

# Thy Kingdom Come . . .

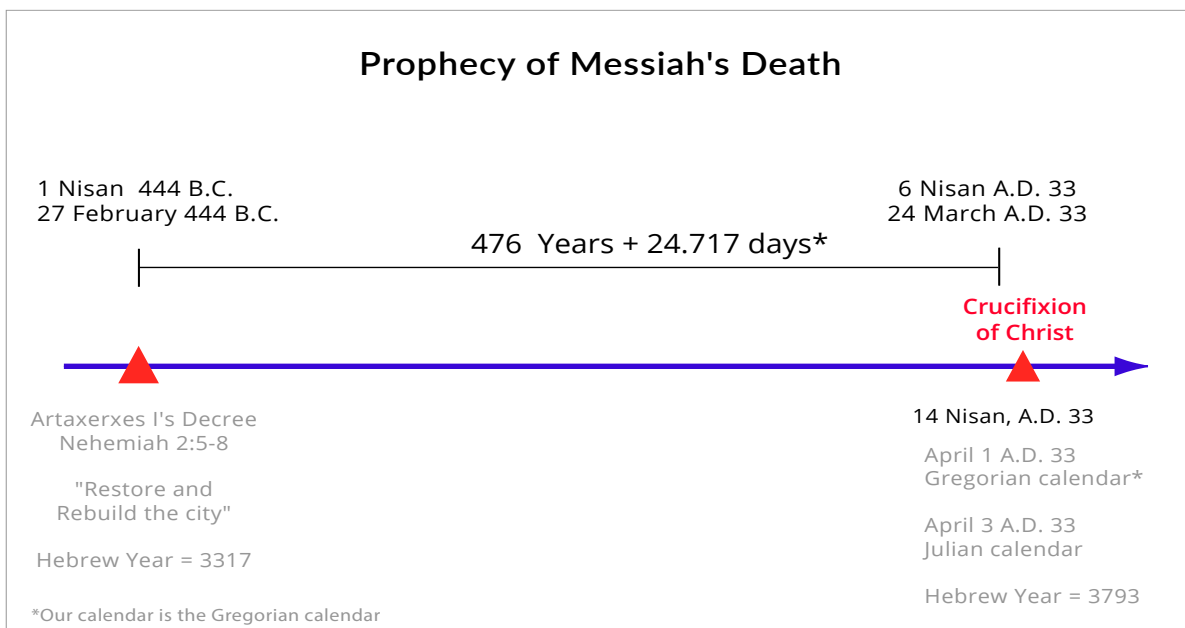
**T**HE MINISTER'S LITTLE DAUGHTER was sent to bed with a stomach ache and missed her usual story time with her daddy. A few minutes later she appeared at the top of the stairs and called to her mother, "Mama, let me talk with Daddy." "No dear, not tonight. Get back to bed." "Please, Mama." "I said no and that is final." "Mother, I am a very sick woman and I must see my pastor at once!" What a surprising comment from a little child. Her mother never expected it. So is life when I become sick. There are so many things we do not expect. I often joke that we need to go to our calendars and plan our illnesses, tragedies, and disappointments. The weather is not predictable, nor is my memory. The radio, the plumbing or the camera never warn you in advance that they are going to stop working. It is always a surprise when they stop, just like the little girl's comment. There are surprises in the Bible too! When John the Baptist and Jesus Christ came preaching, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" some Jews were surprised. Daniel's vision has a surprise for us too!

**THE VISION.** So far in our study of the book of Daniel, we have discovered that the prophet was given a vision about the future. Apparently, he had asked for an explanation and so God sent the angel Gabriel to help him understand the meaning of the vision.

