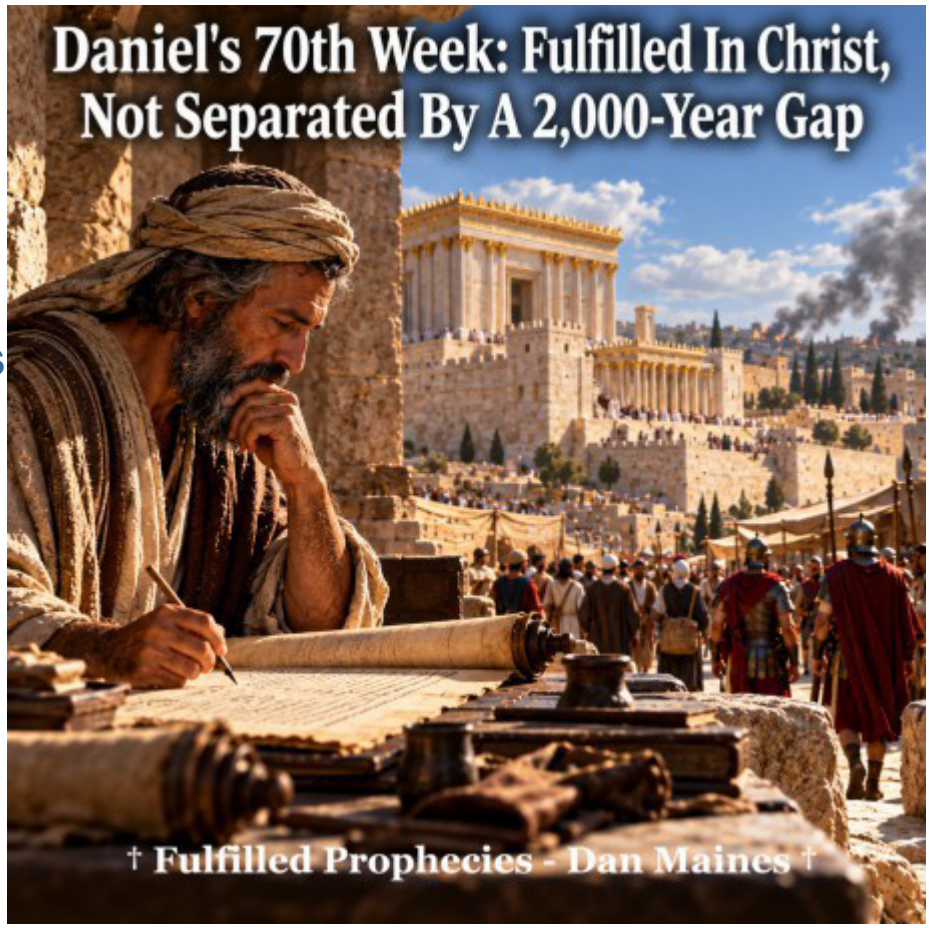
Fulfilled Prophecies

70 Weeks - Daniel's 70th Week: Fulfilled In Christ, Not Separated By A 2,000-Year Gap



By Dan Maines

Daniel's 70th Week: Fulfilled In Christ, Not Separated By A 2,000-Year Gap

Introduction

† Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks is one continuous prophecy concerning Daniel's people, Jerusalem, the Messiah, the ending of sin's covenantal dominion, and the establishment of everlasting righteousness. Nothing in Daniel 9 says that God's prophetic clock would stop after the sixty-ninth week and resume more than 2,000 years later.

† The seventy weeks were decreed as one complete period.

Gabriel didn't tell Daniel that sixty-nine weeks belonged together while the final week would be removed and transferred thousands of years into the future.
† The 70th week centers on Jesus Christ. His ministry, His death, the confirmation of God's covenant promises, and the gospel's first-century mission to Israel provide the natural fulfillment of Daniel's final week.
† The common calculation beginning with the decree associated with Artaxerxes in 457 BC places the completion of the sixty-nine weeks around AD 27, the period when Jesus was baptized and began His public ministry. The final seven then runs approximately from AD 27 to AD 34, with Christ's death occurring in the middle of that period.
† Scripture doesn't explicitly date Stephen's death to AD 34, so that date shouldn't be treated as though a verse gives it. It is a commonly reconstructed chronology. The important biblical point is that Daniel's 70th week belongs to the first-century work of Christ and the gospel mission surrounding His ministry, death, resurrection, and the early church, not to a future seven-year tribulation separated from the first sixty-nine weeks by thousands of years.
† To understand why Gabriel spoke of seventy sevens, we first need to go back to the Law. Long before Daniel received this prophecy, God had already established a pattern of seven-year Sabbath cycles, and Israel's failure to keep those Sabbaths was directly connected with the exile that Daniel was praying about. That background helps explain why Gabriel's answer came in seventy sevens and why those sevens should be understood as a continuous prophetic timetable (Leviticus 25:2-10; Leviticus 26:34-35; 2 Chronicles 36:20-21; Daniel 9:2).

