Daniel Chapter 9 – Part 2 The 70 Weeks Prophecy





www.prophecylive.org



Learn from the Past > Understand the Present > Prepare for the Future



Inreach & Outreach Resource



This booklet is an eye opener of what's happening in the world.

This 40 page A5 size booklet has the key aspects of the –

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE.

It's available at the cost of printing & postage for bulk orders.

PDF is available on ProphecyLive.org



Enter The Ark of Hope

The Great Controversy between God and Satan is primarily over

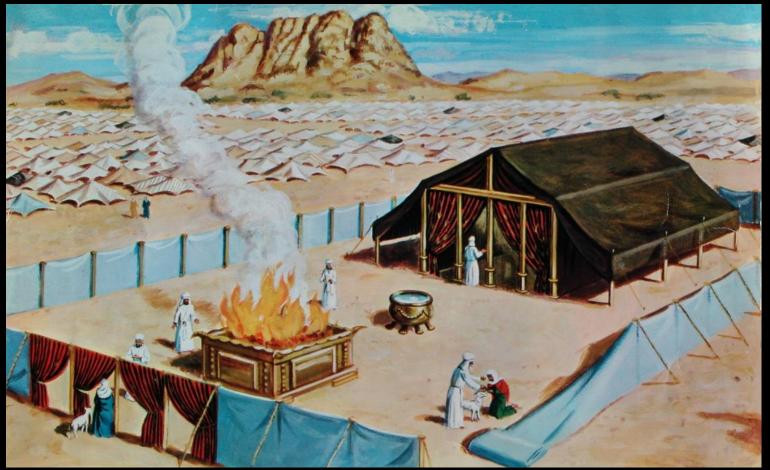
"WORSHIP"

Who will you Choose?



Get into the Ark Sanctuary





And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

Exodus 25:8

Psalms 77:13



Health Snippet – Garlic

Health Benefits of Garlic (Seek Medical Advise)

To fight colds and flu with garlic, I strongly prefer raw garlic. Garlic powder and cooked garlic don't have the same effects in regard to immunity. When buying garlic, look for garlic that has been grown locally to you rather than something that has been shipped overseas.

3. Garlic can help protect against illness, including the common cold:

Garlic supplements are known to boost the function of the immune system.

A large, 12-week study found that a daily garlic supplement reduced the number of colds by 63% compared with a placebo.

The average length of cold symptoms was also reduced by 70%, from 5 days in the placebo group to just 1.5 days in the garlic group.

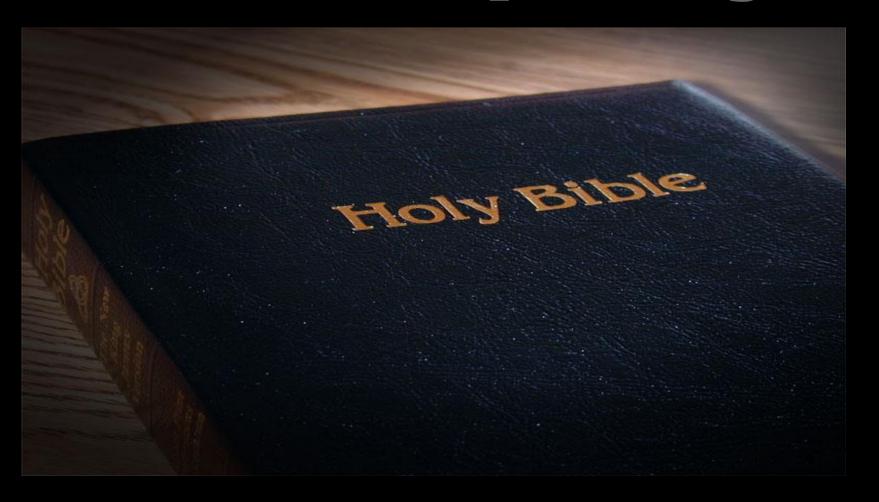
Another study found that a high dose of aged garlic extract (2.56 grams per day) reduced the number of days sick with cold or flu by 61%.

Adding garlic to your diet may be worth trying if you often get colds.

5 WAYS TO FIGHT COLDS AND FLU WITH GARLIC

- 1. Super-Strong Garlic Bread (or Vegetables)
 - To be eaten
- 2. Garlic Vinegar or Oxymel
 - To be taken orally
- 3. Garlic-Infused Oil (For Your Feet, Ears, and Chest)
 - For external use only
- 4. Garlic-Infused Honey
 - To be taken orally
- 5. Parsley & Garlic Gremolata
 - To be taken orally

Can We Trust Bible Prophecy?





Yes we Can!



"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Luke 2:11 (KJV)



Daniel Chapter 9 – Part 2 The 70 Weeks Prophecy





Introduction

Whilst Daniel was praying Gabriel, whom he had seen in the vision at the beginning (Daniel 8:16-17) came and touched him at the time of the evening oblation, about 3pm. Notice in verse 23 that Gabriel's commission was given at the start of Daniel's prayer. So his prayer had been answered before he had even finished. Friends the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16) But notice the speed at which Gabriel covers the distance from heaven to earth, no more than a couple of minutes.

Gabriel goes on to give Daniel some encouragement and comfort by telling him that he is greatly beloved, what a privilege and honour. We too can have the privilege and honour of having the love of God bestowed upon us and be called the sons of God and adopted into the family of God. (1 John 3:1, Romans 8:14-17)



Introduction (cont'd)

So why has Gabriel come? Gabriel tells Daniel that he has come "to show thee...give thee skill and understanding...understand the matter".

Understand what matter? Consider the vision. If we go through chapter 9 we find no vision for Gabriel to give Daniel skill and understanding about. So we must go back to chapter 8 and consider what it was that he did not understand of the vision given there. If we go through this vision we find that he understood the ram, he goat, and little horn, for the interpretation was given him. But the cleansing of the sanctuary with the 2300 days he neither understood it nor was given the interpretation of it, and Daniel's prayer emphasizes this point.

So we find that Gabriel has come to give Daniel the understanding of the 2300 days and the cleansing of the sanctuary (or understanding of the judgment as we have seen that the cleansing of the sanctuary refers to the judgment).



Introduction (cont'd)

The intercessory prayer of Daniel addresses two main concerns: the sins of the people and the desolation of Jerusalem.

Thus, God's response deals with these two petitions. Through the work of the Messiah the people will be redeemed and the sanctuary will be anointed. The two specific petitions, however, are answered in ways that transcend the immediate historical horizon of Daniel: the work of the Messiah will benefit the entire human race.

God loves Daniel, and He loves us.

He listens to our prayers and is gracious and merciful.

The vision mentioned in Daniel 9:21 is the vision of Daniel 8. Gabriel now helps Daniel understand the time element of Daniel 8, the 2,300 evenings and mornings (see also v. 23).

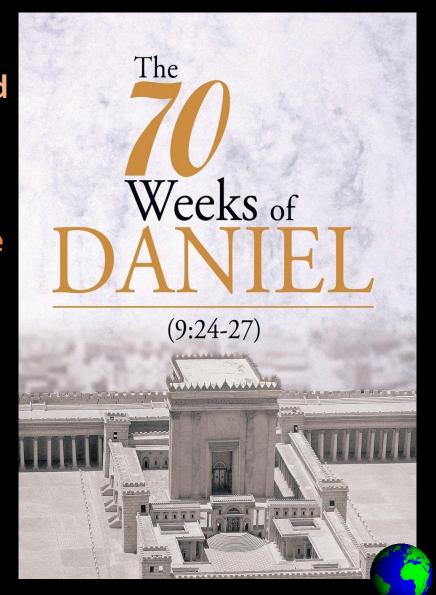


Daniel 9 the key to unlocking Daniel 8

God commissioned the angel Gabriel to make Daniel "understand the vision" (Daniel 8:16). But its impact was so shocking that Daniel became ill and Gabriel had to discontinue his explanation. At the close of the chapter Daniel remarked: "I was appalled by the vision and did not understand it" (Daniel 8:27).

Because of this interruption, Gabriel had to delay his explanation of the time period—the only aspect of the vision he had not yet explained. Daniel 9 describes his return to complete this responsibility. Daniel 8 and 9, then, are connected, the latter being the key to unlocking the mystery of the 2300 days.

When Gabriel appeared he said to Daniel: "I have come forth to give you skill to understand... therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision" (Daniel 9:23). Here he refers back to the vision of the 2300 days. His desire to explain the time elements of the vision of Daniel 8 makes clear why he introduces his explanation with the 70-weeks prophecy.



