

CAN A THINKING PERSON
BELIEVE IN GOD?

Evidence FOR

1. Futility of atheism
2. Design
3. Fine tuning
4. Cosmology
5. Consciousness
6. Personal experience
7. Predictions

Evidence AGAINST

1. Suffering
2. Intolerance
3. Dumb rules
4. Believers

Physicist Brian Greene

You and I are nothing but constellations of particles whose behaviour is fully governed by physical law. Our choices are the result of particles coursing one way or another through our brains. Our actions are the result of our particles moving this way or that through our bodies. And all particle motion – whether in a brain, a body, or a baseball – is controlled by physics and so is fully dictated by mathematical decree... [and] by the non-negotiable and insensate laws of physics, which determine the structure and function of everything that exists. We are no more than playthings knocked to and fro by the dispassionate rules of the cosmos.

Brian Greene, *Until the End of Time: Mind, Matter, and Our Search for Meaning in an Evolving Universe* (London: Penguin, 2021)

A full-page background image of Sherlock Holmes, played by Benedict Cumberbatch, sitting on a black leather sofa in his study. He is wearing a tan overcoat over a dark vest and a white shirt with a patterned tie. He is holding a pipe in his right hand and looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background shows bookshelves filled with books and a dark wooden door.

Why do Sherlock's
thoughts work?



1. The content of one thought causes the content of the next, and so on.



2. His train of thought follows rules of logic.



3. His thoughts can be true or false about things in the world.



4. His thoughts
happen in one mind.



5. He can do science.



6. His thoughts are reliable.



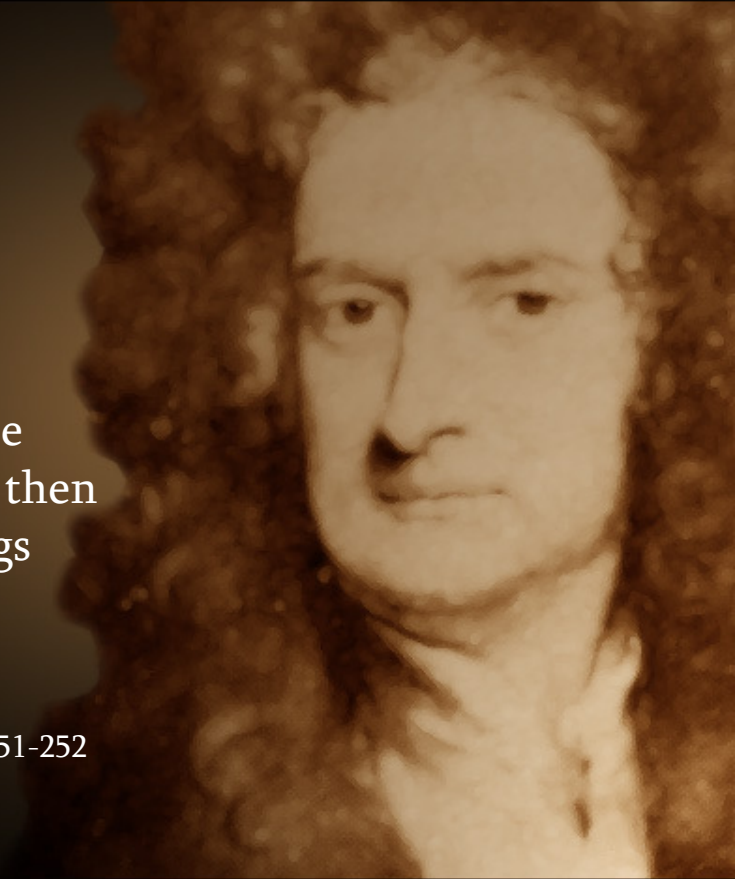
7. He's not on drugs.

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

FACT: Newton spent 42 years researching ancient prophecies.

