

# COUNTDOWN TO THE MESSIAH

## Gabriel's announcement of 70 Weeks (490 years) to the coming of the Messiah

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### Introduction

**Daniel 9:24-27 contains one of the greatest prophecy fulfillments in the whole Bible. It gave a timetable for the coming of the Messiah. The Jews of Jesus day understood this prophecy and had worked out the dates and the expected arrival of the Messiah...which is why they asked John if he were the one. This prophecy stirred up the Zealots to rebel against Rome expecting a miraculous intervention from the Messiah to deliver them. Unfortunately all the dispensational prophecy books coming out of America have twisted this prophecy to try to prove that the 70th week was not fulfilled and refers to the Antichrist making a 7 year covenant with the Jews during the 7 year Great Tribulation. This is a gross distortion of scripture and history as you will see. It is important for your understanding of the Kingdom Vision to understand this prophecy. There is no 7 year Tribulation in scripture nor a 7 year covenant between the Antichrist and the Jews. The 70th Week of Daniel's prophecy was finished in 33 AD!**

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I want you to read the prophecy that the Angel Gabriel gave Daniel in Chapter 9:24-27 carefully and I am going to explain it to you. It is one of the most incredibly accurate and most important prophecies of the Bible. Because it is so important for your understanding of the Kingdom vision the Devil has made sure that every popular prophecy book out of America twists this important scripture so that the Church hopefully misses the Kingdom vision:

*Vrs. 24: Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city; to finish the transgression, 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 the prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

*Vrs. 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 threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again and the walls even in troublesome times.*

*Vrs. 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.*

*Vrs. 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 oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

Now lets do a quick overview of these four verses to get the sweep of the prophecy and then I will give you the in-depth analysis of times, dates, people and happenings.

Vrs 24: Within a space of 490 years (70 weeks x 7 days a week = 490 days or years) six important things will be

accomplished (further explained below).

Vrs 25 The starting date for this 490 year countdown will be when a decree is issued to rebuild Jerusalem. After 69 weeks from this decree, the Messiah will appear in the 70<sup>th</sup> week. The rebuilding of Jerusalem will be with much trials and tribulations.

Vrs 26 After the 69 week period and during the 70<sup>th</sup> week when Messiah is due to appear, He, the Messiah will die in the middle of that week but His death is not for Himself but for others. After Messiah's sacrifice there are coming a people (the Romans) who will destroy the rebuilt Jerusalem and the rebuilt temple and they will leave Jerusalem desolate.

Vrs 27 In the middle of the 70<sup>th</sup> week the Messiah confirms the New Covenant in His own blood and that means the end of animal sacrifices for sins in the Jerusalem temple. Because of the rejection of the people of Jerusalem of the Messiah and their ongoing abominations and rebellion against the Lord, He, Messiah will destroy the city and the temple.

Read the verses again and see if my simple outline seems a reasonable inference from the words written in Scripture. We will shortly prove it from the history of the times, but recognizing truth, first starts as a witness in your spirit by the Holy Spirit who will lead you into all truth!

The popular American prophecy books say no, my interpretation is wrong. This is how they read those 4 verses: Jesus the Messiah came before the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> week in fact during the 69<sup>th</sup> week and died at the end of the 69<sup>th</sup> week in 30 AD having begun His ministry in 27 AD. Then there is about a 2000 year break between the 69<sup>th</sup> week and the 70<sup>th</sup> week which begins the Great Tribulation. Verse 27 then describes how the Antichrist will make a pact with the Jews for 7 years, the Jews having

rebuilt the temple and started animal sacrifices; the Antichrist (supposedly according to them the leader of the European Union!) then after three and a half years enters the new Jewish temple and declares himself to be God and stops the animal sacrifices. I kid you not, every prophecy book that describes the Antichrist making a pact with the Jews and breaking it in the middle of the 7 year Tribulation period automatically types in (Dan. 9:27) to prove their assertion! Do you see any of this in Daniel 9:27? I don't!

