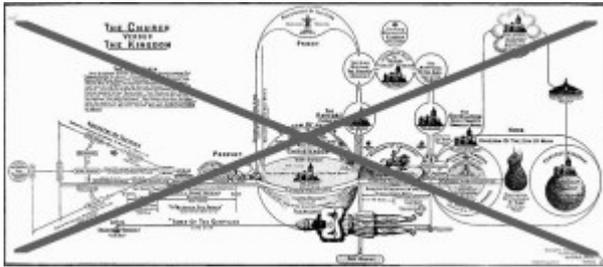


# Dispensationalism and Its Influence on Eschatology



My new friends from 2014 have often used the theological term “dispensationalism” in their conversations with me but until recently the meaning of this word has been nebulous in my mind. I think it most Christians today don’t know what it means either even though they believe the doctrines that sprang from it.

Below is text edited from <http://regal-network.com/dispensationalism/>

Dispensationalism is a method of Bible interpretation which was first devised by John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), and later formulated by the controversial American Cyrus I. Scofield (1843-1921), and is also known as Pre-millennial Dispensationalism. Although Darby was not the first person to suggest such a theory, he was, however, the first to develop it as a system of Bible interpretation and is, therefore, regarded as the Father of Dispensationalism.”

The origin of this theory can be traced to **three Jesuit priests;**

(1) Francisco **Ribera** (1537-1591),

(2) Cardinal Robert **Bellarmino** (1542-1621) one of the best known Jesuit apologists, who promoted similar theories to Ribera in his published work between 1581 and 1593 entitled Polemic Lectures Concerning the Disputed Points of the Christian Belief Against the Heretics of This Time,

(3) Manuel **Lacunza** (1731–1801).

The writings of Ribera and Bellarmine, which contain the precedence upon which the theory of Dispensationalism is founded, **were originally written to counteract the Protestant reformers’ interpretation of the Book of the Revelation which, according to the reformers, exposed the Pope as Antichrist and the Roman Catholic Church as the whore of Babylon.**” (Quoted from <http://regal-network.com/dispensationalism/> )

The doctrine of dispensationalism makes a distinction between Israel and the Church. It stresses a literal fulfillment of Old Testament promises to Israel.

The notion that God has one plan for “ethnic Jews” and another plan for the

Church was utterly rejected by the “Prince of Preachers” Charles Spurgeon.

Distinctions have been drawn by certain exceedingly wise men (measured by their own estimate of themselves), between the people of God who lived before the coming of Christ, and those who lived afterwards. We have even heard it asserted that those who lived before the coming of Christ do not belong to the church of God! We never know what we shall hear next, and perhaps it is a mercy that these absurdities are revealed at one time, in order that we may be able to endure their stupidity without dying of amazement. Why, every child of God in every place stands on the same footing; the Lord has not some children best beloved, some second-rate offspring, and others whom he hardly cares about. These who saw Christ’s day before it came, had a great difference as to what they knew, and perhaps in the same measure a difference as to what they enjoyed while on earth meditating upon Christ; but they were all washed in the same blood, all redeemed with the same ransom price, and made members of the same body. Israel in the covenant of grace is not natural Israel, but all believers in all ages. Before the first advent, all the types and shadows all pointed one way –they pointed to Christ, and to him all the saints looked with hope. **Those who lived before Christ were not saved with a different salvation to that which shall come to us.** They exercised faith as we must; that faith struggled as ours struggles, and that faith obtained its reward as ours shall. Charles H. Spurgeon, “Jesus Christ Immutable,” in The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit

Once you understand how the doctrine of dispensationalism originated, you will hopefully reject all the false doctrines that spring from it. These false doctrines include:

- A distinction between the Church and ethnic Israel.
- The Antichrist is a single individual in the Endtime, and will probably be a Jew.
- The Antichrist sets up a final world government and one world religion during his rule on earth which is from 7 years just before the return of Christ.
- The Antichrist makes a 7 year peace pact with the Jews which allows them to rebuild the Temple of Solomon.
- There will be a secret rapture of the Saints just before the start of the Great Tribulation which is starts 3.5 years into the Antichrist’s reign.

My friends, these doctrines all sprang from the Roman Catholic Church! The Vatican wants you to think the Antichrist will be a Jew because then you will not think of the Pope as the biblical Antichrist – which is what the early Protestant reformers used to think. The doctrine of a final 7 year reign of the Antichrist is based on a false interpretation of Daniel 9:27. That false

interpretation is also the bases of the 7 year peace pact doctrine with the Jews and the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon.