“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



לעשות נקמה בגוים תוכחת בלגים לאסור כלב חס
בקים ועבדי חסד בבילו כדול לעשות חסד בשפט עתה
חזר חזק לכל חסדיו לפי ישראל עם קדוש הללו
הללו אל בקדושו הללו כדור עזר הללו
בברכותו הללו כדור הללו כדור שופר הללו
בעל זכור הללו כדור וכל הללו כלם ועז
הללו כדור שבע הללו כדור חרוב כל חסות
תהללו הללו
זכור וקדוש $\text{א ב ג ד ה ו ז ח ט י כ ל מ נ ס ע פ צ ק ר ש ת}$ קדוש קדוש לא ידוע לפי חזק
זל ויחזקו חסדו כלם כלם חסד ואת סוכר פשוט
כל ויחזקו חסדו כלם כלם חסד ואת סוכר פשוט

THE PROPHECY

Know...and understand, that from
the going forth of the command to
restore and rebuild 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



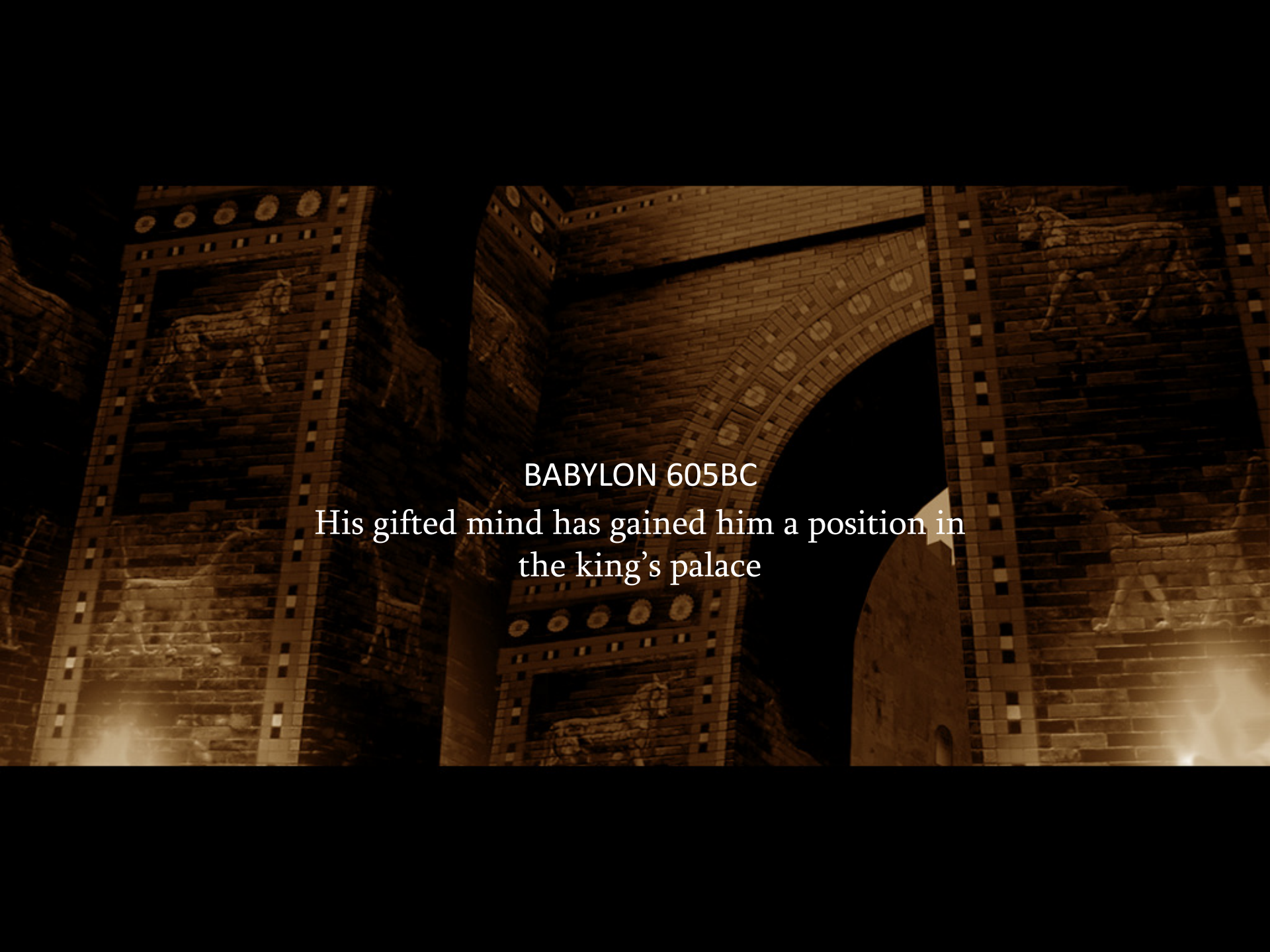
JErUSALEM 539BC

The city has been smashed by the armies of Babylon...



