



Chapter 9

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McGee Introduction: This is another one of those remarkable chapters in Scripture. Dr. Philip Newell evaluates it, “The greatest chapter in the book and one of the greatest chapters of the entire Bible.” The double theme is prayer and prophecy. If one were to choose the ten greatest chapters of the Bible on the subject of prayer, this chapter would be included on any list. If the ten most important chapters on prophecy were chosen, this chapter would again be included on any list. The first 21 verses give us the prayer of Daniel, and the final 6 verses give us the very important prophecy of the Seventy Weeks.

THE PRAYER OF DANIEL

This prayer of Daniel is actually a culmination of a life of prayer. Daniel asked for a prayer meeting to learn the dream of Nebuchadnezzar at the beginning of the book, and he has been a man of prayer all the way through. The prayer in this chapter gives the pattern of his prayer life and acquaints us with the conditions of prayer. Here are some of the basic elements in the prescription of prayer:

Purposeful Planning. Prayer was no haphazard matter with Daniel. He wrote, “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes” (v. 3). Prayer was not just a repetition of idle words or the putting together of pretty phrases with flowery grammar. The Lord Jesus said, “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (Matt. 6:7). Such is not real prayer.

Painful Performance. Daniel prayed with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. This was not done for outward show but to reveal the sincerity of his heart. One doesn’t see many prayer meetings like that today.

Perfect Plainness. Daniel was candid and straightforward in his confession. He got right down to business with God.

There is the story of a preacher in a Scottish prayer meeting who got up and started one of his long-winded prayers. Finally a dear old lady pulled his coattail and said, “Parson, call Him ‘Father’ and ask Him for something.” We need more plainness in prayer.

Powerful Petition. Daniel received an answer while he was speaking and praying. The angel Gabriel appeared to him to give him some explanation. This man got *answers* to his prayers. “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us” (1 John 5:14).

Personal and Private. Daniel did not call a public prayer meeting; he prayed privately. This prayer of his is of three minutes’ duration. Our Lord often prayed privately. His prayer which is recorded in John 17 is also three minutes long. There are many of us who want to call a public prayer meeting when we ought to spend more time in *private* prayer.

Plenary (full) Penetration. Prayer is the only force that has penetrated outer space to the throne of God. Sir Isaac Newton said that he could take up a telescope and look at the nearest star, but he could put down the telescope, get down on his knees and penetrate the outer heavens to the very throne of God.

Prayer for Daniel was a real exercise of soul in spiritual travail. Such prayer is arduous work. It requires effort and endurance and suffering.¹

Introduction - Deffinbaugh

A friend and neighbor called recently to say she had suffered a stroke in one eye. When I went to see her, she asked me to have a cup of coffee. As she poured from the coffee pot, we both noticed the coffee was missing the cup. The stroke had taken my friend's vision from one eye, seriously affecting her perception.

God gave us the sight of two eyes so that we might have depth perception. When one eye is lost, depth perception is greatly diminished. In photography, this is called "depth of field." When under certain conditions, an object is photographed with the background out of focus and fuzzy, we say it has no "depth of field." Under different conditions, a picture may be taken with a clear, sharp background and with good "depth of field."

Men who live independently of God, go about their lives one-eyed, able to only see what is immediately before them. They have no "depth of field." It is easy to understand the "now generation;" they cannot see beyond the present. Prophecy puts present-day living in the context of future certainties. Prophecy is God's way of giving the Christian "depth of field."

In the ninth chapter of Daniel, Daniel concludes that the 70-year period of Israel's captivity is virtually over, and that return of Jews to their own land is imminent. With this hope, Daniel begins to pray for himself and his people. His prayer of confession and petition is answered, but certainly not in a way Daniel would have expected. God sent Gabriel, His angel, to give Daniel understanding and insight into the vision he had received, enabling him to see the near future in perspective. God wanted Daniel to understand the relationship between Israel's soon return to the land and the rebuilding of the temple—in the light of God's promise to restore His people and establish His kingdom on the earth. God wanted Daniel to know that Israel's imminent return to the land was not the coming of the kingdom of God.

Chapter 9 is a truly rich portion of Scripture. Daniel's prayer is a model worthy of our study, our meditation, and our imitation. Gabriel's appearance and announcement provides Daniel and his reader with an increasing level of understanding of the vision God had previously revealed. Verses 24-27 begin to spell out future events in detail rather than with vague, mysterious symbols. While all may not agree on the meaning of these verses, all Christians would agree they provide very specific information concerning the last times. For the first time in Daniel's prophecy, the suffering and death of Messiah is introduced.

These inspired words of prophecy speak of the days to come. They also speak of the coming Messiah, through whom God will provide the forgiveness of sins and bring to earth the kingdom of God. They speak of the hope which lies ahead for every believer. They speak of those future certainties which put present events in perspective.²

¹McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:582). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1995

Introduction Van Impe: What you are about to read is a reflection on one of the most important chapters in the Book of Daniel, and one of the most remarkable passages in all of the Bible. Its dual theme of prayer and prophecy is like no other portion of God's Word: Daniel's prayer stands as a model for any person serious about seeking the Lord and His holiness in his or her life; while the prophecy of the seventy weeks contains the most precise information in Scripture that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah promised to the children of Israel through their own prophets.³

"Oh! That you studied your Bibles more! Oh! That we all did! How we could plead the promises! How often we should prevail with God when we could hold him to his word, and say, 'Fulfill this word unto thy servant, whereon thou hast caused me to hope.' Oh! It is grand praying when our mouth is full of God's word, for there is no word that can prevail with him like his own." (Spurgeon)

Daniel 9:1

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

[first year] The vision was seen about a year after the one in Daniel 8 (cp. Daniel 5:30-31 with Daniel 8:1).

[Darius] Uncle of Cyrus? [Same as Chapter 6?] "...was made": passive recipient.

[Darius the son of Ahasuerus] This was no doubt Astyages or Xerxes, the son of Ahasuerus or Cyaxares. Ahasuerus is an appellative and used of four kings of Medo-Persia. The Greek form is Xerxes. Both Cyaxares and Astyages were called Ahasuerus, the appellative meaning the Mighty.⁴

[Medes] The Medes were Japhethites (Genesis 10:2; 2 Kings 17:6; 2 Kings 18:11; 1 Chron. 1:5; Ezra 6:2; Esther 1:3-19; Esther 10:2; Isaiah 13:17; Isaiah 21:2; Jeremiah 25:25; Jeremiah 51:11,28; Daniel 5:28-31; Daniel 6:1-16; Daniel 8:20; Daniel 9:1; Daniel 11:1; Acts 2:9).

McGee: "First year of Darius ... of the seed of the Medes." The two significant questions are: Who was Darius and what was the date? Darius the Mede *may* be identified as Cyaxares II of secular history (Dan. 5:31). "Darius" is more an official title, such as king, czar, or emperor, than an actual name. There has been some disagreement as to the exact

³ Book of Daniel Commentary by Jack Van Impe

⁴ Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

date. Newell thinks it is 538 B.C.; Culber places it at 536 B.C. I think either date would fit into the background. This man conquered Babylon in 538 B.C.⁵

The Chaldeans were the Babylonians.

Daniel 9:2

In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Here Daniel was reading Jeremiah's prophecy. Daniel took it literally! (Jer 25:11,12; 29:10).

(Jeremiah 25:11-12) ¹¹*And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹²And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.*

Note: It is the "servitude of the nation" in view here, not the city only.

(Jeremiah 29:10) *For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.*

Here also the "servitude of the nation" is in view here, not the destiny of the city.

[books] By the scrolls of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:11 as well as Jeremiah 29:1,10; 2 Chron. 36:21).

[seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem]

Three Periods of Seventy Years

1. The servitude began in the 4th year of Jehoiakim, and the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar, when the Judean kingdom passed under the Chaldean rule for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:1; 2 Kings 24:1-7). This period closed with the fall of Babylon through Darius the Mede (Astyages, Daniel 5:31).
2. The captivity began with the carrying away to Babylon of Jechoniah in the 8th year of Nebuchadnezzar (7 years after the servitude of point 1, above, 2 Kings 24:8-16) and 11 years before Jerusalem was destroyed (Ezekiel 40:1).
3. "The desolations of Jerusalem" is a term referring to the complete destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar in the 11th year of Zedekiah (2 Kings 24:17-25:2; Leviticus 26:32-35). The desolations of Jerusalem began about 19 years after the first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 24:1-5), about 11 years after the second siege (2 Kings 24:8-16), and at the time of the third and final siege (2 Kings 24:17-25:4).

⁵McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:583). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

By the time of Daniel's prayer and vision of Daniel 9 the servitude had ended and the captivity and the desolations of Judah and Jerusalem were soon to end.⁶

McGee: This is in the first year of the reign of Darius. Daniel has now seen a new great world empire come into position, and he is wondering about the future and especially the future of his own people. So Daniel turns to a study of the Word of God. He reads the book of the prophet Jeremiah who said that Israel would be in captivity for seventy years. The date is about 537 B.C. in this chapter. Daniel is between eighty-five and ninety years of age. He had been captured back in 606 B.C. when he was about seventeen. That means that the seventy-year period is coming to a close. It is about the time that these people will be given the opportunity to return to their own land.

Daniel was concerned about his people. I think he was shaken by that little horn in chapter 8, Antiochus Epiphanes, the Syrian king of the Seleucid dynasty. He would abuse Daniel's people, and he would desecrate the temple. All of this caused Daniel great concern.

We should notice that the determining factor which brought Daniel to this prayer was his study of the Word of God. The Word reveals the will of God. A study of God's Word, followed by prayer, is the formula for determining God's will. These are the promises which Daniel read: "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (Jer. 25:11). "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (Jer. 29:10).

Keep in mind that Daniel had been studying Jeremiah's prophecy about these seventy years. When Gabriel used the expression, "seventy weeks" (v. 24), he was extending the time of the seventy years. The Seventy Weeks will cover the entire time of the nation Israel in this time of testing before the kingdom is established on earth.

Just reading Daniel's prayer reveals how different prayer was in his day from what it is now. Notice the conditions in the following verses⁷

Daniel was a student of prophecy and was well aware of the events of his time. Students of Bible prophecy walk in the light and understanding of what God has revealed. Daniel read the prophecies of Moses (Deuteronomy 28:25) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 29:10-11). He knew that the captivity would last 70 years.

Van Impe: Daniel is starting to do his math, and he's doing it by looking at God's timetable for the restoration of Israel. He reads in Jeremiah 25:11-12.

Daniel certainly turned to his Hebrew manuscripts to study 2 Chronicles 36, where he observed that the Jews, because they failed to protect their land (breaking seventy sabbatical years) would be punished for a period equal to their disobedience. The more Daniel read, the more excited he must have felt, because he calculated that the seventy years of judgment on his people had almost come to an end (the captivity of the Jews had started in 605 B.C. and now it was the year 538 B.C.) and that the Jews would soon be allowed to return to their home. But we are forced to say, "Not so fast, Daniel. You have

⁶ Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

⁷ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:583). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

only a partial understanding of what is still to come." And it is this still-to-come end-time information that is the essence of chapter nine.⁸

Guzik: Daniel understood something from reading the words of God's prophets. Prophecy is meant to be understood - perhaps not in every detail, but certainly in its main points.

Daniel understood this by the books - the *specific words* recorded in *God-inspired* books. Daniel couldn't read 2 Timothy 3:16, but he did believe the truth of it: *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*

"These verses show Daniel as a diligent student of Scripture who built his prayer life on the Word of God." (Archer)⁹

Daniel 9:3

And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

"Nothing, therefore, can be better for us, than to ask for what he has promised." (Calvin)

This principle is repeated in many passages. 2 Peter 3:12 indicates that there is a sense in which we can *hasten* the Lord's coming by our holy conduct and godly lives; we can also hasten the Lord's coming through evangelism because Paul says that God's prophetic focus on Israel will resume when the *fullness of the Gentiles has come in* (Romans 11:25). This means that we can also hasten the Lord's coming through prayer, even as Daniel asked for a speedy fulfillment of prophecy regarding captive Israel (Daniel 9). We can also pray *Even so, come, Lord Jesus!* (Revelation 22:20) If you want Jesus to come soon, there is something you can *do* about it!

"Too often our interest in the prophetic Scriptures is of a curious and speculative nature, or else we conclude that God will carry out His sovereign purpose no matter what we do, and so we do not concern ourselves with those matters." (Strauss)

Daniel was determined to do what ever it took to get this job done in prayer. He *"left nothing undone that might possibly make his prayer more effective or more persuasive."* (Walvoord)

[I set my face] This implies *determination* in prayer. Daniel had an objective to achieve in prayer, and he approached God as a man who would not be denied. He did this because he was rightly convinced that his prayer was in the will of God, and knew it was not motivated by any selfish desire.

⁸ Book of Daniel Commentary by Jack Van Impe

⁹ WWW. Blue Letter Bible, David Guzik Commentary on Daniel

[Lord God] YHWH: 7X in this chapter only.

[I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes] This seemed to be the usual procedure for Daniel when he wanted a definite answer (Daniel 2:18; Daniel 6:10; Daniel 8:15,27; Daniel 10:2-3).

I set my face—to seek by prayer—He found that the time of the promised deliverance could not be at any great distance; and as he saw nothing that indicated a speedy termination of their oppressive captivity, he was very much afflicted, and earnestly besought God to put a speedy end to it; and how earnestly he seeks, his own words show. He prayed, he supplicated, he fasted, he put sackcloth upon his body, and he put ashes upon his head. He uses that kind of prayer prescribed by Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the temple.¹⁰

Since Daniel knew that the 70 years were almost ended, he began to seek God, probably to discover whether God had any specific instructions for him in the repatriation of Israel. Though Daniel was 90 years old, he had authority in the court of Darius. We should make ourselves available to God each day so that He can use us for His purposes. Fasting, wearing uncomfortable sackcloth, and putting on ashes were ways the Jews afflicted themselves to show God they were sincere.

Deffinbaugh (vs. 1-3): Daniel tells us the events of this chapter occur during the “first year of Darius.” This is a significant time indicator. It means that Belshazzar has already died, the Babylonian empire has ended, and the Medo-Persian empire has now taken its place (see chapter 5). Daniel’s words inform us that the events of Daniel 9 must have taken place at least 12 years after he received his second vision in chapter 8. It also means the events of this chapter occur at a time very near that described in Daniel 6, as Daniel was rising to power and prominence and as his peers were arranging to bring about Daniel’s evening in the den of lions.

Could it be that the intrigue of Daniel’s peers in chapter 6, which abused the law to prohibit the practice of Daniel’s faith and led to his persecution, was but a foretaste of the things revealed to Daniel concerning the last days in chapter 9? Could it also be that Daniel’s prayers toward Jerusalem three times a day in chapter 6, which he would not cease to pray, were like his prayer in chapter 9?

Daniel was very conscious of the time because of the prophetic implications. When God created the nation Israel and brought them out of Egypt, He gave them His law and made a covenant with them. He promised to bless His people if they kept His covenant and curse them if they rejected and disobeyed. A part of the curse was the threat of captivity in a foreign land. A part of His promise was Israel’s restoration, if they repented and once again kept His covenant.

Understanding the covenant God made with Israel, and God’s warning that the Israelites would disobey and be taken captive by foreign nations, Solomon anticipated a time when the Jewish captives would turn toward Jerusalem in prayer, expressing the very same kind of prayer recorded in Daniel 9:

¹⁰ Adam Clarke’s Commentary

(1 Kings 8:46-53) 46 “When they sin against Thee (for there is no man who does not sin) and Thou art angry with them and dost deliver them to an enemy, so that they take them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near; 47 if they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive, and repent and make supplication to Thee in the land of those who have taken them captive, saying, ‘We have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly’; 48 if they return to Thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to Thee toward their land which Thou hast given to their fathers, the city which Thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for Thy name; 49 then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, 50 and forgive Thy people who have sinned against Thee and all their transgressions which they have transgressed against Thee, and make them objects of compassion before those who have taken them captive, that they may have compassion on them 51 (for they are Thy people and Thine inheritance which Thou hast brought forth from Egypt, from the midst of the iron furnace), 52 that Thine eyes may be open to the supplication of Thy servant and to the supplication of Thy people Israel, to listen to them whenever they call to Thee. 53 “For Thou hast separated them from all the peoples of the earth as Thine inheritance, as Thou didst speak through Moses Thy servant, when Thou didst bring our fathers forth from Egypt, O Lord God”.

The inspired historical account of 2 Chronicles describes the very events God had prophetically foretold:

(2 Chronicles 36:15-23) 15 And the Lord, the God of their fathers, sent {word} to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; 16 but they {continually} mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, until there was no remedy. 17 Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or infirm; He gave {them} all into his hand. 18 And all the articles of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king and of his officers, he brought {them} all to Babylon. 19 Then they burned the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem and burned all its fortified buildings with fire, and destroyed all its valuable articles. 20 And those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, 21 to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete. 22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia— in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah— the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that

he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also {put it} in writing, saying, 23 “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the Lord his God be with him, and let him go up!’”