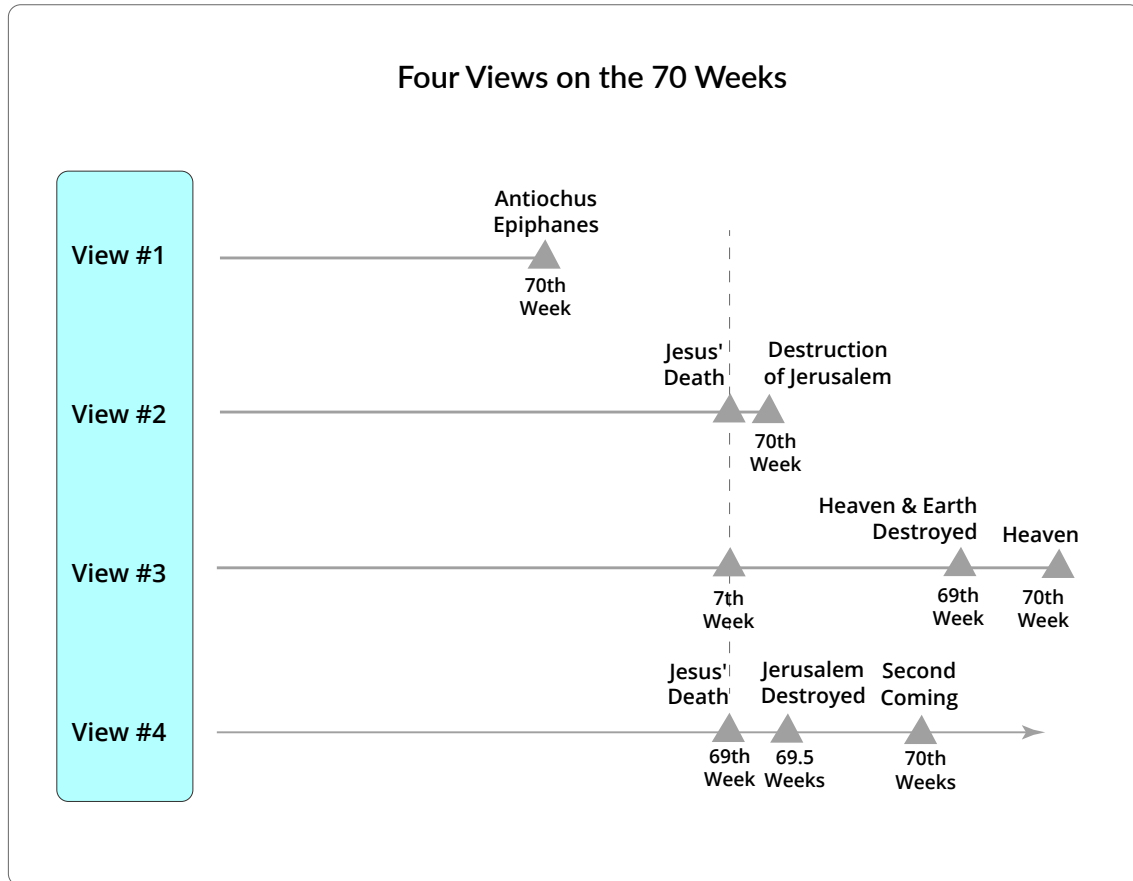
... while I was still speaking in prayer ... Gabriel ... came to me ... and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding ... of the vision. Daniel 9:21-23 (NASB)

It should not be surprising that Daniel did not know how to interpret this vision. God had always helped Daniel. Do you know someone who claims to be able to interpret dreams? If so, it is important to remember that Daniel never claimed to be able to do that. He always went away, asked God for help, returned, gave God glory, and then gave the interpretation. Once again God will give him the understanding he is seeking.

Sometimes we forget that these Old Testament saints did NOT have supernatural powers. We forget they were



## Four Views on the 70 Weeks



God-honoring and their unusual abilities came from God and not from themselves. Daniel's vision was about a period of time called the "seventy weeks."

Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city . . . from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks . . . (NASB) Daniel 9:24-25 (NASB)

These "seventy weeks" are 490 biblical years. They are divided into 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and one week (v. 27). In our last study, we saw that each week was 7 years in length. When we added the 7 weeks and 62 weeks, we discovered that there were only 69 weeks or 483 prophetic years from the time of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was given in 444 B.C. to the time of Messiah's death. The prophecy predicted the week in which Jesus would die for our sins. He died on 14 Nisan (Jewish calendar). According to our calendar, He died on 01 April 33 A.D. The prophecy was literally and precisely fulfilled. The weeks are not symbolic.

