

Daniel

Chapter 9

Daniel's Prayer for the People

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. 4 And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, “O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, 5 we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. 6 Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. 7 O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

8 “O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9 To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. 10 We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. 11 Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. 12 And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.

13 “As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. 14 Therefore the Lord has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, who

brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

16 “O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us. 17 Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord’s sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. 18 O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. 19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

The Seventy-Weeks Prophecy

20 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, 21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. 22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

24 “Seventy weeks are determined
For your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression,
To make an end of sins,
To make reconciliation for iniquity,
To bring in everlasting righteousness,
To seal up vision and prophecy,
And to anoint the Most Holy.

25 “Know therefore 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;
The street shall be built again, and the wall,
Even in troublesome times.

26 “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.
The end of it shall be with a flood,
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.
27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;
But in the middle of the week
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,
Even until the consummation, which is determined,
Is poured out on the desolate.”

Perry Stone Commentary, Hebraic Prophetic OT Study Bible, p. 1353-1355

“Daniel- THE AMAZING SEVENTY WEEKS PROPHECY (Chapter 9)

The ninth chapter of Daniel begins by revealing when the seventy weeks prophecy took place-during the first year of Darius the Mede, the new king of the Medes that overthrew the Babylonians in one night (see Dan. 5). Daniel was studying "books" (9:2), including the scroll of the prophet Jeremiah, who recorded that the land of Israel would lay desolate for seventy years (see Jer. 25:11-12; 29:10). The Jews had not kept the sabbatical cycles instructed in the Law of Moses. Not only had the Jews profaned the Sabbath day, they had also ignored the law that they were to allow the land to lay fallow (unplowed) every seven years (see Lev. 25). Thus, the land of Israel would be unplowed and unplanted for seventy years to provide a rest for the land (read 2 Chron. 36:20-21).

Daniel understood the seventy years of captivity would be ending (9:2); time was nearing for the Jews to return and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. Entering a season of fasting and intercession, Daniel repented before God on behalf of the nation and its leaders. He confessed their iniquity, wickedness, rebellion, and departure from the judgments of God. He confessed that the people did not heed the warnings of the prophets. He exposed the fact that the kings, princes, and fathers had sinned, and as a result, confusion and shame had come upon God's people (9:3-10). In verse 11 the prophet acknowledged that Moses had warned Israel this would happen if they turned from God's Law and rebelled against Him (see Deut. 28; Lev. 19).

In this powerful prayer of repentance and restoration, Daniel declared that God keeps His covenant and shows mercy (9:4, 9). Daniel petitioned God to turn His judgment away from Jerusalem and make His face to shine (a phrase asking for God's favor) upon the desolate sanctuary in Jerusalem (9:16-17). Daniel appealed to God to restore the city because His name was there (9:19).

The Angel Gabriel

In the middle of Daniel's deep intercession, the angel Gabriel appeared and touched Daniel at the time of the evening sacrifice (9:21). This is the same angel that announced the birth of John the Baptist to his father Zechariah (see Luke 1:11-25) and the same messenger that gave Mary the announcement that she would give birth to the Savior (see Luke 1:26-38). Gabriel told Daniel God loved him greatly; the angel also revealed he was sent to bring the prophet an important message from God about the future (9:22-27).

The "Seventy Weeks Prophecy"

Daniel 9:24-27 records the message, Gabriel brought to Daniel; it is often called the "seventy weeks prophecy: before you continue this article, I encourage you to read this passage carefully Remember, Israel had come through seventy years of captivity, but now the angel reveals a seventy of sevens has been determined The first insight to understanding this passage is found in the Hebrew word for "weeks," *shabuwa*; This prediction is not a week of days or seven days making one week); the Hebrew *shabuwa'* is a week of years and not days. An example of the "Week being years is in Genesis 9:27-28. The Genesis reference is to the time when Jacob worked seven years to wed Rachel and instead received Leah for his wife (see Gen. 29:20-25). His father-in-law, Laban, told Jacob he *must "fulfill her week"* to obtain Rachel, and Jacob worked seven more years (see Gen. 29:28). The Hebrew word week in the phrase *fulfill her week* is the same Hebrew word *shabuwa'* and refers to seven years and not seven days.

In the Bible, a prophetic concept exists where a day is exchanged for one year. This is found in two narratives. When the twelve spies returned to Moses after spying out the land for forty days, ten of the twelve returned in unbelief and discouraged the people from possessing the land. As a result, Moses said the people would wander

in the wilderness one year for every day of unbelief-or forty years, a year for every day (see Num. 14:34). The second example occurred when the prophet Ezekiel was instructed to lie on his left side for 390 days and on his right side for forty days, representing the 390 years of Israel's iniquity and the forty years of Judah's iniquity (see Ezek. 4:4-6).

