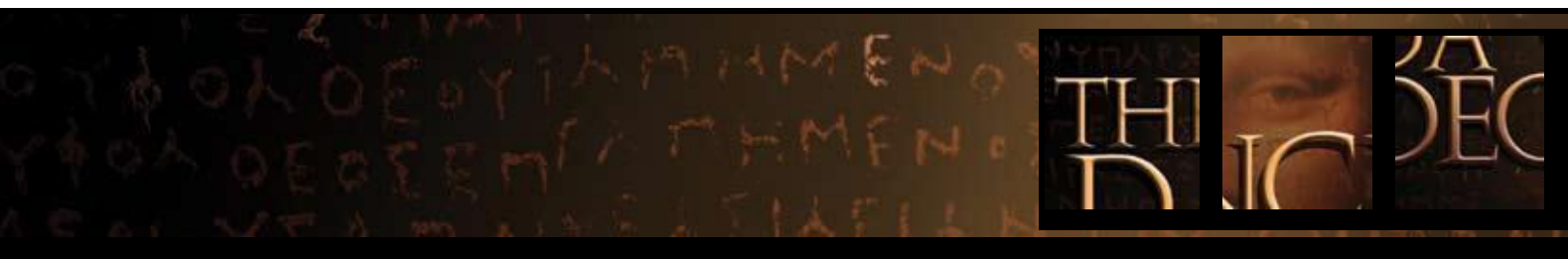


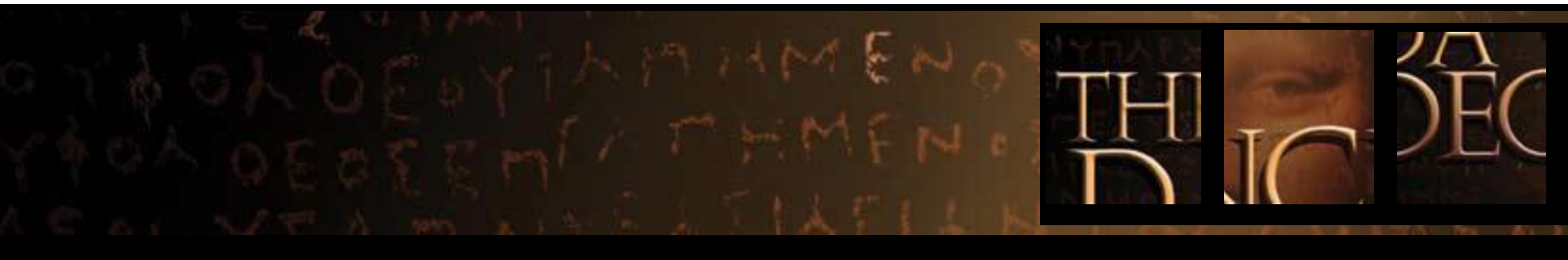
HOPEFM

MYSTERIES UNEARTHED

The Da Vinci Decode episode 3

Newton's big apple:
future prophecy.





Notes

CLAIM: - Dan Brown has the scientist Sir Isaac Newton as head of the Priory of Sion.

FACT: -Newton spent 42 years researching ancient prophecies.

His conclusion:

“The design of God...gave...the Prophecies of the Old Testament...that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event, and his own Providence...be then manifested thereby to the world. For the event of things predicted many ages before, will then be a convincing argument that the world is governed by providence.” Observations Upon the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John, pp. 251-252.

The Prophecy

Daniel: Jewish sage who predicted key events in the history of Jerusalem and the life & death of Jesus Christ over 500 years before they happened.

“Know... and understand, 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. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.” - Daniel 9:25,26 NKJV

The History

539BC:

- Jerusalem has been smashed by the armies of Babylon
- Daniel, a young nobleman, had been captured in the first siege of Jerusalem (605BC) and taken to Babylon. His gifted mind has gained him a position in the king’s palace
- He prays about his home city, Jerusalem, and has a vision from God about its future.