**THE LAST WEEK.** Sixty-nine weeks have been fulfilled but not the last week of the seventy. It is yet to be fulfilled. Just like the previous weeks, the 70th week is literal too! In this study we are going to answer the question, "What happened to the last week?"

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; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." (NASB) Daniel 9:27

But first we want to examine a few other viewpoints about the last week. We will look at five.

One view says the prophecy began in 457 B.C. and 70 weeks later at the time of Antiochus III Epiphanes (175 - 164 B.C.). Those who believe this usually do not believe the Bible contains fulfilled prophecy nor that it predicted the time of Jesus' death. They look for another explanation. We must

remember that many people did not believe the Bible when it says the world hung in outer space on nothing. Yet the Bible was correct (Job 26:7).

Some Jewish scholars say the 70 weeks were fulfilled with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. This view says the weeks as merely symbolic. For 483 years after the date of 444 B.C. does not end in the year A.D. 70, but A.D. 38. Some amillennialist also hold to this view.

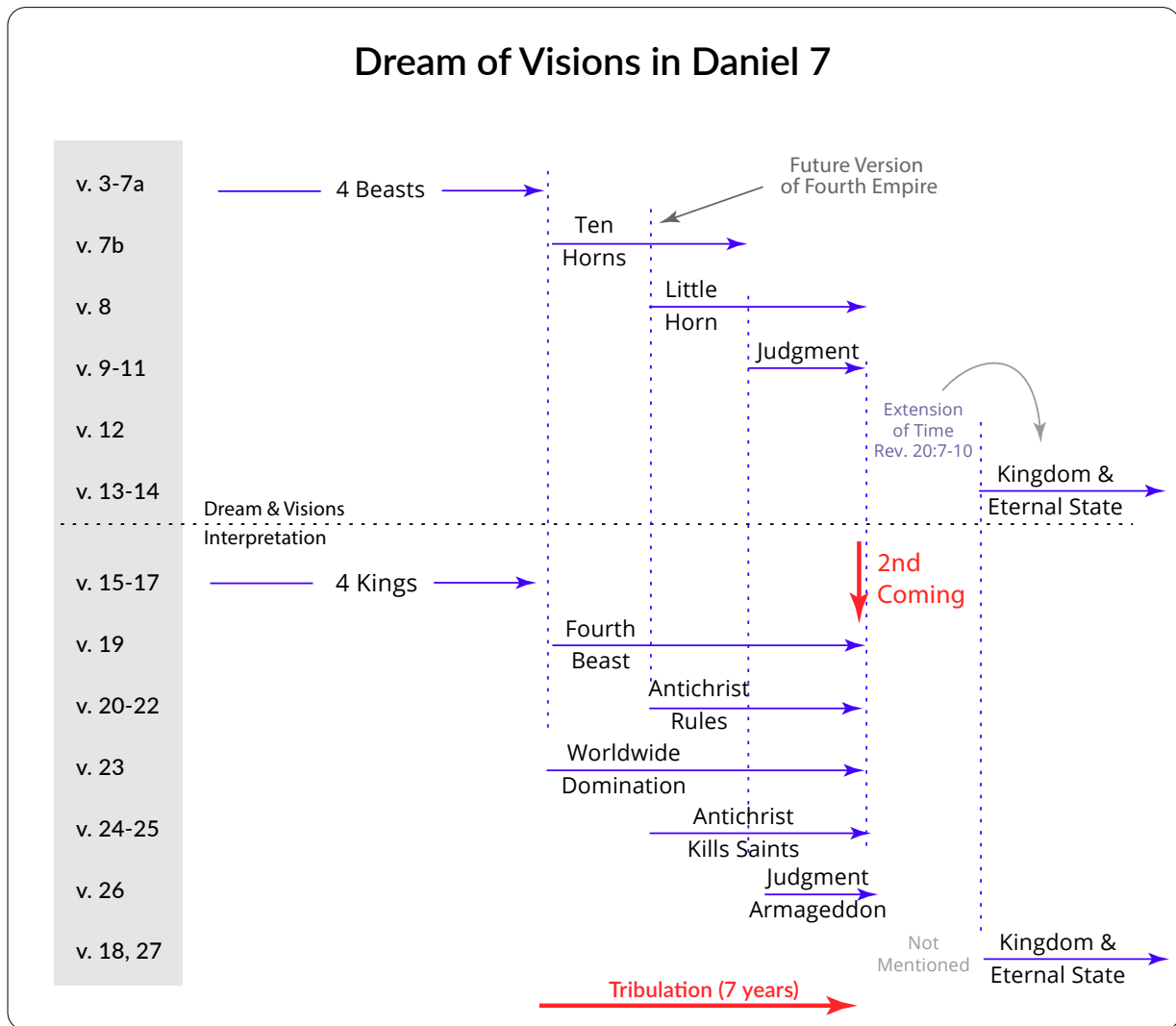
The third view says the 70 weeks are symbolic and represent unknown periods of time. They believe that the first 7 weeks are a period of time until the life of Jesus, the next 69 weeks are the time to the end of the world, and the last week takes us to heaven. But this is contrary to the precise detail found in the book of Daniel. So far great attention has been given to dates, sequences of events, the meaning of symbols, the length of different events, and numerous small details. Daniel has not left

