

1. INTRODUCTION

This module focuses on the prophecy of **Daniel's seventy weeks**. Through this study, you will gain insights into both the **principle and purpose of prophecy** and understand the precise fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy in **34 A.D.**

As you advance in your studies with COGMA, it is essential to:

- **Critically evaluate** the beliefs previously taught to you by various denominations, sects, and groups you have been or are currently involved with.
- Weigh these teachings against what the Bible states.

Our studies have highlighted the significance of allowing the Bible to interpret itself, a concept known as the "**Golden Rule**". When individuals introduce their own interpretations, it often leads to **confusion and an over-reliance** on these personal interpretations.

The Golden Rule Allow the Bible to interpret itself!

For example, some erroneously advocate for a '**gap period**' between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel's prophecy, despite the lack of biblical evidence to support this view.

An **impartial reading** of the prophecy, however, reveals no such 'gap period'. A discerning reader will notice that each week in the prophecy **follows the previous one seamlessly**, without any interruption.

Daniel 9:24-27 states:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Our study of this prophecy will begin with understanding the **nature and purpose of prophecy**.

2. RULES OF BIBLE PROPHECY - AUTHENTICATION

The purpose of all prophecy is to authenticate Jesus Christ. Jesus said concerning all scriptures:

John 5:39 states:

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

The focus of prophecy lies in its validation **after fulfillment**, rather than in the prediction. This validation in God's Word strengthens your faith and encourages **unwavering trust in Jesus Christ**, particularly during challenging times.

Consider Paul's situation. Despite the Holy Spirit forewarning him about upcoming 'bonds and afflictions,' he remained steadfast and continued to trust God each day. Paul's experience demonstrates this:

Acts 20:22-24 states:

And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit (Holy Spirit) unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

The Role of Biblical Prophecy

It's important to understand that biblical prophecy's primary role is to **authenticate the Word of God and Jesus Christ**. Avoid being misled by those who promote personal prophecies as predictors of the future, which is comparable to sorcery and astrology, both forms of witchcraft.

Jesus, in **Matthew 6**, taught us that we cannot foresee the future. Instead, we should **seek God and His righteousness today**. Our daily life should be guided by the light of Christ, trusting in Him fully, recognising that **God's path is always the superior choice. Jesus' way is the better way!**

3. RULES OF BIBLE PROPHECY - TIMESPANS

Understanding Prophetic Timespans

Bible prophecies often provide **timespans rather than exact dates**. They typically foretell future conditions or events that signify their beginning and end, but the exact start date remains unknown until it has been fulfilled.

In **Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy**, the timespan is specified, but not the start and end dates. Daniel received clear conditions in his vision that mark the beginning and end of this prophetic period. Thus, the initiation of Daniel's prophecy can only be identified once the conditions completing the seventy weeks have occurred.

This principle is captured in the phrase: "**YOU MUST KNOW THE END BEFORE YOU CAN IDENTIFY THE BEGINNING.**"

Examples of Prophetic Timespans

1. Example One: The False Prediction of Christ's Return

In the 20th century, numerous false prophets inaccurately predicted Jesus Christ's return in 1988, basing their prediction on the '**fig tree**' **parable found in Matthew 24**. They erroneously linked this parable to Israel's declaration of independence in 1948, anticipating a return within 40 years.

This 40-year timeframe was derived from an interpretation of **Genesis 1:28**, where a biblical generation is approximately 40 years, signifying the time it takes for the next generation to reach childbearing maturity.

When the prediction failed in 1988, **they falsely manipulated** a generation by extending the years.

These predictions have been conclusively disproved as of 2024, some 76 years after 1948. Christ has not returned as they prophesied.

When studying the Bible, it is crucial to analyse the **context, the time period, and the audience addressed**. Understanding the original listeners' perspectives before applying the scripture to modern life and circumstances is essential. You learnt that in the previous module "**Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth.**"

i. Jesus' Prophecies to His Disciples

A thorough examination of **Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21** shows that Jesus was speaking to His disciples in 31 A.D., predicting events within their generation, such as the destruction of the Jewish temple in 70 A.D.

