Daniel’s 70 Weeks
Daniel 9:24-27

Daniel’s 69 Weeks

Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and for your set-apart city, to put an end to the transgression, and to seal up sins, and to cover crookedness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, then, and understand: from the going forth of the command to restore and build Yerushalayim until Mashiach the Prince, is seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It shall be built again, with streets and a trench, but in times of affliction. (Dan.9:24-25).

We are told that the Mashiach would come after 69 weeks (7 + 62 weeks) from the decree to rebuild Yerushalayim. The return of the exiles to Judah, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem, was accomplished in three main stages.

- The first and main party returns with Zerubbabel in 538 BC. They rebuild the temple
- A second party returns with Ezra about 80 years later in 457 BC. They make spiritual and religious restoration and reform.
- A third wave returns with Nehemiah in 445 BC. They rebuild the city walls and gates but not many houses.

We will see that it is the time of the second visit 457 BC recorded in Ezra 7:8, that fits the prophecy given to Daniel. Ezra 7:8 states that the decree was given in the seventh year of the king and we know that Artaxerxes I reigned from 465–424 BC, thus making the year of the decree 458/457 BC, (verse 9 tells us that it was the Jewish new year, thus the Jewish year spans across a normal year). Hopefully there is no need to waste time on the Scriptural philosophy for a day equalling a year (Ezek.4:6 ), this being the case sixty nine weeks equals 483 days equals 483 years. 483 Years from 457 BC bring us to 27 AD (there is no year zero).

Mashiach was anointed with His immersion (Acts 10:38). We now have to prove that 27 AD was the year of Yahusha’s immersion and we can start with Luke,

"Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...Now when all the people were immersed it came to pass, that Yahusha also being immersed, and praying, the heaven was opened and the Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven saying, “You are My Son, the Beloved, in You I am well pleased.” (Luke 3:1, 3:21-22)

Here we have the Biblical account of the immersion of Yahusha. He was immersed in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. From historical records we know that Tiberius Caesar began his reign in the year 12 AD,

Tiberius Caesar was granted supreme power from Augustus Caesar in AD.12 (www.roman-britain.org).

If Tiberius Caesar was granted supreme power in 12 AD, then the fifteenth year of his reign would bring us to 27 AD exactly when the immersion of Yahusha took place according to Luke and as shown in the time line below exactly as predicted in Daniel.
But why is the 69 weeks/years expressed in terms of 7 and 62? Seven years of weeks equals 49 years which if we count from 458/7 BC takes us to 409/8 BC which and the completion of the rebuilding of Yerushalayim.

Daniel’s 70th Week

The prophecy continues with verses 26 and 27 and it is these verses that tend to cause confusion. So let us consider verse 26 first,

*And after the sixty-two weeks Mashiach shall be cut off and have naught. And the people of a coming prince shall destroy the city and the set-apart place. And the end of it is with a flood. And wastes are decreed, and fighting until the end.* (Dan.9:26).

Although the verse says 62 weeks we must not forget the earlier 7 weeks thus the total period is 69 weeks. We have just shown that the 62 aka 69 weeks ended with Mashiach’s immersion and the commencement of His ministry. The verse does not tell us how long after the sixty nine weeks before Mashiach is cut off but we know He was executed 3½ years after commencing His ministry. The people of a coming prince who is to destroy (lay waste) to the city is a reference to the Roman army who destroyed Yerushalayim in 70 AD. So we could rephrase verse 26 to read,

*Three and a half years after sixty nine weeks Mashiach shall be cut off and have naught. And the army of Rome shall lay waste to the city and the set-apart place (70 AD). And the end of it is with a flood. And wastes are decreed, and fighting until the end.*

Now let us now consider verse 27,

*And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week. And in the middle of the week he shall put an end to slaughtering and meal offering. And on the wing of abominations he shall lay waste, even until the complete end and that which is decreed is poured out on the one who lays waste*

Although a seventieth week would terminate Daniel’s prophecy at AD 34 there is no definitive event that highlights this year and whilst the Church affixes the stoning of the apostle Stephen to this date, I am currently unaware of any solid evidence substantiating this as fact. What is more, in my opinion Stephen’s death is immaterial to this prophesy. For a better understanding it is best if we split this verse into three and consider each part individually,

1. *And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week*
2. *And in the middle of the week he shall put an end to slaughtering and meal offering.*
3. *And on the wing of abominations he shall lay waste, even until the complete end and that which is decreed is poured out on the one who lays waste*
1 And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week

Some consider this to be an end time reference concerning the false prophet and place this last week at the end of this age. It is alleged that the false prophet will make a covenant of some sort with someone and after three and a half years will renege on the agreement. But this is all supposition, this whole prophesy is about Mashiach and the 70th week flows immediately after the 69th week, hence it is Mashiach who is the person confirming the covenant. But nowhere within the Gospel accounts does Mashiach confirm a covenant for a period of one week (7 years) and why would He institute a covenant for such a short period, what real purpose would such a short commitment have? These deductions raise the problem of how we should interpret Daniel’s words? I don’t believe Daniel is referring to a covenant of one week or of seven years, such a short period makes no sense and neither can this understanding find support in the Scriptures. This whole prophecy is presented in units of weeks and I believe Daniel is merely referring to events culminating the prophecy, expressing them in terms of a final week. In other words, I believe a more correct understanding would be, ‘and in the seventieth week He shall confirm a covenant with many.’ This presentation correlates with actual events,

For this is My blood, of the new (Kainos) covenant, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. (Matt.26:28).

