

Daniel 9:25-27

VERSE 25. 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. 26. 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. 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 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.'

The angel now gives to Daniel the event which is to mark the commencement of the seventy weeks.

They were to date from the going forth of a commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. And not only is the event given which was to determine the time of the commencement of this period, but those events also which were to transpire at its close.

Thus a double test is provided by which to try the application of this prophecy. But more than this, the period of seventy -weeks is divided into three grand divisions, and one of these is again divided, and the intermediate events are given which were to mark the termination of each one of these divisions.

If, now, we can find a date which will harmonize with all these events, we have, be}

Tond a doubt, the

true application ; for none but that which is correct could meet and fulfill so many conditions. Let the reader take in at one view the points of harmony to be made, that he may be the better prepared to guard against a false application. First, we are to

262 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

find at the commencement of the period, a commandment

going forth to restore and build Jerusalem.

To this work of restoration seven weeks are allotted.

As we reach the end of this first division, seven weeks from the commencement, we are to find, secondly, Jerusalem, in its material aspect, restored, the work of building the street and the wall fully accomplished.

From this point, sixty-two weeks are measured off; and as we reach the termination of this division, sixty-nine weeks from the beginning, we are to see, thirdly, the manifestation, before the world, of the Messiah the Prince. One week more is given us, completing the seventy. And, fourthly, in the midst of this week, the Messiah is to be cut off and cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease ; and, fifthly, when the last week of that period which was allotted to the Jews as the time during which they were to be the special people of God expires, we naturally look for the going forth of the blessing and work of God to other people.

We now inquire for the date which will harmonize with all these particulars. The command was

to include more than mere building. There was to be restoration ; by which we must understand all the forms and regulations of civil, political, and judicial society. When did such a command go forth ?

At the time these words were spoken to Daniel, Jerusalem lay in complete and utter desolation, and had thus been lying for seventy years. The restoration, pointed to in the future, must be its restoration from this desolation. We then inquire, When and

CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-27. 263

how was Jerusalem restored after the seventy years' captivity ?

There are but four events which can be taken as answering to the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. These are, 1. The decree of Cyrus for the re-building of the house of God, B. c. 536. Ez. 1 : 1-4. 2. The decree of Darius for the prosecution of that work which had been hindered, B. C. 519. Ez. 6 : 1-12. 3. The decree of Artaxerxes to Ezra, B. c. 457. Ezra 7. 4. The commission to Nehemiah from the same king in his twentieth year, B. C. 444.

Neh. 2.

Dating from the first two of these decrees, the seventy weeks, being weeks of years, 490 years in all, would fall many years short of reaching even to the Christian era ; besides, these decrees had reference principally to the restoration of the temple and the temple-worship of the Jews, and not to the restoration of their civil state and polity, all of which must be included in the expression,

"

to restore and
to build Jerusalem."

These made a commencement of the work. They were preliminary to what was afterward accomplished. But of themselves they are altogether insufficient, both in their dates and in their nature, to meet the requirements of the prophecy ; and thus failing in every respect, they cannot be brought into the controversy as marking the point from which the seventy weeks are to date. The only question now lies between the decrees which were granted to

Ezra and to Nehemiah.

264 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

The facts between which we are to decide here, are briefly these : In 457 B. c., a decree was granted to Ezra by the Persian emperor, Artaxerxes Longimanus, to go up to Jerusalem with as many of his people as were minded to go with him. The commission granted him an unlimited amount of treasure, to beautify the house of God, procure ' offerings for its service, and to do whatever else might seem good unto him. It empowered him to ordain laws, set magistrates and judges, and execute punishment even unto death ; in other words, to restore the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastical, according to the law of God and the ancient customs of that people. Inspiration has seen fit to preserve this decree ; and a full and accurate copy of it is given in the seventh chapter of the book of Ezra. In the original, this decree is given, not in Hebrew, like the rest of the book of Ezra, but in the Chaldaic (or Eastern Aramaic), the language then used at Babylon ; and thus

we are furnished with the original document by virtue of which Ezra was authorized to restore and build Jerusalem.