BABYLON 605BC

Daniel, a young nobleman, has been captured in the first siege of Jerusalem and taken to Babylon



BABYLON 605BC

His gifted mind has gained him a position in
the king's palace



BABYLON 605BC

He prays about his home city of Jerusalem and
receives a vision about its future

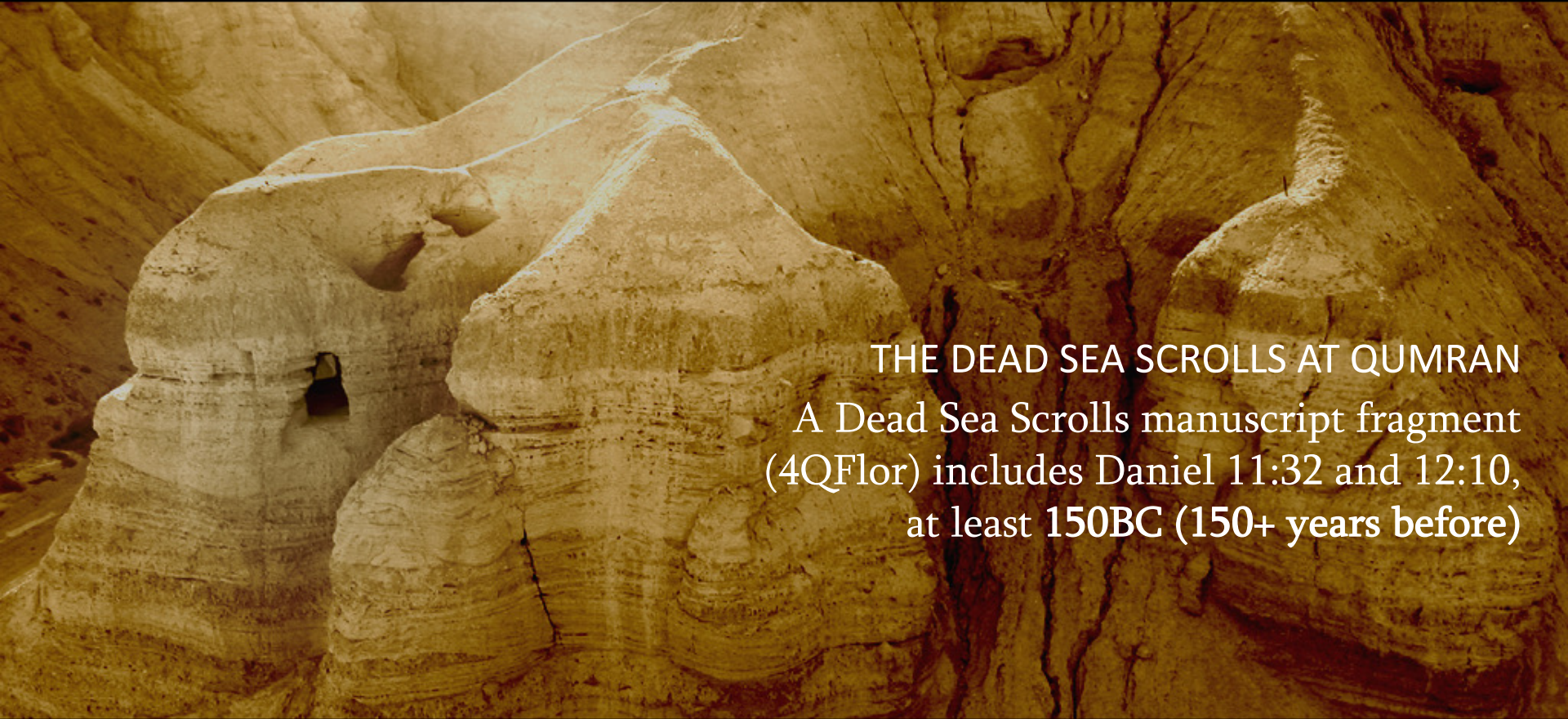


The Prophecy Prediction...
...*came true*...