Specifically, we are informed in the first verses of chapter 9 that Daniel’s prayer in our text was the result of an observation Daniel had made concerning one of Jeremiah’s prophecies. Jeremiah had warned the Jews for years that God’s judgment was coming in the form of the Babylonian captivity. When it came, the false prophets tried to assure the people it would not be for long. Jeremiah warned that the length of Judah’s captivity would be 70 years. After the 70 years of captivity ended, two things would happen: first, the Babylonians would be punished for their severity toward the Jews, and second, the Jews would return to Israel where they would rebuild the temple.

Until now, Daniel could not pray the prayer of chapter 9, for God had commanded the Jews not to pray for Israel (see Jeremiah 7:16; 11:14; 14:11). God had warned the Jews judgment was coming, a warning they ignored. Now, Babylonian captivity was inevitable, irreversible, and non-negotiable. Thus, the Jews were not to pray for Israel but for their captors (Jeremiah 29:7).

But here in chapter 9 in the first year of Darius, the period of divine judgment had ended. Babylon had been judged, and the time for the return of the Jews was drawing near. Now Daniel could pray for his people. He commits himself to pray faithfully, devoting himself to the task.

Is this not amazing? At the very time Daniel devotes himself to this high spiritual calling of prayer, supplication, and fasting on behalf of his people, he also makes significant advancement in his secular ministry of civil service:

Imagine! Daniel did not set aside his devotion to his job, even though he devoted himself to prayer for his people. Intense prayer for the return and restoration of his people did not require a lack of faithfulness to his job and to the king. With the hope of Israel’s return to their land so bright, we might have expected Daniel to resign his job or at least lag in diligence. He did neither, but remained faithful to his employer and faithful to his God. By remaining faithful to his employer, Daniel remained faithful to His God. Verses 1-3 have set the scene. With the death of Belshazzar came the end of the Babylonian empire. The rise of Darius to power commenced the Medo-Persian empire. Daniel realizes that the time of Israel’s chastening has ended, and the time for the Jews’ return to the land of Israel is imminent. So he begins to pray for the restoration of the nation Israel. His prayer, recorded in verses 4-19, may be typical of the prayers he faithfully offered up three times a day.¹¹

¹¹ Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1995

Daniel 9:4

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;

Sixty-seven of seventy years had passed... Notice Daniel's response: *he goes to prayer*. Prayer (for that which was certain?): Daniel is, again, our example: He is "in the Word" and in Prayer! (Prayers: Ezra 9; Neh 9?) [Cf. "Thy Kingdom Come." Prayer is God's way of enlisting *you* in what He is doing. Fasting in NT: Mt 9:14,15; Acts 13:2,3; 14:23; 1 Cor 7:5; 2 Cor 6:5; 11:27.]¹²

[my confession] Daniel here confesses for the sinful people with whom he identifies himself by "we" and "us" (Daniel 9:5-19; cp. Ezra 9:5-15; Neh. 1; Neh. 9:33-38).

[the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments] Seven truths about God:

1. He is a great God (Daniel 9:4).
2. A dreadful God (Daniel 9:4). Hebrew: $\psi\alpha\rho\epsilon\kappa$ (HSN-3372), to be feared or revered.
3. He keeps covenant and mercy to them that love Him (Daniel 9:4), and
4. to them that keep His commandments (Daniel 9:4)
5. A righteous God (Daniel 9:7,14,16)
6. A God of judgment (Daniel 9:7,13-14,16)
7. A God of mercy (Daniel 9:9)¹³

Keeping the covenant—Fidelity and truth are characteristics of God. He had never yet broken his engagements to his followers, and was ever showing mercy to men.

McGee (vs. 3&4): "To seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting." We are told that the Lord Jesus fasted, but fasting was never given to the people of God as a service. It was something that one could do over and above what was required. It is mentioned that in the early church there were many who fasted. Paul wrote to the Christians at Corinth: "In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:27).

Daniel demonstrated a purposeful persistence in prayer. Even Jacob in his prayer cried, "... I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (Gen. 32:26).

This prayer of Daniel is very personal. It concerns him and his people, which is evident by the repeated use of the first person pronouns, *I*, *we*, and *our*. They appear forty-one times in this prayer. You may remember that we pointed out how Nebuchadnezzar used the personal pronoun in chapter 4. What is the difference? For Nebuchadnezzar it was a mark of pride, a mark of being lifted up. The contrast of Daniel's use of the personal pronoun is striking. It denotes humility, confession, and "confusion of faces" in contrast to Nebuchadnezzar's pride and self-adulation.

¹² Chuck Missler, Notes on the Book of Daniel, Commentary, khouse.org

¹³ Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

Daniel is down on his face before God. He recognizes the attributes of God. First we see that he rests upon his personal relationship to God. He calls Him, “My God,” appealing to God in a very personal way. Before he makes his confession, he dwells on the greatness of God. “Dreadful God” actually means worthy of reverence. One cannot trifle with God.

Daniel acknowledges that God keeps the covenant and mercy to them that love Him. He not only makes promises, but He keeps them. He is immutable and, therefore, He is faithful. He is also a God of mercy. It was by His mercy that the nation Israel had been preserved. It is by His mercy that you and I have been brought to this present moment. It is by His mercy that He saves us. “It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not” (Lam. 3:22). God is gracious, but God also expects us to mean business, and God expects to be obeyed.

Now notice Daniel’s confession of sin in the following verses.¹⁴

my confession—according to God’s promises in Le 26:39–42, that if Israel in exile for sin should repent and *confess*, God would remember for them His covenant with Abraham (compare De 30:1–5; Je 29:12–14; Jam 4:10). God’s promise was absolute, but prayer also was ordained as about to precede its fulfilment, this too being the work of God *in* His people, as much as the *external* restoration which was to follow. So it shall be at Israel’s final restoration (Ps 102:13–17). Daniel takes his countrymen’s place of confession of sin, identifying himself with them, and, as their representative and intercessory priest, “accepts the punishment of their iniquity.” Thus he typifies Messiah, the Sin-bearer and great Intercessor. The prophet’s own life and experience form the fit starting point of the prophecy concerning the sin atonement. He prays for Israel’s restoration as associated in the prophets (compare Je 31:4, 11, 12, 31, &c.). with the hope of Messiah. The revelation, now granted, analyzes into its successive parts that which the prophets, in prophetic perspective, heretofore saw together in one; namely, the redemption from captivity, and the full Messianic redemption. God’s servants, who, like Noah’s father (Ge 5:29), hoped many a time that now the Comforter of their afflictions was at hand, had to wait from age to age, and to view preceding fulfilments only as pledges of the coming of Him whom they so earnestly desired to see (Mt 13:17); as now also Christians, who believe that the Lord’s second coming is nigh, are expected to continue waiting. So Daniel is informed of a long period of seventy prophetic weeks before Messiah’s coming, instead of seventy years, as *he* might have expected¹⁵

¹⁴McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:583). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

¹⁵Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. On spine: Critical and explanatory commentary. (Da 9:4). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Daniel 9:5

We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

[**We have sinned**] Only two in OT of which no evil is spoken of: Joseph and Daniel. His prayer is corporate on behalf of his people...

[**We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly**] Twelve sins of Israel:

1. We have sinned (Daniel 9:5,11,15,16).
2. We have committed iniquity (Daniel 9:5).
3. We have have done wickedly (Daniel 9:5).
4. We have departed from God's precepts (Daniel 9:5).
5. We have departed from God's judgments (Daniel 9:5).
6. We have not listened to God's servants, the prophets (Daniel 9:6).
7. We have trespassed against God (Daniel 9:7).
8. We have rebelled against God (Daniel 9:9).
9. We have not obeyed God's voice (Daniel 9:10).
10. We have not walked in His laws (Daniel 9:10).
11. We have transgressed God's law (Daniel 9:11).
12. We have disobeyed God's voice (Daniel 9:11,14).¹⁶

[**rebelled**] Used of revolt against God or royalty.

Daniel confessed that God had kept His part of the covenant but that the Jews had failed to keep their side. God's covenants with us often are conditional on us keeping our side of the agreement. People often blame God for the judgment they have merited, rather than admitting their errors and asking for His forgiveness.¹⁷

Guzik: O Lord, great and awesome God: Daniel began his prayer where we all should - by recognizing the greatness and goodness of God. Sometimes we approach God as a stingy person who must be persuaded to give us something. But Daniel knew the problem was not with God. God keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him.

Daniel's prayer is remarkable for both its *understanding* and *earnestness*. Many pray with understanding but not earnestness; others are earnest but have no understanding in prayer. The two together are a powerful combination.

"Oh! That our prayers could get beyond praying, till they got to agonizing." (Spurgeon)

We have sinned and committed iniquity: As Daniel confesses Israel's sin he prays as if he is as bad as the rest of Israel. This is a confession of **we**, not *they*. In this sense, *they* prayers never really reach God; genuine **we** prayers see self correctly and see our fellow saints with compassion.

¹⁶ Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

¹⁷ Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Daniel, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA

Daniel's confession of sin might seem phony until we realize how passionately and completely he is focused on God. Compared to God, even the most righteous among us falls far short.¹⁸

"I firmly believe that, the better a man's own character becomes, and the more joy in the Lord he has in his own heart, the more capable is he of sympathetic sorrow; and, probably, the more of it he will have. If thou hast room in thy soul for sacred joy, thou hast equal room for holy grief."
(Spurgeon)

Daniel 9:6

Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

McGee (vs. 5&6): "We have sinned." Daniel identifies himself with his people back there in the land of Israel when they rebelled against God, which resulted in their captivity. He is specific in his confession. He labels each sin: iniquity, wickedness, rebellion, disobedience, and refusal to hear God's prophets. He writes them all down. He doesn't leave any out.

My friend, I believe that our confession of sin requires exactly that. It isn't enough to go to God and say, "I have sinned." It means to tell God exactly what we have done. When my wife sends me to the grocery store, she doesn't say, "Get some groceries." She always gives me a list of items. I am to get this, get that, and get the other thing—and four or five more things. I have to go through that list. And I feel that confession of sins should be that specific. Spell it out to Him. Maybe we don't like to do that because it is an ugly thing. But spell it out to Him; He already knows how ugly it is. We need to come to Him in frank, open confession.¹⁹

An honest confession will bring deliverance. As long as we attempt to justify ourselves and defend our actions, we'll get nowhere with God, because God knows us better than we know ourselves. Our confession of sins opens the door for His mercy, grace, and forgiveness. Daniel knew that the Jews had persecuted and killed the prophets of God who had come to warn the people about their sins.

Instead of *complaining*, Daniel *confessed*. During times of great revival among God's people, the Holy Spirit always brings a deep conviction and awareness of sin. When that is responded to rightly, confession is appropriately made. J. Edwin Orr gives a good principle to govern confession: "If you sin secretly, confess secretly, admitting publicly that you need the victory but keeping details to yourself. If you sin openly confess openly to remove stumbling blocks from those whom you have hindered. If you have sinned spiritually (prayerlessness, lovelessness, and unbelief as well as their offspring, criticism, etc.) then confess to the church that you have been a hindrance."

¹⁸ WWW. Blue Letter Bible, David Guzik Commentary on Daniel

¹⁹ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:584). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Genuine, appropriate confession will be sincere, specific, and thorough. Orr describes how in the 1952 revival in Brazil a woman in a crowded church confessed, "Please pray for me, I need to love people more." The leader told her gently, "That is not a confession, sister. Anyone could have said it." Later in the service the lady stood again and said, "Please pray for me. What I should have said is that my sharp tongue has caused a lot of trouble in this congregation." The pastor leaned over to Orr and whispered "Now she is talking!"

All this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God: As Daniel confesses his sin and the sin of Israel, he comes to the sin of *prayerlessness*. Even when they faced great trial and calamity, Israel still did not make their **prayer before the LORD**. When we sense trial or difficulty it should drive us *immediately* to prayer - when we are not so driven it should be a wake-up call to the coldness of our heart.²⁰

Daniel 9:7

O Lord, righteousness *belongeth* unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, *that are near, and that are far off*, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

[**confusion**] Hebrew: *bosheth* (HSN-1322), shame, paleness (Daniel 9:7-8; 1 Samuel 20:30; Ezra 9:7; Psalm 109:29; Jeremiah 7:19).

[**all Israel, that are near, and that are far off**] He prays for Judah and all Israel, far and near. The 10 tribes had been taken into Assyrian captivity 133 years before Judah (2 Kings 17).

[**all the countries whither thou hast driven them**] All Israel and Judah were scattered in all provinces of the empires of Assyria, Babylon, and Medo-Persia, and no doubt in other countries (Daniel 9:7; Esther 8:9-17; Esther 9:1-2).

McGee: "All Israel, that are near, and that are far off." The people of Israel were scattered, but there were no lost tribes—it is a misnomer to call them that. Some of the tribes were near Daniel there in Babylon and others were far off, but he knew where they were. He didn't say they were lost. But they were scattered "through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee."²¹

Daniel 9:8

O Lord, to us *belongeth* confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

²⁰ WWW. Blue Letter Bible, David Guzik Commentary on Daniel

²¹ McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:584). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Daniel 9:9

To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;

Mercies and forgivenesses—From God's goodness flow God's mercies; from his mercies, forgivenesses.²²

Daniel 9:10

Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

[servants the prophets] The despised prophets were recognized by Israel after they had suffered and many of their predictions had been fulfilled (cp. 2 Kings 17:13; Isaiah 44:26; Lament. 2:17; Zech. 1:16; Hebrews 1:1-2).

Daniel 9:11

Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

Their national destiny determined by their behavior (2 Chr 7:14)!

[all Israel] The term "all Israel" here and in the majority of places refers to all the tribes of Israel, not excluding Judah, as some teach today (see Jews and Israel the Same?).

[the curse is poured upon us] The curse God promised that would come upon them if they rebelled (Leviticus 26:14-17,29-39; Deut. 27:15-26; Deut. 28:15-62; Deut. 29:20; Deut. 31:17).

Therefore the curse is poured upon us—It is probable that he alludes here to the punishment of certain criminals by pouring melted metal upon them; therefore he uses the word | | | *πιτταχη*, it is poured out, like melted metal, for this is the proper meaning of the root | □ *νατηαχη*.²³

²² Adam Clarke's Commentary

²³ Adam Clarke's Commentary

Daniel 9:12

And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

[he hath confirmed his words] God will always confirm His Word and curse those who sin and bless those who obey (Galatians 6:7-8; see Twenty-one Examples of Beings Fallen from Grace).

[for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem]

This is one of the greatest proofs of God confirming a curse as well as a blessing, according to His Word. God cannot lie, so what He orders as the penalty for sin will be meted out as surely as reward for obedience.

Daniel 9:13

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

[yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth] Threefold guarantee of blessing from God:

1. Prayer and confession of sin (Daniel 9:3,4-6,17,20)
2. Turning from iniquity (Daniel 9:13; Isaiah 55:7)
3. Understanding and obeying truth (Daniel 9:4-10,13; John 8:32-36; Romans 1:16)

Daniel mentioned the curses outlined in Deut. 28. God had given the people of Israel a choice: obey me and receive blessings, or disobey me and face curses. The affliction was meant to turn the people to God. When we face difficult circumstances, we should ask ourselves if God has reason to send judgment. If we think so, we must urgently seek his forgiveness. Then we can ask him to help us through our troubles.²⁴

McGee: (vs. 8-14): Up to this point have you noticed how Daniel contrasted God's goodness with Israel's sin? He contrasted His righteousness with their "confusion of face" which was their shame. They were scattered because of their trespass against God. They *deserved* the punishment they had received. God was righteous in sending them into captivity. God was right; they were wrong.

Oh, my friend, if you go to God and make excuses for your sin, if you say to Him, "Lord, you know that I am weak and I was in this and that circumstance," you are blaming your sin upon God. You are saying that God made a mistake—He should have taken those things into consideration. He has been too hard on you! My friend, you and I are getting exactly what we deserve. And we need to go to God in confession of our sin. In our day I hear folk implying that God may be wrong in what He is doing. God is *not* wrong; we are the ones who are wrong.

²⁴ Life Application Notes

Daniel's attitude is the proper attitude that each of us should take as we approach our God in prayer. God will not utterly forsake us, but He certainly is not going to move on our behalf until you and I get to the place where we can claim the *mercy* of God and stop making excuses for ourselves.²⁵

Daniel 9:14

Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.

The Lord watched upon the evil—In consequence of our manifold rebellions he hath now watched for an opportunity to bring these calamities upon us.

Daniel 9:15

And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

[thy people] Israelites, even in apostasy and dispersion, are considered the chosen people of God. He is going to bring them to repentance and eternal obedience and fulfill the covenants made with them (Isaiah 11:10-12; Isaiah 59:20-21; Isaiah 66:7-8; Ezekiel 37; Zech. 12:10-13:1; Luke 1:32-33; Romans 11:25-29).

Deffinbaugh: While a fuller exposition of the riches of this text is not possible here, we shall seek to highlight the main features of this portion of Daniel's prayer.

