

Covenant

By Craig Paardekooper

A **covenant** is a formal, binding agreement that establishes a relationship of mutual commitment between two parties. In religious contexts, it usually refers to a sacred bond between God and humanity.

Key Features of a Covenant

- **Mutual obligations:** Both sides have responsibilities (e.g., God promises protection or mercy, humans promise obedience or faithfulness).
- **Relational bond:** It's not just a contract—it's a relationship of trust, loyalty, and love.
- **Sacred authority:** Covenants are sealed by divine authority, often marked with signs (rainbow for Noah, circumcision for Abraham, Eucharist for Christianity).
- **Ethical dimension:** Covenants often include moral laws or duties, shaping how people live in community.

Symbolic Insight

A covenant is more than a rulebook—it's a **two-way relationship** where divine intelligence reaches out, and human beings respond. It's the framework that makes Abrahamic religions unique: God doesn't just command; He promises, forgives, and dwells with His people.

Covenants of the Bible

The Bible highlights several major covenants: the **Adamic**, **Noahic**, **Abrahamic**, **Mosaic**, **Davidic**, and the **New Covenant in Christ**. These covenants form the backbone of the biblical narrative, showing God's unfolding plan of relationship, mercy, and redemption.

The Main Covenants in the Bible

- **Adamic Covenant:** The Creation Covenant – We have agency and must choose to follow God's will – made in God's image.
- **Noahic Covenant:** God promises never again to destroy the earth by flood, with the rainbow as the sign (Genesis 9).
- **Abrahamic Covenant:** God promises Abraham descendants, land, and blessing to all nations through his seed (Genesis 12, 15, 17).
- **Mosaic Covenant:** Given at Sinai, it establishes Israel's law, worship, and ethical obligations (Exodus 19–24).
- **Davidic Covenant:** God promises David an everlasting dynasty, fulfilled in the messianic hope (2 Samuel 7).
- **New Covenant:** Through Jesus Christ, God offers forgiveness, transformation, and direct relationship with Him (Jeremiah 31:31–34; Luke 22:20).

Covenant Cycle

All of these dates are taken directly from the Ussher chronology –

- **Noahic Covenant** (2348 B.C.)
then 427 years
- **Abrahamic Covenant** (1921 B.C.)
then 430 years
- **Mosaic Covenant** (1491 B.C.)
then 437 years
- **Davidic Covenant** (1055 B.C.)
then 430 years
- **New Covenant** (625 B.C.) first mentioned by Jeremiah

So, God entered into a new covenant every 430 years.

During the interval between the Old and New Testaments, the community of the Essenes was founded and a new covenant made with them – called the Damascus Covenant. The Damascus document states – "During the period of wrath, 390 years after He had given them into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, He visited them and caused a Root of His planting to spring forth from Israel and Aaron to inherit His land."

Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Jerusalem Temple and took the Israelites into captivity in 586 B.C., so 390 years later is 196 B.C.

So, we have

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- **Davidic Covenant** (1055 B.C.)
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- **New Covenant** (625 B.C.) first mentioned by Jeremiah
then 429 years
- **New Covenant of Damascus** (196 B.C.)

Each covenant between God and Israel was separated from the previous one by a 430-year period.

Sabbath

"At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he made to his fellow Israelite. He shall not require payment from his fellow Israelite or brother, because the LORD's time for cancelling debts has been proclaimed. If a fellow Hebrew, a man or woman, sells himself to you and serves you six years, in the seventh year you must let him go free." DEUTERONOMY 15 v 1-12

"If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for 6 years but in the seventh year he shall go free, without paying anything." EXODUS 21 v 2

God also instituted a Year of Jubilee. Every seven sabbaths of years - or seven times seven years, a special year of ATONEMENT was to be proclaimed throughout the Land. It was a special year of LIBERTY when each person was to return home to his family and property.

"Count off seven Sabbaths of years - seven times seven years - so that the seven Sabbaths of years amount to a period of 49 years. Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the 50th year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan." LEVITICUS 25 v 8

God's laws indicate that after a period of "seven", debts are to be forgiven and slaves are to be freed and allowed to return home.

The Sabbath represents mercy and forgiveness. It is a time of grace, in contrast to works.

The Covenant Cycle and the Sabbath

Every 7th year is a Sabbath year when the land rests, and every 50th year is also a Jubilee year, when the land rests again.

So, in 430 years there are 61.4 Sabbath Years + 8.6 Jubilee Years = 70 sabbatical years.

- a 430year period, covers 70 sabbatical years.
- Seventy "sevens"

The Jubilee year was to be a year when debts were cancelled, slaves were set free and people received back their inheritance. Bearing this in mind, consider the timing of the Biblical Covenants.

The seventh "day" was appointed as a day of mercy. The mercy of God is shown

- on the Seventh day, which is the Sabbath
- on the 7th year, which is the Sabbath year,
- on the seventh sabbath year, which is the Jubilee year,
- on a Covenant year, which is a total of 70 Sabbath years,
- after 70 years, which is the end of the Captivity in Babylon
- after 77 generations, which is when Christ was born

If God is Holy, then to draw close to sinful mankind is an act of mercy, and the day of mercy is the Sabbath; that's why every covenant was after a period of 70 Sabbath years.

Adamic Covenant

After the 7 days of creation, Genesis 5 provides a record of Adam's descendants until the time of the Flood, which brought an end to Adam's world.

"5 This is the written account of Adam's family line. When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them "Mankind" [a] when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. 4 After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 5 Altogether, Adam lived a total of 930 years, and then he died. 6 When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father [b] of Enosh. 7 After he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years and had other sons and daughters. 8 Altogether, Seth lived a total of 912 years, and then he died. 9 When Enosh had lived 90 years, he became the father of Kenan. 10 After he became the father of Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters. 11 Altogether, Enosh lived a total of 905 years, and then he died. 12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. 13 After he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. 14 Altogether, Kenan lived a total of 910 years, and then he died. 15 When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. 16 After he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. 17 Altogether, Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years, and then he died. 18 When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. 19 After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 20 Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, and then he died. 21 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22 After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked faithfully with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 Altogether, Enoch lived a total of 365 years. 24 Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away. 25 When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. 26 After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. 27 Altogether, Methuselah lived a total of 969 years, and then he died. 28 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. 29 He named him Noah [c] and said, "He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed." 30 After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. 31 Altogether, Lamech lived a total of 777 years, and then he died. 32 After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth."

We are told that the Flood occurred in Noah's 600th year, so we can calculate the duration from the Creation Week till the Flood - $130 + 105 + 90 + 70 + 65 + 162 + 65 + 187 + 182 + 600 = 1656$ years

There are 365.256 days in a year, so 1656 years is a period of $365.256 \times 1656 = 777.77 \times 777.7$ days

This is interesting, since Adam's world was said to be created in 7 days, and now we see that it was destroyed after 777.77×777.7 days.

What is perhaps even more curious is that a day divides into intervals of seconds, minutes and hours thus –

60 seconds = 1 minute

60 minutes = 1 hour

24 hours = 1 day

and

777.77×777.7 days = $(60 \times 60 \times 24) \times 7$ days

So, the world was created in 7 days, and lasted 7 "days".

It's curious, isn't it.

Enoch's 7 Weeks

Enoch was a prophet who lived before the Flood, and foresaw history from his generation until the Messiah divided into 7 weeks. Each week corresponds to a covenant, and matches each of the Biblical covenants in sequence. This shows that the covenant cycle was recognised in ancient times, with each covenant being separated by a period of "seven". Enoch was shown how time is organised into cycles of judgement and covenantal renewal.

Week	Prophecy	History
1	<i>Justice still strong</i>	
2	<i>"And after me there shall arise in the second week great wickedness, And deceit shall have sprung up; And in it there shall be the first end. And in it a man shall be saved; And after it is ended unrighteousness shall grow up, And a law shall be made for the sinners."</i>	At its close : Noah Increase in evil before the Flood
3	<i>And after that in the third week at its close a man shall be elected as the plant of righteous judgement, And his posterity shall become the plant of righteousness for evermore. (Enoch 93:5)</i>	At its close : Abraham
4	<i>And after that in the fourth week, at its close, Visions of the holy and righteous shall be seen, And a law for all generations and an enclosure shall be made for them. (Enoch 93:6)</i>	At its close : Moses Law and the Tabernacle.
5	<i>And after that in the fifth week, at its close, The house of glory and dominion shall be built for ever. (Enoch 93:7)</i>	At its close : David & Solomon. Temple built during this period
6	<i>And after that in the sixth week all who live in it shall be blinded, And the hearts of all of them shall godlessly forsake wisdom. And in it a man shall ascend; And at its close the house of dominion shall be burnt with fire, And the whole race of the chosen root shall be dispersed. (Enoch 93:8)</i>	At its close : Babylonian Captivity Apostasy during the time of the monarchy Elijah ascends to heaven. The Jerusalem Temple is burned The Hebrews are dispersed
7	<i>9. And after that in the seventh week shall an apostate generation arise, And many shall be its deeds, And all its deeds shall be apostate. 10. And at its close shall be elected The elect righteous of the eternal plant of righteousness, To receive sevenfold instruction concerning all His creation. (Enoch 93:9–10)</i>	At its close : Essenes During the Times of the Gentile Empires, people become apostate because they seek to assimilate with the gentiles The phrase "the eternal plant of righteousness" is an Essene phrase. It was how they described themselves – as a righteous remnant. Link The Essenes followed a sevenfold path of peace. They were the first to become Christians – "the Elect righteous" The Essenes dated their founding to 390 years after the destruction of the temple.