Question 1

Did Daniel cheat by writing after the events?





THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AT QUMRAN

A Dead Sea Scrolls manuscript fragment (4QFlor) includes Daniel 11:32 and 12:10, at least **150BC (150+ years before)**

1 MACCABEES

Daniel is mentioned in the Jewish historical work of 1 Maccabees (2:29,60) written 134-104BC

25 The people of the Iewes shall helpe them, as the time shall be appointed, with all their heart.

26 Neither shall they giue any thing, vnto them that make war vpon them, or aide them with victuals, weapons, money, or ships; as it hath seemed good vnto the Romanes; but they shall keepe their couenant without taking any thing therefore.

27 In the same manner also, if warre come first vpon the nation of the Iewes, the Romanes shall helpe them with all their heart, according as the time shall be appointed them.

28 Neither shal victuals be giuen to them that take part against them, or weapons, or money, or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romanes; but they shall keepe their couenants, and that without deceit.

29 According to these articles did the Romanes make a couenant with the people of the Iewes.

30 Howbeit, if hereafter the one partie or the other, shall thinke meet to adde or diminish any thing, they may doe it at their pleasures, and whatsoever they shall adde or take away, shall be ratified.

31 And as touching the euils that Demetrius doth to the Iewes, we haue written vnto him, saying, Wherefore hast thou made thy yoke heauie vpon our friends, and confederates the Iewes.

32 If therefore they complaine any more against thee: we will doe them iustice, and fight with thee by sea and by land.

CHAP. IX.

1 When Bacchides and his souldiers came against the Iewes, they pitched their campe in the desert of Bethan.

Eleasa, and three thousand chosen men with him.

6 Who seeing the multitude of the other army to be so great, were sore afraide, whercupon many conueyed themselues out of the hoste, insonmuch as there abode of them no more then eight hundred men.

7 When Iudas therefore saw that his hoste slipped away, and that the battell pressed vpon him, he was sore troubled in minde, and much distressed for that hee had no time to gather them together.

8 Neuerthelesse vnto them that remained, he said; Let vs arise and goe vp against our enemies, if peradventure we may be able to fight with them.

9 But they dehorted him, saying, We shall neuer be able: || let vs now rather save our liues, and hereafter we wil retourne with our brethren, and fight against them: for we are but few.

10 Then Iudas said, God forbid that I should doe this thing, and flee away from them: If our time be come, let vs die manfully for our brethren, and let vs not staine our honour.

11 With that the hoste [of Bacchides] remoued out of their tents, and stood ouer against || them, their horsemen being diuided into two troupes, and their slingers and archers going before the hoste, and they that marched in the foreward were all mighty men.

12 As for Bacchides, he was in the right wing, so the hoste drew neere on the two parts, and sounded their trumpets.

13 They also of Iudas side, euen they sounded their trumpets also, so that the earth was full of the noise of the trumpet, & the