Thirteen years after this, in the twentieth year of the same king, B. C. 444, Nehemiah sought and obtained permission to go up to Jerusalem. Neh. 2.

Permission was granted him, but we have no evidence that it was anything more than verbal. It

pertained to him individually, nothing being said about others' going up with him. The king asked him how long a journey he wished to make, and when he would return. He received letters to the
CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-27. 9(55

governors beyond the river, to help him on his way to Judah, and an order to the king's forest for timber for beams, etc. When he arrived at Jerusalem, he found rulers and priests, nobles and people, already engaged in the work of building Jerusalem.

Neh. 2:16. These were, of course, acting under the decree given to Ezra thirteen years before. And finally, Nehemiah, having arrived at Jerusalem,

finished the work he came to accomplish, in fiftytwo days. Neh. 6 : 15.

Now which of these commissions, Ezra's or Nehemiah's, constitutes the decree for the restoration of Jerusalem, from which the seventy weeks are to be dated ? It hardly seems that there can be any question on this point.

1. The grant to Nehemiah cannot be called a decree.

It was necessary that a Persian decree should be put in writing, and signed by the king.

Dan. 6 : 8. Such was the document given to Ezra ; but Nehemiah had nothing of the kind, his commission being only verbal. If it be said that the letters given him constituted the decree, then the decree was issued, not to Nehemiah, but to the governors beyond the river; besides, these would constitute a series of decrees, and not one decree, as the prophecy contemplates.

2. The occasion of Nehemiah's petition to the king for permission to go up to Jerusalem was the report which certain ones, returning, had brought

from thence, that those in the province were in great affliction and reproach, that the wall of Jerusalem
266 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

was also broken down and the gates thereof burned with fire. Neh. 1. Whose work were these walls and gates that were broken down and burned with fire ? Evidently the work of Ezra and his associates ; for it cannot for a moment be supposed that the utter destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar, 144 years previous to that time, would have been reported to Nehemiah as a matter of news, nor that he would have considered it, as he evidently did, a fresh misfortune calling for a fresh expression of grief. A decree, therefore, authorizing the building of these, had gone forth previous to the grant to Nehemiah.

3. If any should contend that Nehemiah's commission must be a decree, because the object of his request was that he might build the city, it is sufficient to reply as shown above, that gates and walls had been built previous to his going up ; besides^

the work of building which he went to perform was accomplished in fifty-two days ; whereas, the prophecy allows for the building of the city, seven weeks, or forty-nine years.

4. There was nothing granted to Nehemiah, which was not embraced in the decree to Ezra; while the latter had all the forms and conditions of a decree, and was vastly more ample in its provisions.

5. It is evident from the prayer of Ezra, as recorded in chap. 9 : 9, of his book, that he considered himself fully empowered to proceed with the building of the city and the wall ; and it is evident

CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-27. 267

that he understood, further, that the conditional prophecies concerning his people were then fulfilled, from the closing words of that prayer in which he says,

" Should we again break thy commandments and join in affinity with the people of these abominations, wouldst thou not be angry with us till fehou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no

remnant nor escaping ?

"

6. Reckoning from the commission to Nehemiah, B. c. 444, the dates throughout are entirely disarranged ; for from that point the troublous times which were to attend the building of the street and wall, did not last seven weeks, or forty-nine years. Reckoning from that date, the sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, which were to extend to the Messiah the Prince, bring us to A. D. 40 ; but Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan and the voice of his Father was heard from Heaven declaring him his Son, in A. D. 27, thirteen years before. According to this calculation, the midst of the last, or seventieth, week, which is marked by the crucifixion, is placed in A. D. 44, but the crucifixion took place in A. D. 31, thirteen years previous. And lastly, the 70 weeks, or 490 years, dated from the twentieth of Artaxerxes, extend to A. D. 47, with absolutely nothing to mark their termination. Hence if that be the year, and the grant to Nehemiah the event, from which

to reckon, the prophecy has proved a failure. AP
it is, it only proves that theory a failure which dates
the seventy weeks from Nehemiah's commission in
the twentieth of Artaxerxes.

