

The 70 Weeks of Daniel Concisely Explained

The King Jesus-(A Precise Mathematical Prediction)

Abridged from Chuck Missler, *The Creator Beyond Time and Space*

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The Triumphal Entry involves one of the most astonishing passages in the entire Bible!

To fully appreciate the remarkable significance of the following, it is essential to realize that the Book of Daniel, as part of the Old Testament, was translated into Greek prior to 270 BC, several centuries before Christ was born. This is a well established fact of secular history [Encyclopedia Britannica, Volume 10, p.642.].

After his conquest of the Babylonian Empire, Alexander the Great promoted the Greek language throughout the known world, and thus almost everyone - including the Jews - spoke Greek. Hebrew fell into disuse, being reserved primarily for ceremonial purposes (somewhat analogous to the use of Latin among Roman Catholics).

In order to make the Jewish Scriptures (what we call the Old Testament) available to the average Jewish reader, a project was undertaken under the sponsorship of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285-246 BC) to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Seventy scholars were commissioned to complete this work and their result is known as the "Septuagint" ("70") translation. (This is often abbreviated "LXX".)

The Book of Daniel is actually one of the most authenticated books of the Old Testament, historically and archaeologically, but this is a convenient short-cut for our purposes here.

It is critical to realize that the Book of Daniel existed in documented form almost three centuries before Christ was born.

Daniel, originally deported as a teenager (now near the end of the Babylonian captivity), was reading in the Book of Jeremiah. He understood that the seventy years of servitude were almost over and he began to pray for his people.

The Angel Gabriel interrupted Daniel's prayer and gave him a four-verse prophecy that is a remarkable passage in the entire Bible: Daniel 9:24-27.

These four verses include the following segments:

9:24 The Scope of the entire prophecy;

9:25 The 69 Weeks;

9:26 An Interval between the 69th and 70th Week;

9:27 The 70th Week.

Let's begin with verse 24.

9:24: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy Place."

The idiom of a "week" of years was common in Israel as a "sabbath for the land," in which the land was to lie fallow every seventh year [Leviticus 25:1-22; 26:3-35; Deuteronomy 15].

It was their failure to obey these laws that led to God sending them into captivity under the Babylonians [2 Chronicles 36:20-21].

When did the Messiah present Himself as a King? On one specific day, Jesus arranges it!

Note that the focus of this passage is upon "thy people and upon thy holy city," that is, upon Israel and Jerusalem. (It is not directed to the church.)

The scope of this prophecy includes a broad list of things which clearly have yet to be completed.

A very specific prediction occurs in verse 25:

9:25: "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."

This includes a mathematical prophecy. Verse 24 states that "seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city." In Hebrew the word translated as "weeks" is pronounced "shabua" and literally means a week of years. The word shabuim would readily be understood as a seven of years in this context, much like the word decade means ten years in English.

Verse 25 then declares that Daniel should "know and Understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty two weeks." This verse is a precise mathematical prediction of the time of Messiah's coming! In effect, the angel Gabriel told Daniel that after sixty-nine weeks of years the Messiah would be revealed to the nation of Israel!

If a "shabuim" is a week (seven) of years, it therefore follows that 69 sevens is 483 years ($69 \times 7 = 483$ years).

The Jewish (and Babylonian) calendars used a 360-day year [Genesis 7:24; 8:3, 4; Revelation 11:2; 12:6; 13:3, 4; etc.]; 69 weeks of 360-day years totals 173,880 days.

In effect, Gabriel told Daniel that the interval between the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem until the presentation of the Messiah as King would be 173,880 days.

The "Messiah the Prince" in the King James translation is actually the Meshiach Nagid, "The Messiah the King." (Nagid is first used of King Saul.)

The commandment to restore and build Jerusalem was given by Artaxerxes Longimanus on March 14, 445 b.c. [First identified in Sir Robert Anderson's classic work, *The Coming Prince*, first published in 1894. Now available in any Christian bookstore] (The emphasis in the verse on "the street" and "the wall" was to avoid confusion with other earlier mandates confined to rebuilding the Temple.)

