

IS DANIEL 9:27 A PEACE AGREEMENT OR SOMETHING ELSE?

BY **Mondo Gonzales**



EVER SINCE 1948 and the establishment of the state of Israel, the world of prophecy has been rightfully become laser focused.

We realize that the prophecies predicting the restoration of the Jewish people would also signify that the end of the end of the age would have arrived. It is for good reason that Israel has earned the moniker, "God's prophetic time clock." Hal Lindsey published his book, *The Late Great Planet Earth* in 1970 right after the Six-Day War in which Israel regained sovereignty of the Temple Mount after 1897 years. He understood that we were living in the times of the signs.

Fifty-five years later, prophecy watchers are keeping their eyes open for signs and current events to further reveal the maturation of the coming beast system and arrival of the 70th week of Daniel. This brings with it the need to be very careful in how we interpret the Bible. Those who are seeking to understand the times often get accused of what is known as "newspaper exegesis." This accusation is often made by those who aren't prophecy watchers, but at the same time, this criticism has shown itself to sometimes be justified. We need to be careful not to allow current events to disproportionately influence our interpretation of the Bible, especially prophetic texts.

How do we know what to look for? If we get our interpretation of a biblical text incorrect, it can lead us to look in the wrong place among current events. Also, we could end up attributing meaning to a current event that actually ends up being misplaced.

I believe we are seeing some of this right now. Recently, it's been in the news that President Trump is trying really hard to bring more Middle Eastern countries into the Abrahamic Accords framework with Israel. Back in 2020, Trump secured agreements and normalization between Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan (in motion to be ratified). Now, he is looking to bring in Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, and Syria with Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994) as candidates to reaffirm their previous peace agreements with Israel under the new banner of the Abrahamic Accords.

This has led many people to write into us or make comments on social media that because Trump is seeking to bring a comprehensive peace agreement to the Middle East, they are asking if it is possible that Trump is the antichrist. Why would they think this?

It has been the traditional viewpoint that the antichrist will burst on the scene and make a peace agreement with

Israel and her surrounding neighbors. This signing of a peace agreement will be the start of the 70th week of Daniel. This idea comes primarily from Daniel 9:27 which reads, "*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate*" (KJV).

This traditional viewpoint has been around a long time and it can be difficult for people to think outside the box. This includes me. A few years ago, for fun, I began to question the accuracy of many points of eschatology. I wanted to give a fresh evaluation of various traditional viewpoints. Daniel 9:27 and the peace agreement idea was one of them. I had taught that Daniel 9:27 was a peace agreement for 25 years as this was what I learned as a young Christian. It's healthy to deconstruct theological viewpoints at times and ask whether it can fully be defended from the text itself. At that time, I was also looking at the traditional meaning of 2 Thessalonians 2:3 surrounding the debate of the word "apostasy." During my research, I came across a very well-done exegetical commentary.

The book is titled, *Daniel: Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* and is written by Hebrew scholar J. Paul Tanner (published in 2019 by Lexham Press). In this commentary, he asked a simple question about Daniel 9:27. Where in the entire context of Daniel 9 does the word "peace" appear? It does not. The word peace (Hebrew *shalom*) only appears 3x in the entire book of Daniel (4:1; 6:25; 10:19) and none of them have any connection to the covenant of Daniel 9:27.

Should this matter? Shouldn't we get our interpretation from the text of Scripture itself and not read into it? Does context matter? I hope all of us would say "YES!" From that point on I began to analyze the covenant of Daniel 9:27 within the context of the book of Daniel itself. How does Daniel use the word "covenant" and what other contextual indicators are there that can help us properly understand what Daniel was referring to? If there is no "peace agreement/covenant" in Daniel 9:27 made by the antichrist, then this understanding should certainly influence what we are looking for in the geopolitical context.

If there is no peace agreement, then anything that Trump (or another world leader) does in trying to make a comprehensive security (or peace) agreement with Israel and its neighbors has no specific prophetic fulfillment related to Daniel 9:27. It might have other prophetic ramifications (cf. Rev 6:1-4; 1 Thess 5:3?), but it is not directly related to Daniel 9:27.