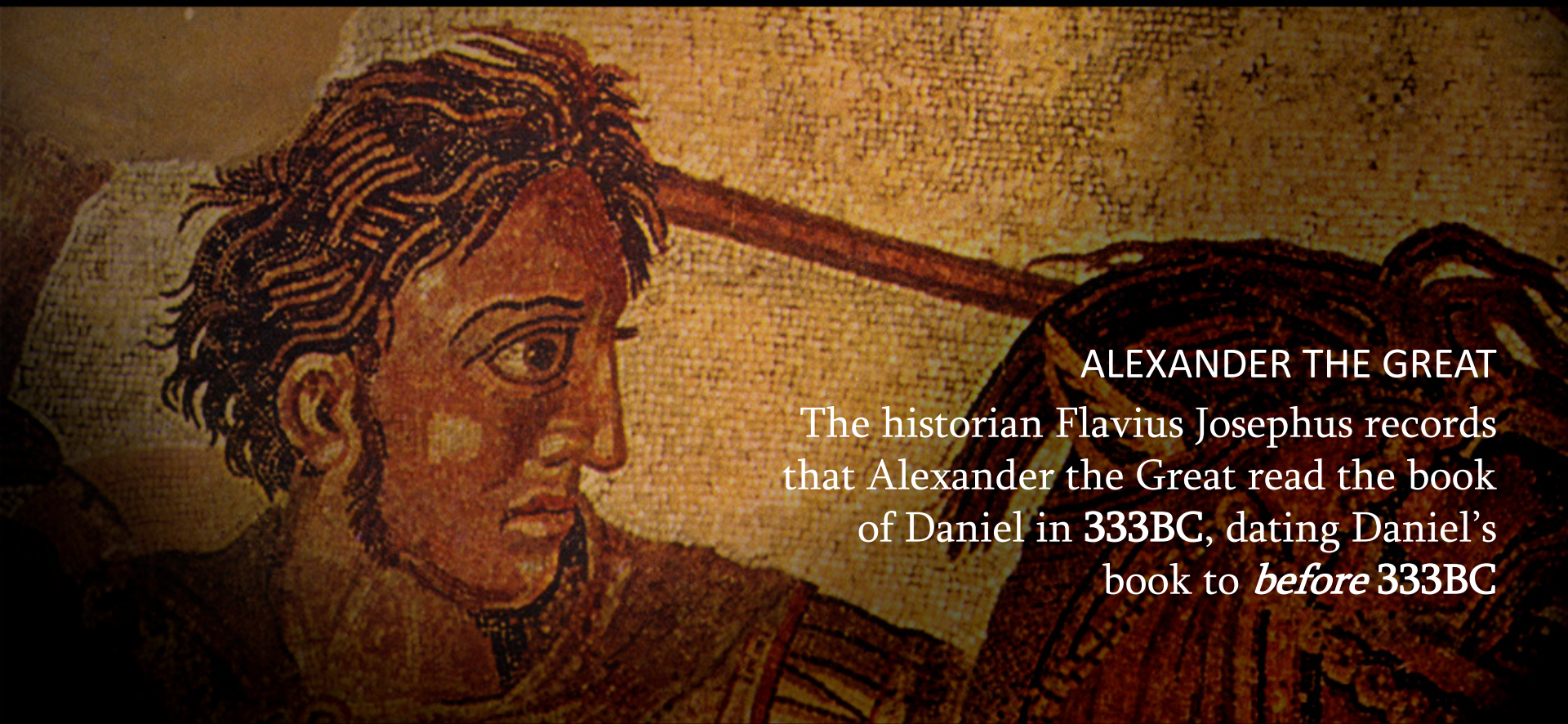
|| 124 folio here the Romanes copie.

† Or, let vs not leave any mist cause behinde vs, why our glory should be spurned away. || Or, the Iewes.



The SEPTUAGINT (LXX)

Daniel's book appears in the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament date to c.250BC



ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The historian Flavius Josephus records that Alexander the Great read the book of Daniel in **333BC**, dating Daniel's book to *before 333BC*

Question 2

Are you quoting selectively?

No. Study Daniel's work.



Question 3

Is it just a matter of interpretation?

Can many meanings be read in here?

No, the wording is exact:

- I. Spells out the city
- II. Mentions a starting date confirmed by history
- III. Gives an exact time period
- IV. Describes the death of the Messiah
- V. And the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple



So what ?

This evidence suggests:

- I. That there is some kind of personal God who is intelligent enough to know the future
- II. That this God is not distant and uninvolved, but cares enough to offer this type of guidance to the human race
- III. That this God is involved with Jesus Christ, and that his life and death are important events to the human race.



Extra information:

The 'weeks' of years mean seven-year periods.

'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. Do not reap what grows of itself or harvest the grapes of your untended vines. The land is to have a year of rest.

Whatever the land yields during the Sabbath year will be food for you -- for yourself, your manservant and maidservant, and the hired worker and temporary resident who live among you, as well as for your livestock and the wild animals in your land.

Whatever the land produces may be eaten.'