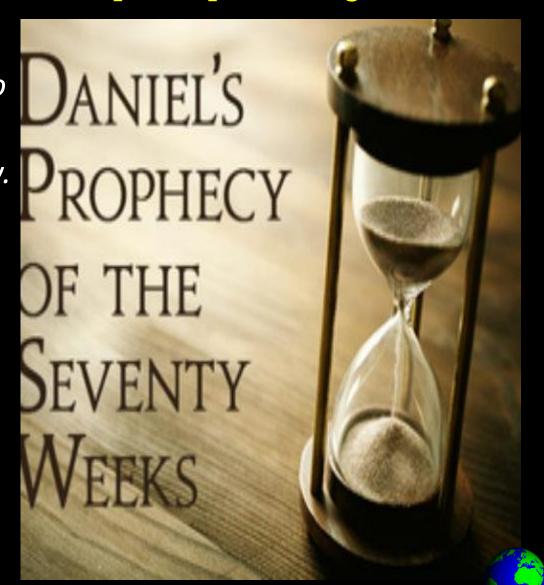
Daniel 9:24 - 70 Weeks prophecy

Daniel 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.

Seventy weeks - 1 week = 7 days, therefore 70 weeks = 490 days, 1 prophetic day = 1 literal year Ezekiel 4:6, Numbers 14:34, thus 70 prophetic weeks = 490 literal years.

NOTE: One of the most notable proofs of the day year principle is that the prophecies have actually been fulfilled on this principle, a demonstration of its correctness from which there is no appeal.

<u>Determined</u> - (chathak, Hebrew) to cut off. So the 70 weeks/490 years are to be cut off from something larger, obviously the 2300 days/years.



Upon thy people and upon thy holy city

The prophecy of the 70 weeks appears to be, in a literary sense, a disorganized mumbo jumbo.

Yet a careful study of the literary structure reveals a beautiful symmetry.

Notice in the following chart that the description alternates between the city and people on the one hand and Messiah the Prince on the other.

Conclusion: 'and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured out upon the desolate'.

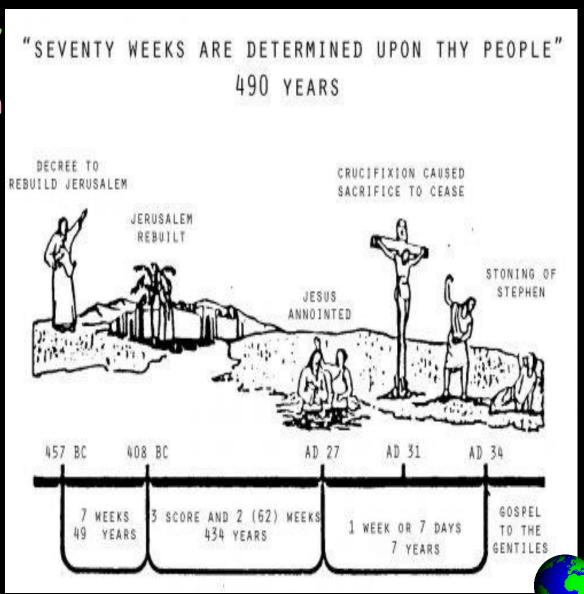
Introduction:	'Going Forth of the Word'
City and People	Messiah the Prince
'Restore and build Jerusalem'	'Messiah the Prince'
'seven weeks'	'sixty-two weeks'
'the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times'	'after the sixty two-weeks shall Messiah be cut off'
'the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary and the end thereof shall be with a flood'	'He [the Prince] 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'

Understanding the Verse...

The 70 weeks, or 490 years, were "determined, "or "decreed", for the Jews and Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24). The underlying Hebrew verb is chathak. Although this verb is used only once in the Scriptures, its meaning can be understood from other Hebrew sources. The well-known Hebrew-English dictionary by Gesenius states that properly it means "to cut" or "to divide."

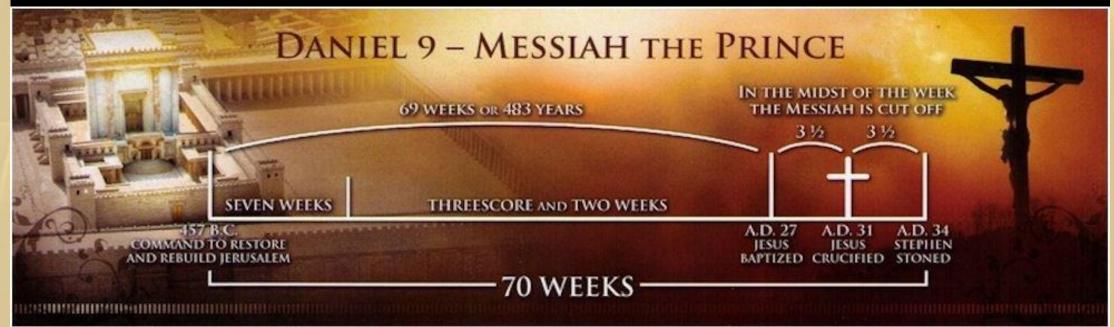
With this background, Gabriel's comments are very revealing. He tells Daniel that 490 years were to be cut off from the longer period of 2300 years. As the starting point for the 490 years, Gabriel points to "the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem" (Daniel 9:25), which took place in 457 B.C., the seventh year of Artaxerxes.

The 490 years ended in A.D. 34. When we cut off 490 years from the 2300 years, we are left with 1810 years. Since the 2300 years were to extend 1810 years beyond A.D. 34, they reach to the year 1844.



Daniel 9:24 - 7 Points to note

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, 1. to finish the transgression, 2. and to make an end of sins, 3. and to make reconciliation for iniquity, 4. and to bring in everlasting righteousness, 5. and to seal up the vision 6. and prophecy, 7. and to anoint the most Holy.

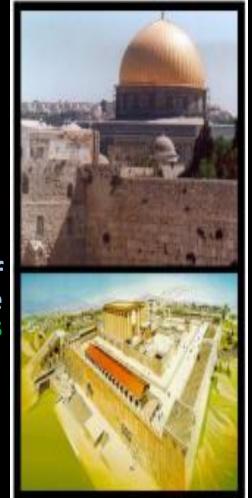


1 - Finish the transgression

The Hebrew word for "transgression" (pesha') suggests the wilful violations by an inferior against a superior (for example, Proverbs 28:24). This word also occurs in the Bible with regard to open defiance of God by humans (Ezekiel 2:3). Through the blood of Jesus, however, rebellion against God is quashed and humans are offered the merits that flow from Calvary.

So the word 'transgression' here is the strongest word for sin in the Old Testament. It literally means 'rebellion' or 'revolt.' This was not rebellion in general terms. The use of the definite article indicates that this was a specific rebellion. In other words, the Seventy Weeks would bring an end to the revolt of the Jewish nation. As we shall see in our detailed study of the Seventy Weeks which follows, their rebellion against God could come to an end in one of two ways: 1) They could receive the Messiah and thus bring their constant rebellion to an end, or, 2) they could irrevocably revolt against the Messiah and thus bring the theocracy to an end. This prophecy clearly indicates that they would choose the second

This prophecy clearly indicates that they would choose the second option. During this time, the Jews would fill up the cup of their iniquity, they would reach the limit of transgression to which God could no longer forbear. Because of this ongoing apostasy they would be rejected as God's chosen representatives on the earth. This they did in the rejection of the Son of God Himself. See Matthew 21:33-46.



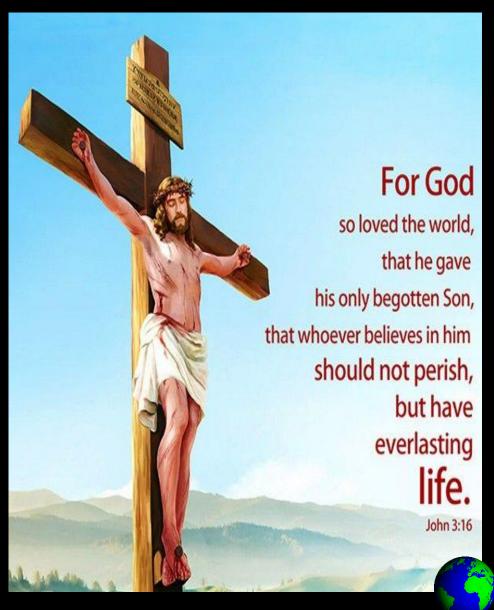


2 - To make an end of sins

The verb carries the meaning of "to seal", and here it means that sin is forgiven.

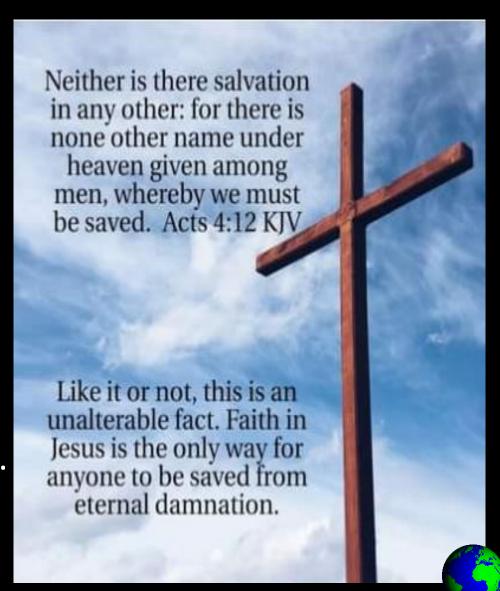
Since the fall, the human race has been unable to live up to God's standards, but the Messiah will take care of our failures.