The Sabbath-Year Foundation Of Daniel's Seventy Weeks
† Daniel's seventy weeks didn't introduce the idea of counting time in groups of seven. God had already established that pattern in the Law. Israel was commanded to count seven-year Sabbath cycles, and seven cycles of seven years produced forty-nine years leading to the Jubilee (Leviticus 25:2-10).

† This background is important because Daniel was praying about Israel's exile when Gabriel revealed the seventy weeks. Israel's failure to keep God's Sabbath requirements was directly connected with the land enjoying its Sabbaths during Israel's exile (Leviticus 26:34-35; 2 Chronicles 36:20-21).
† Jeremiah had prophesied seventy years of Babylonian domination, and Daniel specifically tells us that he was studying Jeremiah's seventy years when he prayed and received the prophecy of the seventy weeks (Jeremiah 25:11-12; Daniel 9:2).
† Gabriel's answer therefore expands Daniel's concern from seventy years to seventy sevens. The language naturally belongs to the covenantal pattern of sabbatical sevens already established in Israel's Law.
† Leviticus 25 commanded Israel to count seven Sabbaths of years, seven times seven years, totaling forty-nine years. Daniel 9 likewise counts units of seven as part of a divinely determined timetable (Leviticus 25:8; Daniel 9:24-27).
† This makes the proposed 2,000-year gap even more difficult to establish from the text. When God established Sabbath-year cycles, the sevens were actual consecutive units of the appointed period. Daniel gives no statement telling us to stop counting after sixty-nine weeks and wait thousands of years before counting the seventieth.
† Messiah was cut off within the prophetic sequence, not after a prophetic clock had been suspended for thousands of years. Daniel says that after the sixty-two weeks Messiah would be cut off, and Daniel 9:27 describes the events associated with the final week.
† The destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary must be distinguished from the completion of the 70th week itself. Daniel foretold the destruction following Messiah's being cut off, and Jesus later identified Jerusalem's desolation as an approaching judgment upon His own generation (Matthew 23:36-38; Luke 21:20-22).
† The temple's destruction in AD 70 therefore doesn't require extending the 70th week to AD 70. The redemptive timetable centered on Messiah could reach its completion earlier, while

the covenantal judgment announced within the prophecy came afterward in AD 70.
† The pattern is consistent from the Law through Daniel: God established the sevens, Israel violated the covenant, exile followed, Daniel prayed concerning the seventy years, and Gabriel answered with seventy sevens culminating in Messiah and the events that followed Him. There is no stated 2,000-year interruption anywhere in that sequence.

Daniel 9:24
Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the wrongdoing, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy Place.
† Gabriel identified the subjects of the prophecy: Daniel's people and Daniel's holy city. The prophecy concerned Israel and Jerusalem and the completion of God's redemptive purposes associated with them.
† The six objectives point directly toward the work of Christ. Jesus came to deal with sin, accomplish redemption, establish righteousness, and fulfill what had been promised through the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:44).
† Paul said that Christ was publicly displayed as the means of reconciliation through His blood, demonstrating God's righteousness (Romans 3:24-26). The writer of Hebrews likewise connects Christ's sacrifice with putting away sin (Hebrews 9:26).
† Daniel didn't say that sixty-nine weeks were decreed upon Daniel's people and city while the seventieth week belonged to an entirely different people thousands of years later. All seventy weeks belong to the same prophetic period.

Daniel 9:25
So you are to know and understand that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until Messiah the Prince, there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be

built again, with streets and moat, even in times of distress.
† Gabriel gave Daniel a measurable period leading to the Messiah. Seven weeks followed by sixty-two weeks equals sixty-nine weeks, or 483 prophetic years when the weeks are understood as groups of seven years.
† Using the decree connected with Artaxerxes in 457 BC as the starting point brings the sixty-nine weeks to approximately AD 27, when Jesus entered His public ministry.
† Luke deliberately placed the beginning of John's ministry and Jesus' baptism within identifiable first-century history, during the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1-3, 21-23).
† The prophecy was designed to identify the arrival of the Messiah, not to create an unexplained prophetic gap immediately before the week in which His redemptive work would reach its climax.