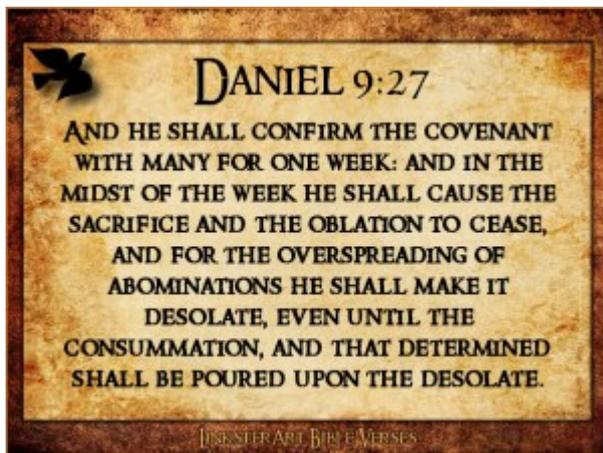
I have written extensively about [Daniel 9:27 and its true interpretation on this website](#).

For more study, please see:

<http://www.theologicalstudies.org/resource-library/dispensationalism/421-what-is-dispensationalism>

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## [What John Nelson Darby Taught About Daniel 9 vs. Prominent Bible Commentators](#)



John Nelson Darby.

John Nelson Darby (18 November 1800 – 29 April 1882) was an Anglo-Irish Bible teacher, one of the influential figures among the original Plymouth Brethren and the founder of the Exclusive Brethren. He is considered to be the father of modern Dispensationalism and Futurism (“the Rapture” in the English vernacular). (Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Nelson\\_Darby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Nelson_Darby))

The correct interpretation of Daniel chapter 9 and especially verse 27 is extremely important because it is the ‘linchpin’ of all Bible prophecy and determines whether you have either a futurism interpretation or a historicist interpretation of Endtime Bible prophecy. This article proves from Darby’s own words he had a futurism interpretation of Daniel 9:27 which was contrary to the standard historicist interpretation of his contemporaries and those before him. In other words, Protestants before Darby did NOT interpret Daniel 9:27 the way he did. They held to the historicist view. And what is the

historist view of Daniel 9:27? It's a Messianic prophecy, a prophecy already fulfilled by Jesus Christ! It's *not* a futurist prophecy to be fulfilled by an Endtime Antichrist!



All Bible Scriptures quoted in this article are from the King James Version. All emphasis in *italics* or **bold** are mine.

### Quotes from John Darby's Synopsis of Daniel 9 taken from [christianity.com](http://christianity.com)

The prince that shall come confirms a covenant with the mass of the Jews. (The form of the word *many* indicates the mass of the people). This is the first thing that characterises the week; **the Jews form an alliance with the head, at that day, of the people who had formerly overthrown their city and their sanctuary.** They form an **alliance** with the head of the Roman Empire.

Darby is referring to the covenant of Daniel 9:27. Notice how he refers to the covenant as an *alliance*? And Darby calls the "prince" of Daniel 9 the head of the Roman Empire though faithful men of God taught the prince is the Messiah. This is not reading what the Word says, but adding one's subjective thoughts to the Word.

But there remained one week yet unaccomplished with this faithless and perverse, but yet beloved, race, before their iniquity should be pardoned, and everlasting righteousness brought in, and the vision and the prophecy closed by their fulfilment. This week should be distinguished by a covenant which the prince or leader would make with the Jewish people (with the exception of the remnant), and then by the compulsory cessation of their worship through the intervention of this prince.

Again Darby uses the indefinite article for covenant though the popular Bible of his time, the KJV, uses the definite article, *the* covenant. And Darby does not clarify the "prince or leader" he is referring to is in fact Jesus Christ! He is referring to an unknown man in the future which most evangelicals today interpret as the Antichrist. That is why Darby is called the father of Futurism. My friends, this is not how Protestants used to interpret Daniel 9:27.

