

As October 22, 1844 approached thousands of Christians from various denominations united in eager expectation of the second coming of Jesus. All this excitement was ignited by a prophecy in Daniel. After Jesus didn't return on that day, most figured that the prophecy was wrong and returned to their churches, but a handful of believers did a deeper study into the prophecy to find out where they went wrong. Upon examination, they realized that the mistake was not in the date, but the event. While the prophecy had so clearly pointed to the year 1844 that thousands of Christians were convinced, the event was misinterpreted. In turn, the movement that ended in disappointment gave birth to a new movement that has gotten much criticism for clinging to the 'failed' prophecy. But did the prophecy fail or did it really point to 1844? Did a major prophetic event occur in 1844 or was this group confused about the prophecy? Why don't you check it out for yourself?

The prophecy begins in Daniel 8. While still a prisoner in Babylon Daniel has a vision in which he sees a goat with one large horn attacking a ram with two horns. When the goat is still going strong, his large horn breaks and four notable horns grow up in its place, followed by another horn that grows out of one of the four horns and become "exceedingly great." As Daniel is contemplating the vision, a voice from heaven is heard saying, "Gabriel, make this man understand the vision" (Dan. 8:15). The angel Gabriel then comes and explains, "The ram which you saw, having the two horns—they are the kings of Media and Persia. And the male goat is the kingdom of Greece. The large horn that is between its eyes is the first king. As for the broken horn and the four that stood up in its place, four kingdoms shall arise out of that nation, but not with its power" (Dan. 8:21, 22).

From the beginning of the prophecy, there is no guessing involved. The angel tells Daniel that the ram represents Persia. The goat represents Greece. The large horn was the first king of Greece, Alexander the Great. The four horns that came up from Alexander were the four generals

which took over the kingdom when he died; Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander, and Seleucus. The horn that became greater than Greece was Rome, the kingdom that followed Greece. Then following this kingdom we are told that truth would be trampled to the ground. This took place during the middle ages of church wars and spiritual corruption. When asked how long this would continue, the angel replied, "For two thousand three hundred days; then the sanctuary shall be cleansed" (Dan. 8:14). As the angel went on to explain this part of the prophecy about the two thousand three hundred "evenings and mornings," Daniel "fainted" (Dan. 8:26, 27). When he awoke and asked others about the last part of the vision, "no one understood it" (Dan. 8:27).

Since he didn't finish his task of helping Daniel "understand the vision," Gabriel returns later to explain the last part of the vision; the part about the "two thousand three hundred days" (Dan. 8:14). In the next chapter Daniel says, "the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision in the beginning" returned and announced, "I have now come forth to give you skill to understand" (Dan. 9:22). Strangely, some refuse to connect the return of Gabriel with the earlier vision, as if the return of Gabriel to explain the vision has no connection with the previous sighting of Gabriel to make Daniel understand the vision in Daniel 8. Why don't Christians today make the connection? Simple. Because they want to sweep the embarrassment of 1844 under a rug, but in separating the two chapters, the prophecy remains unsolved to many. Of course, when we connect Daniel chapter 8 and 9, it brings perfect clarity to the prophecy. Check this out.

Gabriel returns and tells Daniel that "seventy weeks are determined for your people" (Dan. 8:24). Since Bible scholars understand that prophetic time uses a "day for each year" (Eze. 4:6), we know that the seventy weeks refer to a period of 490 years. This means, 490 years are set aside for Daniel's "people," the nation of Israel. Of course, without a starting date this would mean nothing, but Gabriel goes on to give us the

start of the prophecy, telling us that "from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty two weeks," for a total of 483, of the 490 years, leaving one prophetic week, or seven years remaining. Bible scholars recognize that the command to restore Jerusalem took place in 457 A.D., marking the beginning of the time prophecy. Since there is no year zero between B.C. and A.D., adding 483 years to 457 B.C. brings us to 27 A.D., when they would "anoint the Most Holy" (Dan. 9:24). Amazingly, that is exactly what happened. Jesus was "anointed" at His baptism in 27 A.D. (Luke 4:18), leaving seven years left for the Jewish nation.

The prophecy goes on to say, "he will confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering" (Dan. 9:27). Amazingly Jesus did confirm a "covenant" with "many" for one week, or seven prophetic years (Matt. 26:28), but in the middle of the seven years, three and a half years into His ministry, He was "cut off" on the cross, bringing an end to the sacrificial system. Jesus' death in 31 A.D. fulfilled the prophecy, leaving three and a half years left for Israel to repent before they were cut off and the gospel was sent to the "Gentiles," in 34 A.D. (Acts 9:15; 11:18).

While the seventy weeks, or 490 years end here, this was only dealing with the Jewish nation. Notice that Gabriel told Daniel that "seventy weeks are determined for your people" (Dan. 8:24). The original word for "determined" is "cut off," meaning 490 years are cut off a larger time period. What time period? The period of the earlier 2,300 year prophecy which Gabriel came back to help Daniel understand. You see, many Christians today have disconnected these two prophecies and tried to apply them to the antichrist and the rapture, while trying to hide the elephant in the room; the 2,300 days/years.

Today most denominations generally agree on the second half of the prophecy. They recognize that it starts around 457 B.C., which perfectly predicted the ministry of the Messiah in

27 A.D. and His death in 31 A.D. Still, many refuse to connect the return of Gabriel in Daniel 9 to his initial appearance in Daniel 8. Why? Because they know if they do then they must apply the same “day for each year” rule to the 2300 days and add it to 457 B.C. This would leave 1813 years remaining after the crucifixion in 31 A.D., bringing the prophecy to an end in 1844. Since they would like to avoid the embarrassment of 1844 most churches try to keep Daniel 8 and 9 separate, but it does not take a rocket scientist to see that they are part of the same prophecy, ending in 1844.

So what happened in 1844? The prophecy said at that time “the sanctuary shall be cleansed” (Dan. 8:14). While this confuses us today, Daniel knew this cleansing was a reference to the Day of Atonement when Christ would “make atonement for you, to cleanse you” (Lev. 16:30). In that year the feast took place on October 22. Jews recognize this ceremony as a symbol of the coming judgment. This makes sense, as those familiar with sanctuary feasts know each feast has a literal future fulfillment. Spring feasts were fulfilled around the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, while fall feasts are fulfilled in the latter part of history, before the return of Christ.

As the Passover marked the crucifixion, the Day of Atonement marked the start of the judgment, fulfilling the prophecy, “the hour of His judgment has come” (Rev. 14:7). Since this prophecy occurs before the “mark” of the beast, it has to take place before Jesus returns and end with the return of Christ (Rev. 14:9, 14-16). If Daniel 8 and 9 are connected, then we are living in a time of judgment and Christ is about to return. While the prophecy is unpopular, “at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come” (Hab. 2:3).

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What happened in 1844?

And what does it have to do with me today?

