

# A Time, Times and Half a Time

The above phrase is found twice in the writings Daniel the prophet in most modern Bibles. Many commentaries interpret this phrase as meaning three and a half years and a growing number of translators of recent versions have incorporated the idea of three and a half into their text as Scripture in conformance with a huge convoluted end time theory that will need a little pedantic attention to unravel. With that in mind, here are the two verses in four different versions of the Bible which we will now examine carefully. Firstly we have the King James Version:

## Daniel 7:25

And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

## Daniel 12:7

And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

Here are the same verses in the New King James:

## Daniel 7:25 NKJV

He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

## Daniel 12:7 NKJV

Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.

And here they are again in the International Children's Bible which is representative of eight other translations that use the phrase "three and a half years":

## Daniel 7:25 ICB

This king will say things against the Most High God. And he will hurt and kill God's people. He will try to change times and laws that have already been set. The people that belong to God will be in that king's power for three and one-half years.

## Daniel 12:7 ICB

The man dressed in linen who stood over the water raised his hands toward heaven. And I heard him make a promise. He used the name of God who lives forever. He said,

**“It will be for three and one-half years. The power of the holy people will finally be broken. Then all these things will come true.”**

Here it is also from the Common English Bible:

### **Daniel 7:25 CEB**

**He will say things against the Most High and will exhaust the holy ones of the Most High. He will try to change times set by law. And for a period of time, periods of time, and half a period of time, they will be delivered into his power.**

### **Daniel 12:7 CEB**

**I heard the man clothed in white linen, who was farther upstream, swear by the one who lives forever as he raised both hands to heaven: “For one set time, two set times, and half a set time. When the breaking of the holy people’s power is over, all these things will be over.”**

Of the above four versions, the NKJV is representative of the majority of modern English Bibles which present this phrase from these two verses with identical or very similar words so that many commentaries now equate the two verses as speaking of the same event.

**The ICB is an example of a more recent trend in later Bible versions to render the phrase as “three and a half years” and consequently to connect the two verses to the phrase in Daniel Chapter 9:27 which speaks of the “middle of the week” which is also understood to mean three and a half years.**

In this study we will examine these two verses in order to show that they are not to be equated or conflated. To do this we will first look at the original language of Daniel 7:25 and Daniel 12:7 and then we will look closely at the context of these two verses along with Daniel 9:27 and we shall see what we shall see.

### **Daniel 7:25**

**. . . until a time and times and the dividing of time**

**By way of reminder, this portion of Scripture was written in Aramaic which is a ‘sister’ language to Hebrew with many words being identical or similar. The word rendered ‘time’ is the Aramaic word *iddah* and refers to menstruation and it corresponds with the Hebrew word *iddan*, which is variously translated, moment, period of time, situation, appointed time etc.**

To suggest this word means year in this verse is most unfortunate for there is a distinctly different Aramaic word for year and that word is *shena* or *shenah*. **The corresponding Hebrew word for ‘year’ or ‘years’ is *shana*, which is used about 800 times throughout Scripture. The KJV’s use of the word ‘time’ is at least literal if not fully understandable.**

As noted above, the Common English Bible renders “time and times” as follows:

### **Daniel 7:25 CEB**

**. . . period of time, periods of time . . .**

In this they got it accurately. However, along with most Bible versions, they render the KJV word “dividing” as “half a period” or “half a year”, though a few versions agree with the KJV. **The Aramaic**

word that is translated “dividing” is *pelag*. The Hebrew rendition of this word is *palag*, or *Peleg*, which is also translated ‘divide’ or ‘divided’ and refers to the land being divided by water; as in canals or rivers or streams. Peleg, the first man recorded to die after the flood was named after the event that divided the earth, probably when the melt back from the ice age divided the continents and made many islands (Genesis 10:25). So it is that *Pelag* or *palag* more literally means the dividing of time, in particular between this age and the age to come, in other words: the end of the age.

Here it is in its context and as you will see, this literal translation fits:

### Daniel 7:21-27

I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; 22 Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.

23 Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. 24 And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. 25 And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.

26 But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. 27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Do you see it? The last earthly kingdom is persecuting the saints until the dividing of time when the judgment is made and the saints then inherit the everlasting Kingdom. In the light of that which I have discovered, here’s a paraphrase of how I believe this verse should be rendered:

### Daniel 7:25 My Version

And the saints shall be given into his hand from time to time until the dividing of time at the end of the age.

Now let us look at the similar phrase in English in Daniel 12:7 which reads, “. . . a time, times and an half” in the KJV and “time, times and half a time” in the NKJV.

The Hebrew words are completely different from the words used in Daniel 7:25: “time” originating from the Hebrew word *mo’wed*; and half from *wahesi*. *Mo’wed* means “appointed time”, most commonly used of a meeting of the congregation. Also of appointed feasts or any set period of time, so on rare occasions it could mean a year. And *wahesi* actually does mean “half”, though not specifically that of time as it is used in terms like “half a cubit” etc.

Again the KJV is literally more correct, even if the meaning is not so clear, so we shall look at the context in both the KJV and the NKJV:

## Daniel 12:6-7

And one said to the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?

7 And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished.

## Daniel 12:6-7 NKJV

6 And one said to the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?"

7 Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that it shall be for a time, times, and half a time; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these things shall be finished.

The context reveals that this "time, times and an half", or "half a time", is immediately before the complete scattering of the "holy people" as the passage is speaking of that period of time that included the Abomination of Desolation (Daniel 12:11). The KJV has "scattered" and the NKJV has "shattered" and on this rendering scholars and translators are divided, understandably as the word is used both ways throughout Scripture. However, when I looked through the examples of its use, when it referred to people groups or nations it almost always meant "scattered". When used of a clay jar that is struck and is shattered, the imagery includes the scattering of the pieces.

"Time, times and an half" is part of the answer to the question "How long shall the fulfillment of these wonders be?" Therefore it is reasonable to assume it is speaking of a period or periods of time. "How long?" We take note that the question mentions "these wonders" which alerts us to look and see what the "wonders" are as they form an important part of the context and have significance with regard to the meaning. All the historical oppressions of the king of the North and the king of the South are not in mind here. The wonders Daniel had just heard of was the deliverance of his people whose names were in the Book of Life, the people being awakened unto everlasting life, the wise shining and turning many to righteousness (Daniel 12:1-3). When, or how long till the fulfillment of these wonders? How about three and a half years.

## Daniel 9:27 NKJV

Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;  
But in the middle of the week  
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.

The three and a half years of the remainder of the seventieth week of Daniel 9:27 was when many of Daniel's people would enter the New Covenant. And then the people were scattered. They went everywhere preaching the Word. Hallelujah! When we remember that these prophecies of Daniel are to be viewed synoptically, it is easier to join the dots and see that this scattering of the holy people was accomplished in the New Testament. We certainly cannot make this verse fit the description of the Jews destroyed by the Romans who were described as having reached the fullness of their iniquity and consequently are not considered holy.

So then, Daniel 7:25 is speaking of the end of the age, but Daniel 12:7 and Daniel 9:27 are synoptically speaking of the second three and a half years of the 'seventieth week'.

Hope you have found this enlightening.