268 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

7. Will these dates harmonize if we reckon from
the decree to Ezra ? Let us see. In this case, 457
B. c. is our starting-point. Forty-nine years were
allotted to the building of the city and the wall.

On this point, Prideaux, Connec., vol. i, p. 322,
says :

" In the fifteenth year of Darius Notlius,
ended the first seven weeks of Daniel's prophecy.
For then the restoration of the church and state of
the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea was fully finished,
in that last act of reformation which is recorded in
the thirteenth chapter of Nehemiah, from the
twenty-third verse to the end of the chapter, just
forty-nine years after it had been commenced by
Ezra, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longirnanus."
So far, we find harmony. Let us apply the measuring-

rod of the prophecy still further. Sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, were to extend to Messiah the Prince. Dating from B. c. 457, they end in A. D.

27. And what event then occurred ? Luke thus informs u* :

" Now wh^n all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also, being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from Heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." Luke 3 : 21, 22, margin, A. D. 27. After this, Jesus came

" into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled." The time here mentioned must have been some specific, definite, and predicted period ;

CHAPTER IX, VJSS *6-S7. 260

but no prophetic period can be found then terminating, except the sixty-nine weeks of the prophecy of Daniel, which were to extend to Messiah the

Prince. The Messiah had now come ; and with his own lips he announced the termination of that period which was to be marked by his manifestation.*

Here again is indisputable harmony. But further: the Messiah was to confirm the covenant with many for one week. This would be the last week of the seventy, or the last seven years of the 490. In the midst of the week, the prophecy informs us, he should cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. These Jewish ordinances, pointing to the death of Christ, could cease only at the cross ; and there they did virtually come to an end, though the outward observance was kept up till the destruc-

* Luke declares that Jesus "

began to be about thirty }-ears of
age

" at the time of his baptism; Luke 2: 23; and almost immediately after this he entered upon his ministry. How, then, could his ministry commence in A. D. 27, and he still be of the age named by Luke? The answer to this question is found in the fact that Christ was born between three and four years before the

beginning of the Christian Era, that is, before the year marked A. D. 1. The mistake of dating the Christian Era something over three years this side of the birth of Christ, instead of dating it from the year of his birth, as it was designed to be, arose on this wise: One of the most important of ancient eras was that reckoned from the building of the city of Rome ab urbe coiidita, expressed by the abbreviation A. u. c., or more briefly, u. c. In the year which is now numbered A. D. 532, Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian by birth and a Roman Abbot, who flourished in the reign of Ju&tinjau, invented the Christian Era, According to the best evidence at his command, he placed the birth of Christ in the

270 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

tion of Jerusalem, A. D. 70. After threescore and two weeks, according to the record, the Messiah was to be cut off. It is the same as if it had read, And after threescore and two weeks, in the midst of the seventieth week, shall Messiah be cut off and cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. Now as the word midst here means middle, according to an abundance of authority which we might produce, if necessary, the crucifixion is definitely located

in the middle of the seventieth week.