There is some contention whether the Greek(Kainos) should be translated new or renewed but Kainos correlates to the Hebrew Gabar in verse 27 of Daniel and according to Brown Driver Briggs whilst Gabar can mean confirm it also has the meaning: to be strong, mighty, to show oneself mighty. What Daniel is saying, is that Mashiach will be mighty to this covenant. In other words Mashiach Himself will be the very essence, the very core, the very soul, of this covenant. This is what Mashiach is confirming in Matthew, by the spilling of His blood He singularly represents this covenant, without His blood there is no covenant. Because this was not the case with any other covenant it has to be a new covenant. This reasoning is supported by the apostle,

Brothers, as a man I say it: a covenant, even though it is man’s, yet if it is confirmed, no one sets it aside, or adds to it. (Gal.3:15)

According to the apostle an existing covenant cannot be altered or changed in any way, therefore, Mashiach could not add His blood to an earlier covenant, thus He had to be referring to a new covenant. Does this reasoning violate Deuteronomy 4:2 where YHWH commands nothing to be added or subtracted from His Torah? No it doesn’t because Mashiach is not changing any of YHWH’s laws He is only changing the mechanics of implementation and fulfilling that which was prophesied to Jeremiah,

Behold, the days are coming says YHWH, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Mitsrayim; My covenant that they broke, although I was an husband unto them, says YHWH. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, says YHWH, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. (Jer.31:31-33).

When we become immersed in Mashiach we become a new man, a new person with YHWH’s Torah on our hearts. What is more the passage in Jeremiah confirms that new covenants are possible and provided they do not change the Torah they do not transgress Torah. Although the subject matter of this covenant is the same as the earlier covenant; being the Torah, this new covenant is given spiritually and written on hearts, thus the means of administration is different: therefore it has to be a new covenant. YHWH continues,

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know YHWH: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says YHWH: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jer.31:34).

We know Daniel is referring to the same covenant as Jeremiah because he (Daniel) says so,
Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and for your set-apart city, to put an end to the transgression, and to seal up sins, and to cover crookedness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint the Most Holy.

Elohim tells Jeremiah under this new covenant sins will not be remembered, this correlates with Daniel's prophesy for sins to be sealed up. Hence, Jeremiah, Daniel and Mashiach must all be referring to the same covenant since no earlier covenant was capable of removing sin. The removal of sin, as the apostle tells us, required a higher, different sacrifice (Heb.10:4), again this requires a new covenant.

So, coming back to Daniel, the prophet is not saying Mashiach will form a covenant for one week but in the seventieth week He will form a new covenant.

2 And in the middle of the week he shall put an end to the slaughtering and meal offering

It is because of this statement that many detach the last seven years of this prophesy and catapult it into the end times, believing this to be a reference to the false prophet. But as we said earlier this whole prophesy is concerning Mashiach. We know He died three and a half years into His ministry which correlates exactly with Daniel’s statement and by His death Mashiach brought an end to sin offerings and sacrifices,

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. (Heb.9:12).

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of Elohim. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. (Heb.10:12-14).

Now where there is forgiveness of these sins, (eternal redemption) there is no longer any offering for sin. (Heb.10:18).

Paul’s eternal redemption is the same as Daniel’s everlasting righteousness of verse 24,

Seventy weeks are decreed for your people and for your set-apart city, to put an end to the transgression, and to seal up sins, and to cover crookedness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint the Most Holy.

Not only did Mashiach, by His sacrifice, end the sacrificial system of slaughtering and meal offerings but by this, He brought an end to the temple system and its rituals. The new covenant is the Torah on our hearts and we are a spiritual temple (1 Cor.6:19) under a Malkizedek (not Aharonic) priesthood. This is the change that the apostle was referring to when he spoke of a change in the law,

For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.
(Heb.7:12).

It is not a change in the spirit of the law but in the mode of administration of the law as confirmed by the apostle when he says our prayers are our sacrifice (Heb.13:15) thus the principle of sacrifice remains as commanded but the style is changed.

3. And on the wing of abominations he shall lay waste, even until the complete end and that which is decreed is poured out on the one who lays waste

This section of verse 27 does indeed take us to the time of Mashiach’s return and His dealing with the false prophet (the beast of Revelation). If we insert a couple of highlights the verse becomes a little clearer,
And on the wing of abominations (an unrighteous world) He (Mashiach) shall lay waste (bring to an end), even until the complete end and that which is decreed is poured out on the one who lays waste (the destruction of the false prophet).

Conclusion

In view of what we have said I believe a clearer presentation for Daniel 9:24-27 would be the following,

Seventy weeks are decreed for your people Israel and for your holy city Yerushalayim, to put an end to the transgression, and to seal up sins, and to cover crookedness, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophet, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know, then, and understand: from the going forth of the command to restore and build Yerushalayim until Mashiach the Prince is seven weeks and sixty-two weeks: sixty nine weeks. It shall be built again, with streets and a trench, but in times of affliction.

And in the seventieth week half way through the week, Mashiach shall be sacrificed and through His blood will He will enact a new covenant for all, also bringing to an end sin sacrifices and meal offerings. And the army of Rome shall lay waste to the city and the set-apart place. And the end of it is with a flood. And wastes are decreed, and fighting until the end.

And Mashiach shall, at the end of this age, destroy all abomination together with the beast and the false prophet as is decreed.

Some in the Messianic movement have today rejected Yahusha Mashiach, following the orthodox view and denying His deity. The question I have for these people is this, if Yahusha Mashiach was not the one who fulfilled the prophesy given to Daniel, then who lived between 27AD - 34AD and fulfilled this prophesy? You have to answer this question. After all, the Rabbis accept that these verses prove it was Mashiach that walked the earth 2000 years ago, which is why their Talmud places a curse on anyone reading this section of Daniel.

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