Breaking Covenant

Leviticus 26 outlines the consequences of breaking a covenant. It describes 5 cycles of judgement.

1. Disease: Wasting disease and fever that will destroy your sight and sap your strength
2. Famine: The soil will not yield its crops nor the trees their fruit
3. Depopulation: Children and cattle will be killed. Your roads deserted
4. Siege: You will driven into your cities and contained - where you will suffer plague and hunger
5. Expulsion: Extreme hunger – cannibalism. Destruction of cities and sanctuaries. Scattered amongst the nations.

The duration of the expulsion (exile) will be equivalent to the Sabbath years missed while you lived in it –

“The land will enjoy its sabbath years, all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths. All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the sabbaths you lived in it.” LEVITICUS 26 v 33-35

Exile and Expulsion

In 626 B.C. the prophet Jeremiah began his ministry. For 40 years he preached a message of coming judgment – urging the people to repent. Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would be taken captive by the Babylonians and put under their power for 70 years.

"Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: 'Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years. But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,' declares the LORD, 'and will make it desolate forever. I will bring upon that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that is written in this book and prophesied by Jeremiah against all the nations. They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings. I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.'" JEREMIAH 25 v 7-14

"When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place." JEREMIAH 29 v 10

It is a remarkable fact of history that Jeremiah's prophecy was fulfilled exactly.

*"He (Nebuchadnezzar) carried into exile to Babylon the remnant (of the Jews) who escaped the sword, and they became servants of him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. **The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested**, until the seventy years were completed in fulfilment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah." 2 CHRONICLES 36 v 22*

Fulfilment of the Seventy Years

The prophecy of the seventy years of captivity was fulfilled in 4 different ways.

1) The Period of Babylonian Power: This is the period during which the Jews and western Asiatic peoples in general came under the sway of the Babylonian power. This period began with the defeat of the Assyrians and Egyptians at the siege of Harran. The New Babylonian Chronicle describes this event as occurring in the 17th year of Nabopolassar, i.e. 607 B.C. With the defeat of the Egyptians and Assyrians in 607 B.C., the domination of the peoples of Syria and Palestine passed from Egypt to Babylon. Jehoiakim (the king of the Jews) was reduced to a vassal king. This assumption of Babylonian authority over all western Asia is confirmed by Jeremiah as dating from the accession year of Jehoiakim - 607 B.C. Jehoiakim served the Babylonian king for three years and then rebelled against him. Consequently, Nebuchadnezzar sent an army against Jerusalem. The date of this attack is the 3rd year of Jehoiakim. Going forward in time, the fall of Babylon and the tragic crash of the Babylonian Empire occurred in 537 B.C. - exactly 70 years after Babylon assumed power over Palestine.

2) The Desolation of the Temple: The Temple was burnt to the ground in 585 B.C. The Book of Ezra 6 v 15 informs us that the rebuilding of the Temple, after the Jews had returned from the Babylonian exile, was completed in the end (12th month) of the 6th year of Darius king of Persia. The reign of Darius, as given in Ptolemy's Canon is completely confirmed by the contract tablet datings and is also astronomically fixed by two independent eclipse records relative to two separate lunar eclipses, hence indisputable. The first year of Darius began in Spring 521 B.C. and finished in Spring 520 B.C., hence the 6th year ended in Spring 515 B.C. and no authority disputes this date. Now, from the cessation of Divine Services and the destruction of the Temple in 585 B.C. to the time the Temple was rebuilt and Divine Services recommenced in 515 B.C. was an interval of precisely 70 years - and the 70 year desolation was therefore fulfilled to the letter.

3) The Captivity of the Jews: The first batch of Jews to be removed from the Land of Judah to Babylon were those taken in the 3rd year of the reign of Jehoiakim - 604 B.C. Now, the first batch of Jews to come back from Babylon returned in the first year of Cyrus, as recorded in the first two chapters of Ezra. The first year of Cyrus as direct king of

Babylon was his 3rd year as emperor - commencing March 534 B.C. and ending March 533 B.C. It was during this very year that the first return of Jewish captives from Babylon took place. This was precisely 70 years after the first batch of Jews were taken to Babylon in 604-603 B.C.

4) **Divine Indignation:** During this period God expressly declares His righteous indignation against the Jews. Both the beginning and end of this chronological band are clearly defined in the Scriptures. The 8th chapter of Ezekiel informs us that in the 6th year of Jehoiachin's captivity the wickedness of the House of Judah had reached such a pitch that it provoked God's righteous indignation and He declared "Therefore will I also deal in fury; mine eyes shall not spare, neither will I have pity" and He withdrew His Shekinah Glory from the Most Holy in the Temple" (ie He withdrew His protecting "presence" from their midst.) The 6th year of Jehoiachin's exile began March 590 B.C. The period of Divine Indignation on the Jews began in the 6th month (Elul) of the 6th year, that is in autumn 590 B.C. Zechariah chapter 1 reveals the termination of that period of Divine Indignation. In verses 2 and 3, God declares "The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say unto them, Thus sayeth the LORD of Hosts." Verse 1 states that this was uttered in the eighth month (Bul) of the 2nd year of Darius, ie in autumn 520 B.C., exactly 70 years after the provocation of Divine Indignation in autumn 590 B.C. And verse 12 definitely draws attention to the fact that the indignation had lasted 70 years. "Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, 'O LORD of Hosts, how long will thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these three score and ten years?' To which the Divine reply came, 'Therefore, thus sayeth the LORD: 'I am returning to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it,' sayeth the LORD of Hosts, 'and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.' "'For I,' saith the LORD, 'will be unto her a wall of fire round about and will be the glory in the midst of her.'"

Why did the captivity last 70 years?

"At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he made to his fellow Israelite. He shall not require payment from his fellow Israelite or brother, because the LORD's time for cancelling debts has been proclaimed. If a fellow Hebrew, a man or woman, sells himself to you and serves you six years, in the seventh year you must let him go free." DEUTERONOMY 15 v 1-12

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Every seven sabbaths of years - or seven times seven years, a special year of ATONEMENT was to be proclaimed throughout the Land. It was a special year of LIBERTY when each person was to return home to his family and property.

"Count off seven Sabbaths of years - seven times seven years - so that the seven Sabbaths of years amount to a period of 49 years. Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the 50th year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all it's inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan." LEVITICUS 25 v 8

God's laws indicate that after a period of "seven", debts are to be forgiven and slaves are to be freed and allowed to return home. How appropriate, therefore, that after 70 years of captivity and enslavement to the Babylonians, the Jews were set free and allowed to return to their homeland. God deliberately set the duration of the captivity as 70 years because such a period was in accordance with the Sabbath Year Law - a law that the Jews had repeatedly broken.

The Jews were also meant to allow the land itself to rest every seventh year. This, too, the Jews had disobeyed. One thousand years earlier, in the time of Moses, God had told the Jews what would happen to them if they continued to disobey Him.

"I will turn your cities into ruins and lay waste your sanctuaries, and I will take no delight in the pleasing aroma of your offerings. I will lay waste your land, so that your enemies who live there will be appalled. I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. Then the land will enjoy it's Sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy it's Sabbaths. All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not have during the Sabbaths you lived in it." LEVITICUS 26 v 31-35

The duration of the future Captivity (scattered among the nations) is to be related to the Sabbath Year Law - and the length of the period of Captivity is to equate to a great Sabbath for the land. 2 Chronicles confirms this.

"The land enjoyed it's Sabbath rests; all the time of it's desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfilment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah." 2 CHRONICLES 36 v 21

Ezekiel's 430 Years

God instructed the prophet to lie on his left side each day for 390 days in solemn protestation against the "iniquity" of Israel as a sign unto the people that they would know that the fall of Jerusalem was the LORD'S work. Moreover, each day was said to represent one of the years during which the house of Israel had lived in open sin against its God until which time He was to bring judgment.

"Now, son of man, take a block of clay, put it in front of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it. 2Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it. 3Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the people of Israel. "Then lie on your left side and put the sin of the people of Israel upon yourself. a You are to bear their sin for the number of days you lie on your side. 5I have assigned you the same number of days as the years of their sin. So, for 390 days you will bear the sin of the people of Israel. "After you have finished this, lie down again, this time on your right side, and bear the sin of the people of Judah. I have assigned you 40 days, a day for each year. 7Turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem and with bared arm prophesy against her. 8I will tie you up with ropes so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have finished the days of your siege."

Ezekiel's siege lasted 430 days, a day for each year that Israel and Judah had broken the covenant (coincidentally also the same as the number of years for the Canaanite sin to reach its full measure.)