(1) These verses are the *expression of Daniel's repentance and confession of sin, for himself and for his fellow-Jews.* Daniel minimizes neither his sin nor the sin of his fellow-Jews. He uses a wide variety of expressions to describe sin in its various manifestations. In verse 5, Daniel says they have "sinned," "committed iniquity," "acted wickedly," "rebelled," and "turned aside from God's commandments and ordinances." In verse 6, he adds that "we have not listened ... to the prophets." In verse 7, Daniel refers to Israel's "unfaithful deeds." Israel's bondage in Babylon is the consequence of her sin. Daniel's confession mirrors the words of 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 (see above).

(2) *The Word of God, as spoken by the prophets and recorded in the Holy Scriptures, is the standard by which Daniel's sins, and those of his fellow-Israelites, are identified.* Just as many terms were employed to describe Israel's sins, many different terms are used in reference to divine revelation. God gave Israel His "commandments" (verse 4), His "commandments and ordinances" (verse 5), He spoke through the "prophets" (verse 6), "His teachings" (verse 10), His "Law" (verse 11), and the "Law of Moses" (verses 11, 13). God's revelation was His "truth" (verse 13).

²⁵McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:585). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

(3) Daniel understands Israel’s Babylonian captivity as the *curse which has come upon the Jews because they broke God’s covenant made with them at Mount Sinai* (verse 11).

(4) Israel’s sins are seen *in contrast to the character of God*. Daniel’s consciousness of his own sins, and those of his fellow-Israelites, was the result of his deep sense of the majesty of God as seen by His divine attributes. Consider his prayer: God is “great and awesome,” who “keeps His covenant and lovingkindness” (verse 4). God is not just “righteous in all He has done” (verse 14); “righteousness,” “compassion,” and “forgiveness” “*belong to Him*” (verses 7, 9). It is one thing to be righteous, forgiving, and compassionate; it is quite another to own these qualities. Owning them means they can only be obtained from God. These qualities are under His control.

(5) Daniel’s confession of sin is *precisely what is required of Israel in order to be forgiven and restored*.

(Leviticus 26:40-42) 40 “*If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me— 41 I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies— or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, 42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land*”’; (see also 1 Kings 8:46-48).²⁶

Daniel 9:16

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people *are become a reproach to all that are about us*.

Focus: Jerusalem and God’s people...

[let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem] Ten requests of Daniel:

1. Let Your anger and fury be turned away from Jerusalem and Mt. Zion (Daniel 9:16).
2. Hear my prayer (Daniel 9:17,18,19).
3. Hear my supplications (Daniel 9:17).
4. Cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary (Daniel 9:17).
5. Incline Your ear to hear (Daniel 9:18).
6. Open Your eyes (Daniel 9:18).
7. See our desolations (Daniel 9:18).
8. Forgive our sins (Daniel 9:19).
9. Hearken and do (Daniel 9:19).
10. Defer not my answer (Daniel 9:19).

²⁶ Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1995

[thy city Jerusalem] Jerusalem has been chosen by God to be the capital of His eternal kingdom on earth (Psalm 2:6; Psalm 48:2; Psalm 87:2; Psalm 102:16; Psalm 132:13; Isaiah 2:2-4; Ezekiel 48; Zech. 14).

[thy holy mountain] Mt. Zion (Psalm 2:6; Psalm 48:2; Psalm 87:2).

[reproach to all that are about us] This is what men fear (Jeremiah 24:9; Jeremiah 29:18; Jeremiah 42:18; Jeremiah 44:8,12; Ezekiel 5:14-51; Ezekiel 22:4).

Guzik: Let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem: After his confession of Israel's sin and God's great righteousness, Daniel simply asks God to mercifully turn His kind attention to Jerusalem and the temple (cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary) and that God would do this without delay (do not delay for your own sake).

Daniel prayed as a patriot - but a patriot more of the Kingdom of God than the Kingdom of Israel. We should pray with similar patriotism for the Kingdom of God. "Let it never be said that the Church of God has no feeling of patriotism for the Holy City, for the Heavenly Land and for her glorious King enthroned above. To us, Christian patriotism means love to the Church of God." (Spurgeon)

Daniel asks for all this according to all Your righteousness. It is as if Daniel prayed, "LORD, I'm not asking You to do anything against Your righteousness. I'm praying this to advance Your righteous glory."²⁷

Daniel 9:17

Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

Note the *increasing tempo* of the verbs of action...

And cause thy face to shine—Give us proof that thou art reconciled to us.

"Oh, that we might learn how to pray so that God should be the subject as well as the object of our supplications! O God, thy Church needs thee above everything else! A poor, little, sick, neglected child needs fifty things; but you can put all those needs into one if you say that the child needs its mother. So, the Church, of God needs a thousand things, but you can put them all into one if you say, 'The Church of God needs her God.' "
(Spurgeon)

²⁷ WWW. Blue Letter Bible, David Guzik Commentary on Daniel

Daniel 9:18

O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

McGee (vs. 15-18): This is Daniel's petition and plea. He recalls how God led Israel out of Egypt. God did it because of *His* righteousness, not because of theirs. He found the explanation for their deliverance in Himself, not in the people. "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them" (Exod. 2:24-25). The only thing that made an appeal to God from the people was their groaning. In other words, God saw their misery, and He remembered His mercy.

Now Daniel asks God to repeat Himself by delivering them again because of His righteousness. God is righteous when He extends His mercy to us, because Jesus Christ has fully paid all the penalty for our sin. "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

Now notice Daniel's impassioned plea in the following verses.²⁸

Daniel 9:19

O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

[called by thy name] Upon which Your name has been called.

Thy city and thy people are called by thy name—The holy city, the city of the great King. I think it scarcely possible for any serious man to read these impressive and pleading words without feeling a measure of the prophet's earnestness.²⁹

McGee: This is the climactic plea of Daniel. He asks God to hear and answer because of who He is and what He has promised. No good thing rests upon Israel. Daniel doesn't plead because he is Daniel. Rather, he associates himself with his people and says, "*We* have sinned," including himself, you see. God's name is at stake, and Daniel is deeply concerned about the name of God and the glory of God. This is the basis for his plea.

Now we shall see that while Daniel was praying, an answer was on its way.³⁰

Deffinbaugh: Beginning at verse 16, a change is evident in Daniel's prayer. Consider the following observations which summarize this change and its implications.

(1) Daniel's prayer in verses 16-19 moves from the confession of verses 4-15 to petition. In the earlier verses of Daniel's prayer, Daniel asked for nothing. He

²⁸McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:585). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

²⁹ Adam Clarke's Commentary

³⁰McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:585). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

acknowledged his sins and those of his people. He was agreeing with God's Word and the righteousness of the judgment He had brought upon the Jews through the instrument of the nation of Babylon.

(2) Daniel's request is according to God's promises in Scripture. Daniel understood that the 70 years of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah had been fulfilled and that now Israel could be restored. Just as Daniel's confession fulfilled the Old Testament requirements for restoration, so did Daniel's petition. He asked for that which God had promised through the Law and the Prophets.³¹

(3) Daniel's petition is God-centered. At least 19 times, reference is made to God, while man is referenced approximately 11 times. Somehow, whether in confession or in petition, we always seem to find a way to make our prayers man-centered. In confession, we focus on *our* sins, while *Daniel focuses on God's righteousness*. In petition, we focus on *our* needs, while *Daniel focuses on God's purposes and His glory*.

(4) Daniel's petitions are made in accordance with God's character. Daniel has already acknowledged that God acted consistently with His character when He disciplined Israel by giving them over to the Babylonians. Now, Daniel appeals to God to act in accordance with His mercy and compassion, and His love for His people and His chosen place.

(5) Daniel's request is for God to act in His own best interest and glory. An alarming tendency exists in Christian circles (often in contemporary Christian music) of thinking of God as being "there for me." The fact is we are "here for Him." He is using all creation, all mankind, for His glory. This includes both the salvation of His elect and the condemnation of the rest. Daniel's petition is not for God to act in the way that best "meets man's needs" (as perceived by man), but rather for God to act in His own best interest. When we act in our own best interest, it is almost always at the expense of others. But *when God acts in His own best interest, it is always for the good of His own* (see Romans 8:28). Daniel therefore petitions God to act for His sake (verses 17, 19). I wonder how radical would be the change in our prayer life if we petitioned God as Daniel has done.

(6) Daniel's request is for grace, mercy, and compassion. Daniel realizes that Israel's return, restoration, and future blessings are contingent upon God's forgiveness. In this prayer, as it must have been in all of Daniel's prayers and should be in all our prayers, sinful men cannot ask for anything but grace and mercy. Daniel's petition is not on the basis of any merit of their own that he beseeches God to answer (verse 18). Some today would think this particular situation surely justifies a "name it and claim it" approach to God's promises. Daniel did not think so. He did not *claim* anything. He *pleaded* for mercy, as any sinner should and must do.

(7) Daniel's request is for more than what God is going to accomplish in the Jewish Babylonian captives' return to their land. In the Old Testament Law and in the prophets, God promised to establish His eternal kingdom, a kingdom in which men would be perfectly restored, and in which righteousness would dwell. The promise of Israel's return to the land of Canaan and the assurance that the temple would be rebuilt must have raised Daniel's hopes that the end of this 70 year period of divine judgment

³¹ See, for example, Deuteronomy 30:1-10 and 1 Kings 8:46-53.

meant the soon coming of the kingdom of God to the earth. This was not to be the case, and the appearance and announcement of Gabriel was meant to make this clear.³²

Van Impe: Daniel's Prayer

Daniel begins his long prayer with a contrite and broken heart as he addresses God as Adonai-Sovereign Ruler. The word *Adonai* shows Daniel's recognition of God's absolute authority and power, a fitting expression for Daniel to use as he begins his litany of confession and plea for personal and national forgiveness.

However, in verse 2, Daniel suddenly changes his name for God and begins to use the term *Yahweh*-which refers to God as a gracious, covenant-keeping God, holy, just, righteous, and loving. He uses the name *Yahweh* seven times, in verses 2, 4, 10, 13, 14, and 20. It's amazing that Daniel would use God's holy name in the first place because the Jews never pronounced the name of God because their reverence for the almighty God was so great.

That's why they used what is called the tetragrammaton, Y-H-W-H-four letters that cannot be pronounced, and only become the word *Yahweh* when the vowels *a* and *e* are added. As we study Daniel's prayer it will become obvious why he used the term *Yahweh*, particularly as it relates to God as a covenant-keeping God, the topic which most interested Daniel since he'd now become a one-person spokesman for the plight of the Jews and was relying on the trustworthiness of the most high God to keep His promises. However, as we said before, Daniel still did not have all the information to work out all the details of God's plan because most of the predictions would only be revealed at the time of the end (Daniel 12:4).

As Daniel bowed before the Lord, his heart was filled with sadness for his own sin and the sins of his people. He fasted, wore sackcloth, and put ashes on his body to show his humble spirit. He was alone with God. No distractions. No interruptions. I encourage you to read and reread Daniel's prayer, because it is a model for any Christian. Even though Daniel was an upright, faithful, godly man, he still confessed that he had also sinned. Because of his tender heart toward God and a conscience that could be quickly and easily touched, he was unusually responsive when he heard the word of the Lord. Being sensitive to the Spirit of God also increased his sensitivity to the predicament of his people, the Jews, as he recited the various ways in which they rebelled against God, failed to obey His voice, refused to walk in His laws, and chose not to obey His commands. Daniel recognized that for these reasons, the curse had been poured out upon them.

The Diaspora

The Jews had been scattered across the world. What was once their home had become the domicile of heathen kingdoms and pagan rulers. Daniel knew the reason for this dispersion- the Diaspora. Deuteronomy 11:26-28 states,

"Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day: And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known."

³² Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1995

Not only did the Jews refuse to obey the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20, but they'd also turned their backs on the 613 other commandments given to the people of Israel. As Daniel reflects on the history of how the Jews got mired in their present dilemma, he continues to hope and pray that *Yahweh* will end the seventy years of punishment on schedule (as he, Daniel, saw it), and bring peace and relief to their sinful, troubled hearts.

Daniel's Prayer Is Also Personal

Daniel is not revising history. He is seeing history as it is, asserting that God was righteous for what He did to the Jews, admitting that we-Daniel and his people-were the culprits . . . we were the transgressors . . . we didn't obey God's voice . . . we failed to keep His commandments. His prayer was not a whining exercise to get God to overlook the past sins of His people, but a prayer of love and intercession for national and personal forgiveness, and a contrite heart, reminiscent of the words of the psalmist who prayed in Psalm 51:10,

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Daniel refused to offer excuses for Israel's behavior. Again, I urge you to read this prayer over and over, because each time you allow Daniel's heart of confession to intertwine with your own, you will be blessed and encouraged in your own Christian walk.

Unfortunately, for many modern Christians the idea of true and honest confession is a lost spiritual art. But unless we recapture this spirit of humility, face up to what we've done to distance ourselves from God, and choose to make amends, our own spirits will remain shallow and insensitive to the work that God wants to do in our lives. That's why it is always in our spiritual best interest to spend time reading and applying such verses as Psalm 66:18-20:

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. O Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me."

These verses are amplified by what we read in Isaiah 59:1-2:

"Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

There is a direct correlation between our unconfessed iniquities and God's blessing for our lives-to the extent that God cannot even hear our cries if repentance is sidetracked. Daniel knew this. That's why his prayer is so powerful, a model for us to follow today. Daniel walked close to God, and the closer he walked, the more he saw the imperfections in himself and in his people because the Spirit of God lived in him.³³

³³ Jack Van Impe, Commentary on the Book of Daniel

Daniel 9:20

And whiles I *was* speaking, and 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;

McGee: “Whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin.” Notice Daniel says, “*my* sin.” Daniel confessed that *he* was a sinner. It is interesting that there is no place in the Bible which mentions any sin that Daniel committed. In fact, when his enemies were trying to find some wrongdoing in his life, they could find *nothing*—and we may be sure that they left no stone unturned.

Now I have often made the statement that no one has ever been saved by keeping the Ten Commandments. And I have suggested that if anybody knew one in the Old Testament who was saved by keeping the Ten Commandments to let me know about it. Well, one night after a service in which I had said that no one in the Old Testament was ever saved by keeping the Ten Commandments, a UCLA student came up to me and said, “I found a man in the Old Testament who didn’t sin. It’s Daniel.” I told him very frankly that he was right. One cannot find a recorded sin which Daniel committed. Then I showed him this verse where Daniel says, “I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin.” If Daniel had never sinned but *said* that he was confessing his sin, then he would be lying to say he was confessing his sin if, in fact, he had never sinned! So Daniel is a sinner, any way you take it. I think the UCLA student was convinced that the Bible is correct when it says, “For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23, italics mine).

Now if you are wondering what sin Daniel committed, let me say that it is none of your business, and it is none of my business. God did not record it in His Word.

So Daniel was a sinner, and I can still say that no one was ever saved by keeping the Ten Commandments. Daniel was casting himself and his people upon the mercy of God. “Presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God”—which would be Jerusalem and the kingdom of God that will be there (see Isa. 2:1–2).³⁴

Daniel 9:21

Yea, whiles I *was* speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.

“man”: *ish*, man or servant. Gabriel: Always on a mission of Messianic announcement.
“at the beginning”: Dan 8:15-16.

[about the time of the evening oblation] Compare similar important events at this time (2 Samuel 24:15; 1 Kings 18:29; Ezra 9:5; John 19:30).

³⁴McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:586). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Being caused to fly swiftly—God hears with delight such earnest, humble, urgent prayers; and sends the speediest answer. Gabriel himself was ordered on this occasion to make more than usual speed.

McGee: “The man Gabriel”—Gabriel was an angel and apparently appeared in human form. The time of his appearance was at the hour of the evening sacrifice at Jerusalem, which would be approximately three o’clock in the afternoon.³⁵

Daniel 9:22

And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

[give thee skill and understanding] To give wisdom and understanding concerning the future of Israel and last day events. This time Gabriel did not interpret a vision that had been seen, but gave a simple direct prophecy of events concerning Israel and Jerusalem from Daniel's day to the end of all Gentile oppression of Jews. No interpretation is needed. All that is required is to read and believe what is written for our learning. If Daniel was commanded to understand the vision and consider it, then we are to do likewise.

Daniel 9:23

At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

“Beloved”: Cf. Abraham, disciples: “friends” => prophetic insights
Daniel, John: “beloved” => apocalyptic details.

For you are greatly beloved: Both Daniel and the Apostle John (John 13:23) were noted for their love-relationship with God. Both Daniel and John were also noted for receiving amazing prophetic messages.

The “70 Weeks” of Daniel

The Scope 9:24

The 69 Weeks 9:25

(The Interval) 9:26

The 70th Week 9:27

McGee (vs. 22-23): Notice that Daniel gets an immediate answer to his prayer. I heard Dr. Gaebelien say that it took him three minutes to read Daniel’s prayer in Hebrew. By the time Daniel finished his prayer, the angel Gabriel was there. So Dr. Gaebelien

³⁵McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:586). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

reasoned and explained with a twinkle in his eye, “It took Gabriel three minutes to get from heaven to earth.” Of course, if Daniel had his eyes closed while he was praying, it may be that Gabriel was standing on one foot and then on the other for two minutes, waiting for Daniel to get finished. The Lord God has promised, “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear” (Isa. 65:24).