us with vague or unexplained symbols.

A very common view among some amillennialists is that the 69 weeks begin in the 457 B.C. and end at the time Jesus began His ministry. The first 3.5 years of the 70th week covers the length of Jesus' ministry, and last 3.5 years either end when Christ comes. This is extremely inconsistent. How can the 69 weeks and the first half of the 70th week be literal, but the last 3.5 years be symbolic?

**THE SURPRISE.** The correct view of the 70th week will be discussed now. The last week is a seven year period that has not yet occurred. It is coming. We are living in the white spaces between verses 26 and 27 of Daniel 9.

It is common for Scripture to jump in time within a verse and between verses, especially in prophecy. There are jumps in time in many of the genealogies. There are gaps in timeline in the life of Jesus. In Daniel 7:15-17 there is a jump in time after



the four beasts which represent the kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome to the eternal kingdom (see the chart below). Daniel 7:15-17 completely skipped the details given later in verses 19-26. When we arrive at Daniel 11, we will discover that there are two major jumps in time in two different parts of the prophecy. In short, everything is not recorded in Scripture and that is what we have here. We have a jump in time between verses 26 and 27. The last week is delayed.

Is this a surprise? Now you might ask, "How do we know that there is a jump in time between Daniel 9:26 and Daniel 9:27?" The answer is coming. So hang on to your hats, here we go!

**KINGDOM EXPERIENCES!** When John the Baptist and Jesus started their ministries, they had the same message.

John the Baptist came, preaching . . . "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." Matthew 3:1-2 (NIV)

. . . Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." Matthew 4:17 (NIV)

Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come close! That is the meaning of the verse since the Greek word for "near" is *eggizo*, which has the meaning "to draw near." It was a call for people to repent of their sins, and many did (Mark 1:4). Their Messiah was present, and they were going to have some kingdom experiences. They would taste what the future earthly kingdom would be like.

Many of them believed. John the Baptist had told them that Jesus was no ordinary man. He had existed before John the Baptist was born.

The next day he saw Jesus coming to him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'" (NASB) John 1:29-30

Jesus was God, and this was obvious in Jesus' ministry.

Jesus started His ministry near His home town of Capernaum which was in the Jewish region of Galilee (Matt.

4:12-13). Most of His early ministry was in this region because the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Him. On one occasion, Jesus sent His disciples on a missionary assignment of preaching and healing.

And whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat what is set before you; and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." Luke 10:8-9 (NASB)

Their message to the Jews was, "This is a taste of what the future Kingdom of God will be like." The kingdom will be a Jewish kingdom, but it will include Gentiles too (Acts 15:16-17).

