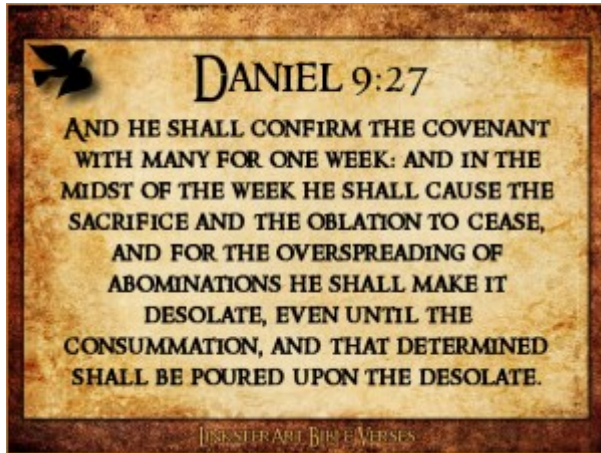


What John Nelson Darby Taught About Daniel 9 vs. Prominent Bible Commentators



John Nelson Darby.

John Nelson Darby (18 November 1800 – 29 April 1882) was an Anglo-Irish Bible teacher, one of the influential figures among the original Plymouth Brethren and the founder of the Exclusive Brethren. He is considered to be the father of modern Dispensationalism and Futurism (“the Rapture” in the English vernacular). (Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Nelson_Darby)

The correct interpretation of Daniel chapter 9 and especially verse 27 is extremely important because it is the ‘linchpin’ of all Bible prophecy. If you don’t get it right, your interpretation of other prophecies in the Book of Daniel, Matthew 24, II Thessalonians 2:3,4, and the Book of Revelation will also be wrong! It all depends on whether you hold the modern popular futurism interpretation of Daniel 9:27, or the older historicist Protestant interpretation. This article proves from Darby’s own words he had a futurist interpretation of Daniel 9:27 which was contrary to the standard historicist interpretation of his contemporaries and those before him. In other words, Protestants before Darby did NOT interpret Daniel 9:27 the way he did. They held to the historicist view. And what is the historicist view of Daniel 9:27? It’s a Messianic prophecy, a prophecy already fulfilled by Jesus Christ! It’s *not* a futurist prophecy to be fulfilled by an Endtime Antichrist!

All Bible Scriptures quoted in this article are from the King James Version. All emphasis in *italics* or **bold** are mine.

Quotes from John Darby’s Synopsis of Daniel 9 taken from christianity.com

The prince that shall come confirms a covenant with the mass of the Jews. (The form of the word *many* indicates the mass of the people). This is the first thing that characterizes the week; **the Jews form an alliance with the head, at that day, of the people who had formerly overthrown their city and their sanctuary.** They form an **alliance** with the head of the Roman Empire.

Darby is referring to the covenant of Daniel 9:27. Notice how he refers to the covenant as an *alliance*? And Darby calls the "prince" of Daniel 9 the head of the Roman Empire though faithful men of God taught the prince is the Messiah. This is not reading what the Word says, but adding one's subjective thoughts to the Word.

But there remained one week yet unaccomplished with this faithless and perverse, but yet beloved, race, before their iniquity should be pardoned, and everlasting righteousness brought in, and the vision and the prophecy closed by their fulfilment. This week should be distinguished by a covenant which the prince or leader would make with the Jewish people (with the exception of the remnant), and then by the compulsory cessation of their worship through the intervention of this prince.

Again Darby uses the indefinite article for covenant though the popular Bible of his time, the KJV, uses the definite article, *the* covenant. And Darby does not clarify the "prince or leader" he is referring to is in fact Jesus Christ! He is referring to an unknown man in the future which most evangelicals today interpret as the Antichrist. That is why Darby is called the father of Futurism. My friends, this is not how Protestants used to interpret Daniel 9:27.

What the passage tells us is this: first, the prince, **the head that is of the Roman empire**, in the latter days makes a covenant referring to one whole week;

Darby again is referring to someone in the future, "in the latter days" and again says "a covenant". As you will see in this article, Protestants before him knew exactly what the covenant was and why the KJV version of the Bible in Daniel 9 uses the definite article, "the covenant", and not just in verse 27, but before it in verse 4! Darby does *not* make the connection of the covenant of verse 4 being the same as the covenant of verse 27! And why? It would prove his interpretation of a future prince making an alliance with the Jews to be false!