The Prophecy

Prediction

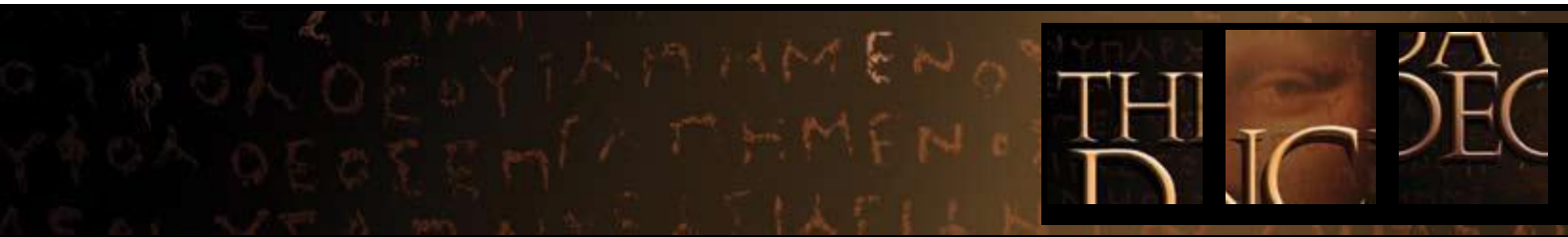
came true

1. Jerusalem would be rebuilt	Many ancient cities never recovered from wartime destruction	In 457BC, King Artaxerxes decreed that the exiled Jews could return and rebuild their city
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The time period explained in the prophecy started from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. This was in 457 BC, and started the period of ‘seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.’

$$(7 \times 7) + (62 \times 7) = 69 \times 7 = 483 \text{ years}$$

483 years from 457BC takes us to AD27 - the start of the public ministry of Jesus Christ (John 4:25-26)



Notes...

2. "After the sixty-two weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself" (Daniel 9:26)	Messiah = God-sent king. Cut off = killed, especially violently; also used of lambs in temple sacrifice.	Jesus of Nazareth, called the Messiah, was killed on a Roman cross after a plot by some Jewish leaders, 31AD.
3. 'in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice' (Daniel 9:27)	AD 31: Jesus died after 3 ½ years ministry (3 ½ is half of 7, the middle of a week).	His death was the ultimate sacrifice for human sin and guilt.
4. 'The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary' (Dan. 9:26)	AD70: Titus and Vespasian besieged and attacked Jerusalem. Temple burned.	

Question 1

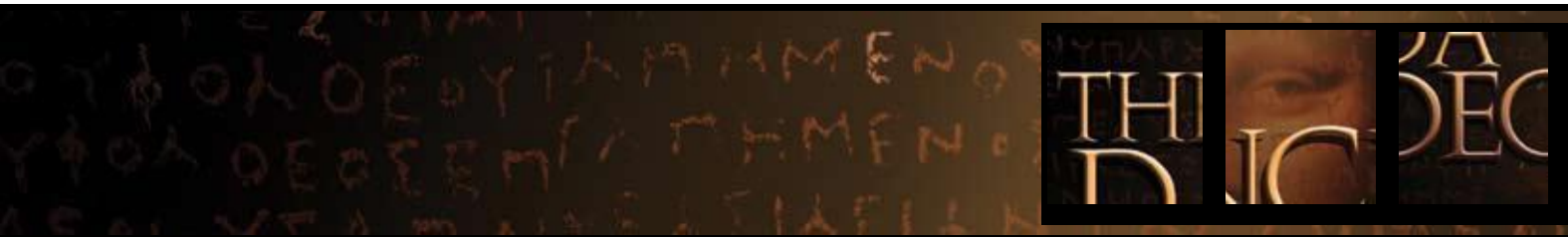
Did Daniel cheat by writing the prediction after the events had happened?

1. Manuscript fragment (4QFlor) among the Dead Sea Scrolls includes Daniel 11:32 and Daniel 12:10, dated to at least 150BC. If Daniel didn't write in 550BC, he still wrote his predictions 100 years before the events.
2. Daniel's book appears in the Septuagint (or LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament dated from c.250BC.
3. Daniel is mentioned in the Jewish historical work of Maccabees, written 134-104BC (1 Maccabees 2:29, 60)
4. The historian Flavius Josephus records that Alexander the Great read from the book of Daniel in about 330BC, dating Daniel's book to well before 330BC.

Question 2

Are you quoting selectively? Or, did Daniel write more predictions that failed, and we are only telling you about the ones that worked?