Luke 3:21-23
Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased." When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years old, being, as was commonly held, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli,
† Jesus' baptism marked the beginning of His public ministry. He was anointed by the Holy Spirit and publicly identified as God's Son.
† Peter later summarized this beginning by speaking of Jesus of Nazareth being anointed with the Holy Spirit and power (Acts 10:37-38).
† This fits Daniel's movement from the decree to the appearance of Messiah the Prince. The prophetic countdown brought history to Christ, not to a future antichrist.

Daniel 9:26
Then after the sixty-two weeks, the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will

destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

† Daniel explicitly said that after the sixty-two weeks that followed the first seven, the Messiah would be cut off. Jesus' death therefore belongs immediately within the prophetic sequence following the sixty-nine weeks.

† Isaiah had already described the suffering Servant as being cut off out of the land of the living (Isaiah 53:8). Daniel uses the same basic picture, the Messiah would be removed through death.

† The prophecy then moves toward the destruction of the city and sanctuary. Jesus also connected Jerusalem and its temple with an approaching first-century destruction (Matthew 23:36-38; Matthew 24:1-2).

† Rome destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70. That historical judgment didn't require moving Daniel's 70th week into the distant future. Daniel's prophecy moves from Messiah's redemptive work to the consequences that would later fall upon the city that rejected Him.

Daniel 9:27

And he will confirm a covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come the one who makes desolate, until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, gushes forth on the one who makes desolate.

† The central figure of Daniel's prophecy is the Messiah. The covenant language fits Christ's mission and the promises of God fulfilled through Him. Jesus said that His blood was the blood of the covenant poured out for many (Matthew 26:28).

† Isaiah likewise described the Servant as one who would justify the many and bear their iniquities (Isaiah 53:11-12). Daniel's reference to the many fits this messianic covenant setting naturally.

† In the middle of the final week, Christ's sacrifice brought the sacrificial system to its intended fulfillment. Animal sacrifices

continued physically until the temple's destruction, but their covenantal purpose had been fulfilled by the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ (Hebrews 9:11-12; Hebrews 10:10-14).
† Daniel didn't say that sacrifice would cease because a future antichrist would interrupt a rebuilt temple. The New Testament points us to Jesus, whose sacrifice made the old sacrificial system obsolete.
† If the final week began around AD 27, its midpoint falls approximately three and a half years later, corresponding with the period traditionally associated with Jesus' crucifixion. The remaining portion of the week belongs naturally to the apostolic gospel mission in the years immediately following the cross.

Matthew 26:27-28
And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is being poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.
† Jesus Himself used the language that explains Daniel 9. His blood established the covenant and was poured out for many.
† Daniel spoke of confirming a covenant with many. Jesus spoke of His covenant blood being poured out for many. That connection shouldn't be ignored in favor of inserting a future antichrist into a passage centered on Messiah.
† The cross wasn't an interruption of Daniel's prophecy. The cross was at the heart of its fulfillment.

Hebrews 9:11-12
But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things having come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by hands, that is, not of this creation; and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all time, having obtained eternal redemption.
† Christ accomplished what the old sacrifices could never accomplish. He entered through His own blood and obtained eternal redemption.

† This explains how sacrifice and offering reached their covenantal end. Their physical continuation couldn't give them continuing redemptive authority after Jesus offered the perfect sacrifice.
† Once the substance arrived, the shadows had fulfilled their purpose (Colossians 2:16-17). The temple sacrifices continued for a transitional period, but before God they had been surpassed permanently by Christ.

Hebrews 10:11-14
Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.
† Daniel's statement about sacrifice and offering finds its redemptive explanation in Christ's one sacrifice.
† The old priests repeatedly offered sacrifices because those sacrifices could never remove sins. Jesus offered one sacrifice that accomplished what the entire old system couldn't accomplish.
† The issue wasn't the exact day when Jewish priests stopped killing animals. The issue was when those sacrifices lost their covenantal standing before God. Christ's perfect sacrifice accomplished that at the cross.

