

# DANIEL'S '70 WEEKS' PROPHECY

## DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME IT IS?

At the beginning of each page of the Prophecy Section of this journal I ask this question, and explain God's timetable for the second coming of Jesus Christ. That timetable is Daniel's '70th Week'. The first four pages of my Prophecy Section correspond to four links in a divine 'prophetic chain':

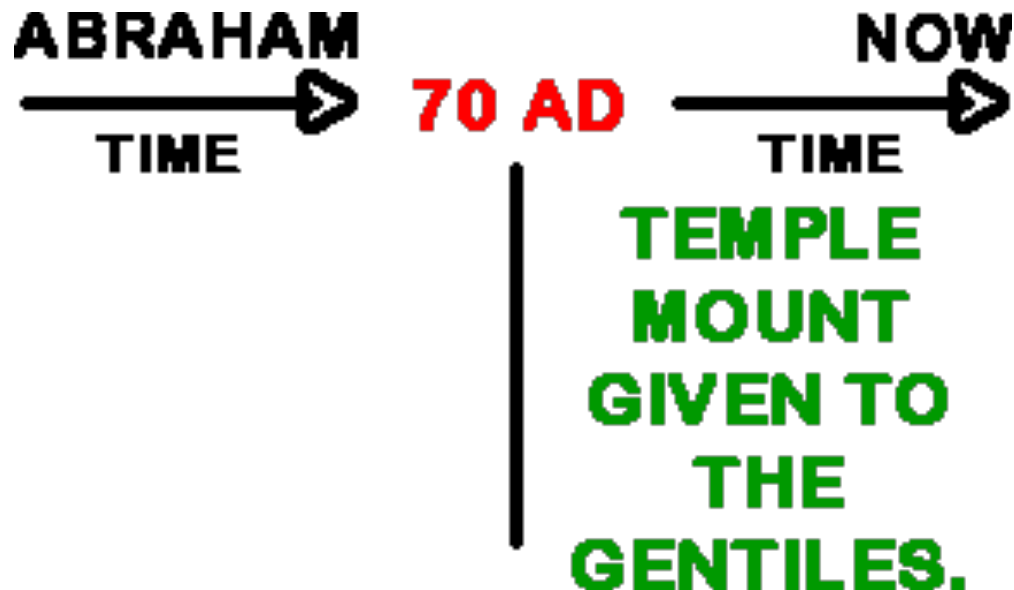


A side-by-side comparison of the three versions of Jesus' Olivet Discourse (from Matthew, Mark and Luke), combined with an examination of the four visions of John's Little Book (in Revelation chapters 11-13), leads to the undeniable conclusion that Daniel's 70th Week is the 'Great Week of the Abrahamic Covenant':