We are going to look at the historical fulfillment of the 490 year countdown to show all 70 weeks were fulfilled by 33 AD. But just for a moment look at verse 27 again. The "he" in verse 27, who does it refer to? Remember your school grammar class when the teacher said that "he" is a pronoun which refers to a subject noun that precedes it. Now look for a singular subject noun in verse 26 that the "he" in verse 27 could refer to. Obviously the only singular subject noun in verse 26 it could refer to is "the Messiah"! So does it not seem to you a reasonable interpretation that the "he" referred to in verse 27 is the Messiah who indeed confirmed the New Covenant with His death in the midst of the week causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease having any effect in the temple! Why twist this scripture out of all recognition to make it speak of the Antichrist and the Tribulation when it so obviously is talking about Jesus the Messiah? Why? Well the simple reason is because spectacular prophecies about a European leader as the Antichrist making a pact with Israel and Russia invading Israel sells prophecy books, in fact millions and millions of books. Lots of money has been made with this theory so its very difficult to say, "hey I was wrong"!

### **The Decree of Artaxerxes I The 490 year countdown begins**

The angel Gabriel told Daniel that from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, the 490 year countdown to the Messiah was to be determined. But there were in fact three different decrees by three different Persian rulers as Ezra 6: 14 acknowledges:

*"And the elders of the Jews builded and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zachariah the son of Iddo. And they builded and finished it according to the commandment of the God of Israel and the decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes the king of Persia."*

So the choice of which decree and which date of the decree is important. Fortunately the history and dates and times of the Persian kings are well authenticated by historians so we can get an accurate date for the start of the decree to start our 490 year timeline.

King Cyrus issued a decree (recorded in 2 Chronicles 36:22) in 534 BC for the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem. But that would be too early as 490 years would run out in 44 BC. In 520 BC King Darius also issued a decree for the rebuilding of the Temple recorded in Ezra 6:1-12. But again that decree would also be too early as it would

run out in 20 BC. Then in the 7<sup>th</sup> year of King Artaxerxes of Persia which is 458 BC (his father Xerxes I died in 465 BC), the King sent Ezra with a decree (Ezra 7:7-26). That this is the correct decree according the angel Gabriel is confirmed in Ezra 9:9 where Ezra confirms that this decree from Artaxerxes included, restoring the Temple, rebuilding the waste places of Jerusalem and rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem:

*"For we are bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended loving kindness unto us in the sight of the Kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the ruins thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem." (Ezra 9:9)*

The year of this decree from Artaxerxes in the hand of Ezra was 458 BC. Add 490 years to this and you come to 33 AD (subtract one year going from BC to AD as there is no year 0), the year Christ was crucified. This is the right starting date for the 70 week prophecy. There are other dates which support this timeline.

### **When Did Jesus Begin His Ministry?**

I ask this question because it is important to know this if we are saying that the 70 Week—490 year timeline ended in 33 AD because it means Jesus ended His ministry in 33 AD with His death and resurrection. Since His ministry lasted about three and a half years, it would mean that He must have started His ministry in 29 AD. Is there any other corroborating evidence we can give to substantiate this date? Fortunately history and scripture help us out here.

Luke 1:36 tells us that John's mother was five or six months pregnant with him when Mary conceived Jesus by the Holy Spirit. So John was about 6 months older than Jesus. John was from a priestly family and would begin his ministry at the age of 30 just as Jesus also began His ministry about the age of 30. Luke 3:1 says very clearly that John began his prophetic ministry "in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar" which is easy to determine from history.

Augustus (Octavian) began his reign on 19 August 43 BC when he was first appointed as consul of Rome. He died precisely 56 years later on 19 August 14 AD. Roman historians made special note of this strange coincidence in their writings making it one of the most well known dates of classical times. Tiberius (his successor) reign therefore began in 14 AD. Shortly after Tiberius reign began, coins were minted with double dates on them; 1<sup>st</sup> year of Tiberius and 45<sup>th</sup> year after the battle of Actium (Sept. 2, 31 BC). Roman historians of the time often dated their history according to the "Actium Era" which began in September 31 BC. Although Augustus made Tiberius co-regent for several years before his death Tiberius did not dare to claim that his reign started while Augustus was still alive and neither did any historians of the time. So both John and Jesus began their ministries sometime in 29 AD. Jesus finished His about three and a half years later on April 3 of 33 AD.

So from the prophecy of Daniel 9 we have the following timeline:

**Seven Weeks      458 BC – 409 BC**

**Sixty-Two Weeks   409 BC – 26 AD**

“and after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off” Dan. 9: 26. This means that after the 69th week, during the 70th week Messiah would be “cut off”.