It now becomes an important point to determine in what year the crucifixion took place. The following evidence is sufficient to be decisive on this question :

The Saviour attended but four passovers according to the record of John, mentioned in the following passages in his gospel. John 2:13; 5:1; 6:4;

year u. O. 753. But Christ was born before the death of Herod; and it was afterward ascertained on the clearest evidence that the death of Herod occurred in April u. c. 750. Allowing a few months for the events recorded in Christ's life before the time of Herod's death, his birth is carried back to the latter part of u. c. 749, a little over three years before A. D. 1. Christ was therefore thirty years of age in A. D. 27. "The Vulgar [common] Era began to prevail in the West about the time of Charles Martel, and pope Gregory II. A. D. 730 ; but was not sanctioned by any public Acts or Rescripts, till the first German Synod, in the time of Carolomannus, Duke of the Franks, which, in the preface, was said to be assembled ' Anno ah incarnatione Dom. 742, 11 Calendas Maii.' But it was not established till the time of pope Eugenius

IV. A. D. 1431, who ordered this era to be used in the public Registers:

according to Mariana and others." Holes'1

Chronology, vol.

i, pp. 83, 84. See also "Life of Our Lord," by S. J. Andrews.

CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-S7. 271

13:1. At the last-mentioned passover he was crucified.

From facts already established, let us then

see where this would locate the crucifixion. As he

began his ministry in the autumn of A. D. 27, his

first passover would be the following spring, A. D.

28. His second would be A. D. 29 ; his third, A. D.

30 ; and his fourth and last, A. D. 31. This gives

us three years and a half for his public ministry,

and corresponds exactly to the prophecy that he

should be cut off in the midst, or middle, of the

seventieth week. As that week of years commenced

in the autumn of A. D. 27, its middle would

be three and one half years later, in the spring of

31, where the crucifixion occurred. Dr. Hales

quotes Eusebius, A. D. 300, as saying: "It is recorded

in history that the whole time of our Saviour's

teaching and working miracles was three years and a half, which is the half of a week [of years]. This, John the evangelist will represent to those who critically attend to his gospel."

Of the unnatural darkness which occurred at the crucifixion, Hales, vol. i, pp. 69, 70 thus speaks:

" Hence it appears, that the darkness which ' overspread the whole land of Judea ' at the time of our Lord's crucifixion was preternatural,

' from the sixth

until the ninth hour,' or from noon till three in the afternoon, in its duration, and also in its time,

about full moon, when the moon could not possibly eclipse the sun. The time it happened, and the

fact itself, are recorded in a curious and valuable passage of a respectable Roman Consul, Aurelius

272 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

Cassiodorius Senator, about A. D. 514: 'In the consulate of Tiberius Caesar Aug. V. and ^Elius Sejanus

(u. G. 784, A. D. 31), our Lord Jesus Christ suffered,

on the 8th of the calends of April (25th of

March) : when there happened such an eclipse of the sun as was never before nor since.'

"In this year, and in this day, agree also the Council of Caesarea, A. D. 196 or 198, the Alexandrian Chronicle, Maximus Monachus, Nicephorus Constantinus, Cedrenus ; and in this year, but on different days, concur Eusebius and Epiphanius, followed by Kepler, Bucher, Patinus, and Petavius, some reckoning it the 10th of the calends of April, others the 13th."

Here, then, are thirteen credible authorities, locating the crucifixion of Christ in the spring of A.

D. 31. We may therefore set this down as a fixed fact, as the most cautious or the most skeptical could require nothing more. This being in the middle of the last week, we have simply to reckon backward three and a half years to find where the 69 weeks ended, and forward from that point, three and a half years, to find the termination of the whole period. Thus going back from the crucifixion, A. D. 31, spring, three and a half years, we find

ourselves in the autumn of A. D. 27, where, as we have seen, the 69 weeks ended, and Christ commenced his public ministry. And going from the crucifixion forward three and a half years, we are brought to the autumn of A. D. 34, as the grand terminating point of the whole period of the seventy weeks. This date is marked by the martyrdom of Stephen^ the formal rejection of the gospel of Christ by the Jewish Sanhedrim in the persecution of his disciples, and the turning of the apostles to the Gentiles. Acts 9 : 1-18. And these are just the events which we should expect to take place when that period which was cut off for the Jews, and allotted to them as a peculiar people, should fully expire.

CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-27. 273

A word respecting the date of the seventh of Artaxerxes, and the array of evidence on this point is complete. Was the seventh of Artaxerxes B. c. 457 ? For all those who can appreciate the force of facts, the following testimony will be sufficient

here :

"The Bible gives the data for a complete system of chronology, extending from the creation to the birth of Cyrus a clearly ascertained date. From this period downward we have the undisputed canon of Ptolemy, and the undoubted era of Nabonassar, extending below our vulgar era. At the point where inspired chronology leaves us, this canon of undoubted accuracy commences. And thus the whole arch is spanned. It is by the canon of Ptolemy that the great prophetic period of seventy weeks is fixed. This canon places the seventh year of Artaxerxes in the year B. c. 457 ; and the accuracy of this canon is demonstrated by the concurrent agreement of more than twenty eclipses. This date we cannot change from B. c. 457, without first demonstrating the inaccuracy of Ptolemy's canon. To do this it would be necessary to show that the large number of eclipses by which its accuracy has been repeatedly demonstrated have not been correctly computed ; and such a result would unsettle every chronological date, and leave* the settlement of epochs and the adjustment of eras entirely at the mercy of

274 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

every dreamer, so that chronology would be of no more value than mere guess-work. As the seventy weeks must terminate in A. D. 34, unless the seventh of Artaxerxes is wrongly fixed, and as that cannot be changed without some evidence to that effect, we inquire, What evidence marked that termination ? The time when the apostles turned to the Gentiles harmonizes with that date better than any other which has been named. And the crucifixion in A. D. 31, in the midst of the last week, is sustained by a mass of testimony which cannot be easily invalidated." Ad. Herald.

From the facts above set forth, we see that, reckoning the seventy weeks from the decree given to Ezra in the seventh of Artaxerxes, B. c. 457, there is the most perfect harmony throughout. The important and definite events of the manifestation of the Messiah at his baptism, the commencement of his public ministry, the crucifixion and the turning away from the Jews to the Gentiles, with the proclamation of the new covenant, all come in, in their exact place, and like a bright galaxy of blazing

orbs of light, cluster round to set their seal to the prophecy and make it sure.

It is thus evident that the decree to Ezra in the seventh of Artaxerxes, B. c. 457, is the point from which to date the seventy weeks. That was the going forth of the decree in the sense of the prophecy.

The two previous decrees were preparatory and preliminary to this ; and indeed they are regarded by Ezra as parts of it, the three being taken as one great whole. For in Ezra 6 :14, we read,

" And they bjuilded and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-27. 275

the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia." It will be noticed that the decrees of these three kings are spoken of as one :

" The commandment," margin, decree, singular number,

"

of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes ;

"

showing

that they are all reckoned as a unit, the different decrees being but the successive steps by which the work was accomplished. And this decree could not be said to have "gone forth," as intended by the prophecy, the last permission which the prophecy required was embodied in the decree and clothed with the authority of the empire. This point was reached in the grant given to Ezra, but not before.

Here the decree assumed the proportions, and covered the ground, demanded by the prophecy, and

from this point its

"

going forth

" must be dated.

With the seventy weeks we are now done ; but there remains a longer period and other important events to be considered. The seventy weeks are but the first 490 years of the 2300. Take 490 from 2300, and there remain 1810. The 490, as we have seen, ended in the autumn of A. D. 34. If to this date we now add the remaining 1810 years, we shall

have the termination of the whole period. Thus, to A. D. 34, autumn, add 1810, and we have A. D., autumn, eighteen hundred and forty-four. Thus speedily and surely do we find the termination of the 2300 days, when once the seventy weeks have been located.

One other point should here be noticed. We have seen that the seventy weeks are the first 490 days of
276 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

the 2300 ; that these days are prophetic, signifying literal years, according to the Bible rule, a day for a year, Num. 14 : 34 ; Eze. 4:6, as is proved by the fulfillment of the seventy weeks, and as all eminent expositors agree ; that they commenced in 457 B. c., and ended in A. D. 1844, provided the number is right, and twenty-three hundred is the correct reading.