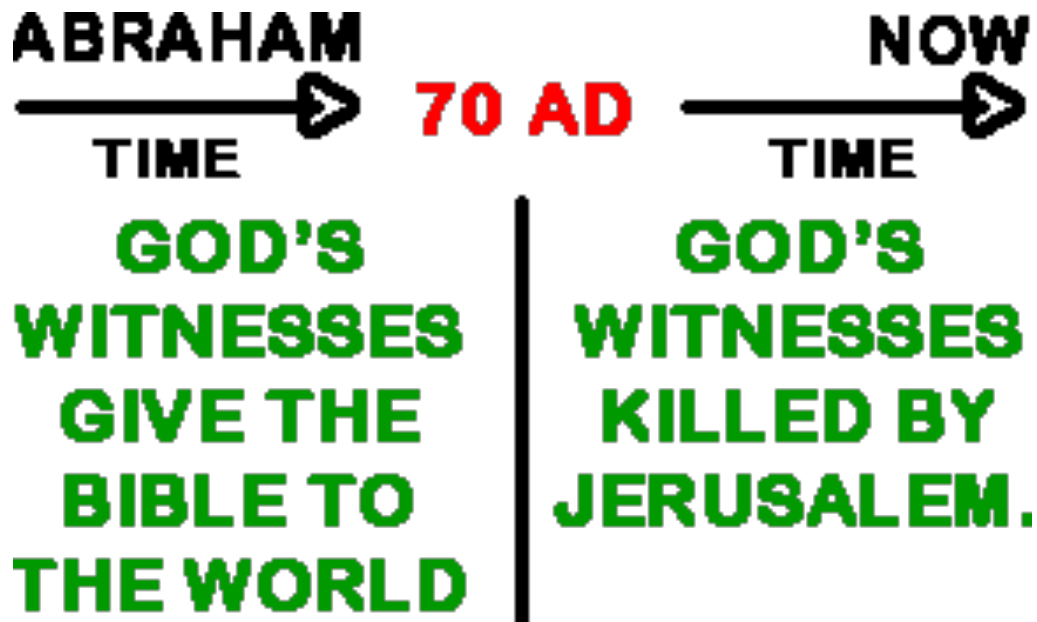


If John's 'Little Book' did not exist, I myself would feel compelled to embrace one of the other two major views on Daniel's 70th Week; either Post-Millennialism or Dispensationalism. But John's Little Book does exist. I present the four visions from that 'Little Book' in the four diagrams below:

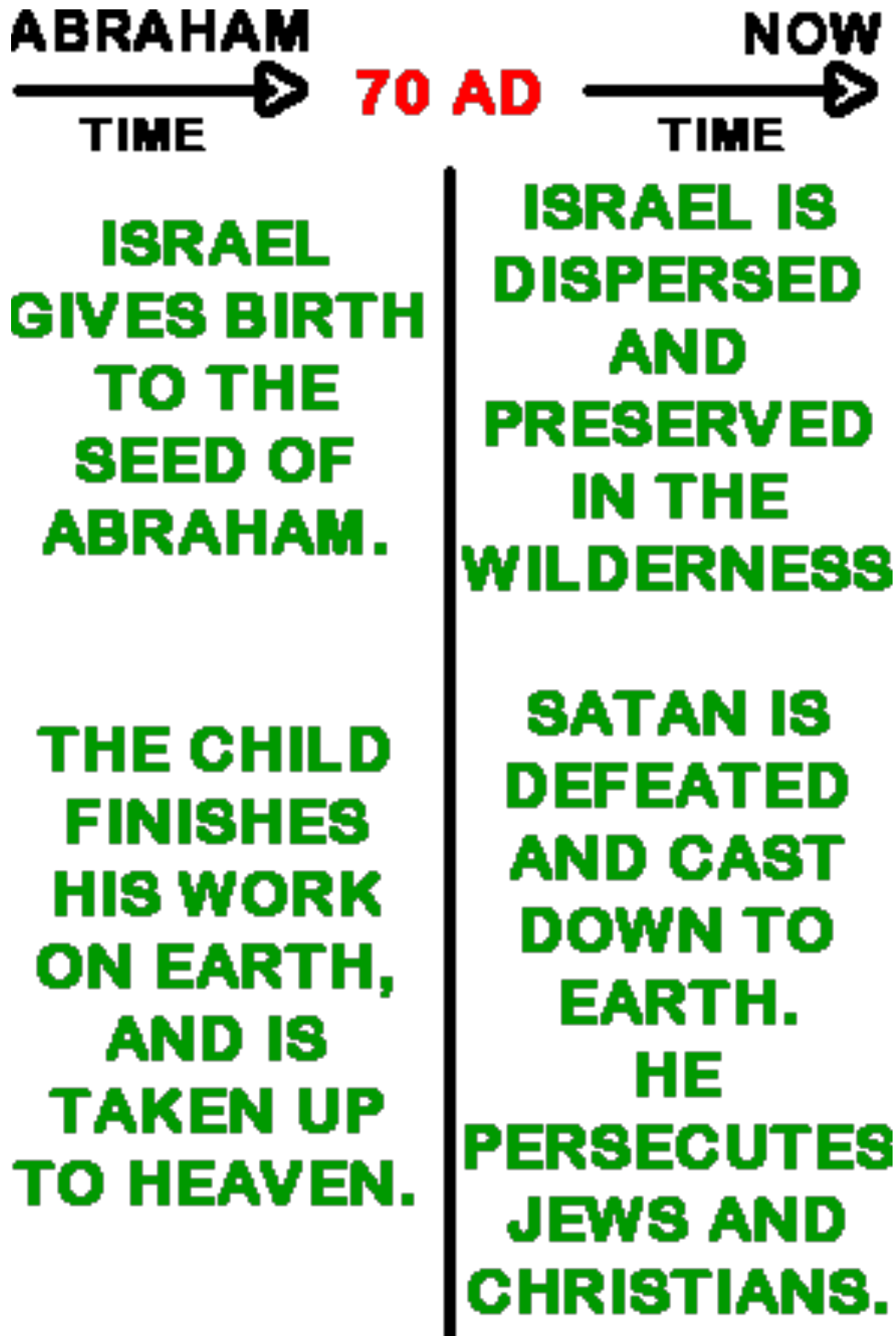
### 1) THE TEMPLE AND THE COURTYARD (Revelation 11:1-2)