What the passage tells us is this: first, the prince, **the head that is of the Roman empire**, in the latter days makes a covenant referring to one whole week;

Darby again is referring to someone in the future, "in the latter days" and

again says "a covenant". As you will see in this article, Protestants before him knew exactly what the covenant was and why the KJV version of the Bible in Daniel 9 uses the definite article, "the covenant", and not just in verse 27, but before it in verse 4! Darby does *not* make the connection of the covenant of verse 4 being the same as the covenant of verse 27! And why? It would prove his interpretation of a future prince making an alliance with the Jews to be false!

### **What John Calvin has to say:**

Christ took upon him the character of a leader, or assumed the kingly office, when he promulgated the grace of God. This is the confirmation of the covenant of which the angel now speaks. As we have already stated, the legal expiation of other ritual ceremonies which God designed to confer on the fathers is contrasted with the blessings derived from Christ; and we now gather the same idea from the phrase, the confirmation of the covenant. We know how sure and stable was God's covenant under the law; he was from the beginning always truthful, and faithful, and consistent with himself. But as far as man was concerned, the covenant of the law was weak, as we learn from Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 31:31, 32.) I will enter into a new covenant with you, says he; not such as I made with your fathers, for they made it vain. We here observe the difference between the covenant which Christ sanctioned by his death and that of the Jewish law. Thus God's covenant is established with us, because we have been once reconciled by the death of Christ; and at the same time the effect of the Holy Spirit is added, because God inscribes the law upon our hearts; and thus his covenant is not engraven in stones, but in our hearts of flesh, according to the teaching of the Prophet Ezekiel. (Ezekiel 11:19.) Now, therefore, we understand why the angel says, Christ should confirm the covenant for one week, and why that week was placed last in order. In this week will he confirm the covenant with many.

You can see John Calvin believed the covenant had to do with the grace of God, not some Endtime treaty an Antichrist will make.

### **Geneva Bible Commentary**

And he (a) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: By the preaching of the Gospel he affirmed his promise, first to the Jews, and after to the Gentiles.

You can see the Geneva Bible says it is Christ who confirms the covenant, and it has to do with the preaching of the Gospel.

### **Matthew Henry**

He is called Messiah (Dan. 9:25, 26), which signifies Christ-Anointed (John 1:41), because he received the unction both for himself and for all that are his. [5.] In order to all this the Messiah must be cut off, must die a violent death, and so be cut off from the land of the living, as was foretold, Isa. 53:8. Hence, when Paul preaches the death of Christ, he says that he preached nothing but what the prophet said should come, 26:22, 23. And thus it behoved Christ to suffer. He must be cut off, but not for himself—not for any sin of his own, but, as Caiaphas prophesied, he must die for the people, in our stead and for our good,—not for any advantage of his own (the glory he purchased for himself was no more than the glory he had before, John 17:4, 5); no; it was to atone for our sins, and to purchase life for us, that he was cut off. [6.] He must confirm the covenant with many. He shall introduce a new covenant between God and man, a covenant of grace, since it had become impossible for us to be saved by a covenant of innocence. This covenant he shall confirm by his doctrine and miracles, by his death and resurrection, by the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, which are the seals of the New Testament, assuring us that God is willing to accept us upon gospel-terms. His death made his testament of force, and enabled us to claim what is bequeathed by it. He confirmed it to the many, to the common people; the poor were evangelized, when the rulers and Pharisees believed not on him. Or, he confirmed it with many, with the Gentile world. He causes all the peace-offerings to cease when he has made peace by the blood of his cross, and by it confirmed the covenant of peace and reconciliation.

### Matthew Henry's comment about the Prince of the Covenant

It is here foretold that the people of the prince that shall come shall be the instruments of this destruction, that is, the Roman armies, belonging to a monarchy yet to come (**Christ is the prince that shall come**, and they are employed by him in this service; they are his armies, Matt. 22:7), or **the Gentiles (who, though now strangers, shall become the people of the Messiah) shall destroy the Jews.**

Notice that Matthew Henry puts the prophecy of Daniel 9:27 in the past while John Darby puts it in the future? John Darby is the author of *futurism*, which is interpreting Bible prophecies having a future fulfillment. Before Darby Protestant theologians interpreted Christ fulfilling Daniel 9:27. They didn't look at prophecy as God telling us the future, but as God showing how His Word was fulfilled in the past which gives glory to God and verifies the Scriptures as the very Word of God! Did Jesus' disciples know when and how the Temple of Solomon was to be destroyed? I submit to you they did not. They only recognized the prophecy *after* it was fulfilled, not before.