Secondly, it removes the temptation to call Trump the antichrist by citing Daniel 9:27 as proof. Anyone that does this because of an association with an alleged peace agreement is misinformed and their prophetic conjectures should be ignored and rejected.

In the rest of this article, I want to share with you the data from the Bible and how we can simply let the authoritative text of Scripture speak for itself. We will also examine how arriving at a proper understanding of the covenant of Daniel 9:27 provides some interesting correlations with what Paul discusses as the “rebellion and the man of sin” in 2 Thessalonians 2:3.

UNDERSTANDING THE BACKGROUND TO DANIEL 9:27

No doubt, there are many opinions and thoughts on the entire 70th week of Daniel (9:24-27). As I was pondering this entire passage I was reminded that Jesus in the Olivet Discourse gave us the key to understand what was happening. He said, “*So, when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand, then let those in Judea flee to the mountains)*” (Matthew 24:15-16). What we find interesting in this passage is that Jesus makes a direct correlation to a historical event which is mentioned in the book of Daniel. Yet He says that this event is going to happen again in the future time of the tribulation period. The key event is what Jesus calls the abomination of desolation. This incident is mentioned specifically in the book of Daniel as Jesus said. We read, “*And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they*

shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation” (Dan 11:31; also 9:27 and 12:11).

As you can see when we compare Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15 and Daniel 11:31, there are many similarities. We see in Daniel 9:27 and 11:31 that sacrifices are stopped. In Daniel 9:27, 11:31 and Matthew 24:15 all make reference to the abomination of desolation. Combining all three of these together we recognize that the abomination of desolation occurs in the middle of the tribulation after the antichrist stops the sacrifices and offerings. This brings up the question—what was the **First Abomination of Desolation**?

- A desecration of a holy place
- First historical fulfillment is widely associated with the Greek Seleucid King, **Antiochus IV Epiphanes** (who ruled from 175 to 164 BC)
- In 167 BC, he desecrated the Second Temple in Jerusalem by stopping the Mosaic sacrifices, erecting an altar to Zeus, sacrificing a pig on it, and banning Jewish rituals (detailed in 1 Maccabees 1:21-59 and 2 Maccabees 6:1-7)
- This event led to the Maccabean Revolt
- After the altar and Temple were cleansed, the feast of Hannukah was established

This first instance of the abomination of desolation happened around 200 years before Jesus spoke His words on the Mount of Olives. The Holy Spirit said, “let the reader understand,” which should point us to a major truth. A key which unlocks the mystery so to speak. He tells us to pay attention to the historical figure of Antiochus Epiphanes. It is well known that most prophecy teachers recognize that the Antiochus Epiphanes is a type or pattern of the final antichrist. **(See the chart below comparing these 2 biblical figures)**

Similarity	Antiochus IV Epiphanes (167 BC)	Future Antichrist	Scripture References
Arrogance and Blasphemy	Exalted himself above all gods, claiming divine status.	Speaks against God, exalting himself above all that is called God. Constantly blasphemes the God of Heaven	Daniel 11:36-37; Daniel 7:25; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Rev 13:6
Desecration of the Temple	Set up an altar to Zeus, sacrificed a pig (abomination of desolation).	Will commit an abomination of desolation in a future temple. EAGER TO DESECRATE GOD's NAME	Daniel 11:31; 12:11; Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4
Persecution of God's People	Banned Jewish practices, killed those who resisted.	Will wage war against the saints during the tribulation.	Daniel 11:32-35; Daniel 7:21; Revelation 13:7
Demand for Worship	Demanded worship as “Epiphanes” (God manifest).	Will demand global worship, exalting himself as God.	Daniel 11:28-31; 2 Thessalonians 2:4; Revelation 13:4, 8
Rise Through Deception	Gained power through flattery and deceit.	Rises through deception and false miracles.	Daniel 11:21-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10; Revelation 13:14
Limited Reign of Terror	Persecution lasted ~3 years (2300 evenings/mornings).	Rules for 42 months (3.5 years) during the last half of the 7-year tribulation.	Daniel 8:14; Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5
"Little Horn" Symbolism	Seen as the “little horn” from the Greek empire.	Described as the “little horn” from the final empire.	Daniel 8:9-12; Daniel 7:8, 20-25
Opposition to God's Laws	Banned circumcision, Sabbath, and altered Jewish laws.	Will seek to change times and laws.	Daniel 11:30-31; Daniel 7:25
Supernatural Rise and Defeat	Empowered supernaturally. Died suddenly, possibly by divine judgment.	Empowered supernaturally. Defeated by Christ at His return.	Daniel 8:24; 11:45; Revelation 13:2, 4; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9; Revelation 19:20
Foreshadowing in Prophecy	Fulfills parts of Daniel's prophecies as a type.	Ultimate fulfillment as the final Antichrist.	Daniel 11:21-35; Daniel 11:36-45; Revelation 13:1-18