With this point established, there would seem to be no room for further controversy. On this point Dr. Hales remarks :

" There is no number in the Bible whose genuineness is better ascertained than that of the 2300 days. It is found

in all the printed Hebrew editions, in all the MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi's collations, and in all the ancient Versions, except the Vatican copy of the Septuagint, which reads 2400, followed by Symmachus; and some copies noticed by Jerom, 2200, both evidently literal errors in excess and defect, which compensate each other and confirm the mean, 2300." Chronology, vol. ii, p. 512.

The query may here arise, how the days can be extended to the autumn of 1844, if they commence 457 B. c., as it requires only 1843 years in addition to the 457, to make the whole number of 2300.

Attention to one fact will clear this point of all difficulty ; and that is, that it takes 457 full years before Christ, and 1843 full years after, to make 2300; so that if the period commenced with the very first day of 457, it would not terminate till the very last day of 1843. Now it will be evident to all that whatever part of the year 457 had passed away before the 2300 days commenced, just so much of the year 1844 must pass away before they would end.

CHAPTER IX, VERSES 25-21. 277

We therefore inquire, At what point in the year 457 are we to commence to reckon ? From the fact that the first 49 years were allotted to the building of the street and wall, we learn that the period is to be dated, not from the starting of Ezra for Babylon, but from the actual commencement of the work at Jerusalem ; which it is not probable could be earlier than the seventh month (autumn) of 457, as he did not arrive at Jerusalem till the fifth month of that year. Ezra 7 : 9. The whole period would therefore extend to the seventh month, autumn Jewish time, of 1844.

Those who oppose this view of the prophetic periods, have been wont in years past to meet us like this :

" The 2300 days have not ended, because the time has passed, and the Lord has not come. Why the time passed in 1844, without the consummation of our hopes, we acknowledge to be a mystery ; but the passing of the time is proof that the 2300 days have not ended."

Time, however, is no respecter of persons nor of theories ; and with the formidable scythe which he is represented as carrying, he sometimes demolishes in the most summary manner the grotesque and gossamer theories of men, however dear they may be to their authors and defenders. It is so here.

Heedless of the wild contortions of those who would fain compel him to stop and fulfill their darling predictions, he has kept on the swift but even tenor of his way until what ? every limit is passed to which the 2300 days can be extended ; and thus

278 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

he has demonstrated that those days have passed.

Let not this point be overlooked. Setting aside for a moment the arguments by which they are shown to have ended in 1844, and letting them date from any point where there is the least shadow of ground for placing them, or from which the wildest dreamer could date them, it is still true that the utmost limit to which they would extend has gone by. They cannot possibly be dated at any point which would

bring their termination so late as the present time.

We therefore say again, with not a misgiving as to the truth of the assertion, nor a fear of its successful contradiction, Those days have ended !

The momentous declaration made by the angel to Daniel, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days, then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," is now explained. In our search for the meaning of the sanctuary and its cleansing, and the application of the time, we have found not only that this subject can be easily understood ; but lo ! the event is now almost accomplished. And here we pause to reflect a brief moment upon the solemn position into which we are brought.

We have seen that the sanctuary of this dispensation is the tabernacle of God in Heaven, the house not made with hands, where our Lord ministers in behalf of penitent sinners, the place where between the great God and his Son Jesus Christ, the " counsel of peace

"

prevails in the work of salvation

for perishing men. Zech. 6 : 13 ; Ps. 85 : 10.