Notice that we are not told that the seventy weeks would bring sinning to an end but rather sins to an end! Jesus made an end of sins by bearing them on the cross. Jesus, legally, took away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Hebrews 1:3 tells us that when Jesus 'had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' In Hebrews 9:28 we are told that 'Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many...' In Hebrews 9:26 we are unequivocally told that Jesus, 'once in the end of the world hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.' And in Hebrews 10:12 we are told that 'this man, [Jesus] after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God.'



2 - To make an end of sins (cont'd)

The Hebrew word 'chattah' here translated 'sins' denotes either 'sin' or 'sin offering'. Leviticus 4:3 is an example of its use in both senses in a single verse. "Let him bring for his SIN...a young bullock...for his SIN OFFERING." The same Hebrew word is used in both instances. This is a common usage through the Levitical books and elsewhere in the Old Testament. It can therefore be used in the sense of sin offerings in Daniel 9:24 because an end of sin offerings was made at the cross, this is seen also in verse 27 causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and also Colossians 2:14. Thus this is a reference to the ending of the sacrificial sin offerings which met their antitype in the death of Christ on the cross.



3 - Make reconciliation for iniquity

As Paul says: "For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross" (Colossians 1:19-20). Here, too, only Jesus can bring about this reality. Reconciliation for iniquity was to be provided.

Jesus reconciled man to God by His sacrifice. In the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 53 we are told that the Messiah would bring peace through His work: 'But He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed.' In Romans 5:10 we are told why man needed peace: 'For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.' In 2 Corinthians 5:18-21 the apostle Paul amplifies the idea of reconciliation through Christ: 'To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.... For he [the Father] hath made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him?



4 - Bring in everlasting righteousness

Christ took our place on the cross and thereby bestowed upon us the blessed condition of "being right" with God. Only by faith can we receive this righteousness that comes from God.

Everlasting righteousness was what our Lord manifested in His sinless life, and by His life, death, and resurrection Christ has made everlasting righteousness available to all who accept it by faith. (1 Corinthians 1:30)

In Jeremiah 23:6 we are told that one of the names of Jesus is, 'The Lord our Righteousness.' And in the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 53:11 we are told: 'by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.' This thought is developed in the New Testament on repeated occasions. For example, in Romans 3 and 4 the apostle Paul fully expounds this idea of Christ our righteousness. By living a sinless life, Jesus wove a perfect robe of His righteousness which He is willing to impute to all who believe. This righteousness is available right now in Jesus. When we receive Jesus we have His life now (1 John 5:11-12), we are citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20), we are accepted in the beloved and seated in heaven with Him (Ephesians 1:6; 2:6). Of course, there is an already and a not yet. We can have his imputed and imparted righteousness even now but to live in a world where only righteousness dwells empirically is still **future**: 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' (2 Peter 3:13).



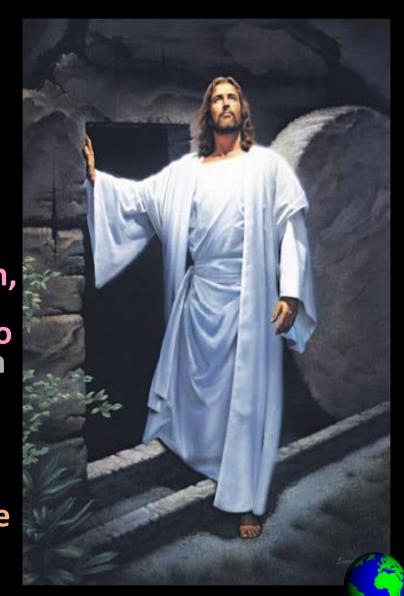


5 - Seal up the vision

When Christ offered Himself in sacrifice, the Old Testament prophecies that pointed to His atoning work were sealed up in the sense that they were fulfilled.

At this point we will not say much about this phrase because we will deal with it extensively later. Suffice it to say now, that by rejecting the Messiah, the Jewish nation brought the vision and prophecy of the 70 weeks to an end. God would no longer communicate with Israel through prophets and visions. When they stoned Stephen, as he was having a vision of Christ and was fulfilling his role as a prophet, God's communications to Israel came to a final end. That is to say, Stephen received the last vision and was the last prophet which God sent to Israel.

Seventy weeks are weeks of years (490 years). They refer to God's people of old. The end of transgression and sin, the atonement for iniquity, the bringing of everlasting righteousness, and the anointment of the most holy place refer to the fulfilment of the plan of salvation as brought about by Jesus towards the end of the seventy weeks.



6 - And Prophecy

By the events which were foretold to occur during the 70 weeks, the prophecy was to be tested. By this single test the accuracy of the entire prophecy is to be determined. If the events of this period are accurately fulfilled then the prophecy is of God and will all be thus accomplished. When Christ began His ministry He began by preaching that "time was fulfilled" thus He recognised that He had arrived on the scene at exactly the right time as prophesied hundreds of years before. (Mark 1:15)

For seven years after the Saviour entered on His ministry, the gospel was to be preached especially to the Jews; for three and a half years by Christ Himself; and afterward by the apostles. "In the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Daniel 9:27. In the spring of AD 31, Christ the true sacrifice was offered on Calvary. Then the veil of the temple was rent in twain, showing that the sacredness and significance of the sacrificial service had departed. The time had come for the earthly sacrifice and oblation to cease.

The one week—seven years—ended in AD 34. Then by the stoning of Stephen the Jews finally sealed their rejection of the gospel; the disciples who were scattered abroad by persecution "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4); and shortly after, Saul the persecutor was converted, and became Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.—The Desire of Ages, p. 233.





7 - Anoint the most holy

Kodesh ka-doshim is the Hebrew phrase used here. This term is used freely through the Levitical books to characterise things and places, but is nowhere applied to persons. Thus this is not a reference to the coming Messiah or "anointed one" but is associated with the temple and its services. We see from Exodus 28:41; 30:25-30 and 40:9-13 that the earthly sanctuary with all its furniture and priests had to be "anointed" before any ministration could commence, to set it apart as holy and sacred for the work that was to be conducted there. In Daniel 8 we have already seen that the earthly sanctuary is a pattern/shadow or type of the true in heaven itself. So all the services and offerings of the earthly pointed to the true, which was Christ Himself. Therefore, once Christ came, the typical or earthly was no longer needed and the heavenly or real were now to be used for the actual salvation of mankind. So the reference to anointing the most holy then refers to this service of inauguration which took place after the fulfilment of the types by Christ on the cross. (Psalms 45:6-7, Hebrews 1:8-9) The sacrifice of lambs was replaced by the sacrifice of Christ, and the ministration of human priests is replaced by the ministration of Christ Himself.





7 - Anoint the most holy (cont'd)

The Most Holy mentioned here is not a person but a place. So the statement refers to the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary as Christ was inaugurated there as our great High Priest (Hebrews 8:1).

The phrase literally reads: 'to anoint the most holy.' This phrase can be understood in one of two ways: 1) the 'most Holy' is a reference to the Messiah as a person (see Hebrews 7:26), or, 2) the 'most Holy' refers to the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

How must we understand this anointing of the most holy?

When the Old Testament tabernacle services were inaugurated the high priest, as well as the sanctuary in its totality, (including the most holy place) were anointed. In harmony with the type, when Jesus ascended to heaven to

In harmony with the type, when Jesus ascended to heaven to begin His heavenly ministry, the entire heavenly sanctuary was anointed as well (including the most holy place).

But not only was the sanctuary anointed. Jesus was also anointed as priest/king to begin His work in the holy place (Acts 2:32-36 in the light of the background given in Leviticus 8:1-12)





Jesus Ascension and Ministry

"Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as Priest and King, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people." - God's Amazing Grace, p. 193

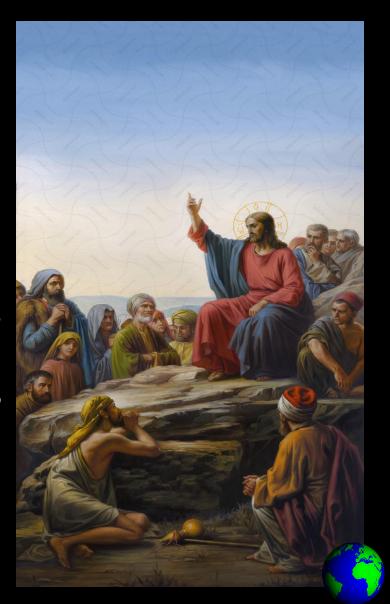
We must conclude, therefore, that the anointing of the most holy must refer to Jesus as a person as well as to the most holy place of the sanctuary. This means that the seventy week prophecy refers to all the highlights of Jesus' mission— His baptism, death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God to begin His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary.