"The Antichrist is going to be determined to help arrange, promote, and secure the rebuilding

Antiochus Epiphanes' actions revolve around his hatred for the Jews and their devotion to the Mosaic covenant of God (Temple sacrifices, circumcision, sabbath, and other Mosaic Laws). Notice the following verses describing his antics related to the covenant of Moses:

- Daniel 11:28: "...his heart shall be moved against the holy **covenant**."
- Daniel 11:30: "...and return in rage against the holy **covenant**."
- Daniel 11:30: "...and show regard for those who forsake the holy **covenant**."
- Daniel 11:31: "...then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the **abomination of desolation**."
- Daniel 11:32: "Those who do wickedly against the **covenant** he shall corrupt with flattery..."

My approach when interpreting a text is to first look at the individual words in any passage and then make an inventory of a specific word as it is used in the rest of the book. In this case, the word "covenant" (Hebrew *b'riyt*) occurs a total of 7x in 6 verses in the book of Daniel (Dan 9:4, 27; 11:22, 28, 30-32). When you look at the six other occurrences outside of Daniel 9:27 it is apparent that the covenant in view is the Mosaic covenant that God made with the people of Israel through Moses (Exodus 24:7-8; 34:27).

It's also evident looking at the various occurrences that sometimes the word holy is attached and other times it is not. There is no overt explanation for this, but even without the word holy the clear intended meaning of covenant is to the Mosaic covenant in the various instances.

Since the word *b'riyt* references the Mosaic covenant in the rest of the book of Daniel, it is reasonable to at least begin with the possibility that the remaining occurrence in 9:27 is also a reference to the Mosaic covenant. I think when we examine the context of this verse, it becomes quite clear that it indeed is a reference to the covenant of Moses also.

Before diving into the text of 9:27, we can learn a few more characteristics of the antichrist figure when comparing the information in the chart above between Antiochus Epiphanes and the future antichrist. We learn that Antiochus was a master blasphemer; desecrated the Temple; set up the abomination; persecuted God's people and sought to disrupt and change the Mosaic covenant (Dan 8:9-14; 11:21-35). In similar fashion, the future antichrist will seek to do all these and more (Dan 7:25; 11:36-45; Rev 13; 2 Thess 2:3-10).

If this is the destiny of the future antichrist why would we be surprised that he is going to be determined to help arrange, promote, and secure the rebuilding of the Third Temple and the reinstitution of the Mosaic covenant for the Jewish people? The reason he will be very eager to help the Jewish people is because he needs it to be built so that he can perform the most blasphemous acts possible on the most sacred place in the Bible; Jerusalem and the Temple Mount itself, and the inner portion of the Temple. Jesus said the abomination of desolation would be "standing in the holy place" of the Temple (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14).