If these false prophets had understood that **prophecy serves to validate events and cannot be confirmed until its conditions are met**, they would have refrained from making such unfounded predictions.

ii. Interpreting Prophecy Correctly

Understanding and interpreting prophecy requires knowing both its start and end dates, which can only be confirmed after the fulfilment of its conditions or predictions. It's essential to allow the Bible to interpret prophecy for you. As stated by Peter:

2 Peter 1:21 states:

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Following the Golden Rule, "**the Bible always interprets the Bible**," is crucial for harmoniously fitting Daniel's prophecy of seventy weeks with the scriptures.

HOW TO STUDY

The Importance of Words in Prophecy

In the first module, "**Study for Approval**," you learned about the significance of words. The disciples asked Jesus about the "**end of the world**" in **Matthew 24:3**. Here, "world" is translated from the Greek word **AION**, meaning age. This differs from **KOSMOS** in **Matthew 24:21**, referring to the literal world or universe. In **Matthew 24:14**, "world" is translated from **OIKOUMENE**, indicating the "known world," specifically the Roman Empire at that time. The question arises: what age were the disciples asking about, and when would it end?

Transition from the Old to the New Covenant

Jesus and His disciples lived under the Old Testament laws of Moses. This age ended on Pentecost, marked by Jesus' return as promised in **John 14**. However, God allowed a transition period for the Jews to move from Moses' law to the New Covenant.

This period concluded with the destruction of the Jewish temple in 70 A.D. Thirty years after Pentecost, in **Acts 21**, Jerusalem's Jewish Christians still followed Moses' law, contradicting Paul's teachings. God permitted this for a generation, a topic you'll explore more in the "Ordinances" module.

2. Example Two: The Great Tribulation

i. Identifying the Great Tribulation

Using the study rules—context, time period, and the audience to whom Jesus is speaking—it is relatively straightforward to identify what the "**great tribulation**" is.

The final week leading to the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ commences in **Matthew 21** with His triumphant and final entry into Jerusalem and concludes with His death and burial in **Matthew 27**. This significant event occurred during the **month of Nisan in the year 31 A.D.**

As you delve into these chapters, immerse yourself in the scene, hearing the words of Jesus as both a witness and participant. **Paint a picture!**

In **Matthew 22**, Jesus finds Himself in the temple, imparting teachings and facing challenges from the Pharisees and Sadducees who sought to trick Him and bring accusations against Him. Unable to find fault and counter Jesus' wisdom, they eventually depart.

In the subsequent chapter, Jesus remains in the temple, addressing not only the multitude but also His disciples. In His discourse, He unveils the **hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees** and delivers seven "**woes**" or judgments upon them. Jesus ends His address with these words:

Matthew 23:36 states:

Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

ii. Which Generation?

The crucial question arises: **which generation is He referring to?** It is evident that Jesus is speaking of the generation of people present and listening to Him in 31 A.D.

Jesus then says this:

Matthew 23:38 states:

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

Considering that the "**house**" of the **New Covenant** symbolises the **church of God**, a spiritual entity, it prompts us to ponder the "house" of the Old Covenant.

The "**house**" of the Old Covenant people pertains to the **physical temple of God in Jerusalem**, the very subject of Jesus' reference in **Matthew 24**. Hence, in **Matthew 23**, Jesus conveys that within the span of one generation, the temple in Jerusalem, representing the "presence of God," would be rendered desolate.

It would transform into a barren and desert place. The temple, once a symbol of God's presence, became **a void and empty place after Jesus' crucifixion**.

iii. Jesus' Prophecies on the Mount of Olives

As we transition to **Matthew 24**, we find Jesus having left the temple and the multitude, now positioned on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the temple and its structures. It is at this juncture that His disciples approach Him, seeking an explanation of His words from **Matthew 23**.