No. Many of his predictions have been fulfilled (though some are still future). Study Daniel in detail.



Question 3

Notes...

Is it just a matter of interpretation?

Can many meanings be read in here? No, the wording is exact:

1. Spells out the city
2. Mentions a starting date confirmed by history
3. Gives an exact time period
4. Describes the death of the Messiah
5. And the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple

So what?

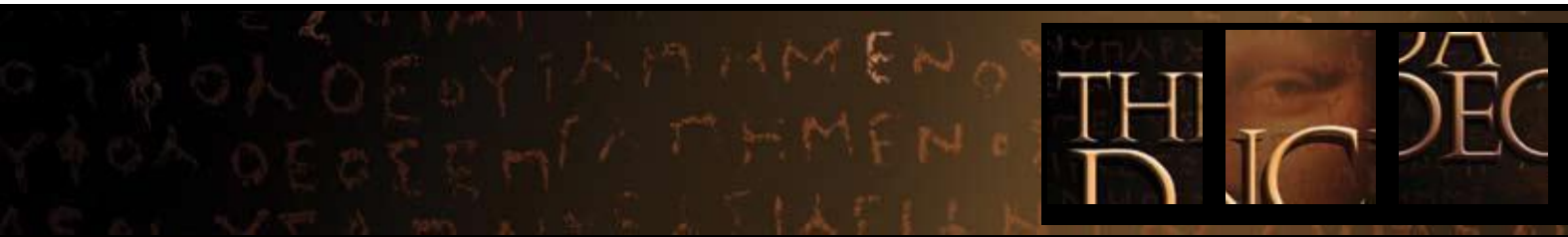
Where does this evidence point?

1. That there is a personal God who is intelligent enough to know the future.
What human being could naturally see the future 500+ years ahead?
2. That this God is not distant and uninvolved, but cares enough to offer this type of guidance to the human race.
3. That this God is involved with Jesus Christ: the life and death of Jesus are important events to the human race.

Extra information: Daniel's Messianic prophecy

The summary:

539BC - Daniel predicted that the Messiah would arrive 483 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. The decree was established in 457BC.	Jesus Christ appeared at the time predicted.
Daniel predicted that the Messiah would die.	Jesus Christ died on a Roman cross in AD31.
Daniel predicted that Jerusalem would be destroyed again.	The Romans destroyed Jerusalem in AD70.



Notes...

The starting point of the time period

The historical books of Ezra and Nehemiah record four relevant decrees:

1. 538/537BC	King Cyrus of Persia gave the Jews permission to return home and rebuild their temple with money he donated.	This did not include rebuilding the city, and enemies from Samaria stopped them completing even the temple. (Ezra 1:2-4)
2. 520/519BC	Darius 1 Hystaspes decreed the Jews could rebuild their temple	But still not the city. (Ezra 6:1-12)
3. 457BC	Artaxerxes granted Ezra permission to appoint public officials, use money from the king's treasury, establish Jewish law etc (Ezra 7:18)	Ezra received orders to rebuild the city (Ezra 7:12-26), but then Artaxerxes stopped the rebuilding due to political pressure.
4. 13 years later	Nehemiah asked permission to go and re-start the reconstruction of the city (Nehemiah 1:2)	Permission granted. The reconstruction resumed.

The decree that really began the rebuilding was the third one. This is a firm starting point for Daniel's prophetic period.

The weeks

The weeks (or 'sevens' NIV) mean seven-year periods. Weeks of years were a common idea in Judaism.