Note that Daniel was “greatly beloved” in heaven. That is wonderful. The believer in Jesus Christ is seen by God as being in Christ. According to Ephesians 1:6 we are accepted in the Beloved—so the believer is loved in heaven because he is in Christ.³⁶

Deffinbaugh: Gabriel’s appearance interrupted Daniel who was still praying. With this fact and in the angel’s own words, Gabriel’s appearance and announcement was in answer to Daniel’s prayers. There is a clear link between Daniel’s prayer and Gabriel’s prophetic announcement.

More than this, I believe there is a very clear connection between the arrival and announcement of Gabriel in chapter 9 and the vision Daniel received in chapter 8, even though it happened 12 or more years earlier. Gabriel appears by name in both chapters (8 and 9) and here only.³⁷ The focus of both chapters 8 and 9 is on Israel, the last days, the opposition of the “little horn,” and the “suffering of the saints.”

When Daniel received his vision of the “ram” and the “goat” in chapter 8, he could not understand it. Gabriel was instructed to explain the vision to Daniel, but even after he had done so, the vision was still a mystery to him. The closing words of chapter 8 underscore this:

(Daniel 8:27) Then I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up again and carried on the king’s business; but I was astounded at the vision, and there was none to explain it.

When Gabriel appears in chapter 9, it is a number of years later. Gabriel’s first appearance came rather early in the reign of Belshazzar. Gabriel’s second appearance to Daniel came after the death of Belshazzar (see chapter 5) and in the first year of the reign of Darius. Gabriel’s first appearance to Daniel came in the actual vision with Gabriel standing near to Daniel. During his second appearance, Gabriel did not come as a part of any vision. He informed Daniel that he had been instructed to come to give him “insight with understanding” (9:22), so that he could “gain understanding of the vision” (9:23). What vision? What vision was Gabriel’s appearance and announcement going to help Daniel to understand? No new vision is given to Daniel in chapter 9. Therefore, the vision Gabriel came to further explain and clarify was the vision of chapter 8. Daniel told us he did not understand it after Gabriel’s first explanation (8:27). Now we are told that Gabriel has come to give Daniel insight to understand it. It is therefore now necessary for Daniel to understand the vision which eluded him for 12 years; Gabriel appears a second time to give a more complete explanation of its meaning.³⁸

³⁶McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:586). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³⁷ Daniel makes a point of telling us in chapter 9 that this Gabriel who appeared to Daniel in chapter 9 was the very same person who appeared to him in chapter 8 (see 9:21).

³⁸ Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1995

Daniel 9:24

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

shabu'im = sevens, “week.” (Gen 29:26-28; Lev 25, 26).

hatak, determined, reckoned.

- 1) The focus of the passage is on the **Jews**, not the Church or the Gentile world.
- 2) The six major items listed have *yet to be completed*...to seal up (close authority of) the vision; to anoint the *godesh gadashim*, the Holy of Holies, etc.

Unfulfilled in over 2000 years: v.26 will detail an intervening **Interval** between the 69th and 70th Weeks. A key to understanding this passage is to realize that the 70 “Weeks” are not all contiguous.

“Weeks” = ?

Days: Sabbath on the 7th Day (Gen 2:2; Ex 20:11);

Weeks: Feast of Weeks (Lev 23:15,16);

Months: Nisan to Tishri (Ex 12:2; Lev 23:24);

Years: Sabbatical Years for the Land (Lev 25:1-22; 26:33-35; Deut 15; Ex 23:10,11; 2 Chr 36:19-21).

Note: focus of entire prophecy is *Israel*, not the Gentile world (Dan 9:24).

Seventy “Sevens” imply weeks of *years* (Gen 29:27, et al.). Sabbath for the land ordained and failure to keep the sabbath of the land was the very basis for 70 years captivity (2 Chr 36:19-21).

Seventy weeks are determined—This is a most important prophecy, and has given rise to a variety of opinions relative to the proper mode of explanation; but the chief difficulty, if not the only one, is to find out the time from which these seventy weeks should be dated. What is here said by the angel is not a direct answer to Daniel’s prayer. He prays to know when the seventy weeks of the captivity are to end. Gabriel shows him that there are seventy weeks determined relative to a redemption from another sort of captivity, which shall commence with the going forth of the edict to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, and shall terminate with the death of Messiah the Prince, and the total abolition of the Jewish sacrifices. In the four following verses he enters into the particulars of this most important determination, and leaves them with Daniel for his comfort, who has left them to the Church of God for the confirmation of its faith, and a testimony to the truth of Divine revelation. They contain the fullest confirmation of Christianity, and a complete refutation of the Jewish cavils and blasphemies on this subject.

Of all the writers I have consulted on this most noble prophecy, Dean Prideaux appears to me the most clear and satisfactory. I shall therefore follow his method in my explanation, and often borrow his words.

Seventy weeks are determined—The Jews had Sabbatic years, Leviticus 25:8, by which their years were divided into weeks of years, as in this important prophecy, each week containing seven years. The seventy weeks therefore here spoken of amount to four hundred and ninety years.

In verse 24 there are six events mentioned which should be the consequences of the incarnation of our Lord:—

- I. To finish (⋄| | λεχηαλλε, to restrain), the transgression which was effected by the preaching of the Gospel, and pouring out of the Holy Ghost among men.
- II. To make an end of sins; rather |Σ⋄| } |™|Σ υλεηατηεμ χηαταοτη, “to make an end of sin-offerings,” which our Lord did when he offered his spotless soul and body on the cross once for all.
- III. To make reconciliation (| | |Σ υλεχηαππερ, “to make atonement or expiation”) for iniquity; which he did by the once offering up of himself.
- IV. To bring in everlasting righteousness, { | | | |⊙) τσεδεκ ολαμιμ, that is, “the righteousness, or righteous ONE, of ages;” that person who had been the object of the faith of mankind, and the subject of the predictions of the prophets through all the ages of the world.
- V. To seal up (| | |Σ πελαχητομ, “to finish or complete”) the vision and prophecy; that is, to put an end to the necessity of any farther revelations, by completing the canon of Scripture, and fulfilling the prophecies which related to his person, sacrifice, and the glory that should follow.
- VI. And to anoint the Most Holy, { | | |⊙ | |⊙ | κοδοση κοδοσηιμ, “the Holy of holies.” | | | μασηαχη, to anoint, (from which comes | | | μασηιαχη, the Messiah, the anointed one), signifies in general, to consecrate or appoint to some special office. Here it means the consecration or appointment of our blessed Lord, the Holy One of Israel, to be the Prophet, Priest, and King of mankind. ³⁹

McGee: “Seventy weeks” does not mean weeks of seven days any more than it means weeks of seven years or seven other periods of time. The Hebrew word for “seven” is *shabua*, meaning “a unit of measure.” It would be comparable to our word *dozen*. When it stands alone, it could be a dozen of anything—a dozen eggs, a dozen bananas. So here, Seventy Weeks means seventy sevens. It could be seventy sevens of anything. It could be units of days or months or years. In the context of this verse it is plain that Daniel has been reading in Jeremiah about *years*, seventy years. Jeremiah had been preaching and writing that the captivity would be for seventy years. The seventy years of captivity were the specific penalty for violating seventy sabbatic years. That would be seventy sevens, a total of 490 years. In those 490 years, Israel had violated exactly seventy sabbatic years; so they would go into captivity for seventy years. “To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years” (2 Chron. 36:21).

1 week=7 years 70 weeks=490 years 70 weeks divided into 3 periods: 7 weeks—62 weeks—1 week

³⁹ Adam Clarke’s Commentary

Now Daniel was puzzled as to how the end of the seventy years of captivity would fit into the long period of Gentile world dominion which the visions in chapters 7 and 8 had so clearly indicated. He obviously thought that at the end of the seventy years his people would be returned to the land, the promised Messiah would come, and the kingdom which had been promised to David would be established. How could both be true? It appeared to him, I am sure, to be an irreconcilable situation created by these seemingly contradictory prophecies.

The Seventy Weeks, or the seventy sevens, answer two questions. Israel's kingdom will not come immediately. The seventy sevens must run their course. These seventy sevens fit into the Times of the Gentiles and run concurrently with them. They are broken up to fit into gentile times. The word for *determined* literally means "cutting off." These seventy sevens are to be cut off, as the following verses will indicate. The seventy sevens for Israel and the Times of the Gentiles will both come to an end at the same time, that is, at the second coming of Christ. This is important to know in the correct understanding of the prophecy.

The Seventy Weeks concern "thy people," meaning the people of Daniel. That would be Israel. And they concern "thy holy city," which can be none other than Jerusalem. Six things are to be accomplished in those Seventy Weeks or 490 years. We will see as we progress in our study that sixty-nine of those "weeks" have already passed, and one "week" is yet to be fulfilled.

Here are the six things to be accomplished:

1. "To finish the transgression." This refers to the transgression of Israel. The cross provided the redemption for sin—for the sin of the nation, but not all accepted it. Today the word has gone out to the ends of the earth that there is a redemption for mankind. But in that last "week" we are told that God says, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications ..." (Zech. 12:10). And in Zechariah 13:1: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." That has not been opened yet. All you have to do is to look at the land of Israel and you will know this has not been fulfilled.

2. "To make an end of sins." The national sins of Israel will come to an end at the second coming of Christ. They are just like any other people or any other nation. They are sinners as individuals and as a nation. They have made many mistakes as a nation (so have we), but God will make an end to that.

3. "To make reconciliation for iniquity." During this period of Seventy Weeks, God has provided a redemption through the death and resurrection of Christ. This, of course, is for Jew and Gentile alike.

4. "And to bring in everlasting righteousness" refers to the return of Christ at the end of the 490 years to establish the kingdom.

5. "To seal up the vision and prophecy" means that all will be fulfilled, which will vindicate this prophecy as well as all other prophecies in Scripture.

6. "To anoint the most Holy" has reference to the anointment of the holy of holies in the millennial temple about which Ezekiel spoke (Ezek. 41–46).⁴⁰

⁴⁰McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:586). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Daniel 9:25

Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

[street shall be built again, and the wall] Streets and wall, expressing the completeness of the restoration of the city, including the places of resort and the thoroughfares leading to them.

The Trigger (*terminus ad quo*):

The Decrees to “Rebuild Jerusalem”?

1) Cyrus, 537 B.C. Ezra 1:2-4

2) Darius Ezra 6:1-5, 8, 12

3) Artaxerxes, 458 B.C. Ezra 7:11-26

4) Artaxerxes, 445 B.C. Neh 2:5-8, 17, 18

(1) (2) and (3) were to build the *Temple*. Only the last one (4) was to rebuild the *city*, the walls, etc. Note: bxor> *rehob*, “street”; #Wrx’ *haruts*, moat, fortification. Why “7 + 62”? Time to build the city? Time to close the Old Testament canon? Time between Testaments?

Nominal 360-day Years

• Biblical Usage: Genesis (Gen 7:24; 8:3,4); Daniel (Dan 9:27; 12:6); Revelation (Rev 11:2,3; 13:5).

• Ancient calendars based on 360-day years.

• Assyrians, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Hebrews, Persians, Greeks, Phoenicians, Chinese, Mayans, Hindus, Carthaginians, Etruscans, Teutons, et al.

All these calendars were based on a 360-day year; typically, twelve 30-day months. (In ancient Chaldea, their calendar was based on a 360-day year and it is from this Babylonian tradition that we have 360 degrees in a circle, 60 minutes to an hour, 60 seconds in each minute, etc.)

• Orbital Changes? Long day of Joshua (Josh 10:12, 13) due to Mars pass-bys? [Strangely corroborated by Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, which draws on eye witness account of the two moons of Mars before adequate telescopes available. Cf. Joshua Commentary or our briefing package, *Signs in the Heavens*.]

In 701 B.C., all calendars appear to have been reorganized. Numa Pompilius, the second King of Rome, reorganized the original calendar of 360 days per year, by adding 5 days per year. King Hezekiah, Numa’s contemporary, reorganized his Jewish calendar by adding a month each Jewish leap year (on a cycle of 7 among every 19 years).

The Target (*terminus ad quem*)

The *Meshiach Nagid*: “The Messiah the King.” The prediction is to the presentation of the Messiah the King (*Nagid* is first used of King Saul). On several occasions in the New Testament when they attempted to take Jesus as a King, He invariably declined, “Mine hour is not yet come.” (Jn 6:15; 7:30, 44; etc.) Then one day, He *arranges* it.

The Triumphal Entry

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. Zechariah 9:9

All four Gospels, Mt 21:1-9; Mk 11:1-10; Lk 19:29-39; Jn 12:12-16. Nisan 10: “take to everyone a lamb.” Jesus deliberately arranges to fulfill Zech 9:9. This is the only day He allows them to proclaim Him King (Lk 19:38).

Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. Luke 19:38

...quoting Psalm 118.

And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, “Master, rebuke thy disciples.” Luke 19:39

Why? What for? The Pharisees assure our noticing the significance!

And He answered and said unto them, “I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” Luke 19:40

Jesus held them accountable to recognize *this very day* (Lk 19:41-44). This was the 10th of Nisan, prior to the Passover on the 14th of Nisan, A.D. 32.

Chronology of His Ministry

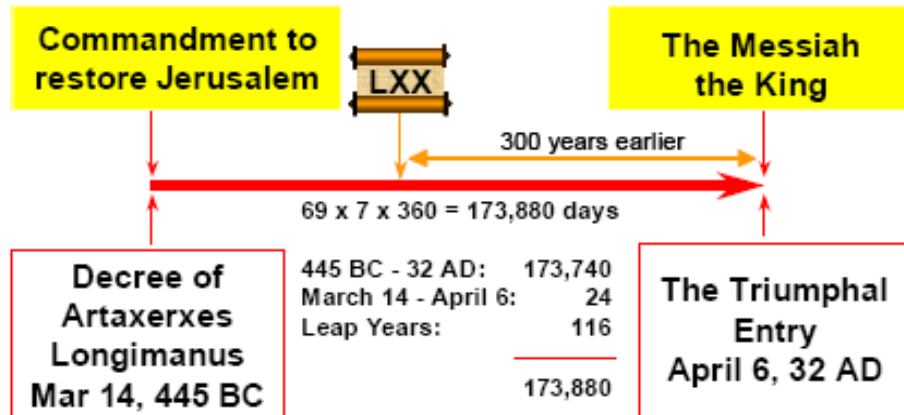
Christ’s ministry began in fall A.D. 28 (Tiberius was appointed in A.D. 14.)

Augustus died August 19, A.D. 14 (within the) 15th year of Tiberius (Lk 3:1).

4th Passover: April 6, A.D. 32 [Sir Robert Anderson, 1894]. (Other chronologies presume a Friday crucifixion)

[Other examples of Precision: Gen 8:4, Noah’s new beginning, 7th month, 17th day. (Exodus 12:2: Nisan becomes 1st month.) Jesus resurrected on the anniversary of the “New Beginning” under Noah!]

The 69 Weeks



Judgment Declared

*And when He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least **in this thy day**, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Luke 19:41, 41*

For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another ...because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. Luke 19:43, 44

Guzik: Some say the 483 years were completed at the triumphal entry of Jesus (if dated at 32 A.D.). Sir Robert Anderson's significant work *The Coming Prince* follows this argument in great detail.

- Anderson, using a 360-day year (which Israel used in Daniel's day), calculates 173,880 days from the decree to the triumphal entry, fulfilling the prophecy *to the day*. "It is customary for the Jews to have twelve months of 360 days each and then to insert a thirteenth month occasionally when necessary to correct the calendar." (Walvoord)
- The year 32 A.D. (based on Luke 3:1) for Jesus' death is controversial (most chronologists favor 30 or 33 A.D.). But recent attempts have made some case for the date: "A recent article attempts to give credence to the date of A.D. 32; cf. R.E. Showers, *Grace Journal*, XI (Winter, 1970), pp. 30ff. The evidence presented is worthy of notice." (Wood)
- "No one today is able dogmatically to declare that Sir Robert Anderson's computations are impossible." (Walvoord)

Until Messiah the Prince: Taking Anderson's calculations as reliable, we see a *remarkable* fulfillment of prophecy. A Gentile king made a decree and 483 years later *to the day*, Jesus presented Himself as **Messiah the Prince** to Israel.

In our mind a **Prince** is a good step lower than a *king*. In the Hebrew vocabulary, "**Prince**" has more the idea of "strong, mighty ruler" than "son of a king and heir to the throne."

"There was only one occasion in our Lord's earthly ministry on which He is depicted as presenting Himself openly as Zion's King, the so-called 'Triumphal Entry,' recorded in each one of the Gospels and fulfilling Zechariah 9:9 and Psalm 118:26." (Newell)

- On that day, Jesus *deliberately* arranged the event to present Himself as Messiah (Mark 11:1-10)
- On that day, Jesus welcomed praise (Luke 19:38-40) instead of quieting it (Luke 5:14 and 8:56)
- On that day, Jesus made special reference to the importance of that day (Luke 19:41-42)

This prophecy is so specifically fulfilled that it has been a significant testimony to many. "Others of the Jewish [scholars], by the evidence of these words, have been compelled to confess that Messiah is already come, and that he was that Jesus whom their forefathers crucified." (Trapp)⁴¹

Daniel 9:26

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

An interval, or gap, is clearly required by v. 26: events described are *after* the 69th and *prior* to the 70th week.