On one occasion, Jesus was confronted by some Pharisees who came up from Jerusalem. He had this to say about the kingdom of God,

But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Matthew 12:28 (NASB)

Jesus did not mean that the kingdom was present, or that He was sitting on an earthly throne. He was telling them that that they had just experienced the power of the future kingdom. He had not come to bring the kingdom; but when He came, some elements of the kingdom experienced.

**KINGDOM IS FUTURE.** The first time Jesus came He did not come to establish the kingdom God the Father promised to the nation of Israel (2 Samuel 7:16-17; Isaiah 65:17-25; Jeremiah 33:14-26; Ezekiel 34:11-31; 39:25-29). We also find this truth in Luke 17:22-30 and Acts 1:6.

In order to see this, we need to go back to Daniel 9:27 where we discovered that the 70th week starts with peace and ends with war.

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; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate." Daniel 9:27 (NASB)

In 1 Thessalonians 5:2, we find that Daniel's 70th week is called the day of the Lord.

For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come . . . 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3 (NASB)

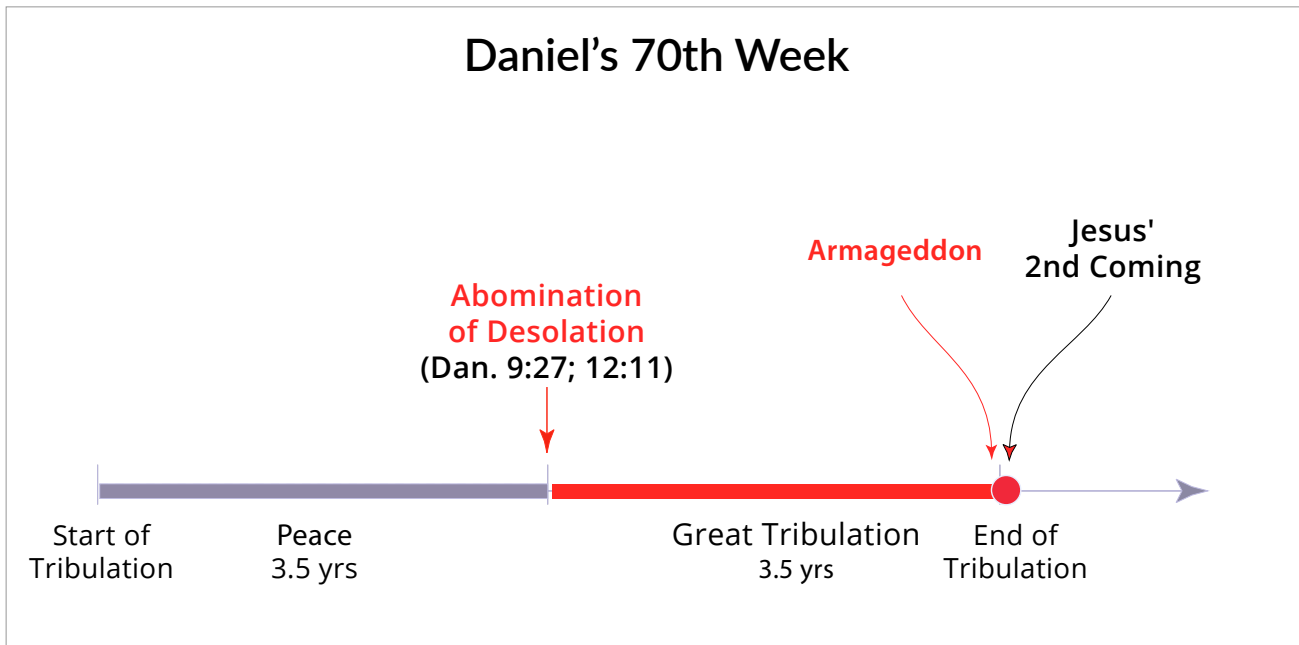
The day of the Lord and Daniel's 70th week both start with peace and end with war. The first half of the week or 3.5 year period is peaceful and the last 3.5 years is a time of war. Both Daniel 7:25 and 2 Thesalonians. 2:1-8 describe the activities of

(NASB)

A timeline of Daniel's 70th week is provided in the end of the study.