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT OF DANIEL 9:27

Before trying to seek the interpretation, let's just examine the parts of the text. The most important section of the entire verse for us is the first sentence in which you will find it has a few variations depending on the English translation you use. Of course, it is best to operate from the original Hebrew. I learned Hebrew 20 years ago and took two years of Hebrew in seminary and this passage is not overly complicated. I share that only so the readers can understand the offering of my own literal translation which will hopefully bring out some of the nuances. Nevertheless, you will see that if you look at various English translations, my summary translation will be mostly evidenced in the different English versions.

Two of the most literal translations in English are the King James Version and the New American Standard Bible. Let's focus on the first part of Daniel 9:27.

The King James reads, "*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.*"

The New American Standard Bible reads, "*And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering.*"

The New English Translation Septuagint is an English translation of the Old Testament Greek which was published in 2007. It reads, "*And the covenant will prevail for many, and it will return again and be rebuilt broad and long.*"

If I were to offer up a more literal translation, it would read, "*And he shall cause the covenant to prevail for the many for one week, and in the middle of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering.*"

The Hebrew verb for "confirm" or "make strong" or "cause to prevail" is *gabar* and is what is known in Hebrew grammar as being in the hiphil form (the causative). This specific form of this verb only occurs twice in the entire Bible. It also occurs in Psalm 12:4 which reads as follows in the KJV and ESV. "Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" (KJV). And also, "those who say, 'With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us; who is master over us?'" (ESV). Both of these render the Hebrew verb as "prevail" which fits very nicely in the flow of Daniel 9:27.

We have already discussed the occurrences of the Hebrew word for covenant in the book of Daniel above which will help put together the meaning of this verse in context.

UNDERSTANDING THE INTERPRETATION OF DANIEL 9:27

So now that we have covered some of the important textual elements in the verse, what does it mean? How should we interpret this passage? Based on the background of Antiochus Epiphanes' connection to the violation of the Mosaic covenant and its future links to the coming antichrist,

we can make some straightforward conclusions. Going back to my translation, which has other corroboration, we can understand what this text is saying.

The future antichrist is going to arrive on the scene at the end of the age. We do not know exactly what his political position will be just prior to the start of the 70th week of Daniel. He doesn't receive full unlimited tyrannical authority until the midpoint of the tribulation where the Bible says he will then rule for 42 months during the second half (Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Rev 13:5).

Daniel writes, ***"And he shall cause the covenant to prevail for the many for one week, and in the middle of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering."***

So, this brings up the question we brought up at the beginning of this article. What exactly is the covenant? Is it the Mosaic covenant which is caused to prevail or is a comprehensive peace agreement between Israel and other nations which is caused to prevail (strengthened)? As I said at the start, the traditional interpretation is that it is a peace agreement.

Two details stand out against this viewpoint. The first is what we have already discussed. The word "covenant" in the book of Daniel always refers to the sacred Mosaic covenant of Daniel's day. It seems out of place that Daniel would suddenly use this word to refer to an external "peace" agreement involving the antichrist with Israel and others.

Historically speaking we know that Israel as a nation was kicked out of the land of Israel in 70 AD and finally in 135 AD. They roamed the nations of the world until 1948 when the state of Israel was established. Yet we also know that it was not established as a theocratic nation with the Mosaic covenant and the Temple services at the forefront. In fact, it was established predominately by secular atheists/agnostics. This is why there was and still is some resistance by orthodox religious Jews to the establishment of the state of Israel. If they had their way, they would immediately reestablish the Mosaic covenant (Torah) throughout the land and also rapidly rebuild the Temple. When the false messiah (antichrist) comes on the scene and is in a position to "cause the covenant to prevail for the many for one week" he will be received with open arms.

The second detail, which stands against Daniel 9:27 as a peace agreement, is the context of the entire chapter. Paul Tanner in his excellent Daniel commentary writes,

"The problem with this view is that there is nothing in the context to support the idea that a peace treaty or covenant of protection is in view, nor is this thesis taught elsewhere in Scripture. Yet the context of Dan 9:27 does support an alternative view. The fact that he eventually 'puts an end to sacrifice and offering' suggests that this covenant has something to do with the ancient Mosaic law. If the antichrist's purpose is to masquerade and deceive the Jewish people into thinking he is the real Messiah, then it makes sense that this covenant in Dan 9:27 is related to the Mosaic law. In light of the contextual clue about 'sacrifice and offering,' the words 'make

a covenant' are best understood to mean that the antichrist will pose as a false messiah who dupes Israel (at least initially) and causes the Mosaic covenant to prevail in the land (i.e., he enforces it). Actually, the expectation in orthodox Jewish eschatology is that Messiah will uphold the Mosaic law and usher in an age of righteousness" (p. 592).