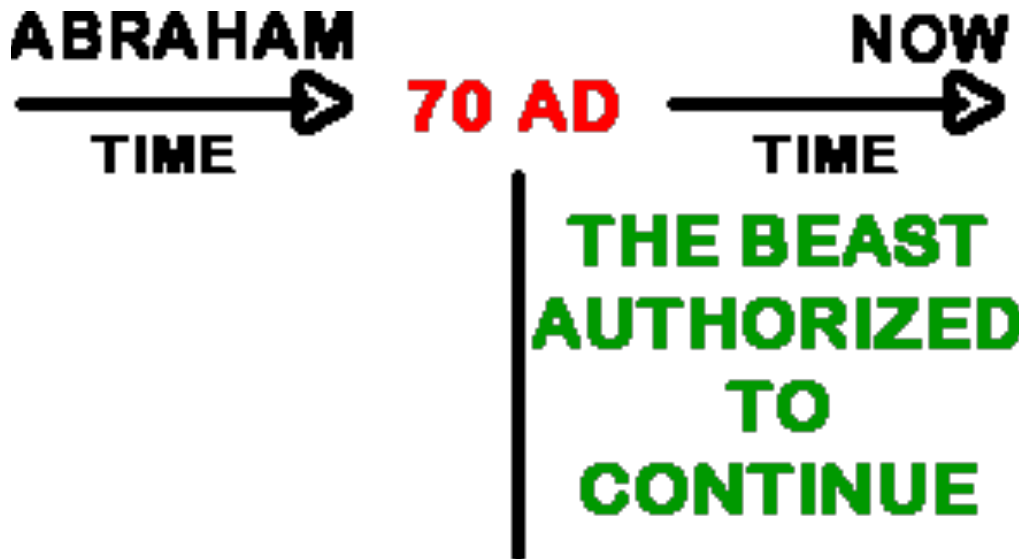
### 2) THE TWO WITNESSES (Revelation 11:3-12)



### 3) THE WOMAN, THE CHILD AND THE DRAGON (Revelation 12)



## 4) THE BEAST FROM THE SEA (Revelation 13)



### DANIEL'S CIRCUMSTANCES

The prophet Daniel lived approximately 400 years after King David. Daniel was probably born around 610-615 BC. David's son, King Solomon, had built the great Temple in Jerusalem around 1000 BC. But after Solomon's death the nation of Israel split into two parts; the northern kingdom of Israel (comprised of 10 tribes), and the southern kingdom of Judah (comprised of the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin). After this division of the nation, the kingdom of Israel began to stray farther and farther away from God.

The northern kingdom of Israel was conquered and destroyed by Assyria around 720 BC. But the northern 10 tribes were not completely lost. Many of them fled from the Assyrian invasion to take refuge in Judah and Jerusalem. The remaining kingdom of Judah (where Daniel lived) continued on until 597 BC; when it was conquered by Babylon. These conquests of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah represented the judgments of God, because they had departed from Him and His laws. The Biblical prophets loudly warned the people of both kingdoms that this judgment was coming; warnings that we can still read in the Bible today.

