

## When Did Messiah the Prince Make Himself Known Publicly?

Daniel 9:25  
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Judaism, since the time of the first century, is still waiting for the appearing of the Messiah. They deny that Jesus Christ was the Messiah. They deny that His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were foretold in the Old Testament (Isaiah 53). In fact, in Matthew 28 that the soldiers that guarded the tomb of the Lord Jesus witnessed a great earthquake and beheld in great fear the angel that rolled the stone from the entrance to the empty tomb. When these soldiers awakened from the shock of what they saw, they ran in fear and told all that they had seen to the Jewish religious leaders, who bribed the soldiers to circulate the lie that the disciples of Jesus had stolen the body from the grave while they slept.

And so Jews (even till the present time) continue to wait for the coming of the Messiah who was prophesied to come in Daniel 9:25 at a specified time and who was prophesied to be cut off in death as a criminal likewise at a specified time in Daniel 9:26. Why can't Jews in general today understand that the Messiah, the anointed Prince, Jesus Christ, has already come and fulfilled these prophesies in Daniel 9? Paul tells us why in 2 Corinthians 3:14. Praise be to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus that there is coming a time when that blindness will be removed by God, and Israel as a nation will be granted repentance and faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 11:25-27). That is why we are to pray for the salvation of Israel as a nation. God's Covenant of Grace shall overcome their unbelief, rebellion, and hatred for Jesus, who is Messiah, the Prince.

As we continue to work our way through Daniel 9, we will be focusing today on Daniel 9:25 and the following main questions: (1) When Was the Command to Restore and Build Jerusalem? (2) When Did Messiah, the Prince, Make Himself Known Publicly?

### I. When Was the Command to Restore and Build Jerusalem?

A. The angel, Gabriel, gave to Daniel (in Daniel 9:24) six events or purposes that God had determined to bring to pass concerning His people and the city of Jerusalem within a period of 70 weeks of years (490 consecutive years).

1. These six events/purposes of God were fulfilled at the first coming of Jesus Christ in the 70<sup>th</sup> week (the last 7 years). This 70<sup>th</sup> week would reveal **the transgression of all transgressions** committed by Israel (the hatred, rebellion, and crucifixion of Messiah the Prince), but the 70<sup>th</sup> week would also reveal **the death of all deaths** to put away the sin of God's elect (whether in Israel or in the nations)—the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

2. But when would Messiah the Prince reveal Himself to Israel? That is the amazing revelation that we find in Daniel 9:25.

B. The angel, Gabriel, reveals the starting point (*terminus a quo*) of the 70 weeks as being "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem." There are three prominent starting points for the 70 weeks that conservative, biblical scholars (past and present) will usually select from among.

#### 1. The edict given by Cyrus ca. 538/537 B.C. (Ezra 1:2-3; Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:13).

a. The objections to this being the command of Daniel 9:25 are: (1) The chronology does not add up in bringing one to Messiah the Prince—538/537 B.C. plus 69 weeks (483 consecutive years) brings one to ca. 55/54 B.C.; (2) This edict of Cyrus (Ezra 1:2-3) does not mention the city—only the temple.

b. Though the emphasis is upon the temple, I don't doubt that restoring and building homes etc. for the Jews to dwell in is implied.

c. For some conservative scholars, the number of precise years is not really important because they interpret the years figuratively. What is important is the starting event and the ending

event. But just as the prophecy of the 70 years of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:12) were actual calendar years (Daniel 9:2), so should be the 490 years of the 70 weeks.

d. Other conservative scholars who adopt this starting point make the case that the chronology used by nearly all biblical scholars (past and present) is based upon the “canon” of Ptolemy (2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.), which has included more years for the Persian kings than the biblical calendar has (152 more years), and that when the biblical calendar is used, the 483 years unto Messiah, the Prince, actually brings one to the time of Christ’s baptism (26-27 A.D.). That is a minority position among conservative biblical scholars (both past and present).

e. I will not mention the edict by King Darius (Ezra 6) because it is simply reissuing the same edict given by Cyrus.

## **2. The first edict given by Artaxerxes ca. 458-457 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26).**

a. This edict given by Artaxerxes sent Ezra to Jerusalem with a number of the Jews again with an emphasis on the temple, but also mentioning restoring judges, magistrates, and courts (which would imply restoring buildings for them to meet in as well as homes to live in).

b. In fact, the enemies of the Jews accused them at this very time of rebuilding Jerusalem (Ezra 4:12). Ezra also praises God at this time that He has given them a wall (perhaps the beginning of a wall) in Jerusalem and Judea (Ezra 9:9). The prophet, Haggai, was prophesying at this time that the people were more concentrated on building their own houses than the house of the Lord (Haggai 1). If this is the starting point, it carries us to Jesus’ baptism in about 26-27 A.D. (458/457 B.C. + 483 years= 26/27 A.D.).