What John Calvin has to say:

Christ took upon him the character of a leader, or assumed the kingly office, when he promulgated the grace of God. This is the

confirmation of the covenant of which the angel now speaks. As we have already stated, the legal expiation of other ritual ceremonies which God designed to confer on the fathers is contrasted with the blessings derived from Christ; and we now gather the same idea from the phrase, the confirmation of the covenant. We know how sure and stable was God's covenant under the law; he was from the beginning always truthful, and faithful, and consistent with himself. But as far as man was concerned, the covenant of the law was weak, as we learn from Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 31:31, 32.) I will enter into a new covenant with you, says he; not such as I made with your fathers, for they made it vain. We here observe the difference between the covenant which Christ sanctioned by his death and that of the Jewish law. Thus God's covenant is established with us, because we have been once reconciled by the death of Christ; and at the same time the effect of the Holy Spirit is added, because God inscribes the law upon our hearts; and thus his covenant is not engraven in stones, but in our hearts of flesh, according to the teaching of the Prophet Ezekiel. (Ezekiel 11:19.) Now, therefore, we understand why the angel says, Christ should confirm the covenant for one week, and why that week was placed last in order. In this week will he confirm the covenant with many.

You can see John Calvin believed the covenant had to do with the grace of God, not some Endtime treaty an Antichrist will make.

Geneva Bible Commentary

And he (a) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: By the preaching of the Gospel he affirmed his promise, first to the Jews, and after to the Gentiles.

You can see the Geneva Bible says it is Christ who confirms the covenant, and it has to do with the preaching of the Gospel.

Matthew Henry

He is called Messiah (Dan. 9:25, 26), which signifies Christ-Anointed (John 1:41), because he received the unction both for himself and for all that are his. [5.] In order to all this the Messiah must be cut off, must die a violent death, and so be cut off from the land of the living, as was foretold, Isa. 53:8. Hence, when Paul preaches the death of Christ, he says that he preached nothing but what the prophet said should come, 26:22, 23. And thus it behoved Christ to suffer. He must be cut off, but not for himself—not for any sin of his own, but, as Caiaphas prophesied, he must die for the people, in our stead and for our good,—not for any advantage of his own (the glory he purchased for himself was no more than the glory he had before, John 17:4, 5); no; it was to atone for our sins, and to purchase life for us, that he was cut

off. [6.] He must confirm the covenant with many. He shall introduce a new covenant between God and man, a covenant of grace, since it had become impossible for us to be saved by a covenant of innocence. This covenant he shall confirm by his doctrine and miracles, by his death and resurrection, by the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are the seals of the New Testament, assuring us that God is willing to accept us upon gospel-terms. His death made his testament of force, and enabled us to claim what is bequeathed by it. He confirmed it to the many, to the common people; the poor were evangelized, when the rulers and Pharisees believed not on him. Or, he confirmed it with many, with the Gentile world. He causes all the peace-offerings to cease when he has made peace by the blood of his cross, and by it confirmed the covenant of peace and reconciliation.

Matthew Henry's comment about the Prince of the Covenant

It is here foretold that the people of the prince that shall come shall be the instruments of this destruction, that is, the Roman armies, belonging to a monarchy yet to come (**Christ is the prince that shall come**, and they are employed by him in this service; they are his armies, Matt. 22:7), or **the Gentiles (who, though now strangers, shall become the people of the Messiah) shall destroy the Jews.**

Notice that Matthew Henry puts the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 in the past while John Darby puts it in the future? John Darby is the author of *futurism*, which is interpreting Bible prophecies having a future fulfillment. Before Darby Protestant theologians interpreted Christ fulfilling Daniel 9:27. They didn't look at prophecy as God telling us the future, but as God showing how His Word was fulfilled in the past which gives glory to God and verifies the Scriptures as the very Word of God! Did Jesus' disciples know when and how the Temple of Solomon was to be destroyed? I submit to you they did not. They only recognized the prophecy *after* it was fulfilled, not before.