“cut off”: tr;K’ *karat*, to cut off, eliminate, kill, execute; death penalty (Lev 7:20; Ps 37:9; Prov 2:22).

“not for Himself”: nothingness: rejection, substitution.

The people of “the prince that shall come” = historically, the Romans.
Thus, the Prince to come will be of the Roman Empire (but *NOT* necessarily from Europe!) Sanctuary destroyed, etc. 38 years are included with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Over 1970 years have transpired so far.

“...flood”: diaspora. Titus Vespasian: 38 years later; (not 3½!).

Daniel 9:26: Rabbinical Confirmations

- Messianic; prior to the Temple destroyed [*Yalkut*, Vol II, 32b, p.79 Nazir edition.]
- Messiah to exit prior to A.D. 33. [*Midrash Berishit*, p.243 Warsaw edition; re: Yakov Prasch.]

⁴¹ WWW. Blue Letter Bible, David Guzik Commentary on Daniel

Israel and the Church

Distinctions: different origins, missions, destinies. “Replacement” views deny Israel her place in God’s program (Romans 9, 10, 11); it makes God a liar and laid the basis for Christian Anti-Semitism. The “70 Weeks” deal specifically with *Israel*. Also, Paul’s trichotomy: Jews, Gentiles, Church (1 Cor 10:32). Distinctives reappear after Revelation 4.

Blindness Declared

Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. Luke 19:42

For How Long?

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the Fullness of the Gentiles be come in. Romans 11:25

The Interval

Interval also implied: Dan 9:26; Isa 61:1,2 (re: Lk 4:18-20); Rev 12:5,6. Also: Isa 54:7; Hos 3:4,5; Amos 9:10,11 (Acts 15:13-18); Micah 5:2,3; Zech 9:9,10; Lk 1:31,32; 21:24.

Interval defined: Luke 19:42 *until* Rom 11:25. This interval is the period of the Church, an era kept secret in Old Testament: Mt 13:34,35; Eph 3:5,9.

• Born at Pentecost: Col 1:18; 1 Cor 12:13; Acts 1:5, 11:15-16.

• Prerequisites: Atonement (Mt 16:18, 21); Resurrection (Eph 1:20-23);

Ascension: (Eph 4:7-11—spiritual gifts only after ascension).

[Interval implied in 24 references] “Israel” is *never* used of the Church (73X). Gal 6:16 is misunderstood, by ignoring the *kai* in the Greek which clearly distinguishes the two groups. It seems that the Lord deals with Israel and the Church *mutually exclusively*.

The Church: Mystery Character

• Body Concept Eph 3:3-5,9

• Indwelling every believer Col 1:26-27

• Bride of Christ Eph 5:22-32

• *Harpazo*, (“Rapture”) 1 Cor 15:50-58

• One “New Man” Eph 2:15; Cf. Rev 12:5

• Distinguished from Jews or Gentiles 1 Cor 10:32

Our need: *Ecclesiology*, not Eschatology!

Sir Robert Anderson's Calculations		
445 B.C. to 32 A.D. (476 x 365)	=	173,740 days
March 14 to April 6 ¹	=	24 days
Leap years	=	116 days
	Total	= 173,880 days

¹Anderson calculated that the decree was issued on March 14, 445 B.C. and that Jesus died on April 6 in 32 A.D.

Daniel 9:27

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

[it desolate] The temple (Daniel 8:9-14; Daniel 11:45; Matthew 24:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13).

[until the consummation] Until the end of the 70th week (see point 14, of The Seventy Weeks).

[determined] Hebrew: *charats* (HSN-2782), to point sharply; to decide; to decree (Daniel 9:26-27; Job 14:5; Isaiah 10:23; Isaiah 28:22). Destruction is decreed for Antichrist (Daniel 7:11,25,26; Daniel 8:25; Daniel 11:45; Isaiah 11:4; Ezekiel 38:17-21; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10).

[upon the desolate] Not upon the desolate place, but upon the one making the temple desolate.

The Covenant Enforced with “the many” : “The many” is an idiom for Israel. This is the “Covenant with Hell,” Isa 28:15; Zech 11:15-17 etc.

“...midst of the week...” : The most documented period of time in the Bible. Time, times, and the dividing of time (Dan 7:25; 4:16, 23, 25).

Which “Prince”?

Antecedent: “The Prince that shall come...” After death of Nero, General Galba was recalled to become Emperor. A conspiracy had him assassinated. After Galba, Ortho was made emperor; he was unfit and committed suicide. After revolution and political instability, the general-in-command of the Roman-Israeli expedition was recalled to restore order and become Emperor: General Vespasian, father of Captain Titus who

remained general in charge of the siege. Just a few days before the final assault on Jerusalem, Vespasian was crowned Emperor of the Roman Empire, making Titus a prince (Titus may have been a descendant of Antiochus IV).

“Time, Times, and ½ Time”

“Times” = dual, later lost in Aramaic: $1 + 2 + \frac{1}{2} = 3 \frac{1}{2}$

3½ years Dan 12:7

42 months Rev 11:2; 13:5

1260 days Rev 11:3; Dan 12:6

½ “week” Dan 9:27

Every Detail by Design?

...and it was at Jerusalem the Feast of the Dedication, and it was winter.

John 10:22

Which “Feast of Dedication?”

- Solomon’s Temple? Autumn 1 Kings 8:2
- Zerubbabel’s Temple? Spring Ezra 6:15,16
- The Rededication Winter 25th of Kislev

The “Abomination of Desolation”

Antiochus IV (“Epiphanes”) 175-164 B.C.

Antiochus IV was the 8th king of the Syrian dynasty and infamous brother of Cleopatra. “Epiphanes” = “Illustrious.” [Called “Epimanes,” the mad man.] He made Torah reading punishable by death; slaughtered a sow on the Altar and erected an idol to Zeus in the Holy of Holies; incited the Maccabean Revolt, which succeeded in rededicating the Temple, 25th Kislev, 165 B.C. This is still commemorated at Hanukkah. (Authenticated by the Holy Spirit: Jn 10:22.) The sacrifices and oblations cease; 2 Thess 2:4. These require a Temple previously consecrated in Jerusalem. (Preparations have begun!)

The Great Tribulation

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened. Matthew 24:21,22

This “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” climaxes in the “Day of the Lord”: Isa 61:2; Zech 12, 14; Rev 19:19; et al. (Note that this is 3½ years, not 7, as is so often assumed.) Revelation 6 - 19 is essentially an elaboration of the events during the “70th Week” of Daniel 9.

The “Time of Jacob’s Trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7)

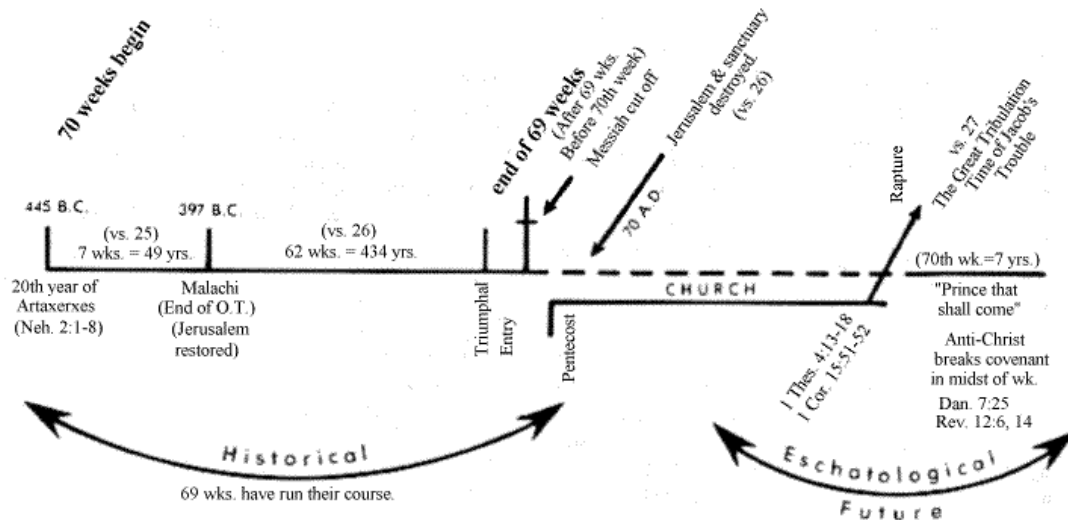
And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. Daniel 12:1

I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly.

Hosea 5:15

Life Application Notes: There has been much discussion on the numbers, times, and events in these verses, and there are three basic views: (1) the prophecy was fulfilled in the past at the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 168-167 B.C. (see Daniel 11:31); (2) it was fulfilled in the past at the destruction of the temple by the Roman general Titus in A.D. 70 when one million Jews were killed; or (3) it is still to be fulfilled in the future under the antichrist (see Matthew 24:15).

McGee: The starting point for this period of 490 years is essential to the correct understanding of the prophecy. Since this period is projected into the Times of the Gentiles, it must fit into secular history and originate from some date connected with the Times of the Gentiles. Of course there have been many suggestions for a starting point: the decree of Cyrus (see Ezra 1:1-4); the decree of Darius (see Ezra 6:1-12); the decree of Artaxerxes (at the seventh year of his reign—Ezra 7:11-26); but I feel that the decree of Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign (Neh. 2:1-8) meets the requirements of verse 25. The commandment to rebuild the city of Jerusalem was issued in the month Nisan 445 B.C. That, then, will be our starting point.⁴²



The first seven weeks of forty-nine years bring us to 397 B.C. and to Malachi and the end of the Old Testament. These were “troubled times,” as witnessed to by both Nehemiah and Malachi.

⁴²McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:588). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Sixty-two weeks, or 434 years, bring us to the Messiah. Sir Robert Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince*, has worked out the time schedule. From the first of the month Nisan to the tenth of Nisan (April 6) A.D. 32, are 173,880 days. Dividing them according to the Jewish year of 360 days, he arrives at 483 years (69 sevens). On this day Jesus rode into Jerusalem, offering Himself for the first time, publicly and officially, as the Messiah.

After the 69 weeks, or 483 years, there is a time break. Between the sixty-ninth and Seventieth Week two events of utmost importance are to take place:

1. Messiah will be cut off. This was the crucifixion of Christ, the great mystery and truth of the gospel: “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt. 16:21). “That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:15).

2. Destruction of Jerusalem, which took place in A.D. 70, when Titus the Roman was the instrument.

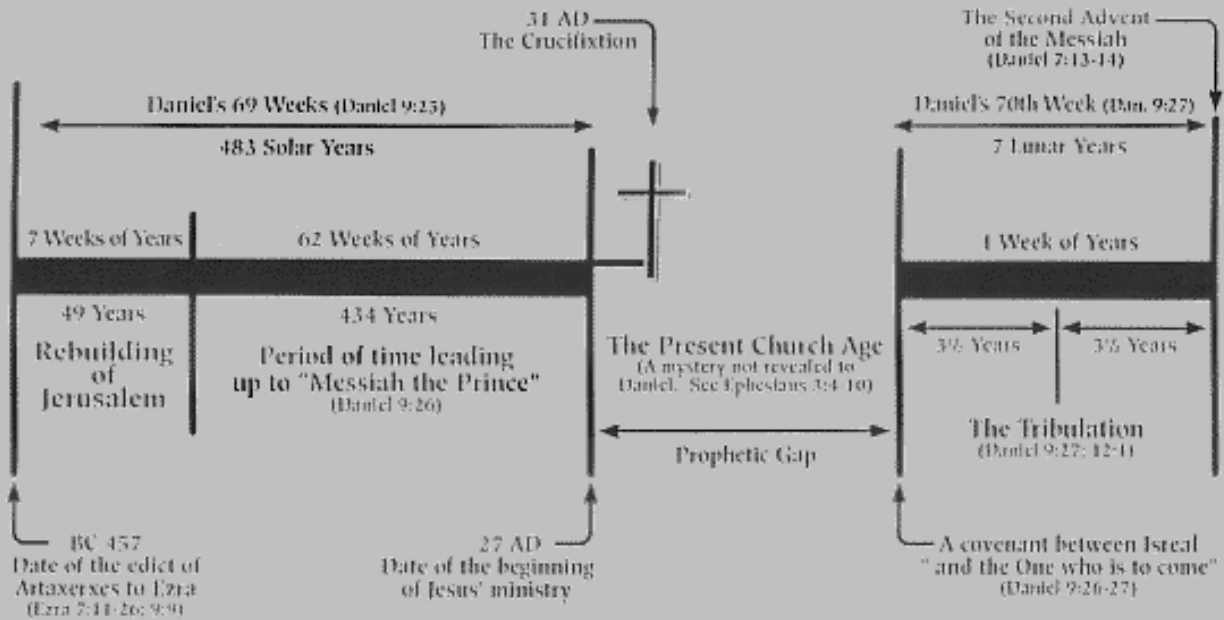
The final “week” (the seventieth), a period of seven years, is projected into the future and does not follow chronologically the other sixty-nine. The time gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks is the age of grace—unknown to the prophets (Eph. 3:1–12; 1 Pet. 1:10–12). The Seventieth Week is eschatological; it is the final period and is yet unfulfilled.

“The prince” is a Roman; he is the “little horn” of Daniel 7; he is “the beast” of Revelation 13. After the church is removed from the earth, he will make a covenant with Israel. Israel will accept him as her Messiah, but in the midst of the “week” he will break his covenant by placing an image in the temple (Rev. 13). This is the abomination of desolation. What Israel thought to be the Millennium will turn out to be the Great Tribulation (Matt. 24:15–26). Only the coming of Christ can end this frightful period (Matt. 24:27–31).

My friend, you and I are living in the age of grace, and the Seventieth Week of Daniel, the Great Tribulation, as the Lord Jesus called it, is yet to take place.⁴³

⁴³McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (3:588). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

DANIEL'S SEVENTY WEEKS (Daniel 9:24-27)



The Prophecy of Seventy Weeks (490 Years)

Decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah— March 14, 445 B.C.	Presentation of Messiah as Prince April 6, A.D. 32		Covenant of Antichrist with Israel	Return of Messiah to Establish Kingdom of God
	v. 25 Sixty-nine Weeks (483 Years)	v. 26 Gap of Time	v. 27 Seventieth Week	
	(Seven Weeks) 49 Years to Complete Rebuilding of Jerusalem	(Sixty-two Weeks = 434 years)	Messiah Cut Off—A.D. 33 Jerusalem and Sanctuary Destroyed—A.D. 70	3 1/2 Years Image of Antichrist in Temple
				3 1/2 Years Desolation by Antichrist Six Purposes v. 24

Guzik: He shall confirm a covenant: The "he" Gabriel mentions is the *prince who is to come* mentioned in the previous verse. If we know that the prince's *people* destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D., then we know this coming prince has his ancestral roots in the soil of the ancient Roman Empire.

Therefore, the *prince who is to come* will in some way be an heir to the Romans, even as the final world government is an heir to the Roman Empire (Daniel 7).

He shall confirm a covenant with many for one week: The coming prince will make a **covenant** with Israel for the final unit of seven years, completing the seventy weeks prophesied for the Jewish people and Jerusalem.

Covenant with many: The word **many** here is a *specific* reference to Israel, not a *general* reference to a group. The ancient Hebrew says, "*covenant with the many.*"

With this **covenant** Israel will embrace the Antichrist as a political messiah, if not the literal Messiah. Jesus predicted this in John 5:43: *I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.*

Taking the description of what would be accomplished in the 70 Weeks from Daniel 9:24, we know that the 70 Weeks are not yet complete. Yet the events promised in the first 69 weeks are fulfilled, indicated that there is a lengthy "pause" in the 70 Weeks, between the 69th week and the 70th week. The 70th week will begin when the coming prince **shall confirm a covenant** with the Jewish people. These "gaps" or "pauses" in prophecy may seem strange to us, but they are common. Comparing Isaiah 9:6 and Luke 1:31-33 shows another significant "pause" or "gap" in prophecy regarding the coming of the Messiah.

We can think of it in this way: God has appointed 490 years of special focus on Israel in His redemptive plan. The years were "paused" by Israel's rejection of Jesus. Now, there is no *special* focus on Israel in God's redemptive plan because this is the time of the church. God's focus will return to Israel when the church is taken away (at the rapture) and the last seven years of man's rule on this earth begin.

"The 70th week will begin when the Jewish people are restored in unbelief to their land and city; and among them will be found a faithful remnant, owning their sin, and seeking Jehovah's face." (Henry Ironside writing in 1911)⁴⁴

Deffinbaugh: Years earlier, when Daniel experienced the vision of the ram and the goat (chapter 8), the meaning of this prophecy remained a mystery, even though Gabriel had given Daniel an explanation. Now, in light of the end of the 70 years of captivity, the overthrow of the Babylonian empire, and the soon return of the Jews to Israel, the meaning of this vision became more important. We are told three times in chapter 8, that the vision pertains to the end times (8:17, 19, 26). The return of the captive Jews to their own land was not a part of the events of the end times. The return and restoration of Israel was not the commencement of the kingdom of God. And so Gabriel's announcement to Daniel focuses on the vision of chapter 8 to show that the events in the near future were not to be viewed as the beginning of the end.