The disciples posed **three significant questions** to Jesus, seeking insight into the future:

1. **"Tell us, when will these things be?"**
2. **"What is the sign of your coming?"**
3. **"When is the end of the world?"**

These three questions are covered in greater detail in lesson 21 "**Keys to Successful Study**" in the module "**Rightly Dividing the Truth**".

iv. The First Question

Jesus initiates His response by foretelling the destruction of the temple and its buildings, an event that unfolded in 70 A.D. at the hands of the Roman army, thus addressing the “**first question**”.

v. The Second Question

The “**second question**” pertains to the return of Christ, which indeed occurred on the day of Pentecost approximately fifty-two days later. The sign that **authenticated** His return is the indwelling Spirit in believers.

vi. The Third Question

The **third question**, concerning the "end of the world," requires clarification. It does not refer to the end of the literal world, denoted by the Greek term **COSMOS**. Instead, it concerns the conclusion of the age, represented by the Greek word **AION**.

vii. Jesus Lived in the Old Covenant Age

As previously discussed, Jesus and His disciples lived within the confines of the Old Covenant age. The disciples' inquiry centred on the culmination of this age. The **New Covenant Age**, also known as the **Gospel Day**, commenced on the day of Pentecost when the **city of God, the New Jerusalem, descended from God out of Heaven**.

When examining the initial response in **Matthew 24** to the disciples' three questions, it becomes evident that **Jesus is directly addressing His disciples and the events that would transpire in their lifetime**. In other words, within their generation:

Matthew 24:4 states:

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

Notice that Jesus addressed “**them**,” **His disciples**, cautioning them against deception. His words were not directed to individuals in your period of the Gospel Day.

Matthew 24:9 states:

Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

Here, Jesus specifically identifies His disciples and outlines what would occur during their lives, leading to the temple's destruction and the “**great tribulation**.”

Among the twelve disciples, all but two met **martyrdom**. John passed away of old age in Ephesus, while Judas, who betrayed Jesus, took his own life.

Matthew 24:21 states:

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

viii. Historical Confirmation by Josephus

Josephus, a Jewish historian, chronicled the events in “**Wars of the Jews**,” shedding light on the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman army under Titus, where many perished due to **starvation, diseases, and even cannibalism**. Upon the Roman army's conquest, most Jews were killed, with only those deemed useful to the Roman Empire spared.

ix. Jesus' Parable of the Fig Tree

In summary, Jesus employs the "parable of the fig tree" to convey to His disciples that **all these events, including the "great tribulation," would transpire within their generation.**

Matthew 24:34 states:

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Recognising that a **biblical generation spans approximately 40 years**, the fulfillment of "**all these things**" must have occurred between the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the 14th of Nisan in 31 A.D. and the destruction of the Jewish temple in 70 A.D.

4. A GAP PERIOD (FALSE)

Many are falsely taught that a "gap period" exists between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel's prophecy. This gap period is described as the current church age, with the church existing now in this gap for now over 2000 years.

It is incorrectly taught that Daniel's "**time clock**" stopped at the end of the 69th week, coinciding with the ascension of Jesus Christ in Acts chapter 1, and that it will restart at the beginning of the 70th week with Christ's literal return to rapture believers and initiate the great tribulation.

Additionally, it is falsely asserted that while the believers enjoy the marriage supper during the 70th week, those left on earth will face God's wrath, with many being killed by Him.

1. Understanding the Context of Jesus' Prophecy

As explained in the previous section, when Jesus prophesied the "**great tribulation**" in **Matthew 24**, He was addressing those who were present at the time and referring to the impending destruction of the temple and Jerusalem by the Roman army in 70 A.D. It's essential to understand that **Jesus wasn't speaking directly to us in our current time within the Gospel Day.**

i. Misinterpretation of the Marriage

The **marriage of Christ and the church** is a **present reality** and not something destined for the future. **Paul** revealed this truth in his letter to the **Romans** when addressing his Jewish brethren who had been married to the **Law**.

Romans 7:4 states:

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Paul makes it clear that **born-again believers are married to Jesus Christ** as a **present-day reality**.

The book of **Revelation**, which reveals **Jesus Christ** throughout the **Gospel Day**, is a **symbolic book** that underscores the **reality of the marriage between Christ and the church**.