Verily I say unto you, **This generation** shall not pass, till all these things

be fulfilled.- Matthew 24:34

What generation was Jesus referring to? My generation? My children's generation? No! The generation of the people He was speaking to! His disciples of 30 A.D.! Most of them lived 40 more years and saw the fulfillment of the prophecies of Matthew 24.

Reading Darby is an exercise of my mental faculties. He is not nearly as clear as John Calvin or Matthew Henry. And his interpretation of prophecy is clearly an *eisegesis* which means "to lead into" – the interpreter injects his own ideas into the text, making it mean whatever he wants. Compare that to Matthew Henry and John Calvin and others who interpreted using *exegesis* which means "lead out of" or letting the Bible speak for itself without speculating. A good exegesis of what the covenant of Daniel 9:27 is found in verse 4 of the same chapter:

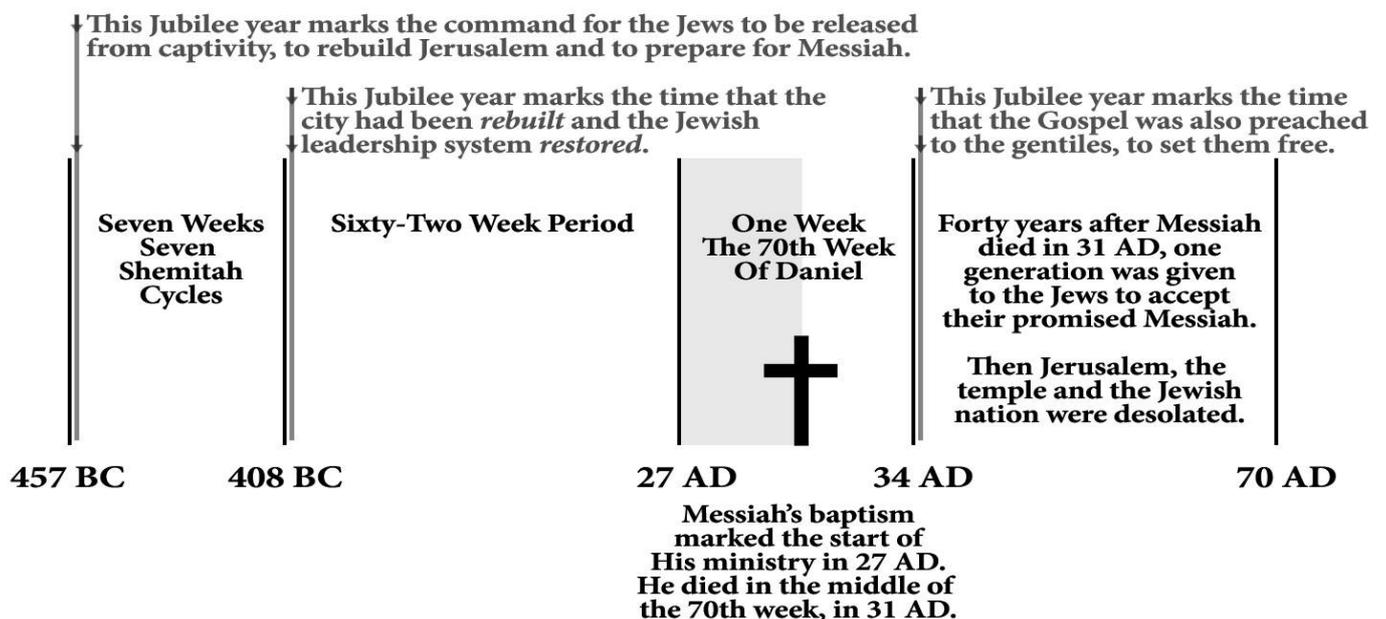
And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping **the covenant** and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; – Daniel 9:4

Where did Darby get his inspiration from? I highly suspect he was influenced by writings of a Jesuit priest for Darby's interpretation of Daniel 9 is what [Jesuit Ribera taught in 1585.](#)

Any comments about this article are appreciated. (As long as you agree with me. :))

## The Timeline of Daniel 9:24-27 Illustrated

Ten Shemitah cycles of forty-nine years, make up the 490-year prophecy. It starts with the Jewish captives being released from captivity, and it ends with the gentiles being released from their spiritual captivity.



This meme is courtesy of David Nikao Wilcoxson [70thweekofdaniel.com](http://70thweekofdaniel.com)