Summarizing Daniel 9:24

Basically, Daniel 9:24 contains God's message to His people, through Daniel the prophet, that He will not wait forever for them to accomplish the work He has given them to do. He set a time limit on it, "seventy weeks," set apart especially for the Jewish people. During this time they were to get serious with God--to stop their national flirtation with sin, make things right with God, choose everlasting righteousness, fulfill the prophecies He had made for them, and "anoint the most Holy." Jesus referred to this time period when He came on the scene, 69 "weeks" (483 years) after the start of the time period, and declared, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). The Bible says that God anointed Him (Acts 10:38), but the Jewish nation rejected Him, the only One who could truly bring in everlasting righteousness. Near the close of the 70 weeks (490 years), Jesus was killed, resurrected, and he ascended to God to become our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, anointing and inaugurating its ministry there. And the focus of God's working with humanity shifted from the Jewish nation to those who accepted and followed Jesus (see Galatians 3:29 and Romans 9, for instance). So despite the failings of the Jewish nation at that time, God fulfilled His promises on His time schedule.



1st Advent of Jesus - 7 points to note



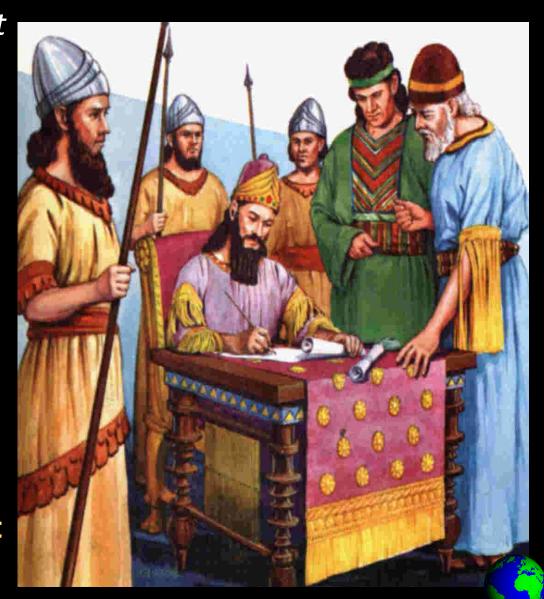
For unto us a child is born, 1. unto us a son is given: 2. and the government shall be upon his shoulder: 3. and his name shall be called Wonderful, 4. Counsellor, 5. The mighty God, 6. The everlasting Father, 7. The Prince of Peace. — Isaiah 9:6 (written between 740 - 686 BC)



Daniel 9:25 - Command to Restore

Daniel 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.

At the end of the vision of the 2,300 evenings and mornings, the prophet is astonished because he cannot understand it (Daniel 8:27). Ten years later, Gabriel comes to help Daniel "understand" the vision (Daniel 9:23). This latter revelation supplies the missing information and reveals that the work of the Messiah is to be accomplished toward the end of a period of seventy weeks. According to the year-day principle and the course of the events predicted, the seventy weeks must be understood as 490 years. And the starting point for this period is the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25).



1. From the Going Forth of the Word

Here Gabriel is giving us the understanding of the starting date of the two-fold prophecy.

We find the following words at the beginning of Gabriel's explanation of the seventy weeks:

The word dabar is very common in the Old Testament. Its usual and proper translation is 'word'. But is this the best translation in the context of Daniel 9? There are several instances in the Old Testament where dabar should be translated in the sense of a royal 'decree' or 'command'. For instance, in Isaiah 45:23 the word dabar is used in conjunction with an oath. A word with an oath takes on the form of a royal decree. In Esther 1:19 the word is used in the sense of a royal commandment to be incorporated into the law code of the Medes and Persians to the effect that Vashti would never again appear before the king. In Ezra 7:13 Artaxerxes Longanimus gives a royal decree (dabar) which authorizes the Jews to return to Jerusalem. These two references in Esther and Ezra are particularly significant because, as we shall see, they are found in sources which are directly related to the historical context of Daniel 9.





The decree of Cyrus the Great in 536 BC

This cannot be the date for the beginning of the 70 weeks for two reasons:

First of all, a beginning date of 536 BC makes it impossible for the 70 weeks to be fulfilled in the Messiah. Four hundred and eighty three years after 536 B. C., would take us to the year 53 B. C., a date far too early for the coming of the Messiah.

Secondly, both Ezra 1:2-4 and 2 Chronicles 36:23 make it crystal clear that Cyrus' decree did not authorize the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem. It only gave permission to rebuild the temple. How then do we explain Isaiah 44:28 and 45:13? Don't these texts say that Cyrus would give a decree to rebuild the city? These verses in Isaiah are to be understood as Cyrus beginning the process which would ultimately lead to the rebuilding of the city. They are not to be taken to mean that he would give a command to rebuild the city. Both Ezra and 2 Chronicles give us the actual decree and nothing is said there about the rebuilding of the city.

Finally, for the sake of argument, even if Cyrus had given a decree to rebuild the city (which he clearly did not) this would still not fulfill the specifications of the prophecy of Daniel 9:25. This prophecy requires a decree not only to rebuild Jerusalem but

also to restore it.





The Confirmatory Decree of Darius I in 520

This decree does not fulfill the specifications of Daniel 9:25 either. The extant Biblical evidence indicates that when Cyrus gave his decree, many of God's people returned to Jerusalem with great enthusiasm to rebuild the temple (Ezra 2). The foundation of the temple was quickly laid but then Samaritan opposition halted the work. As a result of this Samaritan opposition (Ezra 4:1-5), the people ceased building the temple and focused on their own personal affairs. This sad condition is described in Haggai 1:1-11. For over 15 years the temple remained with only the foundation laid. But then, in 520, Darius I reaffirmed the decree which had been given in 536 by Cyrus (Ezra 6:1-13). Even a cursory reading of this decree reveals that it was simply a reconfirmation of the decree which had been given previously by Cyrus.

* It gave only permission to rebuild the temple, not the city.

This decree led Zerubbabel, Joshua, Zechariah and Haggai to encourage the people to awaken from their slumber and continue the work of rebuilding the temple. The book of Haggai describes the renewed enthusiasm of the people. As a result of Darius' decree and the leadership of Zerubbabel,

As a result of Darius' decree and the leadership of Zerubbabel, Joshua, Zechariah and Haggai, the temple was finished in only five years (Nehemiah 6:15)!





The Decree of Artaxerxes I in 457

The Biblical evidence indicates that this is the only decree which fulfils the specifications of Daniel 9:25. As we have already seen, neither of the previous two decrees gave permission for the Jews to rebuild and restore the city. On the other hand, this decree of Artaxerxes says nothing about the actual rebuilding of the temple. It only states that Artaxerxes gave gifts for the temple which had already been rebuilt! The book of Ezra leaves no doubt that this was the third decree given by Persian kings (Ezra 6:14-15). We have noted previously that the first two do not meet the specifications of Daniel 9:25 so we must take a closer look at this third decree which is found in Ezra 7:11-26 (see also, Prophets and Kings, p. 610)

But before we scrutinize the decree as such, it would be well to underline that Artaxerxes' decree was given in the year 457 B. C. This date can be derived from Ezra 7:7-8 where we are told that the decree was given in the fall of the seventh year of Artaxerxes. The year 457 B. C., as the seventh year of king Artaxerxes, is one of the most firmly rooted dates in ancient history.



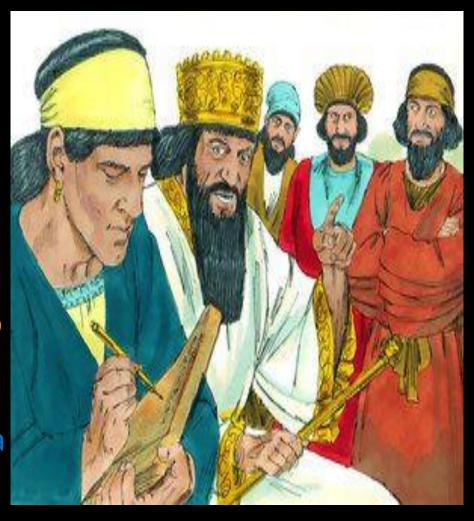
The Decree of Artaxerxes I in 457 (cont'd)

Now let's make a few remarks about the decree. It will be noticed that Daniel 9:25 requires a decree to both restore and build Jerusalem. Nothing short of this can fulfill the specifications of the prophecy. As we shall see below, restore and build, though related, do not mean the same thing. We shall find that 'build' refers to the actual physical construction of the city, while 'restore' is a reference to the reestablishment of the governance of the city according to the specifications of the Hebrew theocracy. It is clear that the decree of Artaxerxes gave Ezra the right to re-establish the theocratic governance of Israel by appointing magistrates and judges to judge the people according to the law of God (Ezra 7:25). It also gave the judges and magistrates the right to punish violations or did it give permission to build the city?