Matthew 27:50-51
And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and gave up His spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split.
† The tearing of the temple veil at Christ's death visibly demonstrated a decisive covenantal change. God Himself opened the way that the old sanctuary had symbolized.
† The temple remained standing until AD 70, but its covenantal function had reached its fulfillment in Christ. The physical structure continued during the transition, just as sacrifices

continued, but the reality to which those shadows pointed had arrived.
† This is why the middle of Daniel's final week belongs at the cross. Messiah was cut off, His blood established the covenant, and His sacrifice fulfilled the old sacrificial system.

Acts 2:36-39
Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what are we to do?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."
† After the cross and resurrection, the covenant message continued to be proclaimed directly to Israel. Peter addressed the house of Israel and announced that the crucified Jesus was both Lord and Christ.
† Peter said the promise was for them and their children. This continued focus on Israel fits naturally within the remaining portion of Daniel's final week.
† Thousands of Israelites responded to the gospel during this period (Acts 2:41; Acts 4:4). The Messiah had been cut off, but God's promised message continued going out to Daniel's people.

Acts 6:7
The word of God kept spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.
† Notice where the gospel was flourishing, Jerusalem. Even priests were becoming obedient to the faith.
† This wasn't a prophetic clock sitting motionless while God waited thousands of years to finish Daniel's final seven. The events Daniel foretold were unfolding around Jerusalem, the

Messiah, the covenant, sacrifice, and Daniel's people.
† The early chapters of Acts therefore provide a natural continuation of the covenant mission begun by Jesus.

Acts 7:54-60
Now when they heard this, they were infuriated, and they began gnashing their teeth at him. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." But they shouted with loud voices, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one mind. When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul. They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Then he fell on his knees and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Having said this, he fell asleep.
† Stephen's death provides an important historical marker in the early church's mission to Israel. His speech reviewed Israel's history and confronted Jerusalem's leadership with its resistance to God's messengers and ultimately to Christ.
† Shortly afterward, persecution scattered believers beyond Jerusalem, and the book of Acts increasingly records the gospel moving outward (Acts 8:1-5; Acts 10:34-48; Acts 13:46-48).
† Many chronologies place Stephen's martyrdom around AD 34, which would correspond approximately with the completion of a seven-year period beginning around AD 27. Scripture itself doesn't provide the calendar year of Stephen's death, so this chronological connection should be presented as a historical reconstruction rather than an explicitly dated biblical statement.
† What Scripture does establish is that Jesus' ministry, death, resurrection, and the earliest apostolic mission to Israel all belong together in the same first-century setting described by Daniel's prophecy.

Galatians 3:16-17
Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as one would in referring to many, but rather as in referring to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. What I am saying is this: the Law, which came 430 years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.
† The New Testament consistently places covenant fulfillment in Christ. He is the promised Seed through whom God's promises reach their fulfillment.
† This makes Christ the natural focus of Daniel 9:27. Reading the covenant of Daniel's final week through Christ agrees with the New Testament's covenant theology.
† Moving Daniel 9:27 away from Christ and making a future antichrist its central covenant figure requires assumptions that Daniel never states.

Why There Is No 2,000-Year Gap
† Daniel 9:24 says seventy weeks were decreed. It doesn't say sixty-nine weeks were decreed followed by an indefinite interruption and then one final week thousands of years later.
† The sequence is continuous: seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, then the events involving Messiah and the final week. Nothing in the text announces that the seventieth week has been detached from the first sixty-nine.
† If someone inserted a 2,000-year gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth units of another biblical time prophecy, the text itself would need to establish that interruption. Daniel 9 doesn't establish one.
† Jesus, not a future antichrist, dominates the prophecy. Messiah appears, Messiah is cut off, covenant promises are fulfilled, sacrifice reaches its fulfillment, and afterward Jerusalem and the sanctuary face the determined desolation.
† Once the 70th week is allowed to remain where Gabriel placed it, immediately following the sixty-nine weeks, the prophecy points directly into the ministry of Jesus and the first-century transition from the old covenant order to its fulfillment in

Christ.

Historical References

† Josephus described the catastrophic Roman war, the siege of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the devastation that followed. His account provides an important non-Christian historical witness to the first-century destruction associated with the city and sanctuary in Daniel's prophecy.