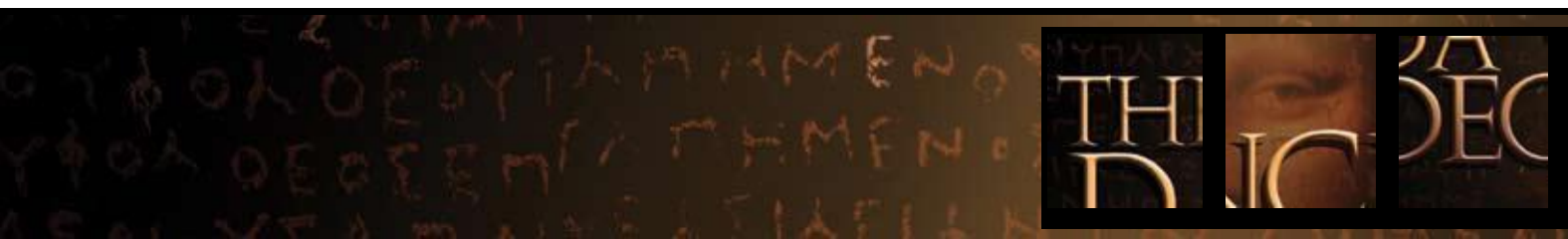
'For six years sow your fields, and for six years prune your vineyards and gather their crops. But in the seventh year the land is to have a Sabbath of rest, a Sabbath to the LORD. Do not sow your fields or prune your vineyards... Whatever the land produces may be eaten.'

Leviticus 25:3-13, NIV

'The 7 and 62 weeks are understood as 69 seven-year periods.'

Josh McDowell, New Evidence That Demands A Verdict, volume 1, London: Thomas Nelson, 1979, p.170.

(With some variation in starting and ending dates, McDowell's overall view of this prophecy is similar to that of Isaac Newton.)



Was Jesus the Jewish messiah?

Notes...

- Jews expect the Messiah to bring about world peace, according to their understanding of the prophecy, and Jesus did not do this:

'if he were truly the Messiah he should not have died in the first place!'

"...not only were the biblical prophecies foretelling the dawn of world peace and political harmony unfulfilled, quite the opposite occurred - Jews lost sovereignty over the land of Israel, the temple was destroyed, and exile and suffering became the mark of their collective condition."

Jesus was 'just another martyred Jew who was killed by the Romans for political insurrection.' -Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein, What Christians Should Know About Jews and Judaism, p. 261-262.

Yet Daniel 9 predicts exactly these things.

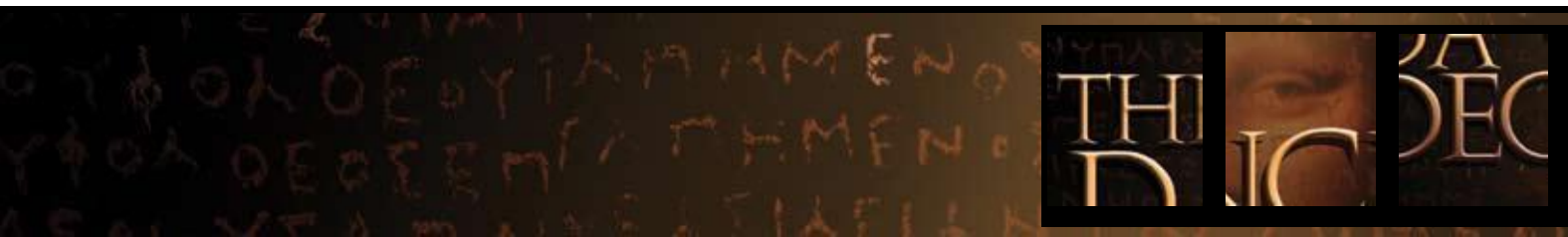
- Many prophecies of the OT do speak of Messiah as a king who brings peace to the whole world (e.g., Psalm 72).
- There are also many prophecies that speak of Messiah suffering and dying (e.g. Isaiah 53).
- This is not a contradiction, but can fit into a consistent picture: Messiah comes and dies on his first visit, but then comes back later to rule. This is what Christians believe about Jesus.

Some Jewish thinkers have given up on the idea of Messiah.

Dan Cohn-Sherbok, The Jewish Messiah

- 'doctrines connected with the coming of the Messiah...have seemed totally implausible'.
- many Jews 'rely on themselves to shape their own destiny'. 'Instead of looking to a heavenly form of redemption, the Jewish community must now rely on itself for its own survival and the redemption of the world.'
- Jews should 'free themselves from the absolutes of the past' because 'these ancient doctrines can be superseded by a new vision of Jewish life which is human-centred in orientation.'
- no longer 'plausible to assert that any religious outlook is categorically true' and Jews should 'recognise that their Scriptures are simply one record among many others' not 'possessing truth for all humankind'.