The Decree of Artaxerxes I in 457 (cont'd)

In Ezra 4:7-23 (the passage, for some unexplainable reason, was inserted at this point in the book of Ezra though it is out of chronological order with what comes before and after) we are told that in the early reign of Artaxerxes, the returned exiles were in the process of rebuilding the city, when their enemies— Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel and the rest of their Samaritan companions—sent a letter to King Artaxerxes complaining that the Jews were building the rebellious and the bad city, and have set up the walls thereof, and joined the foundations.' (Ezra 4:12) They then requested that the king put a halt to the endeavour for his own good (Ezra 4:13-16). As a result, Artaxerxes sent a letter to the enemies of the Jews commanding them to compel the Jews to halt their work (Ezra 4:18-23). This they did, pronto! (Ezra 4:23). But notice that Artaxerxes left the door open because he said: 'cause these men to cease, and that this city shall not be builded, until another commandment shall be given from me.' (Ezra 4:21).





The Decree of Artaxerxes I in 457 (cont'd)

It is highly unlikely that the Jews would have begun building the city without permission from the king.

The scenario is as follows: The decree of 457 B. C., was the original decree given by Artaxerxes authorizing the rebuilding of the city by the Jews. But after he gave this decree, the enemies of the Jews, alarmed by the idea that the Jews would soon function as a theocracy again, sent a slanderous letter to the king and this letter led him to suspend the decree he had given until the matter could be further reviewed. The building project was suspended and remained so until several years later. In the twentieth year of Artaxerxes we find that Jerusalem was still in ruins. In fact, Nehemiah describes the situation to king Artaxerxes: '... the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire. . .' (Nehemiah 2:3). The significant point here is that the city was still in ruins in 445 B. C. even though Artaxerxes had given the decree to build and restore the city in 457 B. C. And why was it still in ruins? The best explanation is that Artaxerxes had suspended his first decree because of the slanderous accusations of the Samaritans.

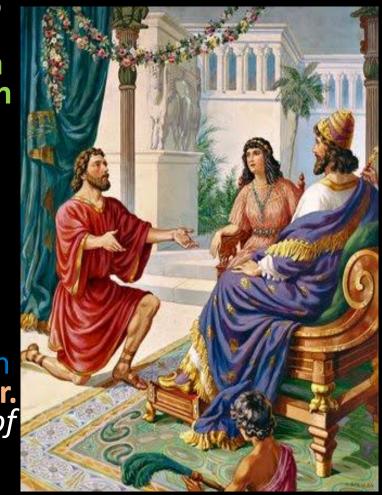




Permission Given to Nehemiah to Rebuild the City and Walls in 445 BC

The king simply gave Nehemiah personal permission to go to Jerusalem and to lead out in the task of rebuilding the city and the walls. This was not a new decree, but rather a reinstatement of the suspended decree which was given in 457 B. C.

In Nehemiah 2-6 we find the fascinating story of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. The narration begins with Nehemiah downcast because the city of Jerusalem 'lies waste and the gates are burned with fire' (Nehemiah 2:3). When Artaxerxes sees Nehemiah's grief he asks why he is so downcast. Nehemiah explains that it is because of the condition of his beloved city. The king then says to Nehemiah: 'For what dost thou make request?' (Nehemiah 2:4). This was the moment Nehemiah had been waiting for. He said to the king: '... send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.' (Nehemiah 2:5). In response, the king gave Nehemiah letters of permission to return to Jerusalem to undertake the task of rebuilding and provided an escort (Nehemiah 2:7-9).

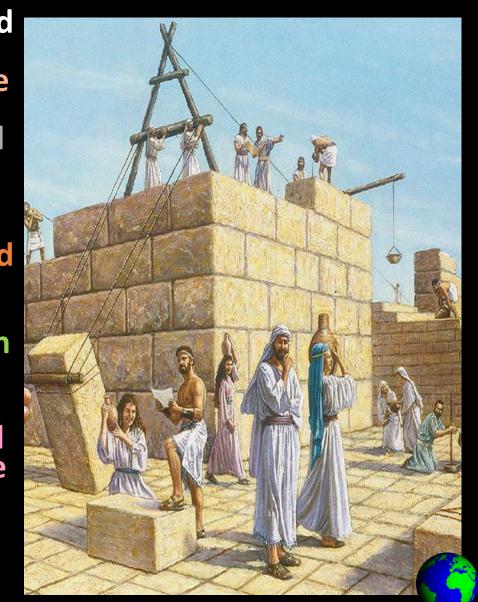




2. The Re-building of Jerusalem

But what took place after the rebuilding was finished is as important at the building itself. When the construction was finished, genealogical records were set straight (Nehemiah 7), the book of the law was read at the feast of booths—the captivity had ended and they now dwelt in their own land (Nehemiah 8), the history of Israel was reviewed and the covenant renewed (Nehemiah 9, especially verse 38), the covenant ritual was restored (Nehemiah 10), the land was restored to those who had returned (Nehemiah 11), and various violations of the book of the law were corrected (Nehemiah 13). All of these actions in Nehemiah 7-13 constitute a restoration of the Hebrew theocracy in harmony with the laws of God.

No doubt there were still many things which needed to be corrected (the book of Malachi describes some of these) and no doubt the enemies of Israel continued to offer opposition. But by the year 408, the city had been fully rebuilt and the theocracy's civil and religious system was in full force.

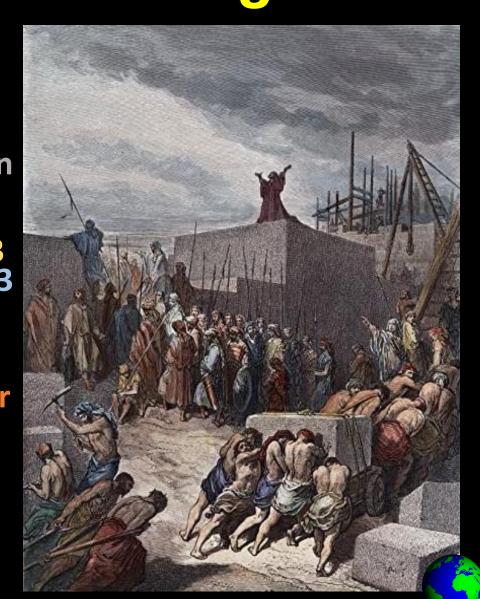


The Timing of the Re-building

The forty nine years between the giving of Artaxerxes' decree and the completion of the building and restoring of Jerusalem were certainly turbulent and troublous times.

One further point needs to be made: The permission given by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah cannot fulfill the decree of Daniel 9:25 for chronological reasons. As we shall see, the 'anointed one' was to come 483 years after the decree was given. If we begin the 483 years in 445 B. C., the Messiah would have to have been baptized in 37 A. D. No scholar ever suggests that Jesus began his public ministry in 37 A. D. This would mean that Jesus was crucified in the year 41 A. D. and Stephen was stoned in the year 44. * This simply does not fit the historical data.

In conclusion, we have seen that there were four 'decrees' relating to the return of the Jews after the exile. Two of these decrees were 'original' and the other two were simply 'confirmatory.'

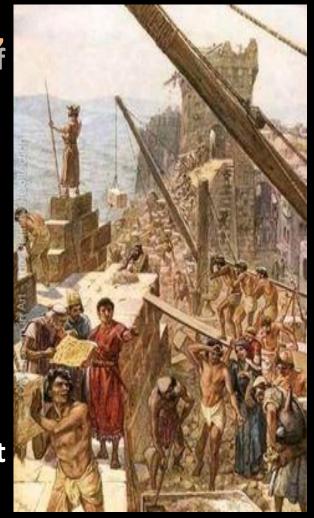


3. To Restore and Build Jerusalem

Many have overlooked the fact that in order for Daniel 9:25 to be fulfilled, a decree must be given to both restore and build Jerusalem, in that order. Some commentators have simply assumed that both of these words mean basically the same thing. But is this the case?

In order to understand what it means to restore and build Jerusalem we must first comprehend what 'Jerusalem' means. Frequently, when the Bible speaks of 'Jerusalem' it is not merely referring to the physical city but rather to the city as a polis, that is, as a living social, religious and political entity composed of people, commerce, rulers, magistrates, judges and civil and religious laws. In order for the city to function as a polis it must have self-governance as well as legal sovereignty over the land.

The captivity of Jerusalem involved far more than the destruction of the physical city. In fact, Jerusalem lost its governance before the city was destroyed. In Daniel 1:1-3 we are told that Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem in 605 and besieged it. He took king Jehoiakim captive as well as the royal seed and the princes. Thus Jerusalem lost her political autonomy or right to self-governance. She became subservient to Babylon. Even though the physical city of Jerusalem was not destroyed at this time, the seventy year captivity of Jerusalem did begin.