**One Week            26 AD – 33 AD**

But this timeline raises an interesting objection: Daniel 9:26 says that Messiah is to die after the 69th week, which means in the 70th week. Daniel 9:27 clarifies this even further and says that “in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease.” I have already said that this does not refer to Antichrist but to the atoning work of Jesus who through His sacrifice made the sacrifice of animals in the Temple no longer necessary for the forgiveness of sins. But the “midst of the week” would be 29 AD when Jesus began His ministry, so what did Jesus do at the beginning of His ministry that would cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease? Get ready for revelation!

## **The Day of Atonement and the 2 Goats**

In Hebrews 9:11-12 we read:

***“But Christ being come a High Priest of the good things to come, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”***

We know of the Passover lamb that was slain during the feast of Passover which also typified the sacrifice of Christ on the cross for our sins, becoming the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. But here the writer of Hebrews is referring to the Day of Atonement that occurs during the Feast of Tabernacles when once a year, on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the High Priest enters into the Holy of Holies to offer up the blood of a slain goat for the sins of the people. This is described in Lev. 16: 7-10:

***“And he shall take the two goats and shall present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots on the two goats; one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord’s lot fell and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell for Azazel shall be presented alive before the Lord to make an atonement with him and let him go to Azazel in the wilderness... (vrs 21) and Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and shall confess over him all the iniquities of the people of Israel and all their transgressions and all their sins and he***

***shall put them on the head of the goat and send him away into the wilderness...”***

Jesus was not only our sin offering on the cross entering into the heavenly tabernacle with His own blood, but at the start of His ministry He was baptized by John and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him anointing Him for battle and immediately He was led into the wilderness to confront Satan. Paul describes our own baptism in water as signifying our death and rising in newness of life in the Spirit (Rom. 6:3-4). So judicially Jesus died at His baptism, as we do, and then he died physically three and a half years later on the cross thereby fulfilling the Old Testament type of Lev. 16. Of the two goats, one goat sacrificed on Yom Kippur for sin, the other goat sent into the wilderness to Satan (Azazel) bearing the sins of the people. Jesus came not just to save us from our sins but also to destroy all the works of the devil thereby fulfilling the type of the two goats on the Day of Atonement.

I have written in “Azazel” where your Bible says “scapegoat” because in actual fact in the original Hebrew “Azazel” is written there. Bible scholars agree that this is a proper name used here in the original text. This name is found in the ancient book of Enoch which was widely read in Jesus’ time and in fact Jude in his epistle quotes from this book. Eerdman’s Bible Dictionary says of 1<sup>st</sup> Enoch:

“Portions of the work were well known in Christian circles. 1 En.1:9 is quoted explicitly in Jude vv.14-15. The work was accepted as scripture in various early Christian writings. (e.g. Barn.16:5; Clement of Alexandria *Ecl. ii*; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer. iv. 16:2*)”

Here are some of the things Enoch has to say about Azazel:

***8:1-3 “And Azazel taught men to make swords and knives and shields and breastplates and made known to them the metals of the earth and the art of working them and bracelets and ornaments ...and the beautifying of the eyelids ...and there arose much godlessness and fornication and they were led astray and became corrupt in all their ways.”***

***10:4-8 “...and the Lord said to Raphael, Bind Azazel hand and foot and cast him into the darkness; and make an opening in the dessert which is in Dudael and cast him therein ...and cover him with darkness...and on the day of the great judgment he shall be cast into the fire... the whole earth has been corrupted through the works taught by Azazel; to him ascribe all sin.”***

Jesus went into the dessert under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, confronted Satan there, defeated him and proceeded to destroy his works throughout His ministry. He has given to us the same authority! Jesus fulfilled Daniel 9:26,27; He died judicially in the waters of Baptism in the midst of the week and died physically on the cross at the end of the week in 33 AD fulfilling the requirements of the 2 goats of Leviticus 16. One slain, the other sent into the wilderness on the day of Atonement!

## The Fulfillment of Dan. 9:24

So we can see that by the end of the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel's prophecy in 33 AD when Jesus was crucified, the out-comes prophesied by Gabriel in Dan. 9:24 were all fulfilled:

- He "finished the transgressions" and made" an end to sin" by His sacrificial death and shed blood (1 John 2:2; 3:5).
- He made "reconciliations for iniquity" (Heb. 2:17; 2 Cor. 5:18; Rom. 5:10).
- By His obedience were "many made righteous" (Rom. 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:21).
- He "sealed up the vision and prophecy" by ending the dispensation of law that came through the visions and prophecy of the Old Testament prophets by fulfilling the law (Math. 5:17; Heb. 8:13).
- To "anoint the most holy" refers to the anointing of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at His baptism (Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18). And then on the Day of Pentecost He poured out His Holy Spirit on the 120 in the upper room anointing them with power.