**SPIRIT OF ELIJAH.** Jesus' comments about John the Baptist also reveal that He did not come to bring the kingdom. The prophecy of Malachi says that Elijah will come before the day of the Lord.

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children



the Antichrist (Daniel 7:8, 19-26 and in 2 Thesalonians 2:1-9). Later in our study we will find that both Daniel 11 and 2 Thesalonians 2:8 agree that Satan is the real power behind the Antichrist. The day of the Lord will begin with the Tribulation.

The Tribulation - the 70th week and the beginning of the day of the Lord - has not yet come. It is coming in the future. That is the message of 2 Thesalonians 2:2.

. . . you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 2 Thessalonians 2:2

to their fathers . . . Malachi 4:5-6 (NKJV)

Have you ever wondered if John the Baptist was Elijah? Luke's gospel tells us that John the Baptists came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17). But He was not Elijah since Elijah would not come until the day of the Lord. Jesus makes that point first to a crowd of people and then later to His disciples in Matthew 17:12-13.

But why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I say to you, and one who is more than a prophet . . . For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you care to accept it, he himself

is Elijah, who was to come. Matthew 11:9 (NASB)

**A PHYSICAL KINGDOM.** The people were confused. They thought the kingdom was coming soon.

And while they were listening to these things, He went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. Luke 19:11 (NASB)

They did not realize that Jesus had come to offer them forgiveness of their sins and not a kingdom. Jesus had been offering them a spiritual kingdom, but the kingdom would come later. The earthly kingdom would be a Jewish kingdom.

... He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end. Luke 1:33 (NASB)

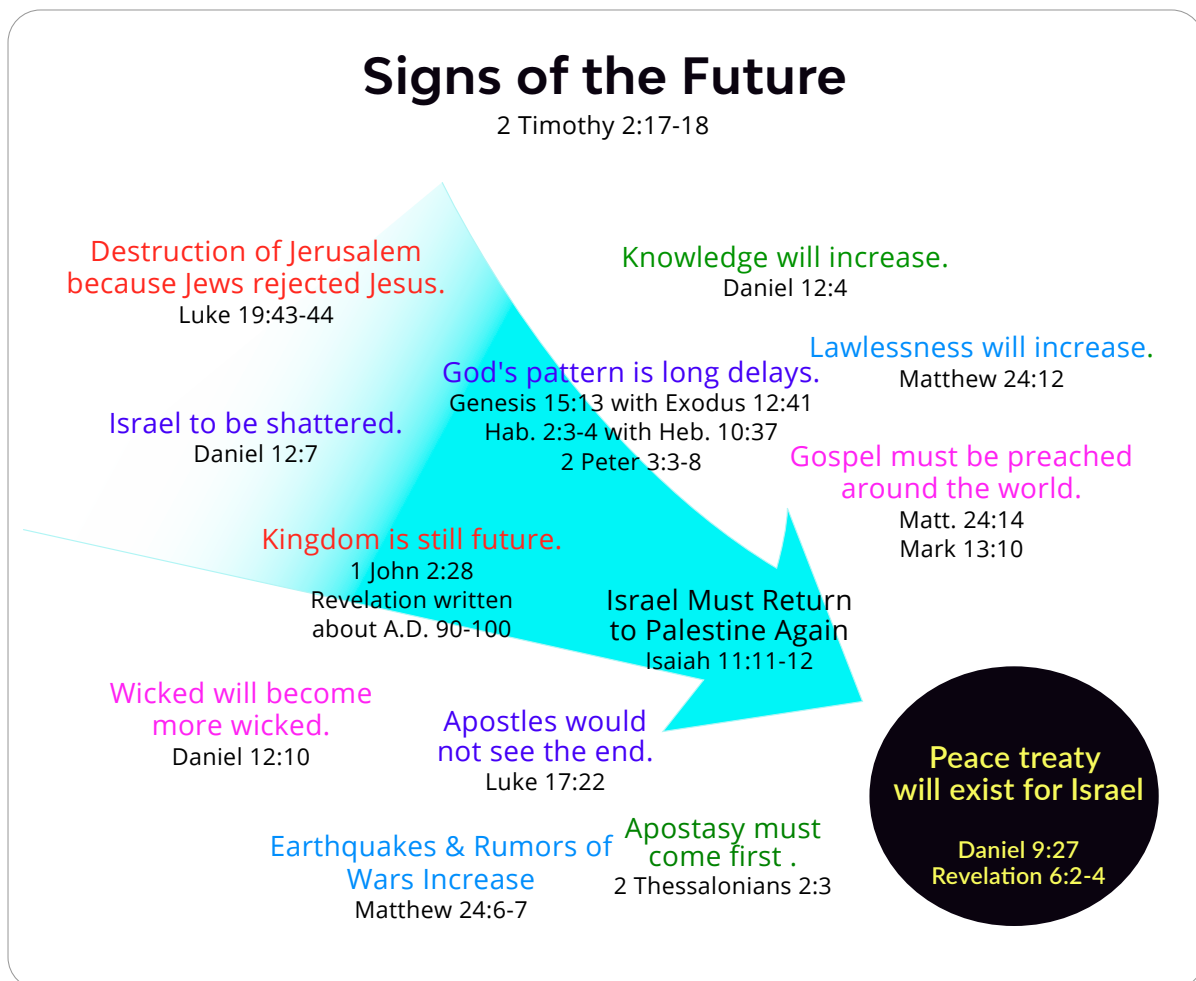
The earthly kingdom would be a physical kingdom. The saints will eat and drink in this kingdom (Matthew. 26;29). There will be tables in the kingdom (Luke 22:29-30) and Jesus will celebrate the Passover in it (Luke 22:15-16).