The kingdom of David was conquered in two stages by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar. After Nebuchadnezzar's first conquest of Judah in 597 BC, he confiscated much of its wealth and put it under taxation. He also took many of its young and capable people back to Babylon to serve him. Daniel was one of those first captives taken to Babylon. His story is recorded for us in the book of Daniel.

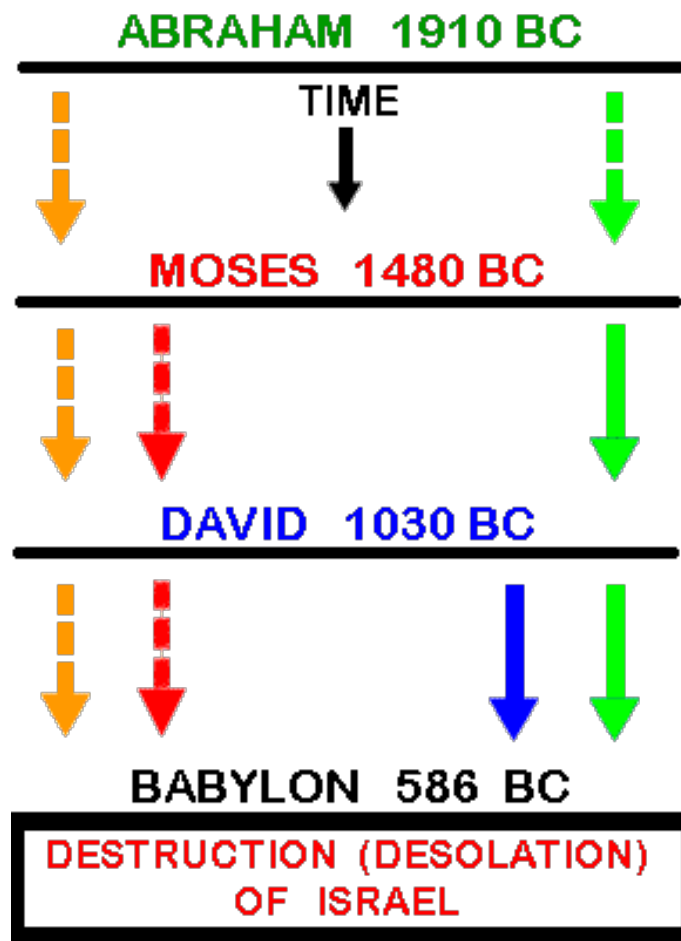
While he lived in Babylon, Daniel watched his homeland from a distance as it continued to disobey God and rebel against Nebuchadnezzar. And so, in 586 BC, Babylon brought complete desolation and upon the Jewish people. Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its great Temple, bringing an apparent end to the Mosaic Covenant. And he removed David's family from power, ending the Davidic Kingdom (there has not been another king from David's family who has ruled in Israel since that time).

But for Daniel and the Jewish people, the desolation of the kingdom of Judah did not end God's judgment. Nebuchadnezzar dragged the chained survivors all the way back to that part of the world where Abraham had first begun 1300 years earlier. God could not have made His fierce anger toward Israel more clear.



## ABRAHAM'S JOURNEY REVERSED!

As a devout God-fearing man, the destruction of his homeland raised serious questions in Daniel's mind. Foremost among them were 1) 'Does Israel have a future?' and 2) 'What will become of the covenant promises of God?'; His covenants with Abraham, Moses and David?



## END OF THE COVENANTS?

God's answers to Daniel's questions are found in the book of Daniel, and are foundational to the prophecy section of this web site. Daniel was a faithful servant of God, and his character is important for all Christians to study and follow. But his prophecies are even more important, because Daniel lived at one of the great crossroads of world history; when God's covenant promises to Abraham, Moses and David were coming face to face with the rise of Gentile world power. It was in those circumstances that God began to foretell how that confrontation was going to play out; both for Israel and for the world.