## The Desolation of Jerusalem : Dan.9:26,27

Gabriel tells Daniel (vrs,26) that, *"the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary...and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."* When Gabriel talks of a "prince" that is to come this is not the Antichrist but Rome and its armies that in 70 AD destroyed both the city and the sanctuary fulfilling this prophecy. Not only were the city and the sanctuary to be rebuilt but they would be destroyed again by a future empire to come.

In vrs. 27 Gabriel reveals who would be the judge to bring about the desolation of the rebuilt Temple and city of Jerusalem...it would be the Messiah Himself!..."*and for the overspreading of abominations he (Messiah) shall make desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."*

In Math 23:36,38, Jesus spoke judgment out over Jerusalem and its inhabitants saying, *"Verily I say unto you all these things shall come upon this generation...Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem... behold your house is left unto you desolate"*.

That generation experienced the utter desolation of Jerusalem when the armies of Rome in 70 AD destroyed the city and the Temple. Josephus tells us that over 1,100,000 people were killed in that slaughter.

## The 70 Week Prophecy has been fulfilled!

As you can see the entire 70 week, 490 year prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 has been accurately and completely fulfilled in exact times and dates. It was also exactly fulfilled as to Old Testament types fulfilled in the ministry of Jesus ending the 490 years exactly at His crucifixion in 33 AD. There is no need to twist the scripture of Dan.9:27 to try and find an Antichrist there when it clearly speaks of the

Messiah! There is no need to twist the years and dates to come up with a mysterious 2000 year gap between the 69th week and the 70th week. There is, therefore, no scripture in the Bible that speaks of a 7 year tribulation period. Read any American prophecy book and Dan. 9:27 is the only scripture that they cite when referring to a 7 year Great Tribulation!. There is no scripture, therefore, that speaks of a pact by the Antichrist with the Jews for 7 years and then broken in the midst of the 7 years. There is, therefore, no scripture in the Bible that speaks of rebuilding of the Jewish temple sometime in the future so that animal sacrifices can be restored so that the Antichrist can appear in that temple and stop the sacrifices!

## Explanatory Note:

I have seen the dates used by the Dispensationalists to try to get 69 weeks or 483 years to the end of Jesus ministry so that they can have a 70th week left over for the Antichrist and the Great tribulation. They use a starting date of 445 BC as the decree to Nehemiah and the end date as 30 AD for the crucifixion of Jesus. But since 445 BC to 30 AD does not equal 483 years they decided to use a shorter 360 day year! This is an incredible twisting of scripture just to save an unscriptural teaching!

Firstly you have to then start the ministry of Jesus in 27 AD which contradicts Luke 3:1 saying it started 15 years after Tiberius started his reign. Then you have to use a year system that nobody used at that time. How were the Jews supposed to work out the 70 weeks dates using a 360 day year when they did not use such a year system. Everyone at that time used a 365 day year system which is why Julius Caesar changed the calendar in 46 BC to reflect this common knowledge. The other calendar method the Jews used was the Lunar calendar of 357 days but would then add in an intercalary period to make up the 365 days so the seasons would not get out of sync. As for the decree to Nehemiah in 445 BC that had nothing to do with building the city, or the temple as they had all been built already by Ezra by the time he got there. All he did was to rebuild the walls which had fallen in disrepair.

## Get the Kingdom Vision!

Church, beware of false teachers and false prophets in our midst! Their purpose is to get your eyes off of Jesus and His Lordship over all the earth and to get it onto the devil and his works. Dan. 9:24-27 is an incredible prophecy sent from heaven by the mouth of an Archangel to the Church for our edification. It is speaking of our Lord the Messiah and what He would accomplish. It is not speaking of the Antichrist! It says to us that the Lord is in control of history and He decides who rules and for how long! He came to make a new covenant with us...not some supposed Antichrist making a covenant with the Jews. It says He caused the sacrifice and oblation to cease when He became our sacrifice for sin...not some supposed Antichrist causing sacrifices to cease in a future Jewish temple.

**Get onto the Kingdom agenda! Get out of prophetic dead ends and false teachers who would lead you there!**