

Messiah, Confirms the Covenant

How do you respond to the teaching which says that the Messiah confirms the covenant of Daniel 9:27?

There has been a particular interpretation of Daniel 9:25-27 circulating among many Christians, and to our deep concern, among some Messianic Believers as well. This interpretation claims that it is not the antimessiah/antichrist that makes or confirms the “covenant with many,” but rather that it is actually Yeshua the Messiah. A careful reading of the Biblical text will show this interpretation to be flawed and actually *supportive of antinomianism*. Let us review these verses.

To set the stage, Daniel 9:25-26 tells us “you are to know and discern *that* from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince *there will be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end *will come* with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined” (NASU).

The occurrence of the first seven weeks and then the sixty-two weeks took place from the decree issued to Nehemiah that the Temple in Jerusalem was to be rebuilt to the point of Yeshua’s “cutting off.” This cutting off was His crucifixion and death. After this, we are told that “The people of a prince yet to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary” (Daniel 9:26, CJB).

It is important that we understand that the prince who is to come in the future *is not the Messiah*. He is a descendant of the Romans who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E., a destruction that took place after the Messiah’s being “cut off.” It is not the Messiah that makes or confirms the covenant in Daniel 9:27, but it is this other leader, for “He will make a strong covenant with leaders for one week of years” (CJB).

The alternative view held by some today is that the Messiah confirmed “the covenant” through His ministry on Earth. Because Yeshua’s ministry lasted roughly three-and-a-half years, it is said that the first half of the Seventieth Week has already occurred. All that remains now is a three-and-a-half year Great Tribulation where the Holy Spirit will be poured out incredibly upon Believers so they can perform miracles greater than He did.

Although we will not deny the admonitions in Scripture of the Holy Spirit being poured out on the saints in the Last Days (Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18), Yeshua warns us very strongly that “False messiahs and false prophets will appear and produce signs and omens, to lead astray, if possible, the elect” (Mark 13:22, NRSV; cf. Matthew 24:24). Adherents of this interpretation, many of whom are found in charismatic or Pentecostal-type arenas, are usually led more by their emotions of wanting to see “the Spirit poured out,” rather than rationally and realistically exegeting the Scriptural text. There can be a danger in wanting to see “the Spirit poured out” that can cause misinterpretations.

In addition to not accepting this interpretation because the “he” of Daniel 9:26-27 is the prince of the people who destroyed Jerusalem (the Romans), we as Messianics must not accept it even more so on the basis of what Yeshua’s “cutting off” is believed to be. As it is commonly asserted that if it is Yeshua who confirmed “the covenant,” likewise then He is the One who will put “a stop to sacrifice and grain offering” (Daniel 9:27b). According to most adherents we have encountered, who are in mainstream Christianity, this means that He terminated all the functions of the Torah or the Law of Moses from the animal sacrifices to the Sabbath to the Biblical holidays to the dietary requirements. This, as should be obvious, is a position that we, as Torah obedient followers of the Lord, must reject.

If we accept this interpretation, then who are the people that destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E.? Adherents of this belief run into a serious problem here. The pagan people who destroyed Jerusalem were the Romans who had no regard for the God of Israel and who were not “Yeshua the Prince’s people.” More notably, the Messiah Himself

tells us to look for the Abomination of Desolation in Matthew 24:15-21. If we follow through, are we to assume that He, Yeshua, is the One who commits it in Daniel 9:27? Surely not.

If we accept the belief that it was the Messiah who confirmed the covenant of Daniel 9:27, then the logical end is that we also dispense with the Torah, as have many proponents of this interpretation. We must likewise conclude that it is Yeshua who commits the Abomination of Desolation, and not the antimessiah.

The Messiah's words in Matthew 5:17-19 stand very clearly against this. Yeshua said that the authority of the Torah stands until Heaven and Earth pass away. Even more important, we must understand that animal sacrifices *will be occurring* in the Millennial Kingdom, so it is impossible that He has terminated the validity of the Torah—including these ordinances. (Consult our FAQ entry **Sacrifices, in the Millennium.**) The sacrifice of Yeshua is certainly superior to the animal sacrifices of the Temple, but the Book of Acts is clear that the Apostles continued to participate in the Temple service as long as the Temple stood, and would have understood the animal sacrifices as a memorial of the Messiah's final sacrifice. It is obvious here that it is the antimessiah/antichrist who stops the sacrifices during the middle of the Seventieth Week, not the Messiah.

The assertion that there is a "Seventieth Week of Messiah" is misguided and as Messianic Believers we should not accept it—unless we are prepared to become antinomians against the Torah and believe that Yeshua the Messiah commits the Abomination of Desolation.

(This entry has been adapted from the author's book *When Will the Messiah Return?*)