Revelation 21:2 states:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

That holy city, **new Jerusalem**, according to the twelfth chapter of the book of **Hebrews**, is the **church of Jesus Christ**. Further reading in the twenty-first chapter of **Revelation** elaborates on this:

Revelation 21:9-10 states:

"And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God."

ii. Hebrew Custom and Prophetic Days

In Hebrew custom, after a **marriage ceremony**, there was a **feast of seven days**, with **intimate relationships** beginning on the first day.

This is a type pointing to the **seven prophetic days of the Gospel Day**, during which the church, the **Jerusalem from above**, is **fruitful from its very beginning**. On the **day of Pentecost**, more than **3000 souls** were birthed into the kingdom.

Galatians 4:26 states:

"But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Paul spoke of this **marital relationship between Christ and the church** as a **great mystery** when he compared it to the literal marriage of a husband and wife.

Ephesians 5:31-32 states:

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."

iii. Present Reality of the Marriage

Denying the **present reality of the marriage between Christ and the church** implies that believers are not **legitimate sons and daughters of God** and His family. However, the **Bible** contradicts this denial.

Ephesians 2:19 states:

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

The **marriage of Christ and the church** will be covered in more detail in the module on the **New Testament Church**.

iv. Misinterpretation of the Marriage Supper

Many have been taught to believe in a **literal marriage supper** in the heaven of God during a future tribulation period. This is completely false as the **marriage has already taken place** and the **supper continues throughout the Gospel Day**. This is not a **literal or physical supper**, but one that is **spiritual**.

The **spiritual nature** of the true marriage supper is evident by both the words of Paul and Jesus.

1 Corinthians 10:21 states:

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

What is provided on the "Lord's table"?

John 6:51 states:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Both **Job** and **Jeremiah** personified the supper:

Job 23:12 states:

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

Jeremiah 15:16 states:

"Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

"The marriage supper" is a **spiritual reality**, representing the **intimate relationship** between Christ and the church, a relationship that has existed since the morning time of the Gospel Day. Again, this will be covered in more detail in the module on the **New Testament Church**

v. The Church is Already One with Christ

If we accept that the church of God is our mother, then reading John's first epistle, where he tells us we are the "**legitimate sons and daughters of God**," logically leads us to the conclusion that Christ and the church are already united. They must already be married.

1 John 3:2 states:

Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

It's important to note that **God has no illegitimate children**. To suggest otherwise would be to imply that He is a spiritual fornicator and, by extension, a sinner. For a more detailed explanation, please refer to the "**The New Testament Church**" module.

vi. The Church is Not in a Prophetic "Gap Period"

Furthermore, the idea that the church exists in a prophetic "**gap period**" outside the realm of time is not accurate. The true church has been present and a home for the redeemed since the day of Pentecost in 31 A.D., as confirmed in Acts 2:

Acts 2:47 states:

Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Jesus did not establish and build His church, as mentioned in **Matthew 16:18**, to hide her, but to reveal her as a beacon of hope and salvation to an unsaved world

2. The Church as the Light of the World

The church, is referred to as the "**light of the world**," serves as a beacon of hope, guidance, and truth in a world filled with darkness and confusion. This metaphor, drawn from **Matthew 5:14-16**, highlights the Church's role in reflecting the message and love of Jesus Christ. By embodying Christ's values, the Church illuminates the path towards righteousness and spiritual enlightenment.

Matthew 5:14-16 states:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

i. **Visible Example of God's Kingdom**

As the light of the world, the Church is called to be a **visible example of God's kingdom on Earth**. This involves:

- Engaging in acts of kindness, justice, and compassion.
- Demonstrating the transformative power of faith.

The Church's mission is not just to preach the gospel but to **live it out**, showing others the way through its actions.

ii. **Providing Comfort and Solace**

The Church's light provides comfort and solace to those in despair by:

- Offering a sense of community and belonging.
- Serving as a sanctuary where individuals can find spiritual support and encouragement.

3. The Church: Bearer of God's Message

The visible church, as the bearer of **God's message**, has a **profound responsibility** to share the gospel. Through **preaching, teaching, and embodying Christ's love**, the Church offers a **living testimony** of God's word and strives to reach everyone with the **transformative message** of Jesus Christ.

