

HAS MESSIAH COME?

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The ninth chapter of Daniel is the only place in all the Tanach (aka the Old Testament), that we're told *when* Messiah would come, but instead of explaining it to us, our Rabbis curse anyone wanting to find it out!

“Rabbi Samuel b. Nachmani said in the name (of) Rabbi Jonathan: ‘Blasted be the bones of those who calculate the end!’”¹

Some of our Rabbis, in a further attempt to keep us from understanding Daniel 9:24-26, even state that *Daniel was wrong*. Alfred Edersheim, a Talmudic scholar of the 19th century, who would come to know Messiah, said,

‘later Rabbinism, which, naturally enough, could not find its way through the Messianic prophecies of the book, declared that even Daniel was mistaken.’²

Hutzpa (shameless audacity) has descended to new depths! Yet Judaism’s greatest Rabbi, Rambam,³ in his *Letter to Yemen*, wrote, ‘we cannot assert that Daniel was wrong in his reckoning,’⁴ but in the same paragraph, Rambam says that *it was for our own good that the curse was pronounced!*

“Daniel has elucidated to us the profundities of the knowledge of the End Times. However, since they are secret, the Wise, may their memory be blessed, have barred the calculation of the days of the Messiah’s coming so that the untutored populace will not be led astray *when they see that the end times have already come, but there is no sign of the Messiah*. For this reason the Wise, may their memory be blessed, have decreed: ‘Cursed be he who calculates the End Times,’ but we cannot assert that Daniel was wrong in his reckoning.”⁵

Rambam was trying to protect us, being concerned that we would be ‘led astray’ if we figured out Daniel’s time for the coming of the Messiah because Rambam thought that the time for Messiah *had already come*, but Messiah hadn’t come! Even Rabbi Yehuda the Prince, known simply as ‘Rabbi,’ because of his written compilation of the Mishnah around 220 CE (i.e. 200 AD), said of Daniel’s time frame for Messiah that, ‘These times were over long ago.’⁶ How did they know that the time was past, and what happened to our Messiah?!

When the angel Gabriel spoke to Daniel in Babylon, the Temple and Jerusalem had laid in ruins for about 70 years (Dan. 9:2, 11-12, 16-19. It was about 525 BCE (i.e. 525 BC). The King of Babylon had destroyed both the city and the Temple in 586 BCE and had taken most of us remaining Jews to Babylon where we wept for Jerusalem (Ps. 137).

Before calculating the time of Messiah’s appearance, as seen in the ‘weeks’ of Daniel 9:24-26, it’s easy to

¹ Sanford R. Howard, *L’Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom* (Thorsby, AL: Sabbath House, Inc., 1999), p. 209. *Sanhedrin* 97b, vol. 2, p. 659, Soncino Press. Editorial footnote #6 says, ‘i.e., Messiah’s advent.’

² Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000), p. 957. *Bereshith Rabba* 98 (a midrash or commentary on Genesis). Edersheim lived from 1825 to 1889 CE.

³ Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (Rambam) is also known as Maimonides (1135-1204 CE).

⁴ Risto Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings* (Jerusalem: Keren Ahvah Meshihit, 1992), p. 100. Rambam, *Igeret Teiman* (Letter to Teman), chapter 3, page 24.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid. p. 101. *Sanhedrin* 98b and 97a.

see from what's written that Jerusalem and the Temple would be rebuilt again, God would atone for our sins (vv. 24-25), the Messiah would be 'cut off' (die), and after that, Jerusalem and the Second Temple would be destroyed (v. 26). It's because of Jerusalem and the Second Temple's destruction that Rambam and *Rabbi* wrote that the End Times had come, but that the Messiah hadn't. At least, they didn't think so, but Daniel gave the time of Messiah's coming, His atonement for our sins, and His death, all of which would have to happen before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Second Temple:

Daniel 9:24: "Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and your holy city: to finish the rebellion, to put an end to sin, to atone for guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up both vision and prophet and to anoint the Holy of Holies."⁷

Dan. 9:25: "Know and understand that from the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, until the time of Prince Messiah,⁸ there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It shall be built again with streets and trench, but in a troubled time."

Dan. 9:26: "After the sixty-two weeks, the Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself. And the army of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the Temple. Its end shall come with a flood and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed."

The expression a 'week of years' occurs in the Mishnah (Sanh. vol. 1)⁹ and means seven years.¹⁰ This is affirmed in Midrash Rabbah on Lamentations, which says that 'one week in Daniel 9 means a week of years.'¹¹ The concept is also found in both the Sabbath (every seventh day; Gen. 1:1-2:3; Ex. 16:26-27, 29-30; 20:10-11; 23:12, etc.) and the Jubilee years, every 7 times 7 years plus one year (Lev. 25:3-4, 8).