Verily I say unto you, **This generation** shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.- Matthew 24:34

What generation was Jesus referring to? My generation? My children's generation? No! The generation of the people He was speaking to! His disciples of 30 A.D.! Most of them lived 40 more years and saw the fulfillment of the prophecies of Matthew 24.

Reading Darby is an exercise of my mental faculties. He is not nearly as clear as John Calvin or Matthew Henry. And his interpretation of prophecy is clearly an *eisegesis* which means "to lead into" – the interpreter injects his own ideas into the text, making it mean whatever he wants. Compare that to Matthew Henry and John Calvin and others who interpreted using *exegesis* which means "lead out of" or letting the Bible speak for itself without

speculating. A good exegesis of what the covenant of Daniel 9:27 is found in verse 4 of the same chapter:

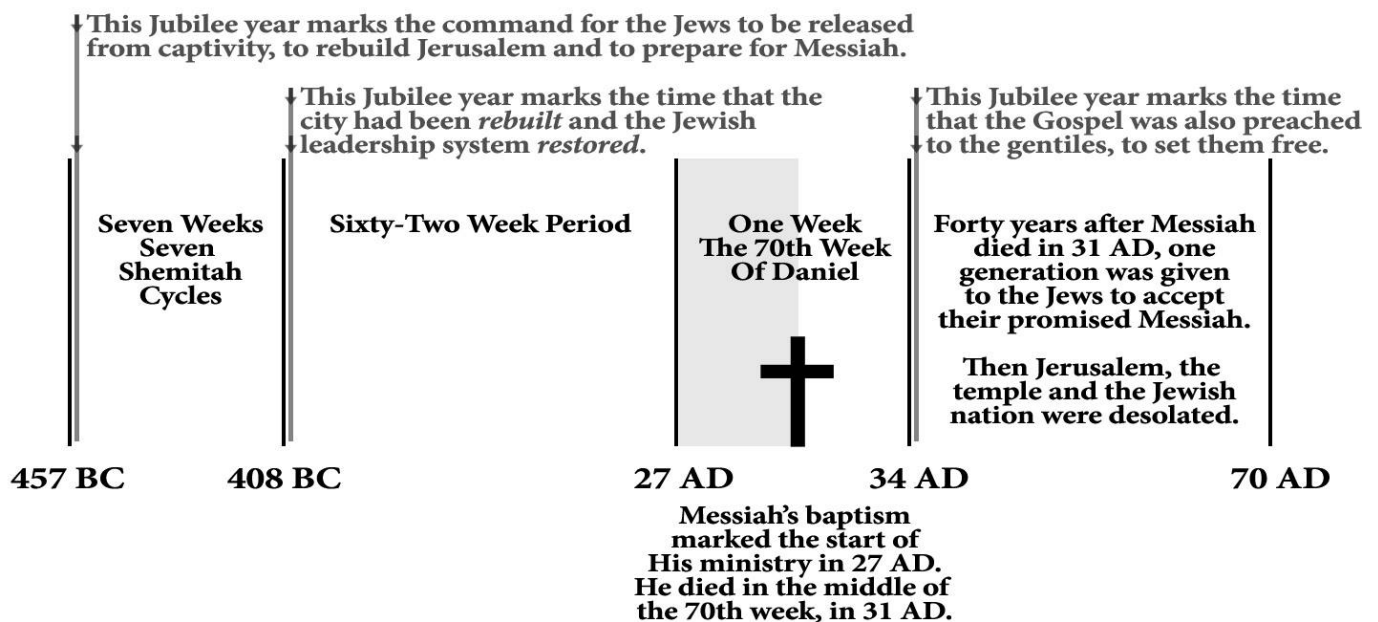
And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping **the covenant** and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; – Daniel 9:4

Where did Darby get his inspiration from? I highly suspect he was influenced by writings of a Jesuit priest. Darby's interpretation of Daniel 9 is exactly what [Jesuit Francesco Ribera taught in 1585!](#)

Any comments about this article are appreciated.

The Timeline of Daniel 9:24-27 Illustrated

Ten Shemitah cycles of forty-nine years, make up the 490-year prophecy. It starts with the Jewish captives being released from captivity, and it ends with the gentiles being released from their spiritual captivity.



This meme is courtesy of David Nikao Wilcoxson 70thweekofdaniel.com