Paul posed the question of how the lost would hear the good news of Jesus Christ without a preacher:

Romans 10:14 states:

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

i. **Mission to Reach All People**

The Church's mission is to **reach out to every corner of the world**, ensuring that:

- **All people** have the opportunity to hear and respond to the **transformative message** of the gospel.

The gospel that is not only preached and taught but also demonstrated through the lives of **born-again believers** who constitute the **visible Church** is the **power of God to salvation**. Paul says:

Romans 1:16 states:

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

During the "church age," the day of salvation, the gospel message is to **resound throughout the world**. This message of **hope, healing, and salvation** emanates from the **visible and present Church** within the Gospel Day, not a hidden Church in a supposed gap period. Will

In summary, the Church's role as the bearer of **God's message** involves a **profound commitment** to spreading the gospel. By **preaching, teaching, and living out Christ's commandments**, the Church ensures that the **transformative message** of Jesus Christ reaches all people, offering them **hope, healing, and salvation**.

To teach that the church is "hidden" is to deny the overwhelming scriptural evidence that she is visible and the vehicle of God's message and **demonstration of Christ's life presently**.

4. False Prophets and Teachers

False prophets and teachers have misused the prophecy of Daniel's 70 weeks to promote their **false end-time scenarios** and cause confusion. While we will delve into "**the return or second coming of Christ and the so-called rapture**" in a separate module, it's crucial to place your trust and understanding in the Word of God and believe the words Jesus spoke in John chapter 14.

5. Jesus' Promise of His Return

Jesus clearly promised His disciples that He would depart from them and then return while they were still physically alive. His promise was not merely to be with them, but "**to be in them**."

John 14:16-18 states:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Who is the Spirit of Truth? In **John 14:6**, Jesus declared Himself to be "**the truth**."

John 14:6 states:

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

On the day of Pentecost in 31 A.D., **Jesus returned to be "in His disciples,"** not in a physical or literal form but through the **Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Christ**.

Romans 8:9 states:

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

It is important to understand that **Jesus will never again be known in a physical form**, as emphasised in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 5:16 states:

Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

6. The True "Rapture" or Catching Away

Concerning what is often referred to as the rapture or catching away, Jesus spoke to His disciples in John 14:1-3:

John 14:1-3 states:

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions (dwelling places): if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

i. Receiving Believers While They are Alive

Pay attention to verse three, which states, "**that where I am, there you may be also.**" Jesus is not describing a scenario where He is coming for His disciples but rather "**receiving**" them to be where He is. This truth of "**receiving**" does not pertain to receiving His disciples after their physical death but involves a catching away to be where He is while they are still physically alive.

The true "**rapture**" or **catching away** occurs when a believer is **born again** and raised or caught up "**in Christ**," as Paul taught in Ephesians 2:5-6:

Ephesians 2:5-6 states:

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

Please note that a comprehensive discussion of the **second coming, resurrections, and rapture** will be provided in a separate upcoming module.

The **Biblical rapture or catching away** takes place when a believer experiences **spiritual birth** which is to be born again.

5. BACKGROUND OF THE BOOK OF DANIEL

1. The Background to the Book of Daniel

The book of Daniel covers the period of **Israel's captivity by the Babylonian Empire**, leading into the time of the Medo-Persian Empire. **Israel had rebelled against God** and turned to other gods, which led to God allowing Babylon to take them captive for a span of seventy years.

Jeremiah 25:11 states:

And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Jeremiah also prophesied that, at the end of the seventy-year period, the **Babylonian Empire** would face defeat.

Jeremiah 25:12 states:

And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

This prophesied event occurred in **538 BC**, as detailed in Daniel chapter 5, when Belshazzar drank from the vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem.

2. Daniel's Captivity and Rise to Power

Daniel himself was taken into captivity as a child in **606 BC** and remained in Babylon even during the reign of the Medo-Persian Empire. There is no recorded instance of Daniel returning to

Jerusalem at the conclusion of the prophesied seventy-year captivity. In fact, Daniel rose to the position of **second-in-command under Darius** in the Medo-Persian Empire, as described in Daniel chapter 6.