## **3. The second edict given by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah ca. 445/444 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:5-6).**

a. The strength of this starting point is that it specifically mentions building the gates and the wall per Daniel 9:25.

b. The weakness of this starting point is that it extends the 69 weeks (483 years) a number of years past the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ—so it overshoots Messiah, the Prince by a few years (445/444 B.C. + 483 years=38/39 A.D.).

c. Those who hold this view then take the 483 solar years (based upon the pattern of the sun) and convert them to lunar years (based upon the pattern of the moon) and come up with a date of the triumphal entry ca. 32 A.D. (lunar years have 11 days per year fewer than solar years). I would not dismiss this as possible, but the previous 70 years of Babylonian captivity were based upon 70 solar years, so why would not the 70 weeks also be based upon solar years? Why would God give this time period in solar years if He meant lunar years? Why do they interpret the last week (7 years) in solar years rather than in lunar years?

4. Of the three starting points, it seems that the first edict of Artaxerxes given to Ezra in 458/457 B.C. is the most likely option—by moving 69 weeks (483 consecutive years), it brings us to the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in 26/27 A.D.

C. Why is there in Daniel 9:25 this division of the 7 weeks (49 years) and 62 weeks (434 years)?

1. The initial 7 weeks (49 years) of restoring and building Jerusalem (“street” and “wall” (ditch) will be filled with various troubles/conflicts that came from enemies who sought to end this reformation of a biblical church and state in Israel at that time (Ezra/Nehemiah).

2. Not only were there enemies from without, but also forgetfulness/preoccupation of God’s people, grave and serious sins among God’s people of unlawful marriages with the nations around them that were forbidden by God’s Law, and divorcing their lawful wives in order to pursue unlawful marriages.

## **II. When Did Messiah the Prince Make Himself Known Publicly?**

A. When Gabriel revealed unto Daniel that these 69 weeks of years (483 consecutive years) will be “unto the Messiah the Prince”, this tells that this prophecy is all about Jesus Christ (Daniel 9:26).

1. Jesus is both Messiah (the Anointed One) in the Old Testament (Psalm 2:2,7; Isaiah 61:1)

and is Christ (the Anointed One) in the New Testament (Luke 4:16-21; John 1:41-42; John 4:25-26; Acts 10:37-38). Wherever the name, “Christ”, is used in the New Testament, it identifies Jesus as the Messiah, the Anointed One (599 times in the New Testament). Is there a more definitive and clear person in Scripture to whom this Anointed One (Messiah) refers?

2. Likewise, Jesus is given the title of “Prince” in the Old Testament (Isaiah 55:4—the same Hebrew word as in Daniel 9:25; Isaiah 9:6—“Prince of Peace”—a synonym is used) and in the New Testament (Acts 3:15—the Jews “killed the Prince of Life”; Revelation 1:5). This prophecy (Daniel 9:25) points to Messiah the Prince who brought to pass the events and purposes of God in Daniel 9:24. The 69 weeks (483 years) bring us to Messiah the Prince. What an amazing prophecy!

B. There is generally one of two events that conservative, biblical scholars (both past and present) see as the ending point (*terminus ad quem*) of the 69 weeks (483 consecutive years).

1. The public triumphal entry of Christ just before His death (ca. 31/32 A.D.). Jesus was publicly proclaimed by the multitudes at that time the “Son David” and “King of Israel”. Both of these titles would indeed point to Jesus as being the Messiah. This ending point goes along with the starting point of the word of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah in 445/444 B.C. But as was pointed out, this position requires changing the 483 solar years to lunar years (as noted earlier). Though this view is possible, this seems to be a significant weakness of the view.

2. The second option for the ending point of the 69 weeks (483 years) is the public baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist at which time Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit when the Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove (26/27 A.D.). This connects “to anoint the Most Holy” (Daniel 9:24). It was at Christ’s baptism that John the Baptist states Jesus was made manifest to Israel (John 1:31).

C. Let me summarize what the angel, Gabriel, prophesied in Daniel 9:25. From the issuing of a word (edict) by the Persian king, Artaxerxes, in 458/457 B.C. until Messiah the Prince is baptized by John and anointed by the Holy Spirit (26/27 A.D.), 69 weeks of years (483 years) would pass. The first 7 weeks of years (49 years) would be spent in restoring and building Jerusalem (ecclesiastically, politically, and architecturally) during times of great hardship and trials from without and from within.

#### D. Application

1. The reformation and restoring that which had been destroyed by the Babylonians was not accomplished overnight. This was spread out over many years (about 130 years). Reformation was slowed down by kings, by the worldliness of God’s people, by enemies that claimed to want to help, by the forgetfulness of God’s people as to why they were set free, by being outnumbered by the enemy. But by means of faithful officers, priests, and prophets, God stirred up the hearts of His people to persevere until reformation was completed (Zechariah 4:6). Let us as well not grow weary in well doing, for we shall reap if we faint not (whether reformation in our lives, families, church, city, or nation). Reformation usually comes slowly and gradually as does sanctification. We just want the Lord to hurry and change people, when it is usually us that God begins by changing.

2. There is hope because it is Jesus that builds and reforms His church and gates of hell will not prevail against her (Matthew 16:18). Discouragement will turn to hope when we look to Jesus, Messiah the Prince. No amount of evil or power in this world will prevent Him from bringing in a glorious reformation in which Israel and all nations will come to Him and serve Him as Messiah the Prince (Revelation 11:15).

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