Chabad is one of the largest orthodox Jewish groups in the world. According to their website about "what is the Jewish belief about the Messiah?" They write:

"Moshiach will first rebuild the Temple and then gather in the exiles. Jerusalem and the Temple will be the focus of divine worship, and 'from Zion shall go forth Torah, and the word of the L-rd from Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin—the supreme Jewish law court of 71 sages—will be re-established and will decide on all matters of law. At this time, all Jews will return to full Torah observance and practice.'"

According to the Jewfaq.org website, their expectations of the Messiah are similar:

- The Messiah will bring about the political and spiritual redemption of the Jewish people by bringing us back to Israel and restoring Jerusalem (Isaiah 11:11-12; Jeremiah 23:8; 30:3; Hosea 3:4-5).
- He will establish a government in Israel that will be the center of all world government, both for Jews and gentiles (Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:10; 42:1).
- He will **rebuild the Temple and re-establish its worship** (Jeremiah 33:18).
- He will restore the religious court system of Israel and **establish Jewish law as the law of the land** (Jer. 33:15).

It is quite evident that when the false messiah appears and causes the Mosaic covenant to prevail in the land of Israel, the religious Jewish people will accept it wholeheartedly.

These details align very nicely with the idea that Daniel 9:27 refers to the establishment of the covenant of Moses (Torah) and not a peace covenant. Those that think it might be a comprehensive peace agreement often appeal to the phrase, "the many" in 9:27 as a peace covenant not with Israel directly but with surrounding nations. According to this view, the antichrist is going to come in strong and establish a peace covenant with the many surrounding enemy nations and allow Israel to rebuild their Temple. This sounds attractive and has been the traditional idea, but it lacks contextual support as we have already demonstrated.

Secondly, the phrase "the many" or "with many" is interesting also. The phrase in Hebrew reads, *"la'rabiym,"* and this exact phrase occurs in Daniel 11:33 referring to the Jewish people, not other nations. The *"la"* on the front is a preposition meaning "for the" and when connected with *"rabiym"* means "for the many" or interpreted "for the Jews." This agrees with 11:33 and also makes great sense that the antichrist will cause the Mosaic covenant to prevail **for the Jewish people** which had been absent for centuries as they lived outside the land. As I noted, the current religious orthodox Jews are super eager to reestablish the

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law of Moses throughout the land of Israel. Right now, there are very few covenantal elements that are mandatory in the land. The rabbis desire full compliance to the Mosaic system, including the Temple services and sacrifices.

Some people who have held to the peace agreement idea try to connect Daniel 9:27 to 1 Thessalonians 5:4 which reads, "While people are saying, 'There is peace and security,' then sudden destruction will come upon them as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and they will not escape." They will take the word peace from this passage and then connect it to Daniel 9:27. Obviously, Paul describes that at the beginning of the day of the Lord many people who are unaware will be caught by the sudden arrival and destructive stages of the day of the Lord. This is in complete agreement with what Jesus described in Luke 17:22-37 in comparing the days of Noah and Lot with the days of the Son of Man. People will be living in a relatively normal phase of casual living being unaware that once the rescue takes place (the rapture), then destruction will arrive.