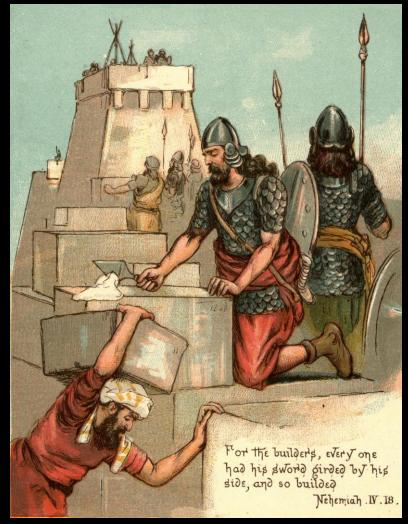
To Restore and Build Jerusalem (cont'd)

Obviously, Nebuchadnezzar did not carry away the physical city of Jerusalem. 'Jerusalem' here refers to a socio/political entity composed of king, officers, military men and craftsmen (In actual fact, Daniel himself attributes the loss of self-governance and the destruction of the city to the apostasy of the kings, princes, fathers and judges [Daniel 9:6, 8, 12])

Now, in order for Jerusalem to be re-established in her previous position after the captivity, two things must happen: Her political/religious self-determination must be restored and the physical city must be built. These two tasks, though related, are not identical. The word 'build' refers to the reconstruction of the physical city. But what does the word 'restore' mean? The word 'restore' means 'to give back to' or 'to return to a condition which existed before.'

In 2 Kings 14:22 we have the same two words which appear in Daniel 9:25. There we are told that Azariah 'built Elath and restored it to Judah.' This text makes it clear that 'build' and 'restore,' though related, are not identical.

What the text means is that the physical city of Elath was built and then governance over it was given to Judah.

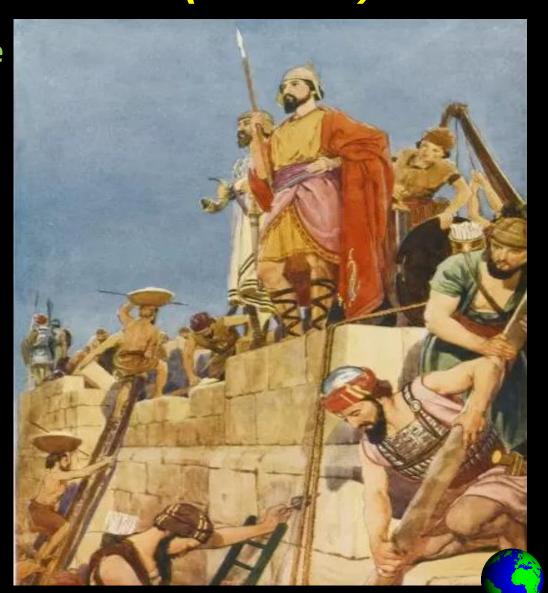




To Restore and Build Jerusalem (cont'd)

The central idea is to legally restore land, to legally restore political governance or to restore the legitimate borders of the kingdom. We therefore must conclude that 'restore' in Daniel 9:25 does not have to do so much with the physical rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem as such, but rather with the legal restoration of the land to its original owner and a giving back of the right to political self-governance according to the laws of God. The actual building of the city then follows. As we have previously seen, only the decree of Artaxerxes meets the criteria necessary to fulfill Daniel 9:25. Only the decree of Artaxerxes officially authorized the restoration of the Hebrew civil order and the right of Israel to govern herself according to the law of God (see, Ezra 7:25-26; also Nehemiah 8-13).

And only the decree of Artaxerxes authorized the physical rebuilding of the city.



4. Unto the Messiah the Prince

There is almost universal agreement among conservative Bible scholars that the Messiah the Prince in verse 25 is Jesus Christ. There are four issues we wish to address in this section:

First, what is the meaning of the word 'Messiah'?
Second, which event marked the anointing of Jesus?
Third, in what season of the year was Jesus anointed?
Fourthly, is the Prince of verse 26 the same person as the Messiah the Prince of verse 25??

1. The word 'messiah' is relatively common in the Old Testament. It means, 'to anoint' or 'to smear.' It is used, for example, to describe the act of anointing David (1 Samuel 16:13). Significantly, David received the Holy Spirit at the same moment that he was anointed and Aaron (Exodus 29:7), among others. The emphasis in Daniel 9:25, however, is not on the act of anointing but rather on the person who is anointed. The phrase can be translated 'unto the Anointed One, the Prince.'

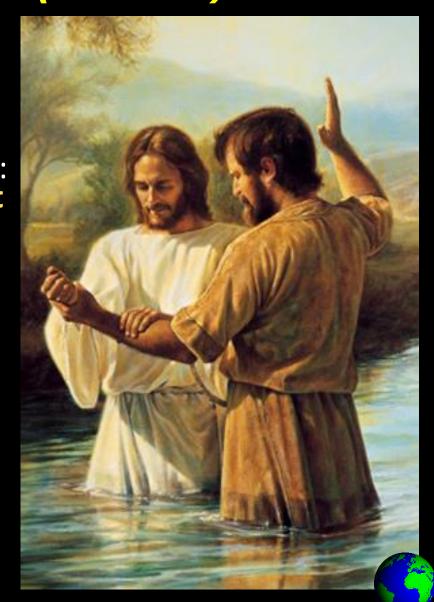




Unto the Messiah the Prince (cont'd)

2) An examination of the Biblical testimony clearly reveals that Jesus was anointed at the moment of His baptism. Let us examine the evidence from John's Gospel first. In John 1:19 we are informed that a group of Pharisees were sent to John with the purpose of asking him who he was. John was quick in his response: 'I am not the Christ.' It would be well to remember that the word 'Christ' in Greek (we still use the word 'christened' to refer to an anointing) means the same thing as the word 'Messiah' in Hebrew. In other words, John the Baptist was saying: 'I am not the Messiah.'

A little later in the chapter we are told that John baptized Jesus and introduced Him as the Lamb of God (John 1:29). At the moment of the baptism the Holy Spirit fell upon Jesus (John 1:32-33). And just a short while later, Andrew told his brother Simon Peter: 'We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.' (John 1:41). And the following day, Nathanael said to Jesus: 'thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.' (John 1:49)



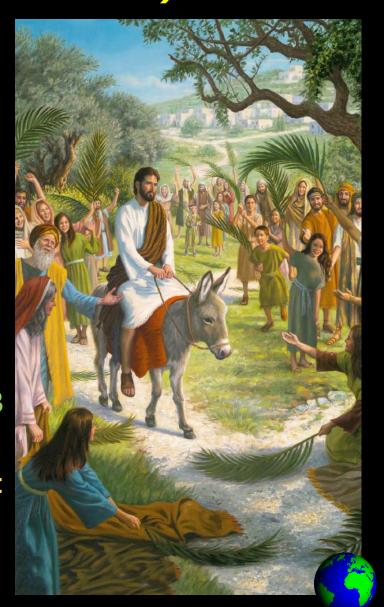
Unto the Messiah the Prince (cont'd)

3) As to the date of Messiah's anointing, <u>Luke 3:1-2</u> provides many chronological clues:

Luke 3:1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate [26—36 AD] being governor of Judaea, and Herod [Antipas: 4 BC—39 AD] being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip [4 BC—33/34 AD] tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

- 2 Annas [6-14 AD] and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.
- 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

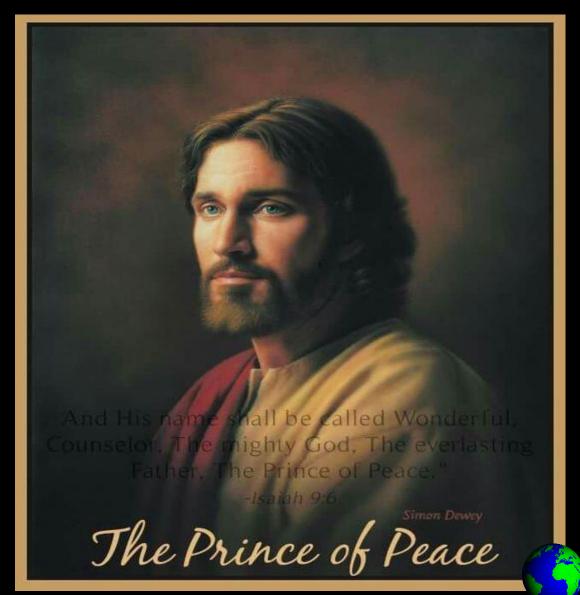
The prophecy of the 70 weeks specifies that Messiah was to come 'seven weeks and threescore and two weeks' after the decree of Artaxerxes. Beginning in 457 BC and going forward 483 years we arrive at 27 AD as the date for the manifestation of the Messiah (remember that there is no year "0" so only one year transpires between 1 BC and 1 AD). We know that Christ was cut off or killed in the middle of the last week, at springtime (Passover). This must mean that Messiah was manifested to Israel three and a half years earlier, in the fall (incidentally, this also means that Artaxerxes' decree was given in the fall).



Unto the Messiah the Prince (cont'd)

4) Notice that the Messiah is also called the Prince.