## SORTING DANIEL'S PROPHECIES

There are five prophecies in the book of Daniel. The first three of those prophecies, in chapters 2, 7 and 8, focus upon the restoration of David's kingdom (by his 'promised Son') after it has been dominated by four successive Gentile kingdoms (Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome). Each of these three prophecies describes future events in greater detail as you read through them. It's like looking at something through a microscope, and clicking up the magnifying power as you proceed from one prophecy to the next.

The fourth prophecy, in Daniel chapter 9, provides two timetables; a 69-week timetable leading up to first coming of Abraham's Seed ('Messiah the Prince', Daniel 9:25), and a final remaining 70th week leading up to God's fulfillment of all prophecy at the second coming.

The fifth prophecy, contained in chapters 10 through 12, focuses primarily upon the theme of the four successive Gentile empires, but also includes a reference to one half of the 70th Week from chapter 9 (3.5 times, Daniel 12:7).

## **THE 70 WEEKS PROPHECY**

The 70 Weeks prophecy is comprised of four verses, found in Daniel 9:24-27:

**Verse 24:** Seventy weeks are determined upon your people and upon your holy city (Jerusalem); to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins and to make reconciliation for iniquity. To bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy and to anoint the most Holy. Daniel 9:24

This verse provides the focus of the prophecy. It is about Daniel's people (Israel) and his holy city (Jerusalem). Within that context God told Daniel that sin would be dealt with, and everlasting righteousness would be established. In addition all prophecy would be fulfilled, and the 'most Holy' would be anointed.

Who or what is the 'Most Holy' referred to here? There are various opinions. Some say it is the Messiah. Some believe that it refers to a rebuilding of the Temple. In Israel's history a new king was anointed upon taking the throne. And so, personally, I suspect that the 'Most Holy' is Jesus Christ, the "Holy One of Israel":

**For the Lord is our defense, and the Holy One of Israel is our King. Psalm 89:18**

**Fear not Jacob, you worm, and you men of Israel. "I will help you" says the Lord and your Redeemer; the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 41:14**

**I am the Lord, your Holy One; the creator of Israel, your King. Isaiah 43:15**

**As for our Redeemer, the Lord of hosts is His name; the Holy One of Israel. Isaiah 47:4**

In these verses the 'Holy One of Israel' is described as both a 'Redeemer' and a 'King'. And this is the order of things that we find in Daniel 9:24; Israel's redemptive cleansing precedes the anointing of Israel's King.

**Verse 25:** Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks and sixty and two weeks. The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. Daniel 9:25



God told Daniel that after a period of 69 weeks (7 weeks + 62 weeks) the Messiah and 'Prince of David' would come. These 'weeks' would be 'weeks of years', each week being 7 years long. And the 69 weeks would begin with the permission allowing the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem.

It is important to be clear about this permission. The Jewish people received two separate permissions to rebuild in their homeland. The first permission, given by King Cyrus of Persia, was to rebuild their Temple. This permission is recorded in the book of Ezra (Ezra 1:1-4), and may have been given around 535 BC. But the permission to rebuild the city of Jerusalem was given 90 years later; by King Artaxerxes I of Persia (around 445 BC, Nehemiah 2:1-10).

It is interesting to notice that God Himself providentially distinguished these permissions for the Jewish people and the world. After they had begun to rebuild the Temple, their enemies wrote to the king of Persia claiming that they were rebuilding the city of Jerusalem (Ezra 4:12-16). As a result the Jews were forbidden to continue their work. It was not until everyone understood that they only had permission to rebuild the Temple, that God then blessed their progress on that project.

Why does God divide the 69 weeks into 7 weeks and 62 weeks? Again, there are many opinions. My own thought is that, although the city's gates and walls were rebuilt fairly quickly (Nehemiah 6:15), it may not have been fully populated and established until 7 'weeks' (49 years) had passed (Nehemiah 7:4).