The covenant broken was the Davidic covenant, made 430 years earlier, with King David.

The Davidic Covenant

The Davidic Covenant states

“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever” 2 Samuel 7 v 12

The Five Points of the Covenant –

1. to set David's offspring on David's throne
2. to establish his throne forever
3. that his offspring would build a house for God to dwell in
4. that He would be his offspring's Father
5. that His mercy would not depart from his offspring, in spite of his sin

The Covenant applies TO THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID. It states that their kingdom and throne will last forever. And this will begin with David's son building a house for God.

The Covenant was Conditional

However, the promise that the kingdom would last forever IS CONDITIONAL. The Kingdom of Israel would only last forever if the people and the king who represented them kept God's laws –

“And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do, 2 that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. 3 And the Lord said to him: “I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. 4 Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, 5 then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’ 6 But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, 7 then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 8 And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, ‘Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?’ 9 Then they will answer, ‘Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this calamity on them.’”

“Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: 12 “Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. 13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.” 1 Kings 6:11

There would be a continuous succession of kings - one after the other as long as they obeyed Mosaic law. God's dwelling in the temple was also conditioned upon this obedience. He says that the temple was consecrated to put His name there forever. Yet he goes on to state the conditional nature of forever. God revealed the same thing to Solomon during its construction.

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My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people, Israel.” 1 Kings 6 v 11

Solomon Failed to Meet the Conditions

“But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites— from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely, they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as did his father David. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. So, the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded. Therefore, the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.” 1 Kings 11 v 1

The Division of the Kingdom

The consequences of breaking the covenant were –

1. The kingdom was taken away from Rehoboam, Solomon’s son
2. Rehoboam would only remain ruler over a single tribe – Judah.
3. The other tribes will be ruled over by a servant

Solomon failed to keep the condition, so the conditional promise was not fulfilled. His kingdom in Canaan was not established forever down through successive generations for Israel living in the land. It was taken from him. However, “for the sake of David” Solomon’s kingdom would not be taken from him during his life. Instead, the kingdom would be taken away from Solomon’s son Rehoboam. Rehoboam became king, but the people rebelled against him because of his heavy taxes. 10 tribes broke away from Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king instead. These 10 tribes became known as “Israel” in opposition to “Judah”.

So, the Kingdom of Israel was split in two –

- Northern Kingdom – ruled by Jeroboam – consisting of 10 tribes – with a capital at the town of Samaria
- Southern Kingdom – ruled by Rehoboam – consisting of the tribe of Judah – with a capital at the town of Jerusalem.

Fulfilments

The offspring of David would only have a kingdom forever if they obeyed God’s statutes. If they did not obey, then their kingdom would be brought to an end.

Summing the Reigns of the Kings of Judah

If we simply add the reigns of Judah's monarchs, they sum to 394 years 6 months and 10 days. To this, we must add the year designated in Scripture as "the Captivity". Thus, the total becomes 395 years 6 months and 10 days.

Overlap of Reigns

The only Scriptural co-regency between these kings is that of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram. The length of this overlapping co-regency is 4 years. Subtracting the 4-year overlap from the total, leaves 391 years 6 months and 10 days. When

Jehoram died, Ahaziah claimed his father's last year as his first official year. Then upon Ahaziah's being slain that same year, his mother Athaliah seized the throne and also made that her first official year. Consequently, Jehoram, Athaliah, and their son Ahaziah all three occupied the throne in 886 BC, and all laid claim to that year. As a result, the official years become two years more than the actual years. Therefore, these extraneous years must be subtracted from the 391 years 6 months and 10 days in order to obtain the true interval of the period. 389 years 6 month and 10 days.

So, the Kingdom ended in the 390th year.

Solomon reigned for 40 years, so it can be seen that from the beginning of Solomon's reign, until the last king of Judah, there were exactly 430 years!

Ezekiel lay on his side 40 days for the 40 years of the sin of Judah, and 390 years for the sin of Israel. In a period of 430 years there are 70 sabbath years

- Number of sabbath years of rest = $430 / 7 = 61.4$
- Number of jubilee years of rest = $430/50 = 8.6$
- Total = 70 sabbath years

The duration of the captivity would be equal to the missed sabbaths while the people dwelt in the land – a period of seventy sabbaths or seventy “sevens”.

Daniel's Seventy Sevens

This prophecy covers the period starting immediately after the 70 years of captivity ended – starting with the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, and lasting for seventy “sevens”. The use of the phrase **seventy ‘sevens’** indicates that this is a covenant period, and its duration is measured according to the sabbatical cycle.

“Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place”

We might refer to this as the Restoration Covenant. During this period, the Jews were under Gentile rule.

- **Loss of sovereignty:** With kingship and land stripped away, the temptation to define identity through **political power or wealth** was curtailed. Israel could no longer compete with empires on those terms.
- **Exile and diaspora:** Being scattered forced the people to preserve their distinctiveness through **ritual, law, and memory**, rather than territory or armies.
- **Temple destruction and rebuilding:** The Babylonian exile and later Roman destruction of the Temple shifted focus from physical structures to **Torah and prayer** as the enduring center of identity.
- **Dependence on covenant:** Without control of land or politics, Israel’s survival hinged on fidelity to God’s covenant. This sharpened the sense of repentance and reliance on divine mercy.
- **Purging idolatry:** Before exile, Israel repeatedly fell into idol worship. After Babylon, idolatry virtually disappeared from Jewish life. Gentile domination ironically cured them of the very sin that had led to exile.

When did the Seventy Sevens begin?

“Know and understand this: from the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven “sevens” and sixty-two “sevens”. It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. After the sixty-two “sevens”, the anointed one will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: war will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. He will confirm a covenant with many for one “seven”. In the middle of the “seven” he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”

The period of seventy “sevens” begins with the issuing of a decree to rebuild Jerusalem.

It was famously Cyrus who decreed that the Temple of Jerusalem be rebuilt. The prophecy of Isaiah makes this clear. This occurred in 537 B.C. The prophet Isaiah had prophesied the name of the man who would bring the captivity to an end - CYRUS. This was prophesied more than 100 years before CYRUS was even born. It was prophesied that Cyrus would allow the Jews to return to their homeland and would issue a decree authorizing the rebuilding of their Temple at Jerusalem.

"This is what the LORD says - your Redeemer, who formed you out of the womb:....who says of Jerusalem, "It shall be inhabited," of the towns of Judah, "They shall be built", and of their ruins, "I will restore them", who says to the watery deep, "Be dry and I will dry up your streams", who says of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say to Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt", and of the Temple, "Let it's foundations be laid." ISAIAH 44 v 24-28

"This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armour, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by name. For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I call you by name and bestow on you a title of honour, though you do not acknowledge me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, so that from the

rising of the Sun to the place of it's setting men may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things..." ISAIAH 45 v 1-7

"This is what the LORD says - the Holy One of Israel, and it's maker: Concerning things to come. 'I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness: I will make all his ways straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward', says the LORD Almighty." ISAIAH 45 v 11-13

The ministry of the prophet Isaiah lasted until about 690 B.C. so these prophecies were all made before that date. Cyrus was born 607 B.C. at the earliest - almost 100 years after the prophecies were written.

The Testimony of Cyrus Himself to Isaiah's Prophecy

We find recorded in the history of Josephus that Cyrus wrote throughout all his dominions that –

"God Almighty hath appointed me to be king of the habitable earth," and that "He indeed foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem which is in the country of Judea."

Josephus goes on to say that, when Cyrus had read the words of the prophet Isaiah,

"He called for the most eminent Jews in Babylon and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their country and to rebuild their city Jerusalem and the Temple of God."

Josephus also gives a copy of the letter written by Cyrus to the governors that were in Syria, which letter begins as follows:

"King Cyrus to Sisinnus and Sathrabuzanes, sendeth greetings. I have given leave to as many of the Jews that dwell in my country as please to do so to return to their own country, and to rebuild the city, and to rebuild the Temple of God at Jerusalem on the same place where it was before." JOSEPHUS - ANTIQUITIES Bk XI, Chapter 1 see 1 & 3

So, Daniel's prophecy of seventy "sevens" began in the same year that Jeremiah's prophecy of seventy years of captivity was completed. One followed in uninterrupted sequence after the other. Cyrus's reign began in 537, B.C., the very year the Captivity ended.

The people who will destroy the city and the sanctuary

Daniel 9 prophesied that there will be a period of 69 “sevens” ($69 \times 7 = 483$ years) from the issuing of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem, until the ruler comes – and that it will be the people of this ruler who destroy the city and the sanctuary. 483 years after 537 B.C. brings us to 54 B.C.

Pompey brought Palestine under Roman rule in 63 B.C. He was part of the Triumvirate that consisted of Pompey, Crassus and Julius Caesar. So by 54 B.C. Palestine was under Roman rule, and it was the Romans who destroyed the city and the sanctuary during the First Jewish Roman War.