Thus, Daniel's prophecy is seventy weeks of years. Since there are seven days in one "week" and one prophetic week is actually seven years, then seventy "weeks" are seventy times seven, or 490 total years. The angel said that during the 490-year cycle of the seventy sevens, an end of sins will be made, climaxing with reconciliation, bringing in everlasting righteousness and anointing of the new temple (see 9:24).

The Three-Part Division

Gabriel then divides the seventy sevens into three different time periods.

The first-time cycle of sevens begins with the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince, It is seven weeks (49 years) plus an additional 62 weeks (434 years). These are two distinct time frames that will run into one another and form a total of 483 years (49 years plus 434 years). The angel gave an amazing prophecy when he predicted that the Messiah would be "cut off" after 62 weeks (434 years), starting the count from the end of the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. As scholars point out, from the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem until the Messiah was cut off, or crucified, totaled 483 years.

The final time frame is "one week," or seven years. In the middle of the this final seven-year cycle (which would be after forty-two months or three and a half years), a future coming "prince" (the Antichrist) will enter the city of Jerusalem again, stop the sacrifices, and make the city desolate through abominations until the end of the consummation of all things (see Dan. 9:26-27). Notice the three divisions in greater detail below.

Division One: Seven Weeks of 49 Years

The Jews did return after seventy years based upon a decree. However, this prediction says there was a decree to rebuild Jerusalem. When the captives returned, they immediately began building the temple and soon thereafter began rebuilding the walls during severe opposition from leaders in Samaria (see Ezra and Nehemiah). Daniel had predicted that the city and wall would be rebuilt in troublesome times (see Dan. 9:25). The first phase of seven weeks (49 years) began when the first group of captives returned to clean up Jerusalem and rebuild the walls and gates, and it continued until the time the Jews completed and occupied the city, which according to Gabriel would be 49 years.

Division Two: 62 Weeks

When the city was complete (after the 49-year cycle), a new count began to move forward "threescore and two weeks (9:25), meaning 62 weeks from the completion of the city until the Messiah was "cut off" Notice that the Messiah will be cut off but "not for himself" (9:26). Christ did not die for Himself, but He died to bring redemption for humankind (see John 3:16). These 62 sevens are 434 years from the completion of the city to the death of the Messiah. This would bring us to the time of the crucifixion of Christ. Several dates are given for the crucifixion, from as early as AD 28 to AD 32. As believers, we must by faith understand that this time frame revealed by Gabriel was complete at the time of the crucifixion.

Division Three: One Week

Notice in the prophecy that the seven weeks and the 62 weeks are put together in the same passage (v. 25-26). However, the final seven-year period stands by itself long after the Messiah is cut off. The "war desolations" may refer to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70. Then in verse 27, we come to the last seven years in the cycle of the 490 years, or 70-week prophecy. Scholars note that there is a continual flow from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah is cut off, 483 years. However, the last seven years were interrupted by wars and desolations of the temple and Jerusalem. This is where some scholars indicate that a gap of prophetic time occurs. From the decree to rebuild to the death of the Messiah was a total of 483 years. Where are the missing seven years that would complete the 490-year cycle (the 70 weeks)?

This gap can be identified as a time frame in which the Jewish people rejected Christ as the Messiah and the Gentiles received Him. This acceptance by the Gentiles introduced the "times of the Gentiles," which must conclude to bring about the return of the Messiah (see Luke 21:24; see also Romans 11:25 that speaks of the conclusion of the "fulness of the Gentiles"). The fullness of the Gentiles will be accomplished when the complete number of Gentiles hear and receive the Gospel and come into the Kingdom; this will be followed by the removal of spiritual blindness from natural Israel (see Rom. 11). According to Luke 21:24, the times of the Gentiles are completed when the Gentile nations that once controlled Jerusalem lose complete control of the sacred Jewish city of Jerusalem, and it goes back under the authority of the Jewish people. This occurred in 1967 during the Six-Day War, as Jerusalem was reunited as one city under Jewish authority. However, there is one more major division coming under the Antichrist (see Rev. 11:1-2).

The final seven years of Daniel 9:27 have not yet occurred and will begin when the coming "prince" (Antichrist) forges a seven-year treaty with Israel and then breaks the treaty in the middle of the seven years. At that point, a terrible tribulation will be unleashed against Israel that continues for a "time [one year], times [two years] and an half [half of a year]" (Dan. 12:7). When the seven years are concluded, the Messiah will return and thus complete Daniel's 490-year cycle that will bring in everlasting righteousness."