When reading the book of Daniel, it's essential to note that the first six chapters follow a **chronological order**, detailing the history of Daniel's captivity by the Babylonians and his subsequent years under the rule of Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian. The remaining six chapters, however, are not presented in chronological order and focus on various visions received by Daniel.

It's also worth mentioning that the **book of Daniel** is often considered a **companion to the book of Revelation**.

6. THE BACKGROUND TO DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF SEVENTY WEEKS

In the first year of Darius's reign, Daniel gains insight from the **writings of the prophet Jeremiah** that the captivity of Israel is drawing to a close.

Daniel 9:2 states:

In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

While in prayer and contemplation regarding the end of the captivity, **Daniel has a vision** in which Gabriel appears to him.

Daniel 9:21-22 states:

Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

From the studies conducted in the module "**The Language of the Bible**," it is clear that all visions in the Bible are presented in **symbolic language** and should not be interpreted literally. When Gabriel communicated with Daniel, it was not a physical appearance but rather a message conveyed through a vision.

1. Gabriel as a Man

It is worth noting that **Gabriel is described as a man**, a human being, and not as a celestial angelic being, as some false teachings suggest. In the vision, the man Gabriel informs Daniel that he would receive the skill and understanding needed to interpret the vision.

What follows is then what is commonly called or referred to as "**Daniel's Seventy Weeks**". Subsequently, in the following chapter, approximately two years later, Daniel comes to understand that the fulfillment of this vision is set for a distant future time.

Daniel 10:1 states:

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

The literal version of this verse clarifies that Daniel was troubled concerning the prophecy of the seventy weeks.

Daniel 10:1 (LITV) states:

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia, a thing was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. And the thing was true, and a great conflict. And he understood the thing and had understanding of the vision.

2. Why Was Daniel Troubled?

An essential question arises here: "**Why was Daniel troubled and conflicted?**" The answer is provided in the subsequent passage.

Daniel 10:14 states:

Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.

Daniel understood that his people had a **set timeframe decreed by God**, and beyond this designated period, they would face a significant change in their status as God's people. Specifically, they would be cut off as God's people. This understanding is evident in both chapter 10 and at the beginning of the seventy weeks prophecy, where the text references "**Daniel's people**" as "**thy people**."

Daniel 9:24 states:

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

The critical question that arises is, "**Who are Daniel's people?**" and "**Who are the 'thy people'?**"

7. DANIEL'S PEOPLE

At the time of its writing around 536 BC, **Daniel's people referred to the Old Testament literal Israel**, and the city of Jerusalem was considered the holy city. In this context, Daniel understood that the "**seventy prophetic weeks**" mentioned in **Daniel 9:24** exclusively pertained to literal Israel, who were his people.

Furthermore, Daniel understood that at the culmination of this prophecy, **his people, Israel, would no longer maintain their exclusive status as God's chosen people**. The Hebrew word for "determined" used in this context is **CHATHAK**, which means "to be cut off."

To ascertain whether history and the Bible support this interpretation, it's crucial to follow what the Bible says, adhering to the Golden Rule.

Romans 11:20 states:

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

The subsequent verse emphasises that it was the "**natural branches**" that were cut off.

Romans 11:21 states:

For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

1. Natural vs. Engrafted Branches

The natural branches represent the descendants of Jacob, the literal Old Testament people of Israel, while the "**engrafted branches**" symbolise the Gentiles. According to what the Bible says in Paul's letter to the Romans, **Daniel's people were indeed cut off**, aligning with the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks.

In fact, what the Bible says is that Paul clearly stated that the people of literal Israel had already been cut off by the time he wrote his letter around 56-57 A.D.

i. Erroneous Teachings

It's essential to address the erroneous teachings found among certain Protestant and Pentecostal denominations and sects, which suggest that natural Israel will have a **second chance to be restored as God's people in the future**. This notion is not supported by what the Bible says.

ii. Jesus' Teaching to Nicodemus

When Nicodemus, a Jewish Pharisee, approached Jesus to inquire about the kingdom of God, Jesus emphasised the requirement of being born again.