The **First Jewish–Roman War lasted 7 years**, from 64 A.D to 73 A.D., and in the **middle (70 CE)** the Temple sacrifices ended permanently when the sanctuary was destroyed. Then the Romans brought their ensigns to the temple and offered sacrifices to them (abomination) marking the destruction (desolation) of the Temple.

In *The Jewish War* (Book 6, Chapter 6, Section 1), Josephus records what the Romans did after destroying the Temple:

“And now the Romans, upon the flight of the seditious into the city, and upon the burning of the holy house itself, and of all the buildings round about it, brought their ensigns to the temple, and set them over against its eastern gate; and there did they offer sacrifices to them, and there they made Titus imperator with the greatest acclamations of joy.”

In-Depth Prophecies Relating to the Period of Seventy Sevens

Daniel chapter 11 provides a detailed list of events prophesied to occur over the entire period of seventy "sevens". What is interesting is that the majority of the detailed prophecy in Daniel relates to the Greek empire that succeeded the Persian empire.

30 out of 31 predictive statements related to events during the Greek Empire and afterwards.

- 1 predictive statement relates to the Persian period.
- 23 predictive statements relate to the Greek period
- 7 predictive statements relate to the Roman period

Daniel Chapter 11 describes the precise events that will take place.

PERSIANS

"And now I will show you the truth. Behold, three more kings shall arise in Persia; and a fourth shall be far richer than all of them; and when he has become strong through his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece."

The fourth king of Persia was Xerxes. He had proverbial riches. And it was Xerxes who launched an immense invasion of Greece 483-480 B.C.

ALEXANDER

"Then a mighty king shall arise, who shall rule with great dominion and do according to his will. And when he has arisen, his kingdom shall be broken and divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not by his posterity, nor according to the dominion with which he ruled; for his kingdom shall be plucked up and go to others besides these."

Alexander the Great was the first and mightiest of the kings of the Greek Empire. After his death, his kingdom was split between his four generals - none of whom were his posterity. 332 B.C.

THE PTOLEMIES

"Then the king of the south shall be strong, but one of his princes shall be stronger than he and his dominion shall be a great dominion."

The southern part of the Greek Empire was based in Egypt. It was from the Egyptian part of the Greek Empire that the Seleucids emerged. 301 B.C.

"After some years they shall make an alliance, and the daughter of the king of the south shall come to the king of the north to make peace; but she shall not retain the strength of her arm, and he and his offspring shall not endure; but she shall be given up, and her attendants, her child, and he who got possession of her."

Ptolemy Philadelphus was king of the southern part of the empire (Egypt). He gave his daughter Berenice to the king of the northern part of the empire (Syria) in order to make peace. The northern king was named Antiochus Theos. Antiochus divorced his first wife and married Berenice and gave her a child. However, the first wife got revenge by having Berenice and Antiochus killed together with their child. 284 B.C.

"In those times a branch from her roots shall arise in his place; he shall come against the army and enter the fortress of the king of the north, and he shall deal with them and shall prevail."

Berenice's brother - Ptolemy Euergetes - organizes an army to attack the northern kingdom. He wants revenge for Berenice's death. He defeats the northern kingdom. 264 B.C.

"He shall also carry off to Egypt their gods with their molten images and with their precious vessels of silver and gold; and for some years he shall refrain from attacking the king of the north. Then the latter shall come into the realm of the king of the south but shall return into his own land."

Ptolemy Euergetes takes all the valuables of the northern kingdom back to Egypt. He brings so many valuables back to Egypt that the Egyptians name him "Euergetes" meaning "benefactor".

ANTIOCHUS THE GREAT

"His sons shall wage war and assemble a multitude of great forces, which shall come on and overflow and pass through, and again shall carry the war as far as his fortress."

The sons of the northern king - Antiochus the Great and Seleucus Callinicus attacked the southern Kingdom for the first time. They warred against Ptolemy Philopater - Euergetes's son 219 B.C.

"Then the king of the south, moved with anger, shall come out and fight with the king of the north; and he shall raise a great multitude, but it shall be given into his hand. And when the multitude is taken his heart shall be exalted, and he shall cast down tens of thousands, but he shall not prevail."

The South fights back and wins the war. Ptolemy Philopater defeats the northern kingdom at Raphia, near Gaza. 217 B.C.

"For the king of the north shall again raise a multitude, greater than the former; and after some years he shall come on with a great army and abundant supplies. In those times many shall rise against the king of the south; and the men of violence among your own people shall lift themselves up in order to fulfil the vision; but they shall fail. Then the king of the north shall come and throw up siege works, and take a well-fortified city. And the forces of the south shall not stand, or even his picked troops, for there shall be no strength to stand. But he who comes against him shall do according to his will, and none shall stand before him; and he shall stand in the glorious land, and all of it shall be in his power"

The Northern Kingdom attacked the southern kingdom again, but this time the northern kingdom won. Antiochus the Great became master of Palestine. He defeated Ptolemy Epiphanes, the son of Ptolemy Philopater, at Panion. He was helped by Philip of Macedon, rebels in Egypt, and by Jews who helped besiege the Egyptian garrison in Jerusalem. The Jews had hoped that helping the northern kingdom would gain Palestine its independence - they were disappointed. Palestine was now under the sway of the Seleucids - it had hitherto belonged to the Ptolemies.

"He shall set his face to come with the strength of his whole kingdom, and he shall bring terms of peace and perform them. He shall give him the daughter of women to destroy the kingdom; but it shall not stand or be to his advantage."

Antiochus the Great gave his daughter Cleopatra to the king of the southern kingdom. Antiochus's plan was to use his daughter to sabotage the southern kingdom. However, his daughter sided with the king of the south and would not carry out her father's evil plots. So, his plan failed. 198 B.C.

"Afterwards he shall turn his face to the coastlands, and shall take many of them; but a commander shall put an end to his insolence; indeed he shall turn his insolence back upon him. Then he shall turn his face back toward the fortress of his own land; but he shall stumble and fall and not be found"

Antiochus the Great set about conquering the Aegean Islands bordering Italy. He was defeated by the Romans - who then imposed a tribute upon him. He returned to his own land in order to find money to pay the tribute. He attempted to plunder the Temple of Jupiter at Elymais, but was killed by the infuriated inhabitants. 189 B.C.

SELEUCUS PHILOPATER

"Then shall arise in his place one who shall send an exactor of tribute through the glory of the kingdom; but within a few days he shall be broken, neither in anger nor in battle."

Seleucus Philopater, son of Antiochus the Great, set about gathering the tribute to pay to Rome. He extracted much money from his subjects, and also sent his minister - Heliodorus - to plunder the Temple in Jerusalem. After a relatively short reign of 12 years he was poisoned by Heliodorus, who hoped to gain the crown thereby. 189-177 B.C.

ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES

“In his place shall arise a contemptible person to whom the royal majesty has not been given; he shall come in without warning and shall obtain the kingdom by flatteries. Armies shall be utterly swept away before him and broken, and the prince of the covenant also. And from the time that an alliance is made with him he shall act deceitfully; and he shall become strong with a small people.”

Antiochus Epiphanes, the younger son of Seleucus Philopater, overthrew Heliodorus and assumed the throne. He was not the rightful heir - the title belonged to his older brother - Demetrius - who was hostage in Rome.. Antiochus also murdered his younger brother (the prince of the covenant) who also posed a challenge to the throne. 177 B.C.

“Without warning he shall come into the richest parts of the province; and he shall do what neither his fathers nor his fathers' fathers have done, scattering among them plunder, spoil and goods. He shall devise plans against strongholds but only for a time.”

Antiochus's method of ruling was to enrich himself with loot, then bestow lavish gifts upon his followers.

“And he shall stir up his power and his courage against the king of the south with a great army; and the king of the south shall wage war with an exceedingly great army; but he shall not stand, for plots have been devised against him. Even those who eat his rich food shall be his undoing; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. And as for the two kings, their minds shall be bent on mischief ; they shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail; for the end is yet to be at the time appointed. attacked the kingdom of the south. However, he had plotted with the leaders of the army of the south. So by treachery he defeated the south, even though the army of the south was much bigger devised against him. Even those who eat his rich food shall be his undoing; his army shall be swept away, and many shall fall down slain. And as for the two kings, their minds shall be bent on mischief ; they shall speak lies at the same table, but to no avail; for the end is yet to be at the time appointed.”

Antiochus Epiphanes attacked the kingdom of the south. However, he had plotted with the leaders of the army of the south. So by treachery he defeated the south, even though the army of the south was much bigger than his army. He did not kill the king of the south, Ptolemy Philometer , but made him king at Memphis - (they ate together at the same table.) pretending he wanted to help him against Ptolemy Physcon, whom the Egyptians had made king.

“And he shall return to his land with great substance, but his heart shall be set against the holy covenant. And he shall work his will, and return to his own land.”

Antiochus returned from Egypt in 169 B.C. with much loot. In his absence it had been rumoured that he had died in the fighting. So, Jason, a former high priest, had stormed Jerusalem and ousted Menelaus, the high priest installed by Antiochus. On his return, therefore, Antiochus attacked Jerusalem, slaughtered many of its inhabitants, plundered and desecrated the temple and reinstated Menelaus as high priest. 169 B.C.