The church has a shameful anti-Jewish past, but Jesus himself was not anti-Jewish. He was a Jew. Comments like "love your enemies" and "turn the other cheek" and "go the second mile" should have encouraged peaceful relations with the Roman army.



Notes...

How do we know Messiah would appear in Jerusalem?

- Daniel is told about 'your holy city' (v. 24)
- Rebuilding of Jerusalem (v. 25)
- Destruction of the city and its sanctuary (the Jerusalem temple) (v. 26)

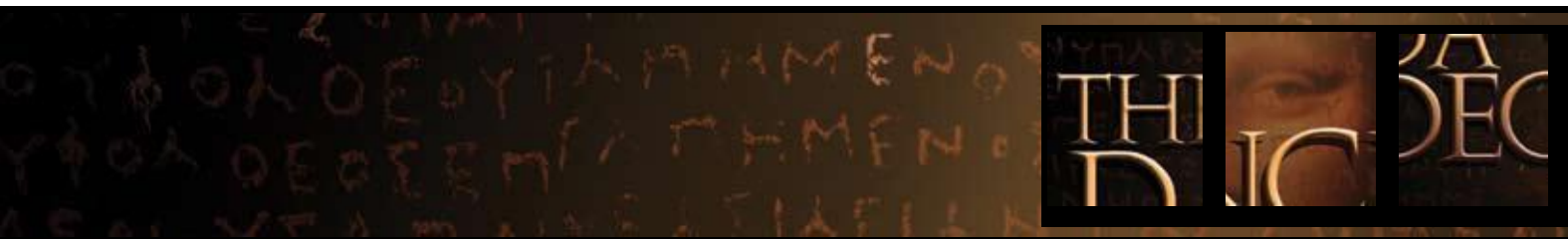
When was Jesus anointed?

'Priests were anointed at 30, and in the year AD27 Jesus reached that age and was anointed by the Holy Spirit and publicly proclaimed as the Messiah. The New Testament is more specific in dating this event (see Luke 3) than the whole Bible is in regard to any other occasion.' -Desmond Ford, Daniel, p. 232

'In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governing Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee and Philip his brother tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanius was tetrarch of Abilence, while Annas was high priest, and Caiaphas, the word of God came upon John the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness; and he moved into the regional around the Jordan preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.' Luke 3:1-3.

John Nolland, Luke 1-9:20

- Pontius 'Pilate was prefect of Judea from A.D. 26-36'
- 'Herod Antipas, in accord with the terms of Herod the Great's final will and as confirmed by the emperor Augustus, ruled over Galilee and Perea from 4 B.C. to A.D. 29.'
- 'Philip... received only minor territories. He ruled until his death in A.D. 34.'
- 'The span of Lysanius' rule is not known.'
- Luke writes 'in the time of the high priest [singular] Annas and Caiaphas [two names]. The NT reflects a situation in which Annas, an earlier high priest (A.D.6-15) and father-in-law of the current high priest Caiaphas (A.D.18-36), retains much of the power and prestige of the high-priestly office (John 18:13, 24; Acts 4:6). The year 27A.D. fits in with this.'
- Calculation error by monk who drafted Western calendar. Christ born 4BC.



Notes...

Did Jesus understand Daniel's prediction?

- “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:15).
 - Jesus elsewhere speaks of Daniel as a prophet and says “let the reader understand” (Matthew 24:15), applying Daniel's predictions to his own era.
 - Jesus' title ‘Son of Man’ is from Daniel 7:13 (and 8:17 and Ezekiel passages)
-

What did Daniel say Messiah would do? (Daniel 9:24)

- To ‘finish rebellion’
 - Put an end to sin
 - Atone for sin finally
 - Bring in everlasting righteousness
 - Seal up the vision and prophecy
 - Anoint the Most Holy
-

For the human heart

- God has a plan to help our human condition
 - God hates sin and the effect it has on us
 - He decided to take the problem onto his shoulders
 - Jesus personally accepted the guilt of sinners like us and paid their debt
 - Daniel said he would be cut off (killed) but not for himself
 - Jesus died for the human sin problem
 - Jesus died to give us freedom from guilt, and to bring in “everlasting righteousness” - goodness that last forever.
-