

An Incredible Prophetic Reminder

Many Christians are unaware of the detailed prophecy given by the angel Gabriel in Daniel 9:24-27. However, it was a scripture well known by most religious Jews during the first decades of the first century A.D. The prophecy describes in mathematical precision when Messiah was expected to appear. Because of this prophecy, there was a widespread expectation for the Messiah to appear among men within the lifetime of Jesus Christ. This was the prevalent belief at the very time Christ was born. Luke's Gospel spoke of a just and devout elderly man by the name of Simeon, who practically lived at the Temple "waiting for the consolation of Israel" a term pointing to the coming of the Messiah. An aged woman named Anna, a prophet, who, like Simeon, spent her time at the Temple in prayer, waiting for the visitation of the Messiah, is also mentioned. After seeing the baby Jesus, she witnessed to many people who were also anticipating the coming of the Messiah. Furthermore, when Persian magi arrived in Jerusalem looking for the Messiah (they, too, were privy to the writings of Daniel) Herod's scholars knew exactly what they were referring to because they understood (although they didn't believe themselves) the widespread expectation among the people at the time.

There is a very interesting comment made by a Rabbi Malbim in a Jewish commentary entitled *Mayenei HaYeshuah* which stated that if the Jews would have repented during the 490 year period in Gabriel's prophecy, the Messiah would have come at its consummation, just as predicted. The great Jewish scholar Nacmonides (A.D. 1300) agreed with Malbim's statement. Another well known Rabbi, Moses Abraham Levi wrote, concerning Gabriel's prophecy in Daniel 9,

"I have examined and searched all the holy scriptures and have not found the time for the coming of the Messiah clearly fixed, except in the words of Gabriel to the prophet Daniel, which are written in the 9th chapter of the prophecy of Daniel."

The Essenes at Qumran taught that their generation would witness the fulfillment of Gabriel's prophecy of the coming Messiah in their lifetime.

The greatest of all Jewish commentators and scholar of the Middle Ages, Moses Maimonides (A.D. 1200), made a startling admission. He acknowledged that the prophecy in Daniel 9 predicted the coming of the Messiah precisely during the first quarter of the first century, A.D., the very time when Jesus Christ lived and claimed that he was the Messiah. He also acknowledged that this conclusion was so dangerous that Jewish religious leaders actually censored the reading of the ninth chapter of Daniel to prevent the Jews from considering the possibility of the authenticity of Jesus' claims.

During the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 A.D., all the genealogical records so necessary to prove and validate the claims the coming Messiah were forever destroyed. Rabbinical writings afterward began to lament

that the period earmarked by Daniel 9 had come and gone, making any future expectation of the Messiah futile, since any claims to the title could no longer be verified. If the Messiah was to come, he would have had to do so exactly at the time when Jesus Christ walked the shores of Galilee. There is no need to look for another, Christ is born! Christ has risen! Christ will come again! Even so, Lord Jesus, Come quickly.