**Verse 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. Daniel 9:26**

In this verse God showed Daniel three outwardly visible, historical events that would follow the Messiah's coming:

- 1) The Messiah would die, but not 'for Himself'. And He would not obtain His promised Kingdom.
- 2) The people of another prince would destroy the city of Jerusalem and the Temple.
- 3) Until the end of the war desolations were appointed for Jerusalem and the Temple.

These predictions were all fulfilled in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple by the armies of Rome (led by the Roman prince Titus, son of the Emperor Vespasian and next emperor of Rome), and the ongoing desolation of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem which continues to this very day.



**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 offering 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 9:27

This verse confronts us with a challenging question that requires an answer: "Who is the 'he' referred to in verse 27?" We are limited to two choices; it must be one of two princes. It must be either "Messiah the Prince" (of Israel) who came and died after 69 'weeks', or "the prince that shall come"; whose people would destroy the city and the Temple.

## **THE DISPENSATIONAL VIEW**

There is a school of thought among evangelical Christians called "Dispensationalism". They would DISAGREE with my claim that Daniel's 70th Week is the 'Great Week' of the Abrahamic Covenant; stretching over roughly 4000 years. Instead Dispensationalists teach that the final 70th Week is just like the first 69 weeks; a 'week' of seven regular calendar years. And they claim that this Week is separated from the first 69 weeks by a 'Dispensation' of time; something that they call 'the church age'.

Dispensationalists teach that Israel's 'prophetic clock' stopped with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, and will not resume again until the 70th Week begins. And their 70th Week will encompass the three events of Daniel 9:27. At the beginning of the 'Week' the Antichrist will 1) confirm a covenant with Israel and the Jewish people. And then at the midpoint of the week the Antichrist will 2) bring sacrifices in the Temple in Jerusalem to an end. At the same time the Antichrist will become 3) Daniel's 'Abomination of Desolation', by standing in the Temple and calling himself God.

Dispensationalists would agree with my explanation of the first two verses of this prophecy. And some of them might even agree with my claim that the 'prince who is to come' in verse 26 is Titus, and that 'his people' are the armies of Rome in 70 AD. But Dispensationalists use a principle of Bible interpretation called 'Dual Fulfillment' to bend God's word, and make it say more than it does. For instance they would say that words 'the prince who is to come' can not only refer to Titus, but also be an indirect reference to a far future 'prince'; the Antichrist.

'Dual Fulfillment' is a valid concept. There are many passages in the Bible where two things are represented at the same time. For instance, when John the Baptist looked at Jesus and said 'Behold the Lamb of God' (John 1:36), or when Christ appears as a slain 'Lamb' before God's throne in Revelation 5:6, we understand that the Passover Lamb of Old Testament Israel had both vital meaning and importance for them in the past, as well as greater meaning and importance in the present. In addition, when we read about God's judgments upon Babylon (Isaiah 47, Jeremiah 50-51), we know that those passages are

fulfilled both by Persia's conquest of Babylon in the past, and also by a future judgment of 'Babylon the Great' in Revelation 18.

But 'Dual Fulfillment' is not a concept to be used carelessly. For instance God Himself makes it clear that He uses 'Dual Fulfillment' in regard to Babylon. He indicated this by representing 'Babylon' in terms of a single statue in Daniel chapter 2. This prophecy is God's explanation for why the last vestiges of Roman power in the world are called 'Babylon' in the book of Revelation. This is because Rome is the final 'iron' phase of this single statue, and the final installment of what Babylon began; removal of the kingdom of David from the world.

### **WOULD DANIEL HAVE EXPECTED THE MESSIAH'S RESURRECTION?**

Dispensationalists need to be dragged, kicking and screaming if necessary, to take an honest look at who Daniel would have thought was the 'he' of verse 27. Not only would Daniel have been open to the possibility that the Messiah would be raised from the dead, he would have assumed it. Daniel already knew, through King David and the prophet Isaiah, that Israel's Messiah would die before being resurrected and glorified:

**You are my Son. Today I have begotten You (from the dead). Ask of Me, and I shall give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession. Psalm 2:7-8 (Acts 13:33)**