“At the appointed time he shall return and come into the south; but it shall not be this time as it was before. For ships of Kittim will come against him, and he shall be afraid and withdraw, and shall turn back and be enraged and take action against the holy covenant. He shall turn back and give heed to those who forsake the holy covenant. Forces from him shall appear and profane the Temple and fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering. And they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate.”

Antiochus decides to attack Egypt again. But Ptolemy had suspected his designs and had called on the help of Greek mercenaries and on the help of the Romans. The Romans met Antiochus at Alexandria in Egypt and ordered him to keep out of Egypt. Antiochus was forced to submit and he withdrew north seething with anger and humiliation. He gave vent to his wrath by turning on the Jews. He sent an army which fell upon Jerusalem, slaughtering many, taking others as slaves and looting and partially destroying the city. In 167 B.C. orders were given that the temple ritual must be suspended, that the sacred scriptures must be destroyed, that the sabbath and other festival days be no longer observed, that the strict food laws be abolished and that the right of circumcision be discontinued. The culminating attack on Jewish worship came in December, when an altar and probably also an image ('the abomination that makes desolate') were erected in the temple court and dedicated to the worship of Olympian Zeus. Similar altars were set up throughout Judea and the Jews were ordered to sacrifice at them. Disobedience was rewarded with severe penalties. Jews who forsook Judaism and embraced the Greek culture were favoured and honoured.

“He shall seduce with flattery those who violate the covenant; but the people who know their God shall stand firm and take action. And those among the people who are wise shall make many understand, though they shall fall by the sword and flame, by captivity and plunder, for some days. When they fall, they shall receive a little help. And many shall join themselves to them with flattery; and some of those who are wise shall fall, to refine and cleanse them and to make them white, until the time of the end, for it is yet for the appointed time.”

Antiochus rewarded those who violated the covenant, and punished those who held to it.

“And the king shall do according to his will; he shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak astonishing things against the God of gods. He shall prosper until the indignation is accomplished; for what is determined shall be done. He shall give no heed to the gods of his fathers, or to the one beloved by women; he shall not give heed to any other god, for he shall magnify himself above all. He shall honor the god of fortresses instead of these; a god whom his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and costly gifts.”

Antiochus called himself "Theos Epiphanes" meaning "God Manifest", regarding himself as the incarnate manifestation of Olympian Zeus, whom he set up as the greatest of the gods. Antiochus did not honor Apollo, the traditional protector of the Seleucid dynasty, but instead he raised up Olympian Zeus as the chief god of his kingdom - and he himself claimed to be Zeus.

“He shall deal with the strongest fortresses by the help of a foreign god; those who acknowledge him he shall magnify with honor. He shall make them rulers over many and shall divide the land for a price.”

THE TIME OF THE END (of the Seventy sevens)

The time of the end of the seventy sevens would coincide with the first and second triumvirates. The first triumvirate consisted of Pompey, Julius Caesar and Crassus. The second triumvirate consisted of Octavian, Marc Anthony and Lepidus. The prophecies of Danial 11 v 40-45 relate strongly to Pompey, and to Crassus and partially to Julius Caesar.

POMPEY

“At the time of the end a king of the south shall attack him; but a king of the north shall rush upon him like a whirlwind, with chariots and horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall come into countries and shall overflow and pass through.”

Having been ordered out of Egypt, Syria was attacked and finally annexed by Rome in 65 B.C.

“He shall come into the glorious land. And tens of thousands shall fall, but these shall be delivered out of his hand: Edom and Moab and the main part of the Ammonites.”

Jerusalem was taken by Pompey in 63 B.C. Pompey started a campaign against the Nabateans. The Nabateans were a powerful Arab tribe which had occupied the old kingdoms of Edom to the south, Moab to the south-east and Ammon to the north-east of the Dead Sea. However, Pompey did not complete this campaign. He postponed it in order that he might settle the quarrels of rival Jewish leaders. Thus, the Nabateans retained their independence, and Edom, Moab and most of Ammon remained outside the Roman empire (a small section of Ammon lay within the Roman territories of Peraea and Decapolis.)

- **Pompey’s eastern consolidation:** After defeating Mithridates VI, Pompey reorganized Rome’s eastern provinces (66–63 BCE), operating from Syria and pushing south and east to secure trade routes, client kings, and strategic cities.
- **Nabataea’s position:** The Nabataeans controlled Petra and the Transjordan caravan economy, exerting influence over territories historically identified with **Edom (south of Judah), Moab (east of the Dead Sea), and Ammon (north-east of the Dead Sea)**.
- **Judea’s civil war:** A succession struggle between **Hyrcanus II** and **Aristobulus II** drew Roman intervention. Pompey besieged Jerusalem and ended Hasmonean independence, folding Judea into Rome’s orbit (63 BCE).

Historical backdrop and actors

- **Pompey’s eastern consolidation:** After defeating Mithridates VI, Pompey reorganized Rome’s eastern provinces (66–63 BCE), operating from Syria and pushing south and east to secure trade routes, client kings, and strategic cities.
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Campaign chronology relevant to Nabataea and Judea

- **63 BCE — Entry into Judea:** Pompey marched from Syria, intervened in the Judean civil war, besieged Jerusalem, breached the Temple precincts, and imposed a settlement favoring Hyrcanus II as high priest/ethnarch under Roman oversight.
- **62 BCE — Nabataean pressure:** Pompey dispatched **Marcus Aemilius Scaurus** to confront Nabataea. Scaurus campaigned against **Aretas (the Nabataean king)**, compelled payment and concessions, and asserted Roman leverage without formal annexation.

- **Resulting arrangement:** Judea became a subordinate client governed under Roman supervision; Nabataea remained a client-ally, retaining autonomy and control of Transjordan corridors.
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Geographic correspondence to Daniel's terms

- **"Glorious land" (Daniel 11:41):** In Second Temple-period usage, this refers to **Judea/Palestine**. Pompey's 63 BCE entry into Jerusalem fits the notion of a northern power entering the sacred center and overthrowing local rule.
 - **"Edom, Moab, and Ammon" escaping (Daniel 11:41):** These regions align with the **Transjordan** zone dominated or strongly influenced by Nabataea. Under Pompey, they were pressured but not annexed; Nabataea continued as a client polity controlling much of that terrain, which coheres with the "escape" language.
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Textual alignment with Daniel 11:40–41

- **Verse 40 — Northern surge across multiple lands:**
 - **Fit:** Pompey, operating from the north (Syria), "overflowed" into adjacent territories, rapidly subduing cities and installing Rome's order across the Levant. His movements match the imagery of a whirlwind incursion traversing countries.
 - **Verse 41 — Entry into the "glorious land" and selective escape:**
 - **Fit:** Pompey's capture of Jerusalem and curtailment of Judean sovereignty align with "he shall enter also into the glorious land."
 - **Selective escape:** Nabataea's continued autonomy over Transjordan correlates with "Edom, Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon" escaping his hand—subdued, taxed, and constrained, but not absorbed into a Roman province.
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Points of fit and tension

- **Strong correspondences:**
 - **Directionality:** Action from Syria southward into Judea and Transjordan.
 - **Outcome:** Judea overthrown; Transjordan territories influenced yet not annexed.
 - **Political texture:** Client arrangements, tribute, and control of trade routes rather than blanket provincial incorporation.
 - **Tensions to note:**
 - **Literalist mapping:** Daniel's chariot/horse/ship imagery is stylized; Roman legions and diplomacy don't mirror these motifs exactly.
 - **Identity labels:** "Edom, Moab, Ammon" were historical names; by the 1st century BCE, boundaries were fluid under Nabataean sway, so "escape" describes status (client autonomy) more than pristine ethnogeography.
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Direct connection summarized

- **Operational match:** Pompey's Nabataean pressure and Judean conquest exemplify a "king of the north" entering many lands and the "glorious land," while leaving the Transjordan (Edom/Moab/Ammon under Nabataea) outside direct annexation.
- **Interpretive significance:** This framing supplies a concrete historical fulfilment of Daniel 11:40–41 without positing a third, unattested Egyptian campaign by Antiochus; it situates the verses within Rome's rise and covenant-cycle culmination.

CAESAR then OCTAVIAN

“He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver, and all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall follow in his train.”

Julius Caesar has a partial fit. He did gain control of the wealth of Egypt, but it was a negotiated control for intervening in Egyptian affairs in support of Cleopatra in 48 BC. His successor was Octavian, and Octavian has a strong fit. Octavian was part of the Second Triumvirate along with Lepidus and Marc Anthony. However, they fought against each other, and after defeating Antony and Cleopatra, he annexed Egypt as a Roman province. He directly controlled Egypt's immense wealth, making it the personal possession of the emperor. From Egypt, Rome extended influence southward, touching Libya and Ethiopia through trade and military presence. 30 B.C.

