

Daniel Chapter 9:20-27 (ESVCE)

Gabriel Brings an Answer

²⁰ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God, ²¹ while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. ²² He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, "O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. ²³ At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.

The book of Daniel is extremely controversial. The essence of the controversy boils down to chapter 9. In Daniel, the timeline goes from 605 BC to the third year of King Cyrus, which would be 536 BC. The traditional view of the book held by both Jews and Christians is that Daniel was written during the period that's described in the book, 6th century BC.

Daniel is composed of visions that are not read in the lectionary, and it's those passages that are the most controversial ones.

The Seventy Weeks

²⁴ "Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place. ²⁵ Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. ²⁶ And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. ²⁷ And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."

The weeks are weeks of years. So seven weeks of years would be 49 years. 62 weeks of years would be 434 years. And so from the beginning of this period to the end of it would be 483 years or the 69 weeks, and that's followed by the one week of years.

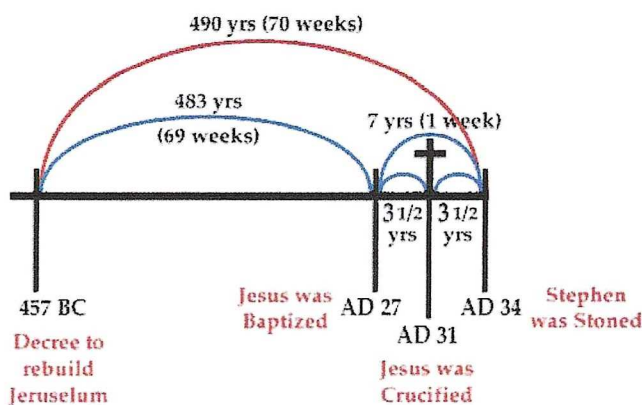
The meaning of Daniel's prophesy depends on what date you choose for the decree to go out to restore Jerusalem. If it's the conquest of Babylon by King Cyrus and gives permission to rebuild the temple, the dates don't really work out that well and the prophesy isn't very interesting. It brings us somewhere in the Roman period in the first century BC.

But scholars will often pick the decree of Artaxerxes I to Ezra in 457 BC to go rebuild Jerusalem. And if you work the math out, after 69 weeks of years we are in A.D. 26. And then the 70th week, where there's going to be an anointed one who appears, where half of the week is going to be putting an end to sacrifice. And then there's going to be desolation poured out on the abomination of desolation, that would correspond with Jesus's public

ministry in the years somewhere between 26 and 33 A.D. Daniel's prophecy appears to predict the coming of Jesus with almost mathematical precision of the anointed one.

Using a Jewish year of 360 days per year and you count 69 weeks of years, that takes you to 173,880 days. And then transposing that into the Gregorian calendar you go from March 14, 445 to April 6, 32 AD, when Jesus comes into the temple in the triumphal entry and puts an end to sacrifice.

The beauty of this prophecy is that *it appears* that Daniel 9:24 through 27 predicts the coming of Christ at the correct time.



Who remembers this? The Church remembers.

The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ from the Roman Martyrology

(The Christmas Proclamation. Read at the beginning of the Mass at Midnight)

The Twenty-fifth Day of December,
when ages beyond number had run their course
from the creation of the world,
when God in the beginning created heaven and earth,
and formed man in his own likeness;
when century upon century had passed
since the Almighty set his bow in the clouds after the Great Flood,
as a sign of covenant and peace;
in the twenty-first century since Abraham, our father in faith,
came out of Ur of the Chaldees;
in the thirteenth century since the People of Israel were led by Moses
in the Exodus from Egypt;
around the thousandth year since David was anointed King;
in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of Daniel;
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
in the year seven hundred and fifty-two
since the foundation of the City of Rome;
in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar Octavian Augustus,
the whole world being at peace,
JESUS CHRIST, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father,
desiring to consecrate the world by his most loving presence,
was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and when nine months had passed since his conception,
was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judah,
and was made man:
The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.