

subject for discussion the question, "Has the promised Messiah already come, or is he yet to come?" Upon which I invited him to forget for a while we live in the 19th century, and to suppose that we live at the time of the prophet Malachi, or a generation later than his ministry and last Old Testament oracles. In this supposition, we opened the Bible, and examined that prophet's message with regard to the sudden appearance of the Covenant Angel in his temple; comparing this with one prophecy of Haggai, and another of Zechariah; and then I said, "Remember now that we are supposed to live during the second temple; and what would you think of the man that would maintain, that these explicit and clear prophecies regarding the coming (and that very soon, and in the same temple) of the Messiah must be slung to a distant future of more than 2000 years?" After a good while of serious thought and hesitation, he said, that certainly, as a citizen of ancient Jerusalem during the second temple, he would have called the supposed individual a *madman or infidel*, as they were then obliged to hope that Messiah would soon come; but seeing that (in his opinion) he has not come yet, the Jews were therefore obliged to think that either were those oracles misinterpreted by their fathers during the second temple (for he cannot deny that then Messiah's appearance was expected daily), or that his coming was delayed because of Israel's sin.

The very nature of our subject under discussion led us to consider Daniel's oracle of the *seventy weeks*; and here he wanted unexceptionable proofs that every one of these weeks was composed of *seven years*, and not of ten, of twenty, or any other number. External proofs, by comparing it with other passages (as that regarding the jubilee period, composed of seven times seven years, etc.), would not satisfy him as conclusive enough, and he must have internal proofs. Internal proofs—Daniel engaged in prayer and supplication, first, for the restoration of the then destroyed Jerusalem; and, second, for a full pardon of the sins of his nation. Both requests are granted to him, and the angel tells him that the first (i.e., the rebuilding of Jerusalem) was to take place after a period of *seven weeks* and that the second (i.e., to "finish transgression, and make an end of sin")

was to take place by Messiah's expiatory death, after another period of sixty-two weeks, and during the last of the last week of the seventy. Now is the question, Was, or was not, Jerusalem rebuilt after Daniel's prayer, and according to the angel's promise? If it was (as no one can deny) then we must see at what time, and consequently of how many years each of these *weeks* was composed. This part of the subject being clear as daylight, we can safely and boldly go on to make a simple addition of the other sixty-two weeks, and see how many years after the rebuilding of Jerusalem Messiah was to come, according to the oracle.\*

If to convince a man of the exact interpretation of some Messianic prophecies would constitute conversion, the work would have been done; as he confessed himself satisfied, yea, well pleased with the interpretation, and astonished at the force of the passage. All but the Holy Spirit must first convince a man of sin, and then bring him to the cross to see Christ suffer and die for his sins, yea, and rise again for his justification; and this part of the work no missionary, yea, and no archangel, can perform. O may he do it who alone can accomplish it! My welcome visitor promised to endeavor and profit as much as possible by his visit to Algeria; and I promised him to do all in my power in the way of leading him in as far as it is given to man to instruct and lead another, and exhorted him to seek by ardent prayer to obtain the rest directly from the Lord.

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ALEPPO.

The Rev. Mr. Brown says, (17th November).—The very short interval between the arrival and departure of the post scarcely permits me to thank you for your kind and refreshing letter. I trust that what you write is the burden of the prayers of yourself and many others. It is difficult for good people at home to conceive how hard it is, amid universal spiritual death, to maintain

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\* Mr. Weiss' argument here is, that it can be proved by undoubted historical facts and dates that the seven weeks spoken of mean 49 years, and the time exactly elapsed before Jerusalem was rebuilt and the worship of God restored; so that the sixty-two weeks must also mean weeks of years, and years, marking the precise time when the Messiah was to come. It is an argument which no Jew can answer.—Edit.