In the kingdom, we are told that Jesus' disciples will judge Israel.

... that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Luke 22:30 (NASB)

Does that sound like heaven? The answer is no. Because there will be no sin in heaven. There will be no judgment in heaven. This is a literal, physical kingdom on earth. It has not happened yet. It is coming.

**KINGDOM IS COMING.** The Jewish leaders eventually killed the One they did not want as their king. They were jealous of Jesus. After He was dying on the cross with nails in His



hands, they asked Pilate to remove the sign that said, "King of the Jews" (John 19:21). They hated Him.

After Jesus' death the Jewish leaders seemed to be afraid that He would return to life three days later. And He did! After He died, Jesus then visited His disciples for many days and before returning to heaven His disciples asked this question,

... "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority." Acts 1:6-7 (NASB)

Jesus simply replied with, "It is coming!" His disciples were still looking for the kingdom. They were looking for Israel's kingdom. They wanted a literal, physical, Jewish kingdom and Jesus never corrected their understanding. Jesus never told them that they were wrong about the kingdom. He only told them they could not know when it will happen.

Today, some say that Jesus' kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. When He returned to heaven, He was crowned as king and started reigning over His kingdom. If this is true, why didn't Jesus tell them that He would set up His kingdom when He returned to heaven? It is true that there is a spiritual kingdom, but it also true that that this spiritual kingdom will some day become a physical one on this earth with tables, drink, and food. It will be a kingdom in which His disciples will judge others. When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He taught them to include the words, "Your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10). His kingdom is coming. It is not here yet, and Daniel's 70th week will come first (see the earlier chart).

**CONCLUSION.** Daniel's 70th week, the Antichrist, eternal judgment, and heaven are all coming in the future. We will learn more about them in our coming studies in Daniel and Revelation. But for now, the Tribulation is the next event in God's prophetic plan. Jesus called it the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21). After that the kingdom comes and Jesus will reign on earth as King!

Some day the prayer request, "Your kingdom will come!" will be answered. Some day we will hear the words,

Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they existed, and were created." Revelation 4:11 (NAB)

Some day we will be with God forever .

Today, Jesus offers each of us a spiritual kingdom that can only be entered by the forgiveness of our sins. The doors to this kingdom are closed unless you believe and want Jesus to forgive your sins. God says that today is the day of salvation. Not tomorrow - today! It is a personal choice that God permits each man and woman to make. What is your choice?