Instead of inherently tying this to Daniel 9:27 where the word "peace" does not appear, there is another place where indeed we are told there will be "peace" before destruction. And that is found in Revelation 6:1-4. The first rider on the white horse is generally considered to be the beginnings of the arrival of the antichrist system, not necessarily the person of the antichrist (even though there is some obvious connection). We know that the antichrist is involved in the beginning of the 70th week of Daniel from Daniel 9:27 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

What we are not told is the gap of time between the opening of the first seal (white horse) and the second seal (red horse). Revelation 6:4 reads, "And out came another horse, bright red. Its rider was permitted to **take peace from the earth**, so that people should slay one another, and he was given a great sword." Note that we do have in this context peace being specifically mentioned, followed by a ¼ of the earth being killed by the 4 plagues.

So, Paul's description of peace and safety followed by sudden destruction as evidence of the start of the day of the Lord fits very well with Revelation 6:1-4 (compare with 1 Thess 5:2-3). The gap of time between the riding of the first horseman and the second could be right on top of one another. Another angle that helps contribute to the understanding of Daniel 9:27, to some degree, is pondering the question of the ethnic heritage of the coming antichrist. We will now discuss briefly this debate.

IS THE ANTICHRIST JEWISH OR A GENTILE?

This topic initiates much discussion in the prophecy world. There are many who think that the antichrist will be Jewish. The main reasons are that it seems inconceivable that the Jews would accept or receive someone as Messiah who is not Jewish. John in his gospel wrote that Jesus revealed His Messiahship to the woman at the well (John 4:26). In the very next chapter, John writes in which Jesus said, "I have come in my Father's name and you do not receive Me [as Messiah], if another comes in his own name, you will receive him [as Messiah]."

Jesus speaks in classic Hebrew parallelism in this verse. It is quite reasonable that the rejection that Jesus mentions is in regard to His Messiahship. In the next phrase, the acceptance by the Jews of someone else is also in regard to that person's Messianic claim. Therefore, since the Jews will receive someone (antichrist) as Messiah, it is unlikely that he would be a Gentile.

Another interesting nugget of information comes from the book of Daniel describing the person of the future antichrist. Daniel 11:37 reads in the KJV, "**Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all.**" This phrase is very important. Most English versions read, "gods of his fathers" conveying that the antichrist will not follow the pagan gods of his fathers. However, the KJV doesn't translate it this way (nor the NKJV). They both translate as a singular, "God of his fathers" which provides a connection to the Jewish heritage of the antichrist. Ultimately, what does the Hebrew text read?

Hebrew can be tricky in that the word *Elohim* is technically a grammatically plural word (*gods*), but it almost always the word used for Yahweh God. This is very well known in Hebrew studies. However, it is not simply just the word *Elohim* which occurs here. It is a very specific phrase.

Paul Tanner, a Hebrew scholar examines all the places this phrase, "God of his fathers" from Daniel 11:37 appears in the Old Testament. He writes,

"This is a common expression in the OT (used at least forty-five times) that is **always** for Yahweh God of the Bible. The expression of (*ʾēlōhē ʾābōtāyw*), 'the God of his fathers' appears 45× in the OT: Exod 3:13, 15, 16; 4:5; Deut 1:11, 21; 4:1; 6:3; 12:1; 26:7; 27:3; 29:24; Josh 18:3; Judg 2:12; 2 Kgs 21:22; Dan 11:37; Ezra 7:27; 8:28; 10:11; 1 Chr 5:25; 12:18; 29:20; 2 Chr 7:22; 11:16; 13:12, 18; 14:3; 15:12; 19:4; 20:6, 33; 21:10; 24:18, 24; 28:6, 9, 25; 29:5; 30:7, 19, 22; 33:12; 34:32, 33; 36:15. In addition, we find 'the God of his father (sg.)' (*ʾlōhē ʾābīw*) three times: Gen 46:1; 2 Chr 17:4; 34:3; and 'the God of your father' (*ʾlōhē ʾābīkā*) four times: Gen 46:3; 50:17; Exod 3:6; 1 Chr 28:9. Cf. Gen 32:9 ('the God of my father'). The expression also occurs in the New Testament for the God

and live or be born in a non-Israel location and still have Jewish ethnic heritage."

of the Bible: Acts 3:13; 5:30; 7:32; 22:14; and 24:14" (p. 699).