But when did the Messiah present Himself as a King? During the ministry of Jesus Christ there were several occasions in which the people attempted to promote Him as king, but He carefully avoided it. "Mine hour is not yet come." [John 6:15. Always in control: John 7:30, 44; 8:59; 10:39]

Then one day He meticulously arranges it [Luke 19:28-40]. On this particular day he rode into the city of Jerusalem riding on a donkey, deliberately fulfilling a prophecy by Zechariah that the Messiah would present Himself as king in just that way:

"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." Zechariah 9:9

Whenever we might easily miss the significance of what was going on, the Pharisees come to our rescue. They felt that the overzealous crowd was blaspheming, proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah the King [Luke 19:39]. However, Jesus endorsed it!

"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Luke 19:40

This is the only occasion that Jesus presented Himself as King. It occurred on April 6, 32 a.d. [Luke 3:1: Tiberias appointed in 14 AD; 15th year, 29 AD; the 4th Passover occurred in 32 AD.]

When we examine the period between March 14, 445 b.c. and April 6, 32 a.d., and correct for leap years, we discover that it is 173,880 days exactly, to the very day!

Here are the calculations.

March 14th, 445 B.C. to March 14th, 32 A.D. is 476 years.

(1 B.C. to 1 A.D. is one year, There is no year zero)

476 years x 365 days per year = 173,740 days

Add for leap years = 116 days (Leap years do not occur in century years unless divisible by 400 [therefore, we must add three less leap years in four centuries])

March 14th to April 6 th = 24 days

total = 173,880

How could Daniel have known this in advance? How could anyone have contrived to have this detailed prediction documented over three centuries in advance?

Some of you may be thinking that the application of this prophecy to the Messiah is a Christian contrivance. In fact, most modern rabbis try to deny the messianic application of this prophecy. However, it is well established that the ancient Jews believed that this prophecy pinpointed the time of the Messiah's coming. In fact, many in the Qumran community (the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls) believed that they were living in the very generation to which this prophecy pointed! (Biblical Archaeology Review, Nov/Dec 1992, p.58)

In the Baylonian Talmud, compiled between A.D. 200-500, ancient rabbis commented on the time of the Messiah's coming and Daniels seventy weeks prophecy.

Regarding the times referred to in Daniel's prophecy, Rabbi Judah, the main compiler of the talmud, said:

"These times were over long ago"
Babylonia Talmud Sanhedrin 98b and 97a

In the 12th Century A.D., Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon (Maimonides), one of the most respected rabbis in history, and a man who rejected the messianic claims of Jesus of Nazareth, said regarding Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy:

"Daniel has elucidated to us the knowledge of the end times. However, since they are secret, the wise (rabbis) have barred the calculation of the days of Messiah's coming so that the untutored populace will not be led astray when they see that the End Times have already come but there is no sign of the Messiah" (Emphasis added). Igeret Teiman, Chapter 3 p.24.

Finally, Rabbi Moses Abraham Levi said regarding the time of Messiah's coming:

"I have examined and searched all the Holy Scriptures and have not found the time for the coming of Messiah clearly fixed, except in the words of Gabriel to the prophet Daniel, which are written in the 9th chapter of the prophecy of Daniel"
The Messiah of the Targums, Talmuds and Rabbinical Writers, 1971.

But there's more.

There appears to be a gap between the 69th week (verse 25) and the 70th week (verse 27):

9:26: "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." The sixty-two "weeks" follow the initial seven, so verse 26 deals with events after 69th week, but before the 70th. These events include the Messiah being killed and the city and sanctuary being destroyed.

As Jesus approached the city on the donkey, He also predicted the destruction of Jerusalem:

For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Luke 19:43-44

The Messiah was, of course, executed at the Crucifixion. "But not for Himself."

The city and the sanctuary were destroyed 38 years later when the Roman legions under Titus Vespasian leveled the city of Jerusalem in 70 a.d., precisely as Daniel and Jesus had predicted. In fact, as one carefully examines Jesus' specific words, it appears that He held them accountable to know this astonishing prophecy in Daniel 9! "Because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."