No serious Bible scholar questions the fact that the Prince of verse 25 is the same person as the Messiah. This same person is called 'the Prince of the Host' in Daniel 8:11 (see Joshua 5:13-15 for the only other occurrence of this title in the Old Testament), the 'Prince of the Covenant' in Daniel 11:22, and 'Michael that Great Prince' in Daniel 12:1. There can be no doubt that this title belongs to Jesus. In the great messianic prophecy of Isaiah 9:6 Jesus is called 'the Prince of Peace.' And Peter calls Jesus 'Prince' twice in the book of Acts (Acts 3:15; 5:31)

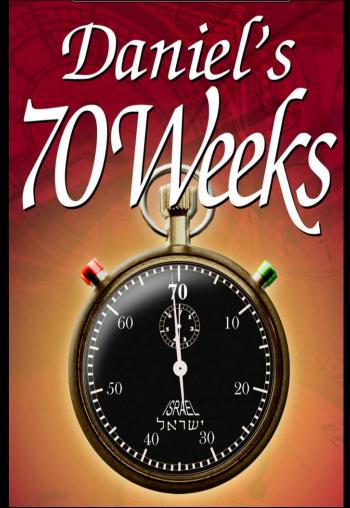


5. Seven weeks

This time period equals 49 yrs, remember a day = a year in prophecy. It took the Jews 49 yrs to complete the task of rebuilding Jerusalem even during troublous times [read the books of Ezra and Nehemiah for this history], which would place the completion date at 408 B.C. and this is true according to history.

"On this point, Prideaux (Connexion, Vol. 1, p. 322) says: 'In the fifteenth of Darius Nothus ended the first seven weeks of Daniel's prophecy. For then the restoration of the church and state of the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea was fully finished, in that last act of reformation which is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Nehemiah, from the twenty-third verse to the end of the chapter, just forty-nine years after it had been commenced by Ezra in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus." - Uriah Smith in Daniel and the Revelation pg. 201.

This appears to be a rather long time to accomplish the task of rebuilding. But if we understand the opposition they incurred from their enemies, and the incident of the Jews placing the poor of their own into slavery, also Haggai and Zechariah being raised up because of the Jews slothfulness in building the house of God, because they placed their own houses on priority instead of Gods, we can see how work started and stopped, started and stopped.



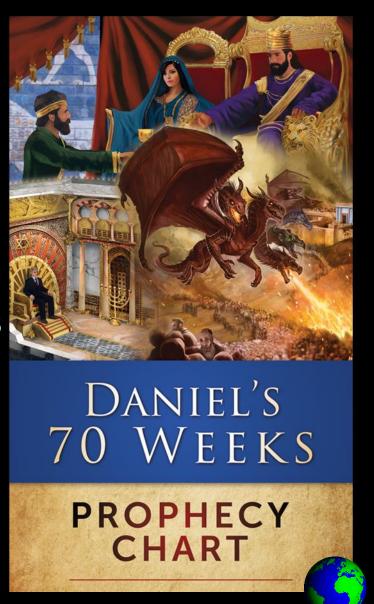


6. And threescore and two weeks

Why does Gabriel refer to this period as 'seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks' when he could have simply said, 'sixty nine weeks'? In other words, why did he separate the seven weeks from the other sixty two weeks? As we look at the literary structure the answer becomes obvious. The seven weeks have to do with the city and people at the beginning of the seventy weeks, while the sixty two weeks take us to the time of Messiah the Prince at the end of the seventy weeks.

62 weeks = 434 days = 434 yrs. The Messiah was to appear after the seven weeks and at the end of the sixty two weeks = 69 weeks in total. So if we take away 434 yrs. from 408 B.C. or 483 from 457 B.C., we end at the date 27 A.D. remembering that there is no year zero. This was the date of the baptism of Christ. And if we look at Mark 1:14-15 we see that Christ started His ministry preaching that the time is fulfilled, what time? The only time can be the end of the 69 weeks/483 years. So Christ fulfils this prophecy exactly.

This is only 69 weeks, so there is yet another week to go to make up 70 weeks.



7. The street shall be built again

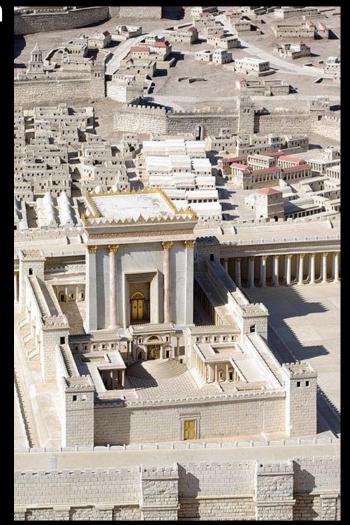
Let's examine the meaning of the word 'street'. The question suggests itself: What would be so significant about the rebuilding of one street (in singular) in Jerusalem after the captivity? No doubt there were many streets in Jerusalem after the rebuilding was finished. Why does Gabriel refer to just one street being rebuilt in troublous times?

'and the wall, even in troublous times'

The simple fact is that the Hebrew word rachab literally means 'broaden, make room, broad expanse and broad roomy place.' The word simply means 'a broad, open space in a town or village.' The evidence from the Old Testament seems to indicate that it could just as well have been translated 'town square' or 'plaza.'

In Esther 4:6 we are informed that the street of the city was in front of the king's gate and in Esther 6:9, 11 we are told that Mordeccai was paraded through the street of the city on the king's horse and in royal apparel.

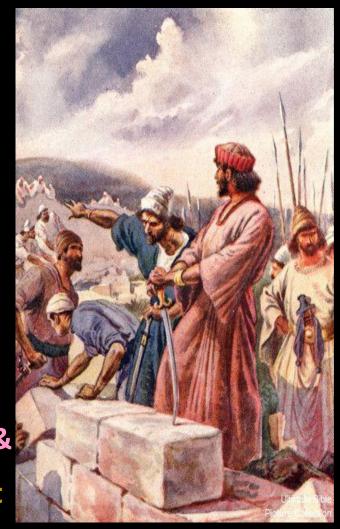
Once again, the town square seems to be a more likely place for this to occur than on a singular street.





Summarising Daniel 9:25

- 1) The decree in this verse must meet two specifications: It must be a decree to restore and build Jerusalem. While the restoration refers primarily to the reestablishment of self-governance in harmony with the laws of the theocracy, the building has to do with the actual reconstruction of the physical city: Its walls, its gates, its city square, etc...
- 2) The physical rebuilding of the city square (rachab) is of prime importance because there judicial, religious, civic and military decisions will be made in the re-established theocracy. This is the reason why the square (rachab) and decision making (harus) are paired together in Daniel 9:25.
- 3) Especially significant is the fact that Artaxerxes' decree of 457 BC gave Israel the right to appoint judges and magistrates and to decide cases which were brought to them in harmony with the laws of God (see, Ezra 7:25-26).
- 4) The 'troublous times' were due to the fact that the Samaritans & other people of the land did not want Israel to rebuild the city and re-establish self-governance. They did all in their power to prevent the rebuilding and restoration, even to the point of accusing Israel of sedition against the Persian government. The period between 457 and 408 B.C. can certainly be described as 'troublous times.'





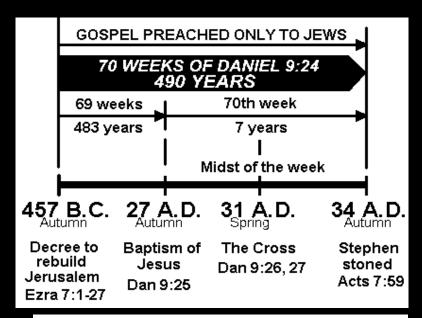
Summary

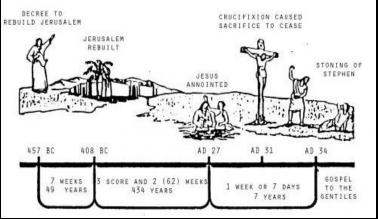
According to the year-day principle and the course of the events predicted, the seventy weeks must be understood as 490 years. And the starting point for this period is the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25).

This command is issued by King Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. It allows the Jews under the leadership of Ezra to rebuild Jerusalem (Ezra 7). According to the biblical text, the seventy weeks are "determined" or "cut off". This indicates that the time period of 490 years has been cut from a larger time period, that is, from the 2,300 years designated in the vision of Daniel 8. It follows from this that the 2,300 years and the 490 years must have the same starting point, namely, 457 BC.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks is divided into three sections: seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and the seventieth week.

The seven weeks (49 years) most likely refer to the time during which Jerusalem will be rebuilt. After these seven weeks, there will be sixty-two weeks (434 years) leading to "Messiah the Prince" (Daniel 9:25). Thus 483 years after Artaxerxes' decree, that is, in the year A.D. 27, Jesus the Messiah is baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit for His messianic mission.