Notice clearly what Tanner discovered. This phrase in Daniel 11:37 always refers to the Yahweh God of the Bible in all other 45 instances! One perfect equivalent to Daniel 11:37 is found in 2 Kings 21:22 where it discusses the wickedness of king Amon and says, "he forsook the LORD God of his fathers (*'ēlōhē 'āḥōtāyw*)." This is the exact same phrasing referring to the antichrist in Dan 11:37. Clearly, Amon was a wicked ethnic Jewish king who forsook Yahweh and embraced pagan religious ideals. The antichrist will be just like this.

However, other godly prophecy teachers see the antichrist as being a Gentile ruler. There are several compelling biblical reasons for seeing the antichrist as a Gentile. The antichrist emerges from the sea, which many interpret as symbolizing Gentile nations in Revelation 13:1; the Greek, Antiochus Epiphanes, as a Gentile type of the antichrist. The "Times of the Gentiles" implies Gentile dominion as found in Luke 21:24. The "Prince Who Is to Come" from Roman (Gentile) Descent in Daniel 9:26-27. The little horn of the Roman Empire in Daniel 7:24 implies Roman Gentile descent.

Tanner responds to this last point by saying, "Yet even if someone insists the antichrist must be in some way 'Roman' because of Dan 7:24, that still does not prove he is a Gentile. He could be ethnically Jewish and yet politically part of the revived Roman Empire of the future. Finally, one should observe that the New Testament never asserts that the antichrist will be a Gentile, which should elicit an ounce of caution. Gleason Archer admits that the antichrist's connection with the ancient Roman Empire still leaves latitude for his place of origin: 'the historical Roman Empire was mainly centered around the Mediterranean, with its capital in Italy, and so there is a good possibility that 'the ruler who will come' will be from Europe rather than from the Near East.'"

I've long considered that the antichrist could be the leader of the Revived Roman Empire and live or be born in a non-Israel location and still have Jewish ethnic heritage. In this regard, both groups are correct. Those that see in Scripture a Jewish false Messiah and also others who see in Scripture a Gentile type connection.

This is not unprecedented. Let me give you a biblical example. Paul the Apostle was clearly an ethnic Jew (Acts 22:3) and a Hebrew from the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5). At the same time, we know that he was a Roman citizen born in Tarsus. The biblical evidence for Paul's Roman citizenship is primarily found in Acts 16:37-38, Acts 22:25-29, and Acts 23:27, with the clearest statement in Acts 22:27-28, where Paul declares he was born a Roman citizen.

We read, "So the tribune came and said to him, 'Tell me,

are you a Roman citizen?' And Paul said, 'Yes.' The tribune answered, 'I bought this citizenship for a large sum.' Paul said, 'But I am a citizen by birth.'"

Additionally, there were over 10 Roman emperors who were not ethnic Romans or Italians.

Here are some notable examples:

❶ **Trajan (r. 98–117 CE)**: Born in Italica (modern-day Spain), Trajan was the first Roman emperor of non-Italian origin. He was of Hispanic descent and is considered one of Rome's greatest emperors.

❷ **Hadrian (r. 117–138 CE)**: Also born in Italica, Spain, Hadrian was Trajan's successor and is known for his extensive travels and the construction of Hadrian's Wall in the north of Britain.

❸ **Septimius Severus (r. 193–211 CE)**: Born in Leptis Magna (modern-day Libya), Severus was of Punic (North African) descent and founded the Severan dynasty.

❹ **Caracalla (r. 211–217 CE)**: Son of Septimius Severus, born in Lugdunum (modern-day Lyon, France), though his family was of North African origin.

❺ **Elagabalus (r. 218–222 CE)** and **Severus Alexander (r. 222–235 CE)**: Both were part of the Severan dynasty and born in Syria, reflecting the empire's eastern influences.

❻ **Philip the Arab (r. 244–249 CE)**: Born in Arabia Petraea (modern-day Jordan), Philip was one of the first emperors from the eastern provinces.