**For you will not leave My soul in Hades. Nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption (bodily decay). Psalm 16:10 (Acts 2:27, 13:35)**

**Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong. Because He has poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors. He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Isaiah 53:12**

But not only that, Daniel already knew through the prophecies that he himself had received from God (in Daniel chapters 2 and 7), that if the Messiah was going to die He would have to be raised from the dead in order to fulfill those prophecies. The Messiah would have to be resurrected in order to become the 'stone cut out without hands' of Daniel 2:34-35, that crushes Gentile kingdoms to powder (Matthew 21:44, Luke 20:18). And He would have to be raised from the dead in order to be the 'Son of Man' who comes to the 'Ancient of Days' in Daniel 7:13-14; to receive an everlasting kingdom.

### **WOULD DANIEL HAVE EXPECTED THE MESSIAH TO CONFIRM A COVENANT?**

Some have understood Daniel 9:27 to say that someone would make or establish a new covenant, but this is not true. In the original Hebrew version of Daniel 9:27, the word translated 'confirm' expresses the idea of honoring or enforcing a

covenant that already exists. God was talking about someone fulfilling a covenant that had already been made. The explanation is simple.

When God made His covenant with Abraham, it was like a contract; what is called in English an 'I-O-U' (I owe you). Although God's gracious promise was trustworthy, it existed only on paper; the money had not yet been 'put in the bank' so to speak. The actual work of redemption for sinful mankind had not yet been done. But when the Lord Jesus came into the world and died on the cross, He paid the price to make God's blessing on all the nations of the world a reality.

This is what Jesus meant when He said "It is finished" just before He died. He was saying 'It is paid!' (John 19:30). He confirmed the Abrahamic covenant. Jesus further fulfilled this covenant when He ascended into heaven and presented His own blood before His Father as proof that our sins had been atoned for (Hebrews 9:12,24).

This is what Daniel 9:27 is telling us; that it is the Messiah who would confirm a covenant for one Week. Through His death Jesus confirmed the Abrahamic covenant backward in time to all those who, like Abraham, had looked forward to its fulfillment; and forward in time to all those who would look back to His finished work upon the Cross.

In Malachi chapter 3 the coming Messiah was called "the Messenger of the Covenant":

**"Behold, I will send my messenger (John the Baptist), and he shall prepare the way before me. And the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple; even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom you delight in. Behold, He shall come" says the Lord of hosts. Malachi 3:1**

In Luke chapter 1, the virgin Mary expressed her joy at receiving God's grace, and spoke of the salvation that her unborn child would achieve:

**He (God) has helped His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers: to Abraham and to his Seed forever. Luke 1:54-55**

Also in Luke chapter 1, Zacharias (the father of John the Baptist) described Christ's coming as God 'remembering His Covenant' and 'performing the mercy' which He had promised:

**Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David. As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He swore to our father Abraham. Luke 1:67-73**

The Apostle Peter alluded to Christ's confirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant, telling the Jews that they would be the first to be offered the blessings of that confirmation:

**You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham "And in your seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed". Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. Acts 3:25-26**

In his first missionary message on the continent of Asia, as he spoke to Jews in a synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, Paul said:

**Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent.**

**And we declare to you glad tidings; that promise that was made to the fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). God has fulfilled this for us, their children, in that He has raised up Jesus (from the dead). As it is written in the second Psalm 'You are My Son. Today I have begotten you'. Acts 13:26,32-33, Psalm 2:7**

And Paul described Jesus as a covenant-Confirmer in Romans 15:

**Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers. Romans 15:8**

Daniel would have been very open to the idea that a resurrected Messiah would be the covenant-confirmer of verse 27. In fact he would never have considered anyone else. There is no other Person in the Bible, other than 'Messiah the Prince' (verse 25), promised 'Blessor of the nations' and 'Son of David', who is spoken of in 'covenant-confirming' terms. The 70 Weeks Prophecy begins in verse 24 with a reference to Daniel's people (the Jews), and their holy city of Jerusalem. The message is about sealing up (confirming, fulfilling) 'vision and prophecy'. This is the context within which God expects us to consider the 'he' of verse 27.