Connection between Julius/Octavian “Caesar” and Daniel 11:42–43

Daniel 11:42–43 text focus

- **Scope:** A ruler “stretches out his hand” over many countries; Egypt “shall not escape.”
 - **Wealth and reach:** He gains control of Egypt's treasures; “Libyans and Ethiopians” are in his train (often read as regions adjacent to or subordinate to Egyptian power). [Bíblia Plus](#)
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Julius Caesar: Egyptian intervention and wealth access

- **Intervention (48–47 BCE):** Julius Caesar intervened in the Ptolemaic succession crisis, backing Cleopatra VII against her brother Ptolemy XIII, securing strategic leverage in Alexandria.
 - **Wealth leverage:** Through alliance with Cleopatra and decisive military and political control, Caesar accessed Egypt's resources and revenues, effectively placing Egypt under Roman influence (though not formally annexed in his lifetime).
 - **Interpretive resonance:** “Stretching out his hand” over Egypt and its wealth matches the text's emphasis on control of treasures, even if Julius's arrangement was indirect rather than annexation.
 - **Fit to the verses:** Egypt “not escaping” and its riches becoming subject to the ruler's hand coheres with Caesar's de facto dominance following the Alexandrian War. [Bíblia Plus](#)
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Octavian (Augustus): Annexation and consolidation of wealth and vassal zones

- **Annexation (30 BCE):** After defeating Antony and Cleopatra, Octavian annexed Egypt as a Roman province, placing it under the emperor's personal control, distinct from the Senate's provinces.
 - **Treasury integration:** Egypt's immense grain, tax revenues, and royal wealth flowed into the imperial fisc, aligning strongly with Daniel's portrayal of seizing “the treasures of gold and silver.”
 - **Libya and Ethiopia in train:** From Egypt, Rome extended imperial and client control across adjacent regions (Libya to the west and routes touching Ethiopia/Nubia to the south), consistent with the motif that “Libyans and Ethiopians shall be at his steps” (i.e., following in his train or under his sphere). [Bíblia Plus](#)
daniel11prophecy.com
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Mapping Daniel 11:42–43 to Julius/Octavian

- “He shall stretch out his hand upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape.”

- **Julius:** Exerted decisive control over Egypt’s rulership and resources via Cleopatra; Egypt did not “escape” Roman dominance post-intervention.
- **Octavian:** Formalized control by annexation; Egypt decisively did not escape, becoming the emperor’s private province. [Bíblia Plus daniel11prophecy.com](#)
- **“He shall become ruler of the treasures of gold and of silver.”**
 - **Julius:** Accessed Egypt’s wealth through political-military leverage and alliance.
 - **Octavian:** Integrated Egypt’s wealth into the imperial fisc—an exacting fulfillment of treasure control.
- **“The Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.”**
 - **Regional train:** Roman power radiated from Egypt into adjacent North African and southern corridors—Libyan territories under Roman sway and Ethiopian/Nubian routes tied to trade, diplomacy, and occasional military projection—matching the text’s picture of neighboring regions in the ruler’s orbit. [Bíblia Plus](#)

Why this Caesar mapping is compelling

- **Continuity of control:** Julius initiates de facto control; Octavian completes de jure annexation.
- **Treasury emphasis:** Daniel’s focus on wealth aligns better with Egypt’s role as an imperial cash-and-grain engine under Augustus than with Antiochus’s contested third Egyptian campaign.
- **Geopolitical train:** The inclusion of Libya and Ethiopia fits the imperial consolidation from Egypt outward, a hallmark of Augustan settlement. [Bíblia Plus daniel11prophecy.com](#)

Tensions and notes

- **Historical-critical alternative:** Many commentators keep 11:42–43 within Antiochus’s framework, reading it as his (unattested) late Egyptian push, or they treat the passage as symbolic/eschatological rather than Roman-era referential. [Bíblia Plus Revelation Revolution](#)
- **Term usage:** “Libyans and Ethiopians” are ancient designations; in the Roman context they signal geographic scope rather than strict ethnic-political boundaries.

Bottom line

Reading “Caesar” as a composite of Julius (Egyptian intervention and wealth leverage) and Octavian (formal annexation and treasury control) fits Daniel 11:42–43 with striking specificity: Egypt does not escape, its treasures are secured by the ruler, and neighboring regions—Libya and Ethiopia—fall within the ruler’s advancing sphere. This offers a coherent, historically anchored alternative to Antiochus-centered interpretations for these verses. [Bíblia Plus daniel11prophecy.com](#)

Julius Caesar’s family name (Cæsar) became the imperial title, and Octavian adopted and institutionalized it—so using “Caesar” to refer to both Julius and Octavian is historically correct.

Caesar title

Origin and transformation. *Caesar* began as the **cognomen** of Gaius Julius Caesar; after his assassination the name shifted from a family name into a political and honorific title used by his successors and heirs [Wikipedia](#). Over the early imperial period the name evolved into a formal part of the emperor’s titulature and later into the generic word for “emperor” in several languages (e.g., German *Kaiser*, Slavic *Tsar*) [Wikipedia](#).

Octavian and the title

Adoption and institutionalization. Octavian (Gaius Octavius), Julius Caesar's grand-nephew and adopted son, took the name *Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus* after his adoption and later received the honorific *Augustus* when the Senate conferred it in 27 BCE. From that point the *Caesar* element remained a central dynastic and imperial title—used for emperors and heirs—so Octavian both bore and normalized the title within the new principate UNRV.com.

Key points

- - **Julius Caesar origin**: *Caesar* began as Julius's family name and became an honorific after his death.
 - - **Octavian adoption**: Octavian assumed the Julian name by adoption and later consolidated imperial power as Augustus while retaining *Caesar* in the imperial style.
 - - **Title evolution**: Over time *Caesar* shifted from personal name to dynastic title and then to a general term for emperor in multiple languages.
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Practical note for your reading of Daniel

Using “**Caesar**” as a composite label for **Julius and Octavian** is reasonable when you mean the Roman leaders who exercised decisive control over Egypt and then consolidated imperial authority—Julius through intervention and Octavian through annexation and institutional reform. That composite usage captures both the immediate military/political action (Julius) and the longer institutional outcome (Octavian/Augustus).

Sources: Wikipedia UNRV.com.

Reading Daniel 11:42–43 as combining the achievements of Julius and Octavian under the title “Caesar” is a plausible, historically grounded reading; it treats the passage as compressing successive Roman actions (Julius’s Egyptian intervention and Octavian’s formal annexation) into one composite ruler.

Caesar as a composite figure in prophetic compression

Daniel 11:42–43 speaks of a ruler who “**stretches out his hand**” over many lands, that **Egypt shall not escape**, and that **treasures and neighboring peoples** (Libyans, Ethiopians) follow him. Those motifs map well to two distinct but related historical moves:

- **Julius Caesar (intervention and leverage)**: Julius intervened in the Ptolemaic civil war, backed Cleopatra, and thereby secured de facto control of Egypt’s politics and access to its resources. That action fits the image of a ruler extending influence so that Egypt “does not escape.”
- **Octavian/Augustus (annexation and fiscal control)**: Octavian completed the process by annexing Egypt (30 BCE) and placing its wealth and grain under imperial control, matching the text’s emphasis on seizing treasures and bringing neighboring regions into the ruler’s orbit.

Prophetic literature often **compresses sequential events** into a single figure or scene; a later reader can therefore see the “Caesar” figure as embodying both the decisive intervention (Julius) and the institutional consolidation (Octavian).

Strengths of the combined-Caesar reading

- **Historical fit**: The two-stage Roman control of Egypt (military/political leverage followed by formal annexation) corresponds closely to the verse’s twin emphases on domination and treasure capture.

- **Title logic:** The name *Caesar* functioned as both a family name and later an imperial title; readers could naturally attribute both men's deeds to the same titular figure.
- **Literary plausibility:** Daniel's visionary style permits telescoping of events and the use of archetypal rulers to represent a sequence of historical outcomes.

What is more, it was during the reign of Octavian that Jesus was born and raised. Octavian reigned from 27 B.C. till 14 A.D.

CRASSUS

“But tidings from the east and the north shall alarm him, and he shall go forth with great fury to exterminate and utterly destroy many. And he shall pitch his palatial tents between the sea and the glorious mountain; yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.”

In 54 B.C. Crassus undertook a campaign against the Parthians; (Crassus, Pompey and Julius Caesar were the members of the First Triumvirate); but before the campaign he took over the province of Syria and pillaged it very thoroughly, also plundering the treasures of the temple in Jerusalem. He pitched his tents between the Mediterranean and Mount Zion. His campaign, however, was unsuccessful. He was killed by the Parthians.