The decree that Daniel spoke of (v. 25) is written in Ezra 6:14¹² and Nehemiah 2:1-8. King Artaxerxes (Artaxerxes Longimanus; 464 to 425 BCE)¹³ 'authorized Ezra the priest to rebuild the city of Jerusalem' and the Temple 'in the seventh year of his reign, that is, in 457 BCE (Ezra 7:7-8, 11-26).'¹⁴ 'The majority of critics agree upon approximately this year.'¹⁵

"The prophecy speaks first about seven weeks of years during which the Temple will be rebuilt and indeed the books of Ezra and Nehemiah describe this 49 year building phase 'in the midst of dire times.' And after this 'a further 62 weeks' of years 'to the coming of the Messiah.'"¹⁶

Multiplying '62 x 7 = 434 years. Altogether, the time from the issuing of Artaxerxes' decree 'to the coming of the Messiah' would 'be 483 years (49 + 434 = 483 years.)'

Subtracting the year of the decree, 457 (BCE) from the 483 years of Gabriel's words to Daniel, we come to the year 26 CE In the autumn of that year Yeshua of Nazareth began His ministry.¹⁷ Coincidence? If

⁷ The Holy of Holies in Daniel is קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים (*ko-desh ko-dah-sheem*).

⁸ Benjamin Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), p. 533.

⁹ Howard, L'Chayim: *Finding The Light of Shalom*, p. 206. Dr. Judah B. Slotki, *Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah* (Soncino Press), p. 77.

¹⁰ Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 99.

¹¹ Howard, *L'Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom*, p. 77. *Midrash Rabbah on Lamentations*, p. 65, Soncino Press, Dan. 9:27.

¹² Ibid. p. 207. It was the third decree of Artaxerxes in 457 BCE that would complete the restoration of Jerusalem and the Temple. The decree of Cyrus was in 537 BCE and that of Darius I was in 518 BCE

¹³ J. M. Sinclair, General Consultant, Diana Treffry, Editorial Director, *Collins English Dictionary*, Fourth Edition (Glasgow, Scotland: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), p. 84. Son of Xerxes I.

¹⁴ Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 99.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ King Herod the Great began Temple improvements in 19 BCE John's '46 years' (2:20) took place in 27 CE Jewish Newsletter 33

the angel Gabriel, Rambam and Rabbi are right about *when* Messiah would come, who else could be our Messiah but Jesus of Nazareth? The Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed by the Roman ‘prince,’ Titus, in 70 CE. If Yeshua isn’t our Messiah, who is?!

Rambam expresses the chaos and confusion in Judaism over Messianic thought and how our Rabbis have understood the time of Messiah by saying,

“we cannot know, in all these and similar questions, how they will be fulfilled since they are veiled even from the Prophets. Our Rabbis have no special teachings on these matters; they simply follow the particular leaning of various verses which gives no uniform doctrine. In any case, the main thing is not to make claims regarding the accuracy of the ordering of these doctrinal questions as it leads neither to the fear of God nor to love. Let us not, therefore, think about the Last Days. The Wise say, ‘Cursed be those who predict the End Times.’”¹⁸

Rambam was quoting Rabbi Samuel again. It seems that Rambam knew Daniel’s prophecy pointed directly to Yeshua. This is why he upheld the curse and warned us about being ‘led astray,’ but does belief in God’s Messiah mean that we would be led astray? No matter what the Gentile Christians have done in making Jesus a Gentile; and teaching that Mosaic Law is not for them, Yeshua is our Messiah and Mosaic Law is still in effect for both Jewish and Gentile believers.¹⁹

The Talmud, Nazir 32b, specifically states that Daniel was referring to the destruction of the Second Temple.²⁰ The Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. The Messiah should have come before that, but some of our Rabbis, in a further attempt to keep us from understanding Daniel, do all sorts of strange things with the ‘weeks.’²¹ For instance, some would have us to think that the time was literal weeks, but that makes absolutely no sense as it took 49 years for the city to be rebuilt, not 49 weeks, and even so, where was the Messiah? Yes, I realize that ‘in the Name of Jesus’ more of us Jews have been murdered and tortured than in all other names combined, but that was no more Yeshua doing that than if a Jew robs a bank, breaking Mosaic Law. Every Gentile who has hurt or murdered our people will stand before Yeshua, the Righteous Judge, on Judgment Day, and have to give an answer to Him (John 5:22-23).

Yeshua began His ministry the previous autumn (26 CE), most likely on the Feast of Trumpets. Marcus Dods, D.D., Author; W. Robertson Nicoll, Editor, M. A., LL. D., *The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, vol. one: *The Gospel of St. John* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), p. 710. F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), p. 76.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 101. Rambam, *Hilchot haMelachim (The Statutes of the Kings)*, chapters 11-12.

¹⁹ In contrast to what Christianity teaches about Mosaic Law, the New Testament upholds Mosaic Law as God’s standard for walking out our faith in Messiah Yeshua. See:

1. *Take the Quiz!* Five Quick Questions about the New Testament at <http://seedofabraham.net/Take-the-Quiz.pdf>;
2. *No Longer Under the Law?* at <http://seedofabraham.net/No-Longer-Under-the-Law.pdf> and
3. *Seven Ways Yeshua Fulfilled the Law* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Seven-Ways-Yeshua-Fulfilled-Law.pdf> and
4. *Law and Grace* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Law-and-Grace.pdf> and
5. *Law 102* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Law-102.pdf> and
6. *The Feasts of Israel as Time Markers After the Resurrection* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Feasts-of-Israel-as-Time-Markers.pdf> and
7. *Hebrews and the Change of the Law* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Hebrews-and-the-Change-of-the-Law.pdf>.