## **WOULD DANIEL HAVE EXPECTED THE MESSIAH TO END THE MOSAIC SACRIFICES?**

Again the answer is 'Yes'. Daniel knew, through the prophet Jeremiah, that the old Mosaic Covenant was going to be replaced:

**"Behold, the days are coming" says the Lord, "that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (the Mosaic Covenant); which covenant they broke, although I was a husband unto them" says the Lord.**

**"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days" says the Lord, "I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying 'Know**

the Lord'. For they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them" says the Lord. "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Jeremiah 31:31-34

Jesus announced the coming of His New Covenant at the 'Last Supper' (Matthew 26:28):

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples. And He said "Take, eat; this is my body". And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying "Drink all of it. For this is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Matthew 26:26-28

The Jewish people hated the idea that the Messiah would bring an end to the Mosaic sacrifices, even though both Jeremiah and Daniel had foretold it. The approaching destruction of the Temple, and the ending of animal sacrifices, was a major point of disagreement between the Jews and Christians. Stephen, the first martyr, was killed for declaring that the Mosaic Covenant would end (Acts 6:14). And Paul was hounded by the Jews because he was accused of disrespecting Moses and the Temple.

Jesus accomplished two important things with the destruction of the Temple. **First**, it demonstrated to the Jews and to the world that He is the Messiah. The fulfillment of His warnings about the coming destruction of Jerusalem confirmed that He had been sent by His Father, and that His words were the words of God.

**Secondly**, Jesus was revealing that the Mosaic animal sacrifices have been replaced by a better Priesthood and Sacrifice; one that can really save people:

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when He (Christ) came into the world He said "Sacrifice and offering You desired not, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have had no pleasure". Then said I (Christ) "Behold, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Your will, O God".

Above when He said "Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin You desired not, neither had pleasure in them" (which are offered by the law of Moses), then He said "Behold, I come to do Your will, O God". He takes away the first (the sacrifices of Moses), that He may establish the second.

Hebrews 10:4-9

If the Temple had not been destroyed, there might still be people today ignorantly sacrificing bulls, sheep and goats in Israel and elsewhere. This would have been truly dishonoring to Moses, because Moses wanted his powerless sacrifices to be replaced. He yearned for the promised Messiah and His genuine salvation. The destruction of the Temple has revealed the Mosaic Covenant for



what it really was, and still is to this day; a 'teacher' to point us to the true Passover Lamb of God (Galatians 3:24-25).

## **ABOMINATION, DESOLATION, AND DISPENSATIONAL ERROR**

In the final portion of Daniel 9:27, we are told how the Messiah would bring an end to the Old Testament Mosaic Temple and sacrifices. He would use something 'abominable' to bring about the desolation of Jerusalem and the Temple. The question is 'What is this abomination that brings desolation?'

In some translations this portion is worded 'Upon the overspreading of abominations shall come one who causes desolation'. Another translation says 'Upon the wing of abominations shall come one who brings desolation'. There are many commentaries on this portion of Daniel 9:27. Was it the 'overspreading' of the abominable sins of Israel that brought desolation? Was it the presence of the Roman Army in the Temple area that was an 'abomination that brought desolation'?

We begin to find answers to these questions as we look at Jesus' final days in Jerusalem, and His prophetic message on the Mount of Olives shortly before His death. As one might expect from 'Messiah the Prince', who came at the end of the 69 'weeks', He has given the world vital information about the remaining 70th Week.

I close out this page by pointing out that Dispensationalists have come to a critical 'fork in the road' regarding three vital passages in God's word; Daniel's 70-Weeks Prophecy, the Olivet Discourse, and John's Little Book. And in every case they have turned left when they should have turned right. Their 'dual fulfillment' mantra has led them to mishandle Daniel's 70 Weeks, to abuse Jesus' Olivet Discourse, and as a result to utterly miss the plain meaning of John's Little Book. I will explain more about Dispensational error in the pages ahead.