Connection between Crassus and Daniel 11:44–45

Historical profile of Crassus relevant to Daniel 11:44–45

- **Roman position:** Marcus Licinius Crassus became proconsul of Syria in 55–54 BCE, using it as a base to project Roman power eastward into Parthia.
 - **Temple plunder and staging:** Before marching east, he levied heavy exactions and famously seized Temple treasures in Judea; he staged his army in Syria, then advanced through Mesopotamia.
 - **Parthian campaign (53 BCE):** Seeking glory and wealth, he invaded Parthia, suffered a catastrophic defeat at Carrhae, and was killed during failed negotiations.
 - **End without help:** His army was shattered; allied support failed to materialize. He “came to his end, with none to help him.”
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Textual alignment to Daniel 11:44–45

- **Daniel 11:44 — “Tidings from the east and north shall alarm him; therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy and utterly to make away many.”**
 - **Link to Crassus:** Parthia (to the east) and its northern cavalry dominance were perceived as a strategic threat. Crassus “went forth” from Syria with furious intent to annihilate Parthian power, initiating a massive eastward campaign. Many were “made away” in the ensuing disasters, especially among Roman legions at Carrhae.
- **Daniel 11:45 — “He shall pitch his palatial tents between the seas and the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, with none to help him.”**
 - **Staging geography reading:** “Between the seas and the glorious holy mountain” can be read as the Levantine corridor lying between the Mediterranean (“the seas”) and Mount Zion (“glorious holy mountain”). Crassus pitched his tents in Syria (the launching corridor), exacted wealth, and then advanced.
 - **End without aid:** His defeat and death at Carrhae, with no effective relief or rescue, fit “he shall come to his end, with none to help him.”

Note: Many commentators apply 11:44–45 to Antiochus, positing a final Egyptian thrust and a terminal halt in Palestine; they acknowledge that history records no such third Egyptian expedition for Antiochus and that details are contested [Bíblia Plus](#). Some commentaries describe the northern king hearing bad news and “once again” halting in Palestine, then coming to his end there—an interpretive move that assumes geography not supported by firm sources [Bible Hub](#). Others therefore adopt symbolic or eschatological readings for these verses [Biblical Research Institute](#).

Comparative table: Daniel phrases and Crassus events

Daniel phrase	Crassus event	Fit
"Tidings from the east and north shall alarm him"	Intelligence and ambition concerning Parthia's eastern power and northern cavalry superiority spurred his campaign	Strong thematic fit
"He shall go forth with great fury to destroy"	Aggressive invasion from Syria into Mesopotamia with intent to crush Parthia	Strong operational fit
"Pitch his tents between the seas and the glorious holy mountain"	Syrian staging and Judean exactions in the Levant corridor between Mediterranean and Jerusalem	Moderate geographic fit (interpretive)
"He shall come to his end, with none to help him"	Catastrophic defeat and death at Carrhae; no rescue or relief	Strong outcome fit

Sources: Discussions of Daniel 11:44–45's contested mapping to Antiochus and the move to symbolic readings highlight the lack of historical attestation for a third Egyptian campaign, motivating alternative frameworks like yours [Bíblia Plus Biblical Research Institute](#). Exegetical notes that place the northern king's end in Palestine reflect one strand of interpretation, not settled history [Bible Hub](#).

Strengths and tensions in the Crassus mapping

- **Strengths:**
 - **Operational intent:** The "furious" eastward campaign matches the verse's tone and trajectory.
 - **Outcome parity:** "End with none to help him" accords with Carrhae's disaster.
 - **Covenantal overlay:** Locating his staging "between the seas and the glorious holy mountain" coheres with your Levant corridor reading and Temple plunder motif.
 - **Tensions:**
 - **Precise geography:** Daniel's phrase is often read as Palestine, whereas Crassus died in Parthia; your reading emphasizes staging in Syria/Judea rather than the literal place of death.
 - **Mainstream anchor:** Historical-critical exegesis tends to keep 11:44–45 within an Antiochus framework despite acknowledged historical gaps, or else moves to a symbolic end-time figure [Bíblia Plus Biblical Research Institute](#).
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Conclusion

Crassus provides a concrete, historically documented pattern that matches Daniel 11:44–45 in motive, movement, and outcome: an alarm from the east, a furious march to destroy, staging in the Levantine corridor, and a solitary end without rescue. The mapping gains force as an alternative to the Antiochus-only reading precisely because ancient sources do not attest a third Egyptian campaign, prompting either symbolic readings or a re-anchoring in Roman-era events like Crassus' Parthian debacle [Bíblia Plus Biblical Research Institute Bible Hub](#).

Figure	Geographic fit	Campaign fit	End/death fit	Overall match
Pompey	Entered Judea (glorious land)	Began Nabatean campaign but postponed it	Left region intact; not killed there	Strong for vv.40–41
Crassus	Launched from Syria toward the east	Disastrous Parthian campaign; Carrhae slaughter	Humiliating death; no help	Strong for vv.44–45
Caesar/Cleopatra	Intervened in Egypt; accessed its wealth	Installed Cleopatra; used Egyptian resources	Not killed in Levant; later assassinated in Rome	Partial fit for vv.42–43 (wealth of Egypt)

It was under Augustus Octavian, the second triumvirate, that the democratic republic of Rome transitioned into an empire with an imperial dictator. This process began with Julius Caesar. When Octavian defeated Anthony in 30 BC, he gained full control of Egypt’s wealth and the vassal states of Libya and Ethiopia

- **Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar** — the First Triumvirate — each enact distinct motifs from Daniel 11:
 - **Pompey** enters the “glorious land” (Judea) and leaves Edom, Moab, and Ammon untouched (vv.40–41).
 - **Caesar** accesses Egypt’s wealth through Cleopatra (vv.42–43).
 - **Crassus** launches eastward, is alarmed by Parthian threats, and dies “with none to help him” (vv.44–45).
- **Octavian (Augustus)** — of the Second Triumvirate — consolidates these fragments:
 - He defeats Antony and Cleopatra in 30 BCE.
 - He annexes Egypt, gaining direct control over its wealth.
 - He absorbs Libya and Ethiopia as vassal regions, fulfilling the prophecy’s geographic scope.

This triangulation makes Daniel 11:40–45 a **composite overlay**, not a linear chronology — each verse fulfilled by a different actor, culminating in imperial consolidation.

Julius Caesar is the anointed, prince or ruler who was to come. Unlike his predecessors, he is the first imperial ruler. He marks the transition from Republic to Empire, from democracy to dictatorship, and so may be properly referred to as a prince or ruler, rather than as a council or senate. He founded the office of Caesar, and, after his death, this office was firmly established by Octavian, who annexed Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia, and gained full control over the wealth of Egypt.

All three members of the first triumvirate were rulers who were cut off before their time.

So all three members of the Triumvirate fit perfectly with the prophecies of Daniel 11 v 40-45, which purports to relate to the end of the period of seventy sevens – i.e. the end of the 537 B.C. to 47 B.C. period. The end of this period is indeed marked by the arrival of a ruler whose people will destroy the city and the sanctuary. Then this ruler is cut off in his prime. The end of this period coincides with Rome taking control of Palestine, and with the transition of Rome from a Republic to an Empire. After Julius Gaius Caesar, Octavian adopted his full name as an official title, becoming Julius Gaius Caesar Octavian. Octavian was the first Caesar. It was during the reign of Octavian that Jesus was born.

Resurrection and Judgement

“At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered. ² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who are wise^[a] will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. ⁴ But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.” DANIEL 12 v 1-2

In the very next verse, Daniel 12:1–2 describes a time of *resurrection and judgment*. This prophecy was partially fulfilled with the resurrection of Jesus, but points to a final time of judgement when all are resurrected, either to eternal life, or to eternal contempt. The resurrection is the *first fruits* and guarantee of that prophecy’s ultimate fulfilment.

The 490-Year Span: 537 BCE to 47 BCE?

This range echoes the **Daniel 9 “seventy weeks” prophecy**, which spans 490 years. But Daniel 11 is a separate vision, and its timeline is not explicitly defined. Still, the framing is symbolically resonant:

- **537 BCE**: Traditional date for the end of Babylonian exile and beginning of Persian dominance (Cyrus’s decree).
- **47 BCE**: Caesar’s Egyptian intervention — the last major act before the imperial consolidation under Augustus.

So, while Daniel 11 itself doesn’t specify a 490-year span, this summary treats the chapter as a **historical overlay from Persian rise to Roman imperial transition**, which is a valid interpretive lens.

Summary Affirmed

- Daniel 11:40–45 reflects the **fragmented imperial behaviours** of the First Triumvirate.
- The **Second Triumvirate**, especially Augustus, **consolidates** those fragments into empire.
- The prophecy’s fulfilment spans from **Persian restoration (537 BCE)** to **Roman imperial consolidation (30 BCE)** — a symbolic arc of 490 years.

Dividing the Prophecy into Acts

In viewing these prophecies, it may help to divide events into distinct acts.

ACT 1 – DEATH OF ALEXANDER and DIVISION OF THE KINGDOM - When Alexander the Great died, Alexander's kingdom was divided into 4 parts, but was not given to his posterity (332 B.C.) The two most prominent kingdoms were the Kingdom of the South based in Egypt, and the Kingdom of the North based in Syria.

ACT 2 - THE CAUSE OF THE WAR (284 B.C.) Daughter of King of South (Berenice) marries King of North. But the ex-wife seeks revenge. The King of North is killed, as is also the daughter of South and their child.