²⁰ Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah*, p. 1004. ‘So also in *Yalkut*, vol. 2, p. 79d, lines 16ff. from the bottom.’

²¹ Howard, *L’Chayim: Finding The Light of Shalom*, pp. 208-211.

GREATER THAN SOLOMON'S TEMPLE?

The prophet Haggai said that the *Glory* of the Second Temple would be *greater* than Solomon's Temple (Hag. 2:9). How could this be?! Solomon's Temple was bigger and much more magnificent than Ezra's smaller and less lavish Temple, even though King Herod had beautified it even further. Some of the people that were there, at the laying of the foundation for the Second Temple, openly wept because they had seen the glory and grandeur of the Temple of Solomon (Ezra 3:10; Hag. 2:1-9).

Rabbi David Kimchi (1160 to 1235), of whom it was said, 'without him we will not find the correct way to interpret the Scriptures,'²² thought that the Second Temple would be greater *because Messiah would walk in it!* He saw both the Lord, and the Messenger of the Covenant as King Messiah:²³

'The Lord, whom you are seeking, will suddenly come to His Temple, the Messenger of the Covenant whom you desire.' (Malachi 3:1)

The Lord, here, and the Messenger of the Covenant, speak of the Messiah. Kimchi was very perceptive.

The idea of Messiah being 'cut off' or killed (Dan. 9:26; Is. 53:4-12; Zech. 12:10) 'is the word used' in Hebrew 'for the' (cutting or the) 'making of a covenant.'²⁴ The Messiah's death would bring the New Covenant that God had spoken of through the prophet Jeremiah, about 600 BCE:

"The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when *I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah*. It will not be like the Covenant that I made with their Fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; a Covenant that they broke, though I was their Husband,' says the Lord."

"But this is the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days,' says the Lord: 'I will put my Law (literally Torah/Mosaic Law) within them and I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord!,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest,' says the Lord, '*for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.*'" (Jer 31:31-34; see also 32:37-44; 50:5; Is. 55:3; 61:8; Ezk. 16:60; 37:26; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16).

A 'New Covenant'? Did God really say that to Jeremiah? Another coincidence? The New Testament ('New Covenant') that Christians speak of is really ours, and Yeshua is really our Messiah. Yes, we been wrong about Jesus all these centuries, but this hasn't taken our God by surprise, as Zechariah the prophet speaks of:

"I will pour on the House of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then *they will look on Me whom they pierced*. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn." (Zechariah 12:10 NKJV)

According to the angel Gabriel, who spoke to Daniel, our Messiah has already come. There's no one else during Daniel's time period (or any other time for that matter) who comes even close to doing what Yeshua did. Aside from His many miracles (Is. 35:1-10; 61:1-3), Yeshua was crucified (Ps. 22; Zech. 12:10) as an atoning sacrifice for us (Is. 53:4-8, 10-12), that we might be forgiven of our sins, as both Daniel and Jeremiah speak of. He rose from the dead (Ps. 16:10; Is. 53:10-12) by the power of God our Father, 40 years *before* Jerusalem and the Second Temple were destroyed and He was seen by hundreds

²² Santala, *The Messiah in the Old Testament in the Light of Rabbinical Writings*, p. 40.

²³ Ibid. p. 102.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 100. The word *כָּרַת* (*yih-kah-rate*) means, 'to make a covenant...from the ancient custom of cutting up victims on such occasions;' Davidson, *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 394. Gen. 15:10.

of us Jews after His death (Mt. 28:1-10; Acts 1:1-14; 1st Cor. 15:1-9). He had been glorified, never to die again.

Now, I wasn't there. I didn't see Yeshua die. I didn't see Him alive from the dead, either, but in 1975, when I read about Jesus, my heart was drawn to believe in Him. It was the God of Israel who was drawing me to Himself. I asked Jesus to forgive me of my sins and to come into my heart and the most wonderful thing happened to me—He did! I felt something come upon me and move within me. I didn't know it then, but it was the Holy Spirit, confirming to me that what I had just done, was heard and accepted by the God of Israel. I felt Shalom (Peace) from Heaven for the first time in my life. It continues to this day. God is with me in Yeshua. I know this, just as Jeremiah spoke of.

Daniel was right! Messiah has come! He's very much alive and real and is the only Way to our Father in Heaven because only in Messiah Yeshua's name are our sins forgiven and we are given His righteousness to be able to stand before our holy God.

Messiah Yeshua is Life (John 14:6). His plans for you are only good. He loves you very much. Who else would die for you so that your sins could be forgiven and give you Eternal Life in return. God speaks of the New Covenant and forgiving our sins and knowing Him, and Daniel speaks of our sins being atoned for and of Messiah the Prince dying. Yeshua is our Messiah and He wants to give you true Life, Love and Joy from Heaven.²⁵

²⁵ Revised on 19 December 2016.