of Christ's return.
- The destruction of the national armies represented in Armageddon throughout the land of Palestine (Rev. 19:15-19; Isa. 63:1-6; Zech. 14:1-4). This could conceivably take place during the 30 or 45-day extension depending on the timing of Christ's return.
- The Antichrist and the false prophet are cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19:20-21). This will take place either in the 30 or 45-day gap of time depending on the timing of Christ's return.
- Satan is cast into the abyss (Revelation 20:1-3). This will take place either in the 30 or 45-day gap of time depending on the timing of Christ's return.
- The national mourning and salvation of Israel in the land (Zech. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:26). This will occur in conjunction with Christ's Second Coming after the destruction of the armies.

Depending on the timing of Christ's return, it will occur either in the 30 or 45-day gap of time.

- Israel is regathered from all over the earth for entrance into the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 24:31; Isaiah 11:11-12; Ezekiel 20:34). This will likely take place during the 45-day gap. This regathering will involve an extended period of time.
- Israel is judged (Ezekiel 20:30-39; Matt. 24:32-51; 25:1-30). This will likely take place during the 45-day gap.
- Gentiles are gathered and judged (Matthew 25:31-46; Joel 3:2). This will also likely occur during the 45-day gap.
- Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints are resurrected and rewarded (Daniel 12:1-3; Isaiah 26:19; Revelation 20:4; 11:15). This will apparently take place at the end of the 75 days (Dan. 12:13).
- The cleanup and reconstruction of the old earth for the Millennial Kingdom (Isaiah 35:1-2, 6-7). This could conceivably begin to take place during the 45-day gap.
- The millennial temple is reconstructed (Ezekiel 40-48). This may begin to take place during the 45-day gap. Of course, these last two events will continue to find fulfillment and be fully realized during the Millennial Kingdom.

This study has been every important for a proper interpretation of Scripture. Understanding gaps in the Scripture will enable the Bible student to grasp the Bible in a more understandable and chronological fashion. The Bible is a unique Book. God is a God of order. He wrote certain passages of Scripture to span the ages and provide us with both a near and far fulfillment. The gaps of time must be dealt with if the student and interpreter of Scripture is going to understand the significance of the End Times and God's plan for the ages.