† Josephus wrote extensively about the conditions surrounding Jerusalem's fall, including famine, internal conflict, Roman siege operations, and the temple's destruction in AD 70. These events correspond historically with Jesus' warnings concerning Jerusalem's approaching desolation (Matthew 24:1-2; Luke 21:20-24).

† Eusebius later recorded the early Christian understanding that believers in Jerusalem left the city before the war and went to Pella. His account reflects the early connection between Jesus' warnings and the first-century judgment that came upon Jerusalem.

† These historical witnesses don't establish the interpretation by themselves. Scripture establishes the prophetic framework, while history confirms that Jerusalem and its sanctuary experienced the first-century destruction Daniel and Jesus described.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't need to wait for Daniel's 70th week to begin. Its focus was Christ and His first-century redemptive work.

† We don't need a rebuilt temple, restored animal sacrifices, or a future seven-year interruption of sacrifices to complete Daniel 9. Jesus already offered the sacrifice that could never be repeated or improved upon (Hebrews 10:10-14).

† We shouldn't move the covenant away from Jesus and give its central role to a future antichrist when Jesus explicitly identified His own blood as the blood of the covenant poured out for many (Matthew 26:28).

† Understanding Daniel's 70th week removes one of the major

foundations supporting a future seven-year tribulation scheme. Daniel's seventy weeks lead us to Christ, His cross, His covenant, and the first-century judgment upon Jerusalem.
† The prophecy isn't primarily about our future. It's about God's faithfulness in keeping His promises through Jesus Christ.
† When Daniel 9 is allowed to remain in its historical and covenantal setting, the pieces fit together without inserting a 2,000-year gap that Gabriel never mentioned.

Q & A Appendix
Q: Does Daniel 9 actually say there is a gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks?
A: No. Daniel presents seventy weeks as the complete period decreed concerning Daniel's people and holy city. The text doesn't state that the final week would be separated from the preceding sixty-nine by thousands of years (Daniel 9:24-27).
Q: Who is the central figure of Daniel's 70th week?
A: The prophecy's focus is the Messiah. He appears after the sixty-nine weeks, is cut off, and the covenant and sacrificial language fits the New Testament's description of Christ's work (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 9:11-12).
Q: Did Jesus cause sacrifices to cease physically at the cross?
A: The priests continued offering animals until the temple was destroyed, but Christ's one sacrifice brought their covenantal purpose to fulfillment. His sacrifice accomplished permanently what animal sacrifices could never accomplish (Hebrews 10:11-14).
Q: Does Daniel 9:27 identify the one confirming the covenant as the antichrist?
A: Daniel 9:27 doesn't use the word antichrist. The immediate prophecy concerns the Messiah, and Jesus specifically described His blood as covenant blood poured out for many (Matthew 26:28).
Q: Was Stephen definitely stoned in AD 34?
A: Scripture doesn't give a calendar year for Stephen's death. AD 34 is a chronological reconstruction used by many interpreters. Stephen's martyrdom can serve as an approximate

marker near the end of the period, but we shouldn't claim that Scripture explicitly dates it to AD 34 (Acts 7:54-60).
Q: What happened after Stephen's death?
A: Persecution scattered believers from Jerusalem, and the gospel increasingly moved beyond Jerusalem and Judea toward Samaria and the nations (Acts 8:1-5; Acts 10:34-48; Acts 13:46-48).
Q: What is the biggest problem with inserting a 2,000-year gap?
A: Daniel never states one. The seventy weeks are presented as the period decreed concerning Daniel's people and Jerusalem, and the events following the sixty-nine weeks lead directly into the Messiah's first-century work (Daniel 9:24-27).
Q: Why does this matter for understanding the end times?
A: If Daniel's 70th week was fulfilled in the first century, it can't serve as the basis for moving a seven-year tribulation, restored temple sacrifices, and Daniel's final week into our future. Jesus placed Jerusalem's coming judgment within the generation then living (Matthew 23:36; Matthew 24:34).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †
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Source Index
† Leviticus 25:2-10; Leviticus 26:34-35; 2 Chronicles 36:20-21; Jeremiah 25:11-12; Daniel 9:2; Daniel 9:24; Daniel 9:25; Luke 3:21-23; Daniel 9:26; Daniel 9:27; Matthew 26:27-28; Hebrews 9:11-12; Hebrews 10:11-14; Matthew 27:50-51; Acts 2:36-39; Acts 6:7; Acts 7:54-60; Galatians 3:16-17
† Historical writers: Flavius Josephus, The Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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