John 3:3 states:

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

To emphasise the point, Jesus reiterated:

John 3:7 states:

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Since Calvary and the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, there is now only one way into the kingdom of God for both Jews and Gentiles: "**YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.**" Salvation under the New Covenant is not contingent upon one's natural birthplace or country; it is open to "**whosoever will believe in Christ.**"

To underscore this universal truth, the condition for entering God's Kingdom is the same for the entire human race, whether Jew or Gentile: "**YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.**"

Romans 1:16 states:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

2. True Salvation Through Belief in the Gospel

It's crucial to recognise that true salvation is achieved through belief in the gospel for both Jews and Gentiles. In the early years of the church, it was primarily composed of Jewish believers, with the first recorded instance of a Gentile being saved occurring with Cornelius and his household in Acts chapter 10. There is no special provision for natural-born Jewish individuals to attain salvation.

Peter, when preaching to the "**rulers and elders of Israel**" in Acts chapter 4, affirmed that genuine salvation, whether for Jews or Gentiles, is received through Calvary.

Acts 4:8-12 states:

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

i. One Body in Christ

The Bible's message is clear: salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ, and **there is no alternative path for Jews or Gentiles**. Paul further emphasises this truth in **1 Corinthians 12:13**, where he speaks of believers being baptised into one body, regardless of whether they are Jews or Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 12:13 states:

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

There is only **“one body” of Christ for the Jew and the Gentile** to make one people, the children of God. This truth is reinforced in **Ephesians 2:13-14**, which reveals the reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles into one body through the Cross.

Ephesians 2:13-14 states:

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

You may recall that under the law of Moses, the Jewish people were commanded to maintain separation from the Gentile people, even refraining from eating or fellowship with them. However, this long-standing division was completely **transformed under the New Covenant** through the redemptive work of the Cross, as Paul explains.

Ephesians 2:15 states:

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

Through the Cross, Jesus made of **“twain,”** namely, the believing Jew and Gentile, creating a **singular new entity**—the body of Christ—with Himself as its Head.

8. DANIEL'S HOLY CITY

In Daniel's time, around 536 BC, the **holy city was indeed Jerusalem**, and the temple of Solomon was where the presence of God resided. Whenever Daniel prayed, he would open his windows and kneel facing Jerusalem.

Daniel 6:10 states:

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

1. The True and Spiritual Jerusalem

From your studies in the upcoming module 'The New Testament Church,' you will come to realise that the significance of literal Jerusalem in Palestine is no longer relevant. It served as a symbol or type that pointed to the reality of the true and spiritual Jerusalem.

Hebrews 12:22 states:

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

This is the **church of God, the church of Jesus Christ**, as the next verse says:

Hebrews 12:23 states:

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

Paul once again confirms that the **church of God is an 'assembly' of both believing Jews and Gentiles.**

The true and living **city of God** is not a physical place but a spiritual one. It is that city that came down from God out of Heaven on the day of Pentecost in 31 A.D."

Revelation 21:2 states:

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

2. The True Jew and Israel

When you follow the "**Golden Rule**" and allow the Bible to interpret itself, all confusion is swept away. **Let the Bible interpret the Bible.**

In the book of Romans, Paul teaches that being a natural or literal Jew is no longer relevant or "special" under the New Covenant. Simply being born a literal Jew does not automatically make one a member of the family of God.

Romans 2:28-29 states:

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

i. Born Again Jews and Gentiles

Under the New Covenant, the term "**Jews**" refers to all who are born again through faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Similarly, **Old Testament literal Israel no longer holds a special status** as a nation or people under the New Covenant. Just like the people of all other nations, they too "**must be born again**" during the Gospel Day.

This is affirmed by Paul in Romans chapter 9:

Romans 9:6-8 states:

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

This underscores that the **true children of God** are those who are born of the promise, not merely of physical lineage.

9. THE PURPOSE OF DANIEL'S PROPHECY

From the introduction of this Workbook, it is evident that the **purpose of prophecy is to authenticate Jesus Christ and His Word**. As you delve into the subsequent Workbooks in this module, you will come to understand that each of these seven purposes was indeed **fulfilled in Christ at His first and literal coming approximately 2000 years ago**.