Daniel's attention was fixed on the period of 70 years which came to an end with the overthrow of the Babylonian empire. Gabriel speaks not of these 70 years but of 70

⁴⁴ WWW. Blue Letter Bible, David Guzik Commentary on Daniel

weeks.⁴⁵ Would Daniel and others think it was but a 70 year wait for the promised kingdom? It was 70 times 7. If 490 years must pass before some of the promises pertaining to the kingdom were fulfilled, then no one should confuse Israel's soon return to their land to be the commencement of the kingdom.

The timing of the kingdom needed clarification, but also the nature of the kingdom, especially the prerequisites for it, needed further explanation. The kingdom of God would indeed commence, but not with the return to the land of Israel, nor with the building of the temple. It would not even begin with the repentance of the nation Israel. Before the kingdom of God could come to the earth, there must be a solution to the great human dilemma of sin.

In verse 24, Gabriel informed Daniel that 70 weeks had been decreed "to finish the transgression," "to make an end of sin," "to make atonement for iniquity," and "to bring in everlasting righteousness." In his prayer, recorded in verses 4-19, Daniel confessed his sins and those of his people. But confession did not remove these sins nor produce the righteousness required for men to live in the presence of a holy God. Gabriel let Daniel know that after the passing of 490 years, the spiritual foundation for the kingdom of God would be laid. This foundation was the removal of sin and the provision of everlasting righteousness.

Verses 25-27 introduce the two main players and the major events which bring about the end of sin, of human kingdoms, and bring in everlasting righteousness and the kingdom of God. The imminent issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem would be a milestone in Jewish history. It would not commence the kingdom of God, but it would begin the count down for the commencement of that kingdom. After 483 years (62 weeks plus 9 weeks), the city of Jerusalem and the temple would be rebuilt, not with ease but in times of distress. At this time, the promised Messiah will be "cut off" and apparently left with nothing. All hope of His becoming the King appears to be shattered with His being "cut off."

Another prince will arise, the counterpart of the Messiah. While the Messiah-Prince is "cut off" and His ascent to the throne of the kingdom seems thwarted, the other "prince" appears to prevail and to possess the earth and its peoples. The holy city and the sanctuary (the temple) will be destroyed by followers of this "prince." The holy place seems to come to an end much like that of the Messiah. Like a flood, the destruction and desolation of the city and the temple come upon it. There is a time of war, and desolation is inevitable.

The "prince" then makes a firm covenant with the masses for "a week" (or 7 years). This covenant seems to put men at ease and give them a false sense of confidence and security. In the middle of this time period, however, the "prince" breaks his covenant, putting a stop to the regular sacrifices and offerings. This prince comes "on the wing of abominations" and makes everything he comes into contact with desolate. He will bring about destruction. This destruction comes about by divine permission because it is a part of the divine plan.

⁴⁵ Literally, the expression is "seventy sevens." Bible students differ as to the exact meaning of this expression, but many understand it to refer to 70 periods of 7 years, or 490 years, which some have shown exactly corresponds to the time when our Lord presented Himself as Messiah to the nation Israel in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

In the fewest words possible, Daniel speaks of the sudden destruction of this evil prince. It is a destruction that has been divinely decreed. It is a complete destruction. The “one who makes desolate” is suddenly destroyed.

Conclusion

What Gabriel has to say in these few verses is not really new. It is but a further explanation of the vision Daniel received in chapter 8. Both Daniel 8 and Daniel 9:24-27 speak of the same events related to the last days, the end.

Gabriel is the interpreter in chapters 8 and 9. In both chapters, events concerning the end time are described—the same events. The little horn of chapter 8 is the “prince” of chapter 9, who concentrates his attention on the “beautiful land” of Israel (8:9) and who opposes and destroys some of the “host of heaven” (8:10) and the “holy people” (8:24; 9:24). He is the one who opposes even the Messiah, the Prince of princes, and by means of whom the Messiah is “cut off” (8:25; 9:25-26). He is also the one who “removes the regular sacrifice” (8:12), who puts a stop to “sacrifice and grain offering” (9:27). In the end, he is “broken without human agency” (8:25), as this one who makes desolate is suddenly and completely destroyed (9:27).⁴⁶

The end times and the coming of God’s eternal kingdom were not imminent for Daniel or his fellow-Israelites. Certain necessary events had to precede the coming of the kingdom, and these things were not to take place for many years. Sin had to be atoned for and put away. Righteousness had to be provided for those who would enter into God’s kingdom. This was to happen many years in the future through the substitutionary death of the Messiah, who would bear our sins on the cross of Calvary. In order for the Messiah to die, He would have to be opposed and even appear to have lost the struggle. Only after this preparatory work could God’s kingdom come to the earth for His people. In addition to this, God’s purpose of bringing the good news of salvation to the Gentiles would have to be fulfilled. During the past 2,000 years, the gospel has been proclaimed, and many Gentiles have come to faith in Jesus as the Savior. Soon, when those Gentiles whom God has chosen have been saved, the times of the Gentiles will end, and the events of the last days will commence, leading up to the defeat of God’s foes and the establishment of His eternal kingdom.

Are you ready for the King to come to the earth? Will you stand in the day of judgment? If you have trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior, your Messiah, then you will not fear His coming; you will welcome Him as King. Because Jesus has already paid the penalty for sin and provided the righteousness God requires, all who are in Him by faith do not dread but look forward to His return.

Daniel’s prayer provides a marvelous model for all who would repent and turn to God for salvation. His prayer begins with a recognition of the perfections and holiness of God and a recognition of our own sinfulness. It recognizes God is just in punishing us for our sins. It comes to God not on the basis of our own deeds or righteousness, but on the basis of His character and His covenant. He is merciful and compassionate, so we may come to Him for mercy and grace. He is also the One who has instituted a new covenant through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. All who come to Him for mercy, grace, and salvation through Christ He will not turn away or cast out. There is no other way to come to God and enter into His kingdom. Even the godly man Daniel knew this to be the way.

⁴⁶ The overlapping of chapters 8 and 9 is summarized in a chart at the end of this lesson.

Just as our Lord suffered in order to enter into His glory, we are called to suffer for His sake before we enter into the glory of His kingdom. There will be persecution and opposition and difficult days ahead. We should not only expect these times, but we should stand firm and endure them. One of the reasons the last days are recorded in Scripture is to let the saints know what to expect so that we might look to Him for the ability to endure. May God give us the grace we need to be faithful in the difficult days ahead.⁴⁷

Daniel 8	Daniel 9
The "little horn" (8:12-14, 22- 25)	The "prince who is to come" (v. 26)
Gabriel is the interpreter (v. 16)	Gabriel explains the vision (v. 21)
Concerns events of the end time(vv. 7,19,26)	Events bring matters to conclusion (v. 24)
Opposes the "Prince of princes"	Messiah the Prince will be cut off (vv. 25-26)
Removes regular sacrifice (v. 12)	Stops sacrifice and grain offering (v. 27) "People of prince" destroy Jerusalem and the sanctuary (v. 26)
Destroys many (vv. 24, 25)	Destruction, abominations, desolation (v. 27)
Horn broken without human agency (v. 25)	Complete destruction poured out on him (v. 27)

Van Impe: The Third Heaven

As Daniel prayed, the angel Gabriel suddenly appeared before him, offering comfort and understanding to Daniel's troubled heart. Gabriel's purpose was to bring an end to Daniel's inner confusion by imparting to him a new revelation from God. The angel began his conversation by saying something you and I should want to hear more than any other phrase in our language: "For thou art greatly loved." Daniel was concluding his prayer when he was surprised by joyous words from God. To have a greater appreciation of this scenario, consider this: Gabriel had been in the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2-3). That's billions of light years away-farther than our minds can grasp-and yet Gabriel now stands before Daniel, arriving in a flash-in nanoseconds.

Here's just how far Gabriel flew to arrive at Daniel's side. We're told that our astronauts would have to travel for forty thousand years at terrific speeds to get to the first star. But that would be just the first leg of their inter-galactic journey if they traveled onward to the third heaven-God's throne. There are billions, trillions, quadrillions, and quintillions of stars beyond that as we go higher and higher.

To confound us yet furthest scientists have now discovered a new quasar that is some eighty-two trillion billion miles out in space. And it becomes even more mind-boggling. We know that light travels at a rate of 186,000 miles per second, so when a scientist talks about a "light year," that's the speed light travels at that velocity for twelve consecutive months, or a distance of six trillion miles.

Now stay with me. You and I could travel thirteen and one-half billion light years and still not arrive at the third heaven-God's throne. It's incomprehensible. Just as Gabriel moved from the dimension of the third heaven to Daniel's side in an instant, so will we be

⁴⁷ Robert Deffinbaugh, deffinbaugh@bible.org, Biblical Studies Press, www.bible.org, 1995

able to move, at the speed of light, in our glorified bodies as we sweep through space-identical to the speed angels traverse the heavenlies.

The Significance of the Seventy Weeks

In this new revelation delivered by Gabriel, Daniel learned, sadly, that God would continue to punish Israel for at least seventy more sevens of years beyond the end of the Babylonian captivity-a number that gives us, as noted earlier, the only Old Testament prophecy that speaks of the precise hour of Messiah's first coming. It's fascinating that it was to be Gabriel who, several centuries later, would also deliver the good news of Messiah's conception and birth to a young virgin by the name of Mary (Luke 1:26-38). We now come to one of the most important prophecies in all of Scripture-a prediction to be applied exclusively to Israel and to the holy city of Jerusalem. First, let's look at the meaning of the phrase, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." The amount of actual time covered by this prophecy is 490 years-literally, seventy sevens. The question from scholars has always been, *Are these 490 "units" of time years, days, months, or weeks?* The math only works if these units are seen as "years." So for this prophecy to be fulfilled, Messiah would have to arrive-for the first time- before the 490 "units" would end. Remember that the 490 years began in 445 B.C.

Now this question: What was the purpose of the 70 weeks of chastisement? The Jews had a Sabbath day which they were to honor by law. They had the freedom to work for six days, and then rest on the Sabbath, just as God had patterned His work of creation. He created the world in six days (Genesis 1:31), and rested on the seventh day (Genesis 2:2). However, the Jews not only had sabbatical days on the seventh day of the week, but they also celebrated sabbatical years. According to Leviticus 25:1-7 they were to let their land lie fallow-unused, unplanted-every seventh year. But in their greed they said in their hearts something to the effect, "This is not a very good deal for us. We're going to lose money, so let's not listen to God. We'll go ahead and plow and plant and harvest on the seventh year, regardless of what God or the law tells us to do."

Because of their spiritual treachery, the Jewish people paid dearly for their 490 years of disobedience. God chastened the Jews by sending them into cruel bondage for the equivalent of seventy sabbatical years-a total of 490 years- according to the 360-day Jewish calendar.

Jeremiah predicted this judgment of seventy years falling on the Jews in Jeremiah 25:9-11 when he wrote:

Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

The die was now cast. Israel would be punished during those seventy weeks (490 years)-a punishment that would be administered because of the following reasons (Daniel 9:24):

1. **"To finish the transgression."** As we've already noted, the Jews did not allow the land to rest for seventy sabbaticals-a 490 year period. Now when Messiah comes, He restores them to their land permanently. They were removed from the land as the transgression required, but now He returns to settle the debt, and provides for His people permanent restoration. Zechariah 13:1 says, *"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."*
2. **"To make an end of sins."** The corporate sins of the nation of Israel will come to an end at the second coming of Jesus Christ. The Jews, as all other people, have sinned, and their transgressions would be paid for by the blood of Jesus shed at Calvary. Because this provision has been made, Messiah comes to announce that the sin that brought all the judgment upon them has been removed (Hebrews 10:17).
3. **"To make reconciliation for iniquity."** During this seventy-week period, God has made redemption available through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Zechariah 12:10 says, *"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."*
4. **"And to bring in everlasting righteousness."** This speaks of the return of Christ at the end of the 490 years. At this time He establishes His kingdom, returning as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Finally, the world becomes a wonderful place, described in joyful terms in Isaiah 35:8: *"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."* This is what Revelation 21:27 speaks of when it refers to this holy city that hovers above the earth. It is a place of righteousness. Nothing can enter that defiles or makes the celestial city unholy. The message here is this: We cannot-and will not- have a perfect world until Jesus comes and binds Satan for a thousand years.
5. **"To seal up the vision and prophecy."** Daniel was instructed to seal the vision until the time of the end. Now-as you read these words-we are approaching that time, and for that reason we're able to explain it, unseal it, and see its depth with Spirit-led understanding. I trust you are catching a glimpse of just how close we are to that great day. Until now- for centuries, actually-we have struggled to see through a darkened glass, but now the truth of Daniel's vision is becoming clearer by the day. We are not at the final time yet, but we are getting very close. Then, once Messiah returns, prophecy will be forever finished because there will be nothing

left to predict. The Son of Man-the radiant Lord Jesus Christ-will be in our midst, and all prophecy will be sealed permanently.

6. "**To anoint the most Holy.**" This is a reference to Ezekiel chapters 4 1-46, where the prophet talks about the anointing of the Holy of Holies in the "millennial" temple. When the Lord Jesus returns, *Yahweh* the Father says, "*I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*" (Psalm 2:6). Just as God's priests in the Old Testament and His servants in the New Testament were anointed for holy service, so Jesus Christ the Prince-the King of Kings-will be anointed for the centuries to come.

At this point I'm going to quote a verse that is the greatest prophecy ever recorded, proving that God alone could have written this book. Why? Because we now come to the exact day that is prophesied in these texts. Verse 25 reads, "*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*"

Let's review the significance of this verse in the context of Nehemiah 2:1-8 where we learn that some of the Jews who had visited their homeland were disturbed because their nation was in such disarray. That's why they requested that the city of Jerusalem-including the wall-be rebuilt. With that background, let's consider Nehemiah 2:1 to investigate the chronology of dates mentioned. "*And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king. . . .*"

The Encyclopedia Britannica says this king came to power in 465 B.C. But now it's Artaxerxes' twentieth year of rule, which takes us down to 445 B.C. Here's the arithmetic: 465 minus 20 = 445 B.C. This is the month Nisan, but no date is given. That is not, however, an issue because Jewish custom tells us that whenever there is no date we are to assume it is always the first day. This means it is the first day of Nisan, 445 B.C. Translated into our modern calendar, that's March 14, 445 B.C. That is the beginning point of the rebuilding of the wall and city of Jerusalem-a task that had to be completed in "seven weeks" or, literally, forty-nine years. And it happened right on schedule.

King Jesus Will Reign

However, there is a second part to this prophecy that refers to the presentation of Jesus Christ as King. Note there are two princes in this text: The first is Jesus, who will reign as the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). The second prince is a Roman general who invades Jerusalem. Here, we are talking about the first Prince-Jesus Christ-who will be "cut off" after seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, for a total of sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years. Now, we take the 483 years and multiply it by the Jewish method of reckoning-which is 360 days in a year. Do you know what 483 times 360 is? 173,880 days. From the date that Nehemiah said, "You may go ahead and rebuild your wall and Jerusalem" (March 14, 445 B.C.) to the day that Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey (April 6, 32 A.D.) exactly 173,880 days had passed. Now do you believe that prophecy is right on? If the Jews had only studied their Old Testament prophecy, they would have known that Jesus was their Messiah.

This is why Jesus said to His people, the Jews, in Luke 19:42, "*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hidden from thine eyes.*" Day 173,880 was the crowning day, and Jewish minds did not grasp it-nor did they accept their Messiah. If God could prove-as we've just outlined-

the precise arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem, is there any question that the remainder of the prophecies in the Book of Daniel will be fulfilled?

As we come to the close of this most important prophetic chapter in the Bible, we also need to deal with the content of verse 26 that speaks of the prince who will come to destroy the city and the sanctuary. This prince was Vespasian and his son Titus-Roman generals who in 70 A.D. marched on Jerusalem and murdered hundreds of thousands of Jews, again destroying the city.

Here we see a similarity between the treachery of this father and son and an earlier tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes, because all three are types of the Antichrist who will rise to power in the last days. But here Vespasian and Titus are highlighted because they are Roman princes. Later, the Antichrist will come as an international leader out of a revived Roman Empire that is presently expanding and wielding influence just as Daniel predicted. For this and many more reasons-all documented by God's Word-we are dogmatic when we say that our era of time could definitely be what Daniel called "the time of the end."

Now what about the apparent 'gap' that exists between verses 26 and 27-a gap of some two thousand years? This is an important period of time, because without it, we would be forced to see these events taking place within a limited period of 490 days, instead of 490 years. The former would be impossible. There are skeptics who scoff that a gap between these verses is a man-made theory. However, the Bible states emphatically that there will be a period of time-a gap-between Jesus' first and second coming. Isaiah 9:6 says,

"Unto us a child is born" (the virgin birth); "unto us a Son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulder" (the government was not upon His shoulder the first time He came to Jerusalem).

When Jesus Christ comes again-the second time-that's when the government will be upon His shoulder, as He rules and reigns as King of Kings and Lord of Lords for a period of one thousand years (Revelation 20:4).