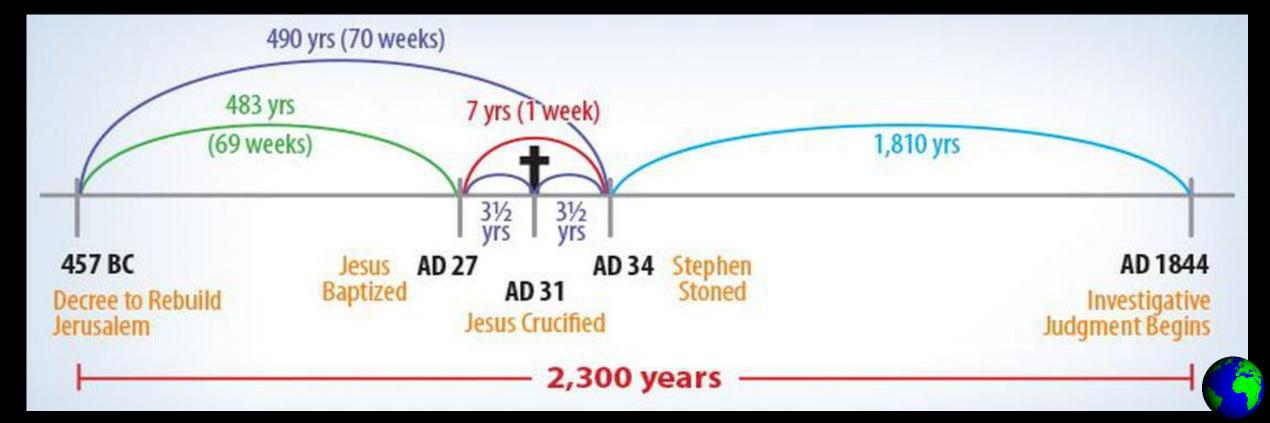




Summary (cont'd)

Below is the chart explaining how the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27 ties in with and forms the starting point of the 2,300-year prophecy of Daniel 8:14. If you count 2,300 years from 457 B.C. (remembering to delete the non-existent zero year), you get 1844; or, if you count the remaining 1,810 years from A.D. 34 (2,300 minus the first 490 years), you come to 1844, as well.

* Thus, the cleansing of the sanctuary in Daniel 8:14 can be shown to start in 1844.



Conclusion

The time of the beginning of the 490 years is linked to the command to rebuild Jerusalem. There were three such commands (536 BC, 520 BC, 457 BC), but the third, issued by King Artaxerxes, was the most comprehensive one and granted Jews some kind of autonomy.

The anointed one is without doubt the Messiah, Jesus. He would appear after seven plus sixty-two weeks—that is, after 483 years, in the year AD 27. In this year Jesus was baptized and began his public ministry.

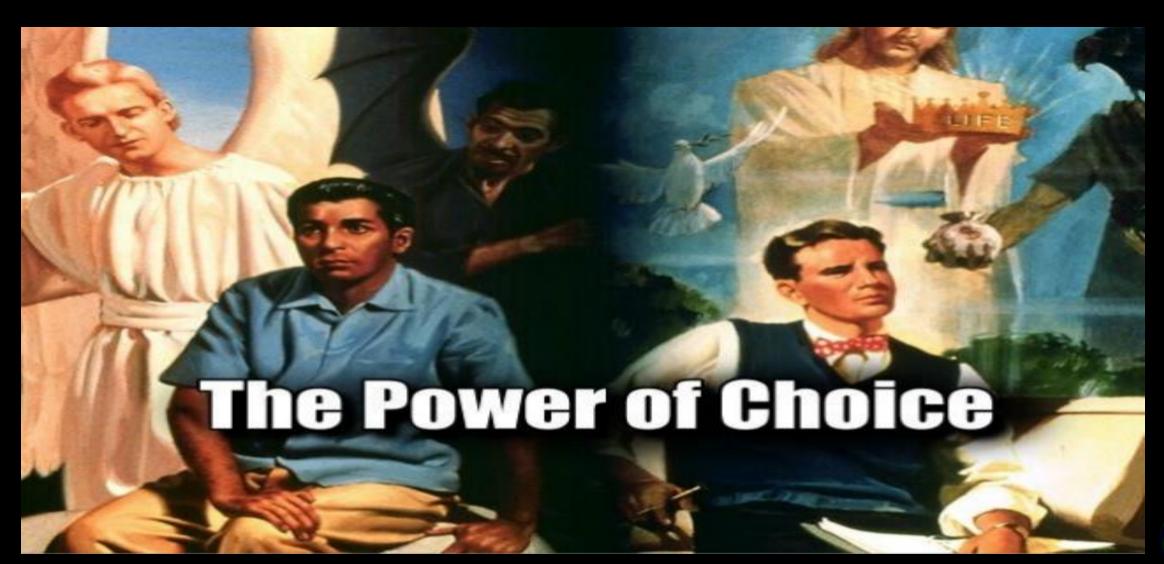
What a theme for meditation is the sacrifice that Jesus made for lost sinners! "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could He have purchased for us richer blessings? Should it not melt the hardest heart when we remember that for our sakes He left the happiness and glory of heaven and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death? Had He not by His death and resurrection opened for us the door of hope, we should have known nothing but the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. In our present state, favoured and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued.

* We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with His human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up.

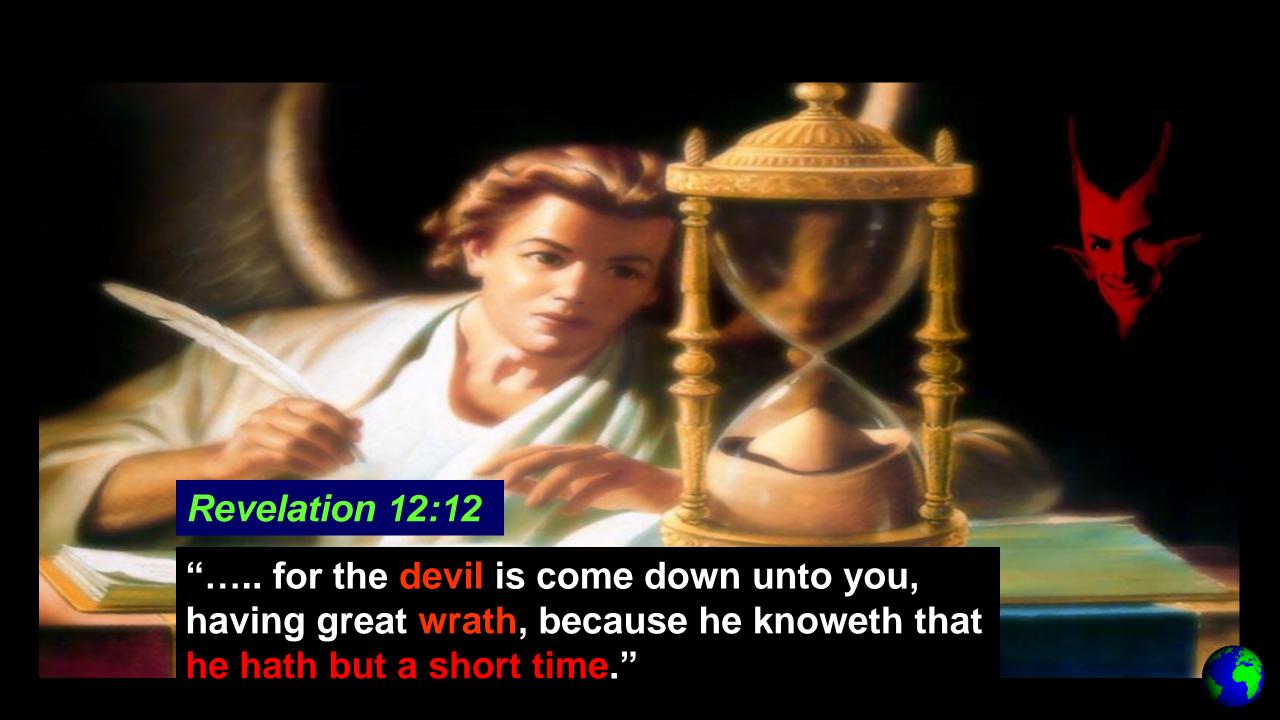




God has given all:







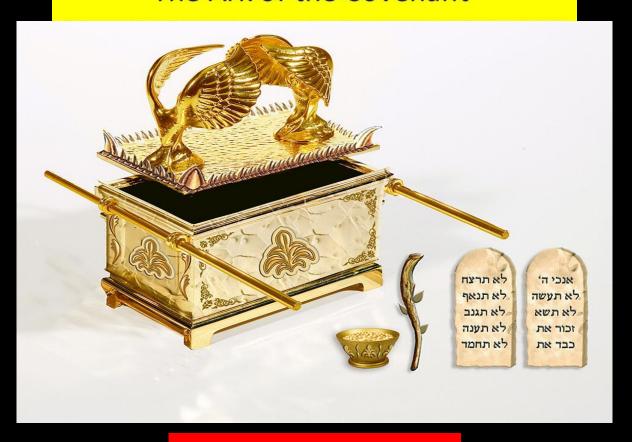
Enter The Ark of Hope

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

- John 10:16



The Ark of the Covenant



Psalms 77:13

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. -Revelation 3:20