1. To Finish the Transgression

Jesus Christ accomplished the purpose of finishing the transgression by offering Himself as a sacrifice, thus addressing the transgressions of humanity.

2. To Make an End of Sins

Through His death and resurrection, Jesus **made an end of sins** by providing a path to forgiveness and redemption.

3. To Make Reconciliation for Iniquity

Reconciliation for iniquity was achieved through Christ's atoning sacrifice, which restored the relationship between God and humanity.

4. To Bring in Everlasting Righteousness

Everlasting righteousness was brought in by Jesus, who, through His perfect life and sacrificial death, imparted righteousness to those who believe in Him.

5. To Seal Up the Vision and Prophecy

By fulfilling the prophecies concerning the Messiah, Jesus **sealed up the vision and prophecy**, confirming their accuracy and divine origin.

6. To Anoint the Most Holy

foreshadowing Christ is **anointing for His divine purpose** which Jesus received for His public ministry at the river Jordan. Importantly, Jesus was not anointed to make Him holy, but to anoint the Most Holy.

7. To Confirm the Covenant

Lastly, Jesus **confirmed the covenant** through His life, death, and resurrection, establishing a new covenant between God and His people.

Conclusion

Understanding these purposes within the framework of Christ's first coming helps clarify the fulfillment of Daniel's prophecy. **Each purpose outlined in Daniel's prophecy points directly to the works and accomplishments of Jesus Christ**, thereby authenticating Him and His Word. As you continue through the Workbooks, the detailed exploration of these purposes will further solidify this understanding.

10. SUMMARY

This lesson delves into the prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks, highlighting the **principle and purpose of prophecy** and its **fulfillment in 34 A.D.** It encourages students to **critically evaluate their previous teachings** and align them with the Bible's statements, advocating the "Golden Rule" of letting the Bible interpret itself.

1. Purpose and Principle of Prophecy

- The prophecy **aims to authenticate Jesus Christ and His Word**, not just to predict the future but to validate it after its fulfilment.
- Emphasis is placed on the principle known as the "**Golden Rule**" in biblical interpretation: allowing the Bible to interpret itself to avoid confusion from personal interpretations.

2. Daniel's Seventy Weeks

- The prophecy describes a period of **seventy weeks** determined for Daniel's people (literal Israel) and the holy city (Jerusalem).
- **Each week in the prophecy follows seamlessly without interruption**, refuting the concept of a 'gap period' between the 69th and 70th week.
- The historical context involves **Israel's captivity by Babylon and the subsequent period under Medo-Persian rule**.

3. Key Scriptural References

- **Daniel 9:24-27** outlines the seventy weeks and the events leading to the Messiah's crucifixion.
- **Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21** detail Jesus' prophecies to His disciples about the destruction of the Jewish temple within their generation (fulfilled in 70 A.D.).

4. Interpretation of Prophecy

- Correct interpretation requires knowing both the start and end dates, confirmed only after the fulfilment of conditions described.
- The prophecy served to **transition from the Old Covenant (literal Israel) to the New Covenant (spiritual Israel, the church of Jesus Christ)**.

5. Fulfilment in Jesus Christ

- The purposes outlined in the prophecy (e.g., to finish transgression, make an end of sins, bring in everlasting righteousness) were **fulfilled through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection**.
- **Jesus confirmed the covenant and sealed the vision and prophecy**, confirming their accuracy and divine origin.

6. False Teachings Addressed

- Misinterpretations, such as the 'gap theory' and the literal marriage supper in heaven, are refuted by scriptural evidence.
- The church is not in a 'gap period' but has been visible and active since the day of Pentecost.

7. Role of the Church

- The church is described as the "light of the world," embodying Christ's teachings and serving as a beacon of hope and truth.
- The mission involves preaching the gospel and living out its teachings through actions.

Summary

Daniel's seventy weeks prophecy is a detailed and symbolic forecast leading to the coming of Jesus Christ, highlighting the transition from Old Testament Israel to the New Covenant church. The prophecy's fulfilment in Jesus' life confirms the divine nature of the scriptures, emphasizing the importance of accurate biblical interpretation and the church's ongoing mission.

This review will help prepare you for your Workbook assignment