By the time we reach verse 27, the Antichrist is already in full power, and Daniel's seventieth week is in effect. It begins when this evil one confirms his peace contract with Israel. This is the start of the seventieth week, and the beginning of the seven year period of Tribulation. The Antichrist deceives a gullible world by confirming the covenant with many-first with Israel- for one week, one *shabua-or* seven years. The information I am about to present is vitally important. If the first sixty-nine weeks, or *shabuas*, total 483 years or 173,880 days on the Jewish calendar annually, and this prophecy was fulfilled in every detail on the final day-then the final week or Hebrew *shabua*, the last seven-year period of 2,520 days, will also be fulfilled right up to the exact moment.

That's why Revelation 11:2 and 13:5 mention forty-two months, and Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 cite 1,260 days as one-half of the Tribulation period. Then in the middle of that *shabua-after* forty-two months- the Antichrist causes the sacrifices to cease. Antiochus Epiphanes, a predecessor and forerunner of the soon-coming global dictator, previously did this centuries ago when he stomped out the Jewish sacrifices and desecrated the Jewish temple.

The Rebuilding of the Temple

How could such an act be perpetuated in our day without the existence of a temple? Here's the answer. Israelites are talking about rebuilding the temple in our day. I

encourage you to read your newspapers and weekly magazines with spiritual eyes in the days ahead because even now building materials are being gathered and temple utensils created for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. When the new temple is erected, all will go relatively well for a while, but then, midway into the Tribulation hour, the Antichrist will sit proudly on that temple throne and claim to be the world's god (2 Thessalonians 2:4). The false prophet will create an image in the likeness of the Antichrist (Revelation 13:15) and all mankind will be commanded to fall down and worship the beast of the revived Roman Empire mentioned in Daniel 7:8-just as Nebuchadnezzar commanded the people of Babylon to bow down and worship him. If, during the Tribulation period, the people do not bow to the Antichrist and give him full allegiance, they will be killed (Revelation 13:15; 20:4-5). When the pagan tyrant Antiochus Epiphanes set up his pagan deities in the place of the most high God, and put a sow on the temple altar, it was called "the abomination that maketh desolate" (Daniel 11:31; 12:11). Now, more than two thousand years later, the Antichrist will also set up an image called "the abomination of desolation" according to the statements of Jesus in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14. Why? Because he is defiling God's holy temple. The Jews revere their holy temple-the Antichrist mocks it and them by breaking one of the Jews' commandments concerning the placing of an idol in the temple (Exodus 20:4-5). At this point their long sought-for temple again becomes desolate because of the abominable idol therein.

The Calm before the Storm

Jesus, in Matthew 24:15-21, says:

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Why flee? Because Satan's final forty-two months are about to be unleashed globally, and he's filled with wrath (Revelation 12:12). Then Russia marches and the abomination of desolation (or image) is set up in the temple during this final three-and-one-half-year period known as the Great Tribulation (Revelation 7:14). It is the time of the end (Daniel 11:40; 12:4).

This revelation and interpretation of the vision delivered to Daniel by the angel Gabriel was a two-edged sword: one of gloom and doom; the other of hope. Gloom, because the Antichrist is about to appear. Hope, because Christ destroys him with the brightness of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8). Today, we are seeing what can only be called "the calm before the storm." History is not yet complete, but the handwriting is on the wall for those who have eyes to see.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Jack Van Impe, Commentary on the Book of Daniel

The Seventy Weeks - Dake

There are 14 main parts to this prophecy. Without a clear understanding of them many other prophecies cannot be fully understood.

1. Meaning of the seventy weeks. The phrase "seventy weeks" literally means "seventy sevens" (Hebrew: for "week" is $\sigma\eta\alpha\beta\upsilon\omega\alpha$ (HSN-7620), seven).

Seventy Sevens of Years because:

- (1) Daniel's prayer, to which this vision was an answer, did not concern days, but years (Daniel 9:2).
- (2) The last "week" is one and is divided into 2 parts, the last half explained to be $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, as proved in the following notes.
- (3) If the last half of the 70th week is $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, then the first half is also $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, making the one seven of Daniel 9:27 to be 7 years.
- (4) If the last or one "week" is a period of 7 years, the other "weeks" are also 7 years each. The whole period, therefore, is $70 \times 7 = 490$ years.

2. Division of the seventy weeks. They are divided into three main periods:

- (1) The 1st division—7 weeks, 49 years for the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25)
- (2) The 2nd division—62 weeks, 434 years from the completion of the city at the end of the 49 years to the time the Messiah is cut off or crucified for men (Daniel 9:25-26)
- (3) The 3rd division—one week, 7 years, the last 7 years of this age, ending with the 2nd advent of Christ to fulfill the 6 events of Daniel 9:24

3. Whom do the seventy weeks concern? The whole 490 years are determined (Hebrew: $\chi\eta\alpha\tau\eta\alpha\kappa$ (HSN-2852), cut off; marked off; decreed) to be fulfilled concerning thy people (Daniel's people) and thy holy city (Daniel's native city, Jerusalem) to fulfill the 6 events of Daniel 9:24. They do not concern the church in any sense. In fact, the church was not begun until after the 69th week, and it will be raptured before the 70th week begins (notes, *2 Thes. 2:7-8; Rev. 4:1).

4. When do they concern Israel and Jerusalem? Not during any time that she has been scattered among the nations. The 70 weeks concern Israel as a nation at Jerusalem. Since Israel was scattered and her city and temple destroyed in 70 A.D., since the 6 events of Daniel 9:24 have not yet been fulfilled, and since the 69th week ended at the crucifixion of Christ, the 70th week is the only part left to be fulfilled. During this time, the 6 events of Daniel 9:24 will be fulfilled. Still in the future, it will be fulfilled when Israel as a nation gets control of Jerusalem again.

5. Six things to be done in the 70 weeks of Daniel (Daniel 9:24):

- (1) "To finish (put an end to) the transgression." The Hebrew word $\pi\epsilon\sigma\eta\alpha$ (HSN-6588) means revolt; rebel; sin against lawful authority. It is often translated "transgression" (Psalm 51:1; Isaiah 43:25; etc.). This transgression has reference to the sins of Israel at Jerusalem, the culmination of their sins when they will be saved from all sin at the return of their Messiah who will turn ungodliness from Jacob and convert the nation in a day (Romans 11:25-29; Isaiah 66:7-10; Ezekiel 36:24-30).

- (2) "To make an end of sins" concerning Israel and Jerusalem. This has never been done, but will be accomplished at the second coming of Christ (Ezekiel 36:24-30; Ezekiel 37:24-27; Ezekiel 43:7; Zech. 14). The Spirit of repentance will be poured out upon Israel just before the second coming, and a fountain for sin and uncleanness will be opened to the whole nation at that time (Zech. 12:10-13:1; Romans 11:25-29).
 - (3) "To make reconciliation (atonement; Hebrew: *καπηαρ* (HSN-3722), to cover; make atonement) for iniquity." This was done for Israel and all others on the cross (Isaiah 53; Col. 1:20; Col. 2:14-17; 1 Peter 2:24), but Israel as a nation has not yet experienced this covering for sin. They will be fully reconciled to God at the second coming of Christ (Isaiah 1:18-20; Isaiah 66:7-8; Zech. 12:10-13:1; Matthew 23:37-39; Romans 11:25-29).
 - (4) "To bring in everlasting righteousness." When transgression comes to an end, when an end of sins is made, and when full atonement for all sin is experienced by Israel, then everlasting righteousness concerning Israel and Jerusalem will be ushered in (Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 12:1-6; Daniel 2:44-45; Daniel 7:13-14,18,27; Ezekiel 43:7; Zech. 14; Luke 1:32-33; Romans 11:25-29; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-20:10; Rev. 21:1-22:5).
 - (5) "To seal up the vision and prophecy." The prophecies concerning Israel and Jerusalem and their eternal restoration under their Messiah will be fulfilled. The word for "prophecy" here should have been translated "prophet." It could also mean that there will be no more need for inspired men to rebuke Israel at Jerusalem in the attempt to lead them to God and righteousness when the Messiah comes, "for all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest of them" (Isaiah 11:9; Isaiah 66:7-10; Jeremiah 31:31-40; Romans 11:25-29).
 - (6) "To anoint the most holy." This refers to the cleansing of the holy of holies, the temple, and the city of Jerusalem from the abomination of desolation, the sacrilege of Gentiles; and to the anointing of the Millennial temple of Ezekiel 40-43; Zech. 6:12-13. "The most holy" is never used of a person, nor would the Jews ever associate this term with their Messiah who is always distinguished by the simple title, Messiah. Therefore, to teach that this refers to man crowning Christ is out of harmony with Scripture. Man is not to anoint and crown Christ. This has already been done by God the Father (Luke 22:29; Acts 1:7; Acts 2:36; Phil. 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:1-3; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-21; Daniel 7:13-14).
6. When do the seventy weeks begin? With the commandment "to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince" (Daniel 9:25). There were three decrees for the restoration of Jerusalem:
- (1) The first decree was given during the first year of the reign of Cyrus, king of Persia (Ezra 1:1-4; Ezra 3:8; Isaiah 44:28; Isaiah 45:1-4; Isaiah 46:11). Cyrus reigned 9 years; then Cambyses, his son, reigned 7 years. In the son's reign the work on the temple ceased (Ezra 4:1-24).
 - (2) Darius I of profane history reigned 35 years. In the second year of his reign he confirmed the decree made by Cyrus 18 years before. The temple was finished in the sixth year of his reign, but the city was not restored. Xerxes reigned 21 years (Daniel 11:1-3) during which time the city was not yet completed.

- (3) Artaxerxes reigned for 40 years. In the 20th year of his reign (444 B.C.) he gave Nehemiah the 3rd decree "to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince" (Daniel 9:25-26; Neh. 2:1-6:19). From this point the 70 weeks or 490 years are counted. At this point the first division of the 490 years (the 7 weeks or 49 years for the restoration of Jerusalem with streets and the wall) began (Daniel 9:25). Nehemiah restored the walls in 52 days after he reached Jerusalem, but this was by no means the full restoration. That took place during the next 49 years. Thus the 3rd decree to restore Jerusalem was 92 years after the first decree by Cyrus.
7. The crucifixion of the Messiah. This was to be after the 62 weeks or 434 years, and was to follow the 7 weeks or 49 years of the restoration of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25-26). Christ was crucified at the end of the 69th week, not in the middle of the 70th week. The 70th week did not end when Stephen was stoned, for the 6 events of point 5, above, were not fulfilled then, nor have they been fulfilled since then. They cannot be fulfilled with Israel and Jerusalem until the rapture of the church and the revelation of the future Antichrist (notes, "2 Thes. 2:7-8; Rev. 4:1).
 8. The people of the prince that shall come (Daniel 9:26). This refers to the Romans who fulfilled this prophecy of the destruction of the city and temple and brought the desolations of Daniel 9:26. This was fulfilled in 70 A.D. (see notes, "Luke 19:41-44; Luke 21:20).
 9. The prince that shall come (Daniel 9:26). This refers to Antichrist who will come from the Roman Empire territory, that is, the Grecian portion, and from the people who destroyed the city and temple of Israel in A.D. 70 (Daniel 9:26; Luke 21:20-24). He will come from among the 10 kingdoms yet to be formed inside the old Roman Empire territory (Daniel 7:23-24).
 10. The church age—the great interval between the 69th and 70th weeks (Daniel 9:26-27). This period was not seen by the prophets, but it is clear here that certain things were to happen between the crucifixion of the Messiah and the Antichrist who makes the 7-year covenant with Israel in the latter days (Daniel 9:26-27).
 11. Twelve great events between the 69th and 70th weeks:
 - (1) Christ was to be crucified at the end of the 69th week (Daniel 9:26).
 - (2) The Romans were to destroy Jerusalem and the temple between the crucifixion at the end of the 69th week and the 70th week (Daniel 9:26-27).
 - (3) There was to be a war between the Romans and Israel between the 69th and 70th weeks (Daniel 9:26-27).
 - (4) Israel was to be defeated by the Romans between the 69th and 70th weeks, or their city and temple could not be destroyed (Daniel 9:26-27).
 - (5) Israel was to be scattered among the nations by the Romans between the 69th and 70th weeks, or the end of this war would not be as a flood to carry them away (Daniel 9:26-27; Luke 21:20-24).
 - (6) Desolations of Israel and their city and temple were to follow the end of the war between Israel and the Romans (Daniel 9:26; Luke 21:20-24). When Christ comes to defend Israel from Antichrist, Jerusalem and the temple will be rebuilt, not destroyed (Zech. 6:12-13; Zech. 14:1-21; Matthew 25:31-46; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-21).

Historically, all the above events were fulfilled by the Romans. They crucified Christ about 31 A.D. and destroyed Jerusalem about 70 A.D. These events did not happen in either the 69th or the 70th week. Jerusalem was destroyed about 39 years after the crucifixion of Christ which ended the 69th week.

- (7) "The prince that shall come" was to come after the destruction and desolations of Jerusalem (Daniel 9:26-27). Since the Jews were led away captive among all nations in 70 A.D. "the prince that shall come" could not confirm a covenant with Jews to fulfill Daniel 9:27. This remains to be done in the future.
- (8) Jerusalem must be restored as the capital of Israel and a temple rebuilt before Antichrist can come and confirm the 7-year covenant with many Jews to fulfill Daniel 9:27.
- (9) The city and sanctuary were to be destroyed by the Romans, as in Daniel 9:26. They must be restored before the 7-year covenant of Daniel 9:27 can be made, for the temple is to be made desolate again in the midst of the 7 years. If it was destroyed in 70 A.D. then it could not possibly be made desolate again until its restoration first. Since it has never been restored from 70 A.D. until now, the fulfillment of Daniel 9:27 must be future.
- (10) Israel, being broken off because of unbelief at the crucifixion of Christ, must be restored again to their own land and get control of Jerusalem before the 6 events of point 5, above, can be fulfilled. Just before the crucifixion Jesus wept over Jerusalem saying, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate . . . ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" (Matthew 21:43; Matthew 23:37-39; Matthew 24:2; Luke 21:20-24). This is the official rejection of Israel as a nation until the second coming of Christ. God could not have fulfilled the 70th week with them immediately following the crucifixion because of cutting them off at this time. The 70th week remains to be fulfilled when God deals with them as a nation again (Ezekiel 37). He cannot do this until the new nation of Israel gets control of Jerusalem again, for the whole 70 weeks concern Israel and Jerusalem (Daniel 9:24). Neither can the 70th week be fulfilled until the temple is built again in Jerusalem (Daniel 9:26-27).
- (11) The prince that shall come from the Roman Empire territory is the one referred to in Daniel 9:27 that shall confirm the covenant with many Jews for 7 years. He does not come until after the future 10 kingdoms are formed inside the old Roman Empire territory (Daniel 7:23-24), and until after the rapture of the church (see Rapture Before Antichrist, and Ten Proofs of the Rapture Taking Place in Rev. 4:1). Therefore, the 70th week is after these 2 events.

The 70th week will be the last 7 years of this age, between the rapture and the second coming (Daniel 9:27). It will be the future tribulation period ending with the second coming. All of Matthew 24:25; Rev. 4:19; Rev. 21; Daniel 7:19-27; Daniel 8:9-14,22-25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Daniel 12:1-17, and many other passages will be fulfilled during these 7 years. The great tribulation will be during the last 3 1/2 years (Jeremiah 30:4-9; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:15-24; Rev. 11:1-19:21). The first 3 1/2 years will be a lesser tribulation due to the fact that Antichrist will be only rising to

power (Daniel 7:23-24; Matthew 24:4-14; Rev. 6:1-9:21). See Sixty-eight Post-Rapture Events, 62 of which will be fulfilled in the 70th week.

(12) The present church age rightfully comes in between the 69th and 70th weeks, during which time Israel is rejected by God and scattered among the nations. There is a postponement of the fulfillment of the 70th week immediately following the end of the 69th week due to Israel's rejection and her house being left desolate until God restores it again in the days of the coming of Christ. "When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory" (Psalm 102:16).

12. The covenant between Antichrist and Israel (Daniel 9:27). The terms of this covenant are not listed, but it is clear it will be a non-aggression pact, perhaps even a military alliance that will enable the Antichrist to gain power over the 10 kingdoms during the first 3 1/2 years of the 70th week (Daniel 7:23-24; Daniel 8:23-25; Rev. 17:8-17). It will include the protection of Israel in their national establishment and restoration and assure them at least temporary peace (Daniel 8:25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45). The length of the covenant is to be 7 years (Daniel 9:27).
13. The middle of the week (Daniel 9:27). The Antichrist in 3 1/2 years gets power over the 10 kingdoms (Daniel 7:23-24; Rev. 17:8-17). He then breaks his covenant with Israel, enters and takes over Palestine, and makes the Jewish temple his capital building (Daniel 7:21-25; Daniel 8:9-14,22-25; Daniel 9:27; Daniel 11:36-45; Matthew 24:15-24; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 17:8-17). He will then do away with all Jewish sacrifices in the temple and set himself and his image in the temple to be worshiped as God. This will continue 2,300 evenings and mornings, or 3 years, 2 months, and 10 days of the 1,260 days of the last 3 1/2 years of the 70th week (Daniel 8:9-14; Daniel 9:27; 11:45; Matthew 24:15-22; 2 Thes. 2:3-4; Rev. 13:1-18). See 2,300 Days Not 2,300 Years.
14. The end of the 70th week (Daniel 9:27). The beast worship and the abomination will continue from the middle of the 70th week through the judgments that will be poured out upon the one making the temple desolate (Daniel 9:27). These judgments will consist of the plagues caused by the 2 witnesses (Rev. 11:3-11) and the vial judgments (Rev. 15-16), ending with Antichrist's defeat and destruction at Armageddon (Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:11-21; Zech. 14).