Leviticus 25:3-13

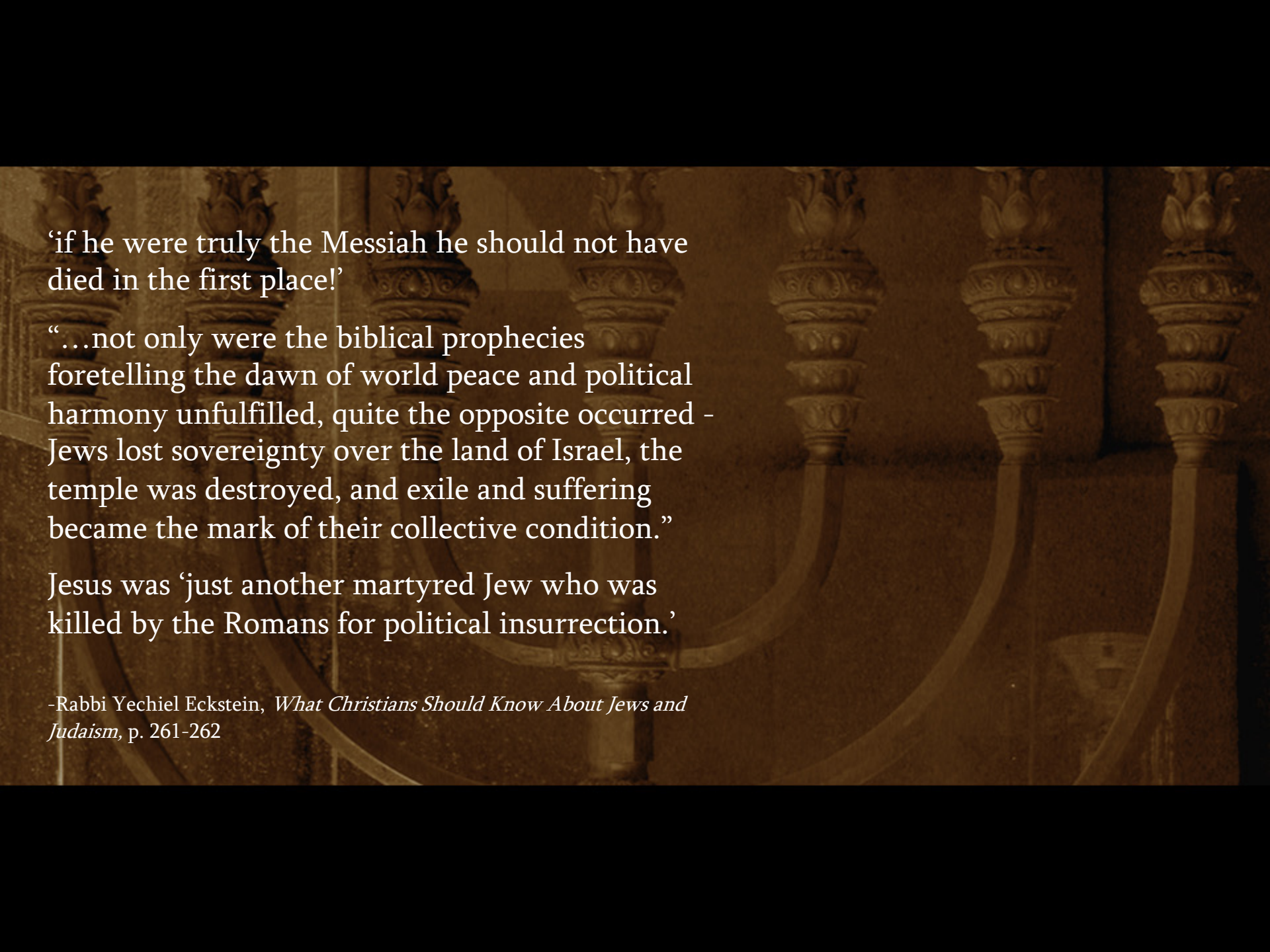
'The 7 and 62 weeks are understood as 69 seven-year periods.'

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



Do Jews recognise Jesus as messiah?





‘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 the Jewish prophet Daniel 9 predicts exactly these things

- Many prophecies speak of Messiah as a king who brings peace to the whole world (e.g. Psalm 72)
- Other prophecies speak of Messiah suffering and dying (e.g. Isaiah 53)
- Contradiction? Or consistent picture: Messiah comes and dies on his first visit, but then comes back later to rule. This is what Christians believe about Jesus.



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