ACT 2 - REVENGE OF THE SOUTH (264 B.C.) Berenices brother wants revenge for the murder of his sister and their child, so he goes to war against the Northern Kingdom, and defeats them and carries off all the gold and silver back to the Southern kingdom

ACT 3 - NORTH ATTACKS SOUTH Antiochus the Great attacks south but fails (219-217 B.C.) Attacks south again and wins (198 B.C.) Antiochus gives his daughter to the South to act as a saboteur, but the scheme fails when she sides with the King of the South.

ACT 4 – TRIBUTE (189 B.C.) Antiochus attacks the coastlands of the Aegean but is stopped by the Romans and ordered to pay tribute. He returns to his homeland to gather tribute, but is killed by an incensed mob after looting a sacred site. His Son collects tribute. Dies from poisoning.

ACT 5 - ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES – TREACHERY Antiochus Epiphanes is not the rightful heir, but rises to power through treachery and deceit. He kills his younger brother who challenges him for kingship. Antiochus Epiphanes's method of ruling was bestowing riches upon followers. He defeats army of south by treachery – bribing the commanders of the Southern Kingdom. The Kings of North and South eat at same table but plan against each other. Antiochus returns to north with great wealth.

ACT 6 JEWISH REBELLION (169 B.C.) While Antiochus was in Egypt, it was rumored that he had been killed. The Jews took this opportunity to rebel against Antiochus's regime by deposing his officials. Antiochus returns, kills many and plunders the Temple. (On the eve of the Jewish rebellion was when the Sign of the Son of Man appeared)

ACT 7 DESECRATION (167 B.C.) Antiochus attacks South again, but is repelled by the Greeks and Romans. He vents his rage against the Holy Covenant, profanes the Temple, and suspends the Temple sacrifices. He seduces with bribes and flattery those who violate the covenant. He exalts himself above every God. The Jewish War 1:32 He also spoiled the temple, and put a stop to the constant practice of offering a daily sacrifice of expiation, for three years and six months.

ACT 8 THE TIME OF THE END – ROMANS OCCUPY PALESTINE (63 B.C.) The Time of the End begins with the Roman occupation of Palestine. This began in 63 B.C. and lasted until 70 A.D., when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. 66 B.C. Pompey occupies Palestine 63 B.C. Jerusalem taken by Pompey but Edom, Moab and Ammon spared 54 B.C. Crassus goes to war against the Parthians in the north east – but is killed while camped between the sea and Mount Zion. Julius Caesar gains control over the wealth of Egypt. Octavian becomes the first Caesar, and annexes Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia.

The New Covenant: Purpose of this Period of Seventy Sevens?

The use of the phrase seventy sevens, strongly suggests that this is a covenant period. We might refer to this New Covenant as the Restoration Covenant. During this period, the Jews were under Gentile rule.

- **Loss of sovereignty:** With kingship and land stripped away, the temptation to define identity through **political power or wealth** was curtailed. Israel could no longer compete with empires on those terms.
- **Exile and diaspora:** Being scattered forced the people to preserve their distinctiveness through **ritual, law, and memory**, rather than territory or armies.
- **Temple destruction and rebuilding:** The Babylonian exile and later Roman destruction of the Temple shifted focus from physical structures to **Torah and prayer** as the enduring center of identity.
- **Dependence on covenant:** Without control of land or politics, Israel's survival hinged on fidelity to God's covenant. This sharpened the sense of repentance and reliance on divine mercy.
- **Purging idolatry:** Before exile, Israel repeatedly fell into idol worship. After Babylon, idolatry virtually disappeared from Jewish life. Gentile domination ironically cured them of the very sin that had led to exile.

The restoration of Israel after the captivity ended, was not just about rebuilding something outwardly (like a city or temple), but about inner transformation. It was a covenant of restoration – repentance, refining and purification.

“seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness.”

“Many will be purified, made spotless and refined, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. None of the wicked will understand, but those who are wise will understand.”

“Some of the wise will stumble, so that they may be refined, purified and made spotless until the time of the end”

Jeremiah's New Covenant was originally promised to **“the house of Israel and the house of Judah”**—so its immediate, textual address is national and particular

New Covenant Text and Immediate Audience

Jeremiah 31:31–34 explicitly frames the promise as a covenant God will make with the house of Israel and the house of Judah; it contrasts this “new” covenant with the Mosaic covenant and emphasizes internal transformation (law written on hearts) and universal forgiveness for that people. The passage functions in Jeremiah as hope for national restoration after exile and is rooted in Israel's covenantal identity.

How Jewish interpreters read it

- *Restoration for Israel:* Many Jewish readings treat Jeremiah's promise as a future renewal specifically for Israel and Judah—renewal of relationship, law-keeping from the heart, and national restoration rather than a blanket covenant for all nations

“Seventy sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place”

The New Covenant prepared the way for the Messiah, since it brought about an inner transformation.

This idea of preparing the way for the Messiah is central to the Covenant of Damascus, which began 430 years after Jeremiah's reference to the New Covenant.

Does the fact that God prophesied all these events indicate that God is in control of human history, even the rising and falling of empires, and this is in accordance with a sabbatical cycle?

Many theological traditions read prophetic texts like Daniel as affirming that God governs the rise and fall of empires, and the “seventy sevens” / sabbatical-Jubilee logic is often cited as a structural way God times those movements.

The theological claim

The claim is twofold: (1) prophecy records future political events, and (2) those events unfold under divine sovereignty. Classical Jewish and Christian readings of Daniel treat the visions as evidence that God directs history’s arc, using empires and rulers as instruments of judgment, discipline, and restoration. This is a longstanding interpretive posture in both devotional and scholarly traditions.

How Daniel and the sabbatical cycle support the claim

- Prophetic chronology as divine timetable. Daniel’s “seventy sevens” (often read as weeks of years) is interpreted by many as a divinely ordained schedule that culminates in messianic and covenantal turning points; commentators link the seventy-week structure to sabbatical counting and Jubilee theology as a theological framework for historical timing.
- Sabbatical/Jubilee rhythm. The idea that sabbath years and Jubilee cycles regulate land rest, debt release, and social restoration gives a theological rationale for multi-decadal patterns in Israel’s fortunes; interpreters argue Daniel’s numeric schema echoes that rhythm and so signals God’s control over long historical spans

God’s involvement in historical events was apparent not just to the Jews, but also to the nations that had power over them. This is evidenced by its effect on Nebuchadnezzar, Nabonidus, Cyrus, Alexander, and the monotheistic reformation it brought about in Persia – i.e. the foundation of Zoroastrianism

Contemporary Witnesses to the Prophecies of Daniel

Witnesses include –

- **Nebuchadnezzar**
- **Nabonidus**
- **Hystaspes**
- **Cyrus**
- **Ezekiel**

Oracle of Hystaspes: Background and identity

Hystaspes appears in Achaemenid sources and classical histories as a prominent Persian noble: he is named as the son of Arsames and the father of Darius I (Darius the Great). Ancient accounts and later inscriptions place him in the Achaemenid elite and identify him with the Old Persian name *Vištāspa*.

When he lived and key dates

Estimating from Darius's life, Hystaspes would have been active in the mid- to late-6th century BCE. Darius is usually dated as born c. 550 BCE and became king in 522 BCE; therefore Hystaspes was likely born before c. 570 BCE and flourished around 550–500 BCE. Classical sources report Hystaspes serving as a governor (satrap) in Persis and later in Parthia/Hyrcania, participating in campaigns under Cyrus and suppressing revolts early in Darius's reign (c. 521 BCE). Some traditions place his death toward the end of the 6th century or around 499 BCE in later accounts.

Offices and historical role

Herodotus and later inscriptions portray Hystaspes as a governor under Cyrus II and Cambyses II and as a senior Achaemenid noble when Darius seized the throne. He is associated with military activity (e.g., campaigns toward the eastern provinces) and with the administrative consolidation of Achaemenid rule in Persis and Parthia; his position and family connections helped secure Darius's claim to the kingship.

Distinguishing names and traditions

Be aware there are two distinct traditions that sometimes get conflated in later literature: (1) Hystaspes the Achaemenid noble (father of Darius I, 6th century BCE), and (2) *Vištāspa*/Hystaspes the legendary patron of Zoroaster in Iranian religious tradition. Classical and late antique authors sometimes blur or conflate these figures, but the historical satrap and the religious patron are not necessarily the same person in scholarly reconstructions

Hystaspes identity and dates — Hystaspes is attested as the father of Darius I and a prominent Achaemenid noble and satrap; from Darius's birth (c. 550 BCE) and Darius's accession (522 BCE) scholars place Hystaspes as active in the mid- to late-6th century BCE.

Cyrus timeline — Cyrus the Great reigned c. 559–530 BCE; Hystaspes served under Cyrus and Cambyses in Achaemenid administration, so his career overlaps the late Cyrus period and the early Achaemenid consolidation.

Implication — Historically, Hystaspes predates or is contemporary with the late-exilic/early post-exilic era traditionally associated with Daniel's life (6th century BCE)

[HYSTASPES, ORACLES OF - Encyclopaedia Iranica](#)

[\(30\) Oracles of Hystaspes: a new translation and introduction](#)