We have seen that the cleansing of the sanctuary

CHAPTEli IX, VERSES 25-27. 279

consists in the removing of the sins from the same,

and is the closing act of the ministration performed

therein; that the work of salvation now centers in

the heavenly sanctuary ; and when this sanctuary

is cleansed, the work is done, and the plan is finished

! Then the great scheme devised at the fall

for the salvation of as many of the lost race as

would avail themselves of its provisions, and carried

forward for 6000 years, is brought to its final

termination. Mercy no longer pleads, and the great

voice is heard from the throne in the temple of

Heaven, saying, It is done. Rev. 16 : 17. And

what then ? All the righteous are safe for everlasting

life ; all the wicked are doomed to everlasting

death. No decision can be changed, no reward

can be lost, and no destiny of despair can be averted,

beyond that point.

And we have seen (and this is what brings the solemnities of the Judgment to our own door) that that long prophetic period which was to mark the commencement of this final work in the heavenly sanctuary, has met its termination in our own generation.

In 1844 the days ended. For thirtyseven years the final work for man's salvation has been going forward. This work involves an examination of every man's character ; for it consists in the remission of the sins of those who shall be found worthy to have them remitted, and determines who among the dead shall be raised, and who among the living shall be changed, at the coming of the Lord, and who, of both dead and living,

280 THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

shall be left to have their part in the fearful scenes of the second death. And all can see that such a decision as this must be rendered before the Lord appears.

Every man's case is to be determined by the deeds done in the body, and each one is to be rewarded according to his works. In the books of

remembrance, kept by the heavenly scribes above, every man's deeds will be found recorded ; in the closing sanctuary work, these records are examined, and decision is rendered in accordance therewith. It would be most natural to suppose that the work would commence with the first members of the human race ; that their cases would be first examined, and decision rendered, and so on with all the dead, generation by generation, in chronological succession along the stream of time, till we reach the last generation, the generation of the living, with whose cases the work would close. How long it will take to examine the cases of all the dead, how soon the work will reach the cases of the living, we do not know. As above remarked, for thirty-seven years this work has already been going forward. The light of the types, and the very nature of the case, forbid that it should be of long continuance. John, in his sublime views of heavenly scenes, saw millions of attendants and assistants, engaged with our Lord in his priestly work. Rev. 5. And so

the ministration goes forward. It ceases not, it delays not ; and it must soon be forever finished.

And here we stand ; the last, the greatest, and the most solemn crisis in the history of our race immediately impending ; the great plan of salvation about finished ; the last precious years of probation almost ended; the Lord about to come to save those who are ready and waiting, and to cut asunder the careless and unbelieving ; and the world alas! what shall we say of them! deceived with error, crazed with cares and business, delirious with pleasure, and paralyzed with vice, they have not a moment to spare in listening to solemn truth, nor a thought to bestow upon their eternal interests.

Let the people of God, with eternity right in view, be careful to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust, and prepare to pass the searching test, when their cases shall come up for examination in the great tribunal above.

To the careful attention of every student of

prophecy, we commend the subject of the sanctuary. In it is seen the ark of God's testament, containing his holy law, and suggesting a reform in our obedience to that great standard of morality. The opening of this heavenly temple, or the commencement of the service in its second apartment, marks the commencement of the sounding of the seventh angel. Rev. 11:15, 19. The work performed therein is the foundation of the third message of Rev. 14, the last message of mercy to a perishing world. This subject explains the great disappointment of 1844, by showing that we mistook the event to occur at the end of the days. It renders harmonious and clear, past prophetic fulfillments, which are otherwise involved in impenetrable ob282

THOUGHTS ON DANIEL.

scuritj. It gives a definite idea of the position and work of our great High Priest, and brings out the plan of salvation in its distinctive and beautiful features. It reins us up, as no other subject does, to the realities of the Judgment, and shows the

preparation we need, to be able to stand in the coming day. It shows us that we are in the waiting time, and puts us upon our watch ; for we know not how soon the work will be finished, and our Lord appear. Watch, lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

After stating the great events connected with our Lord's mission here upon earth, the prophet in the last part of verse 27 speaks of the soon-following destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman power ; and finally of the destruction of that power itself, called in the margin, " the desolator."