❼ **Diocletian (r. 284–305 CE)**: Born in Dalmatia (modern-day Croatia), Diocletian was of Illyrian descent and is known for his administrative reforms.

❽ **Constantine the Great (r. 306–337 CE)**: Born in Naissus (modern-day Niš, Serbia), Constantine was of Illyrian origin and famous for legalizing Christianity.

❾ **Justinian I (r. 527–565 CE)**: Born in Tauresium (modern-day North Macedonia), Justinian, an Eastern Roman (Byzantine) emperor, was of Illyrian or Thracian descent.

If we allow the Bible to speak and examine the history of the Roman Empire, it is not a problem to see that the future antichrist could indeed be politically "Roman" and yet have a different ethnic background by birth. I suspect that he will have his political alliances, but yet appeal to the religious orthodox Jews by being able to claim that indeed he has a Jewish ethnic background.

CONCLUSION

We have examined the various evidence that the covenant of Daniel 9:27 is not a peace agreement, but instead a reference to the Mosaic covenant. The 70th

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week of Daniel and the Day of the Lord begins when the antichrist uses his political influence to cause the covenant of Moses to prevail for the Jewish people. They will receive him as a messianic figure (John 5:43).

From this day forward, they will begin to rebuild their Temple, start Temple services and sacrifices in Jerusalem and see the Torah be established throughout the land of Israel.

The antichrist has a desire to see this in order to make his move to blaspheme the God of heaven similar to his predecessor Antiochus Epiphanes. We know the antichrist stops the sacrifices and sits in the Temple of God and desecrates this holy place through the abomination of desolation (Matthew 24:15). He blasphemes the God of heaven by declaring himself to be God in the very place where the previous holy Temples existed. The antichrist has a great desire to blaspheme God from this very holy spot. In order to make this happen, he knows that he needs to deceive the Jewish leadership and help them start the path to rebuilding their Jewish Temple.

This coincides very nicely with the start of the day of the Lord as beginning with the Jewish rebellion and revealing of the man of sin as referenced in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. Paul writes that the first events, which start the day of the Lord, are a rebellion, which is connected with the man of sin being revealed. When the antichrist comes on the scene, in addition to deceiving the Jews and reinstituting the Mosaic covenant, he also has one certain stipulation. 1 John 2:22 reads, "*Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Messiah? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.*" When the religious Jews are offered to receive the antichrist as their Messiah, they will be formally rejecting the Messiahship of



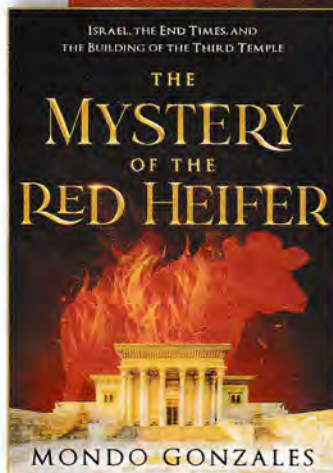
Jesus. This is outright rebellion against the Lord Jesus and His claims to being the Messiah of Israel. It will not be an accident. It will be a repeat of what happened in the first century when the Jewish religious leadership rejected the Messiahship of Jesus (cf. John 5:43).

One final comment. As I was finishing up this article, I received a call from Adam Eliyahu Berkowitz from Israel. He writes for Israel365news.com and has been covering the various developments for preparations for the Third Temple and the red heifer. He said it is official that all five red heifers which were brought over from Texas on September 15, 2022, have been formally disqualified by the Temple Institute. However, this does not mean that the search is over. In fact, it is the opposite. They are going to take these remaining heifers and incorporate them into the Israeli red heifer breeding program. God's timing is perfect and every day things are changing in Israel. He and I also discussed the fact that for the first time in centuries, Israelis are praying and singing and dancing on the Temple Mount with the protection of the police. The status quo of the Temple is changing constantly. The mood in Israel even among the secular Israelis is shifting more towards a positive embracing for the rebuilding of the Third Temple. Maranatha! **PW**

BOOK
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