Ten Things that End This Age:

1. The 7th vial (Rev. 16:17-21)
2. Destruction of Babylon (Rev. 16:19; Rev. 18:1-24)
3. The second coming of Christ (Rev. 19:11-21)
4. The battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21)
5. Judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-46)
6. Separation of the tares from the wheat (Matthew 13)
7. Regathering of Israel (Matthew 24:29-31; Isaiah 11:10-12; Ezekiel 37)
8. Conversion of Israel (Romans 11:25-29)
9. Liberation of Jerusalem (Zech. 14)
10. Fulfillment of the 6 things of point 5, above

Twenty-five Things End Here:

1. Daniel's 70th week (Daniel 9:27)
2. Dispensation of Grace (Matthew 3, refs.)
3. The tribulation (Daniel 9:27; Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:15-22; Rev. 6:1-19:21)
4. Satan's activities on earth for a 1,000-year period (Rev. 20:1-10)
5. The Times of the Gentiles
6. The wrath of God (Rev. 6:17; Rev. 15:1-16:21)
7. Rebellion of Israel (Zech. 12:10-13:1; Matthew 23:37-39; Romans 11:25-29)
8. Desolations of Jerusalem (Zech. 14:1-21; Luke 21:20-24)
9. Gentile world kingdoms (Daniel 2:44-45; Daniel 7:13-14,23-27; Rev. 17:8-17; Rev. 19:11-21)
10. Persecution of Christians (Zech. 14:9; Matthew 13:40-43; Matthew 25:31-46; Rev. 20)
11. Reign of Antichrist (Rev. 19:19-21)
12. Beast worship (Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 15:2-4; Rev. 20:4-6)
13. Revived Grecian Empire (Daniel 8:22-25; Daniel 11:36-45; Rev. 13:5; Rev. 19:19-21)
14. Freedom of demons and fallen angels (Isaiah 24:21-22; Rev. 12:7-12; Rev. 20:1-3)
15. Satanic miracles (2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:1-5,12-17; Rev. 16:13-14; Rev. 19:20)
16. The first resurrection (see Five Raptures in the First Resurrection)
17. Dispersion of Israel (Matthew 24:29-31; Isaiah 11:10-12; Ezekiel 37)
18. Ministry of the 2 witnesses (Rev. 11:7-12)
19. Man's independent rule on earth (Zech. 14:9; Rev. 5:10; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 20:1-10; Rev. 22:4-5)
20. Blindness of Israel (Romans 11:25-29)
21. Satan's dominion of the earth (Rev. 12:7-12; Rev. 20:1-10)
22. The 70 weeks or 490 years (Daniel 9:24)
23. The time, times, and half a time (Daniel 7:25; Daniel 12:7; Rev. 12:14)
24. The 42 months (Rev. 11:2; Rev. 13:5)
25. The 1,260 days (Rev. 11:3; Rev. 12:

Chuck Smith: Some Bible teachers believe that the Church will go through the Great Tribulation. They feel that God is through with the nation Israel and all the prophetic references that deal with Israel actually refer to the Church. This misinterpretation of Scriptures has led to confusion over prophecies that are actually quite clear and simple ([Matthew 24:15-22](#), [Romans 11:1](#)).

This 7-year period will not start while God is still working in the Church to bring forth a Bride for Christ. Once the Church is complete, God will take it up to heaven. Then He'll turn to Israel and make the Jews His special people once again.

After three and one-half years the Antichrist will put a stop to the daily sacrifices and prayers in the rebuilt temple. 1,290 days from this day Jesus will come to earth with His Church to establish His Kingdom and to fulfill the other prophecies concerning the Messiah that haven't yet been fulfilled ([Matthew 24:15-22](#), [II Thessalonians 2:4](#), [Revelation 12:14](#), [Isaiah 16:1-4](#)).⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Chuck Smith, Sermon notes on Daniel, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa CA

Daniel's 70 Weeks Of Years

Dr. David R. Reagan

One of the most remarkable and important prophecies in the Bible is found in Daniel 9:24-27. It is the cornerstone of Messianic prophecy because it establishes the timing of both the First and Second Advents of the Messiah.

The prophecy is usually referred to as “The 70 Weeks of Years.” This name derives from the opening words of most English translations: “Seventy weeks have been decreed” (Daniel 9:24). In the Hebrew, the word translated “weeks” is actually the word “sevens.” So, the text actually says, “Seventy sevens have been decreed . . .”

Just as the English word “dozen” can refer to a dozen of anything, the Hebrew word shavuim, meaning “sevens,” can refer to seven of anything. Its exact meaning is dependent upon the context. In this key passage from Daniel, the context makes it clear that he is speaking of years — seventy sevens of years, which would be a total of 490 years. It is therefore appropriate to refer to the prophecy as “The 70 Weeks of Years” even though those exact words are not found in the passage itself.

The Jewish Context and Goals

Another important thing to keep in mind about the context of the passage is that it is directed to the Jewish people. The opening words of the prophecy make this clear: “Seventy weeks have been declared for your people and your holy city . . .” (Daniel 9:24, emphasis added). The focus of the prophecy is the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

The prophecy begins by stating that six things will be accomplished regarding the Jewish people during a period of 490 years:

- “Finish the transgression”
 - “Make an end of sin”
 - “Make atonement for iniquity”
 - “Bring in everlasting righteousness”
 - “Seal up vision and prophecy”
 - “Anoint the most holy place”

Let’s take a moment to consider the meaning of these six prophecies. The first, “finish the transgression,” refers to the Jew’s rejection of God. The Hebrew word translated “transgression” connotes the idea of rebellion, and the rebellion of the Jewish people is their rejection of Jesus as their Messiah. Jesus said He would not return until the Jewish people are willing to say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” (Matthew 23:37-39). The Jews will open their hearts to their Messiah before Daniel’s 490 year period ends.

The period will also witness an “end of sin” for the Jews. The word translated “sin” refers to the sins of daily life — sins of dishonesty and immorality. This end of sin will occur at the time the Jews accept their Messiah and His earthly reign of righteousness begins.

An atonement for Israel’s sins is the third thing that will happen during Daniel’s 70 weeks of years. This atonement occurred, of course, when Jesus shed His blood on the Cross for the sins of the world. But that atonement will not actually be applied to the Jews until they appropriate it by accepting Jesus as their Messiah.

The 490 year period will also ‘bring in everlasting righteousness.’ This undoubtedly refers to the establishment of the Messiah’s earthly reign when the earth will be flooded with peace, righteousness and justice as the waters cover the sea.

The fifth achievement will be the fulfillment of all prophecy concerning the Messiah. The Apostle Peter referred to two types of Messianic prophecy — those related to “the sufferings of Christ” and those concerning “the glories to follow” (1 Peter 1:11). The suffering prophecies were all fulfilled at the Cross. The prophecies concerning “the glories to follow” are yet to be fulfilled. Just as Jesus was humiliated in history, He is going to be glorified in history. This will occur when the Jews accept Him, and He returns to reign over the world from Mt. Zion in Jerusalem.

The final goal to be achieved at the end of the 70 weeks of years is “the anointing of the most holy.” Most English translations say “the most holy place.” The Hebrew simply says, “the most holy.” Commentators therefore differ as to whether this is a reference to the anointing of the Messiah as King of kings or whether it is talking about the anointing of the Millennial Temple described in Ezekiel 40-48. Either way the anointing will not take place until the Lord returns in response to the national repentance of the Jews.

The Starting Point

Daniel says all these spiritual goals will be accomplished within a special period of 490 years. When did that period begin, and when did it end? It is when Daniel addresses these questions that he begins to give clues as to the timing of the First and Second Advents of the Messiah.

The prophecy says that the starting point of the 70 weeks of years will be “the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem” (Daniel 9:25). Keep in mind that this prophecy was given to Daniel by the angel Gabriel during the time of Israel’s exile in Babylon. The approximate date was 538 B.C., shortly before the first remnant of Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem in 536 B.C. under Zerubbabel. Jerusalem was in ruins at this time, having been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar 70 years earlier in 586 B.C. (The captivity had begun in 605 B.C., before the destruction of Jerusalem, when Nebuchadnezzar took Daniel and other “youths” to Babylon as hostages — Daniel 1:1- 4.)

The crucial question relates to when the decree was issued “to restore and rebuild Jerusalem.” There are three possible dates:

- 538 B.C. — Cyrus, King of Persia, issued a decree to Zerubbabel to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-3; and Ezra 6:1-5).
- 457 B.C. — Artaxerxes, King of Persia, issued a decree to Ezra authorizing him to reinstitute the Temple services, appoint judges and magistrates, and teach the Law (Ezra 7:11-26).
- 445 B.C. — Artaxerxes issued a decree to Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

On the surface, the third decree, the one issued to Nehemiah, seems to be the most obvious candidate for the starting date of the prophecy, for it is the only one that specifically relates to the rebuilding of the city. For that reason, most commentators have selected it as the beginning of the 70 weeks of years.

The Events of the 70 Weeks of Years

Daniel’s prophecy next states that the 490 years will be divided into three periods as follows: seven weeks (49 years) plus sixty-two weeks (434 years) plus one week (7

years). He states that at the end of the first two periods (69 weeks or 483 years), the Messiah will be “cut off,” a seemingly clear reference to the crucifixion. He then states that both Jerusalem and the Temple will be destroyed.

The prophecy concludes by focusing on the last week of years. It says that following the death of the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem, “the prince who is to come” will make a covenant with the Jewish people that will enable them to reinstitute their sacrificial system. This prince will come from the same people who destroyed the Temple (the Romans).

We know from 2 Thessalonians 2 that this “prince who is to come” is the Antichrist, the “man of lawlessness” who is “the son of destruction.” The same passage makes it clear that his covenant will enable the Jews to rebuild their Temple.

Both passages — Daniel 9 and 2 Thessalonians 2 — establish the fact that in the middle of this 70th week (3½ years into it) this “prince who is to come” will double cross the Jewish people. He will march into the rebuilt Temple and declare himself to be God. He will stop the sacrifices and he will erect “an abomination of desolation,” most likely an idol of himself. The book of Revelation specifies that the Messiah will return to earth 3½ years after this desolation of the Temple takes place.

Now we have the timing of the two advents of the Messiah. He will come the first time at the end of 483 years and will be “cut off” before the Temple is destroyed. He will return the second time at the end of a seven year period that will begin with a treaty that allows the Jews to rebuild their Temple and reinstitute the Mosaic system of sacrifices.

Calculating Dates

The first person in modern history to calculate the 483 years to the “cutting off” of the Messiah was Sir Robert Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince* (1894). Using the decree to Nehemiah issued in 445 B.C. as his starting point, and using what he called “the 360 day prophetic year,” Anderson calculated that it was exactly 173,880 days or 483 lunar years from the day the edict was issued to the day Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. His calculations placed the crucifixion in the spring of 32 A.D.

These calculations have remained almost sacred in Christian thinking for the past one hundred years. But they need to be examined carefully because the fact of the matter is that there are two serious problems with Anderson’s calculations.

The Prophetic Year Problem

The first is his assumption that the years in the prophecy are lunar years of 360 days. That assumption is based upon the fact that the book of Revelation defines the 70th week of Daniel as lasting a total of 2,520 days (Revelation 11:3 and 12:6). The only way that can translate into seven years is by using lunar years of 360 days.

Now, on the surface, it seems logical to apply this Revelation principle to Daniel. If the years of the final week of Daniel’s prophecy are lunar years, then surely the first 483 years must also be lunar years.

But there is a flaw in this logic. Daniel’s prophecy was written to the people of his time to give them, among other things, an insight as to when the Messiah would come. And the fact of the matter is that Daniel does not even so much as hint that he is speaking of anything other than regular solar years.

Some would counter by saying that the Jews used a lunar calendar and therefore thought only in lunar terms when calculating time. But that simply is not true. The Jews have never relied on a pure lunar calendar, like the Muslims do. The Jews have always used a lunar/solar calendar. Their months are 30 days long, but they insert what is called an intercalary month every so often to make adjustments for the true solar calendar.

For the Jews this is an absolute necessity because their major festivals (Passover, Harvest and Tabernacles) are all directly related to the agricultural cycle. If they did not make the solar adjustments, their festivals would migrate around the calendar, resulting in harvest festivals falling during seed planting times! This is exactly the case with the Muslim calendar which is a pure lunar calendar. And thus, the sacred festival of Ramadan circulates around the year. One year it will be in August, the next in September, and the next in October.

The point is that the Jews in Daniel's time did not think in terms of 360 day years. Nor did Daniel. If you will look at Daniel 9:1-2 you will see that shortly before he was given the 70 Weeks of Years prophecy by Gabriel, he discovered Jeremiah's prophecy that the Babylonian captivity would last 70 years. He realized immediately that he was very near the end of those 70 years.

The indication of this passage is that Daniel interpreted Jeremiah's prophecy of 70 years to be 70 regular years as defined by the Jewish lunar/solar calendar. And again, if his subsequent prophecy about the 70 weeks of years was to have any meaning to the Jewish people, it had to be understood in terms of regular years, not "prophetic years" of 360 days each.

Why then would there be a difference between the first 483 years and the last seven? I suspect it may relate to a statement made by Jesus in Matthew 24. He said the 70th week of Daniel will be "cut short" lest all life on earth be destroyed during that terrible period of tribulation (Matthew 24:22).

The Terminus Problem

The second problem with Anderson's calculations is their terminus date of 32 A.D. This just simply is not an acceptable year for the death of Jesus since it would place the crucifixion on either Sunday or Monday. Even Anderson recognized this problem, and as one author has put it, Anderson engaged in some "mathematical gymnastics" to arrive at a Friday crucifixion.

In his book, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, Harold Hoehner of Dallas Theological Seminary shifts the date of Nehemiah's decree from 445 to 444 B.C. and then calculates the 173,880 days to the spring of 33 A.D., when the crucifixion would have fallen on a Friday. But this creates more problems than it solves. The 444 B.C. date is suspect and the 33 A.D. date is very late. Luke 3:23 says Jesus was "about 30 years of age" when He began His ministry. His ministry lasted 3½ years. Hoehner's chronology would make Jesus 32 years old at the start of His ministry and 35 at the time of his death.

An Alternative Viewpoint

I believe a better solution is to interpret Daniel's prophecy as speaking of lunar years adjusted periodically and thus amounting to regular years. I also believe that the best starting point for the prophecy is the decree issued to Ezra in 457 B.C.

I have already explained why I believe regular years should be used. Let me now explain why I think the decree issued to Ezra should be used as the starting point for the calculation of the first two periods totaling 483 years.

The decree given to Zerubbabel authorized the rebuilding of the Temple. The decree issued to Nehemiah concerned the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. Ezra's decree was more general in nature, covering a variety of subjects. But we know from Scripture that he interpreted it to mean that the Jews were authorized to launch a general rebuilding campaign that included the temple, the city, and the walls. His interpretation is stated in Ezra 9:9 — "God has not forsaken us, but has extended loving kindness to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us reviving to raise up the house of our God, to restore its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem" (Ezra 9:9).

Now, using Ezra's decree as the starting point (457 B.C.), if we count forward 483 years we will arrive at 27 A.D. (There is only one year between 1 B.C. and 1 A.D.) According to the translator of Josephus, the Jewish new year that began in the fall of 27 A.D. marked the beginning of the last Jubilee Year that the Jews enjoyed in the land before their worldwide dispersal by the Romans in 70 A.D. This is most likely the year that Jesus began His public ministry. This is hinted at in Luke 4 where it says that when Jesus launched His ministry at the synagogue in Nazareth, He did so by reading a passage from Isaiah 61 about the way in which the Messiah would fulfill the spiritual essence of the Jubilee. After finishing the reading, Jesus proclaimed, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21).

The Relationship of the Resurrection

Further evidence that this date is correct is the fact that it would place the end of Jesus' 3½ year ministry in the spring of 31 A.D. And that happens to be the most likely year of the crucifixion.

Most scholars have tried to place the crucifixion in either 30 or 33 A.D. because these are the only two years in the time frame of Jesus' death when Passover fell on Friday. The belief that Jesus was crucified on a Passover that fell on Friday is based on a statement in Mark 15:22 which says the crucifixion took place on "the day of preparation before the Sabbath."

But this statement does not necessarily mean that the crucifixion took place on a Friday. Such an assumption is rooted in Gentile ignorance about Jewish feast days. What the Gentile church has failed to recognize over the centuries is that the first day after Passover is a feast day, or "High Sabbath," because it is the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is considered to be a Sabbath regardless of what day of the week it falls on (Numbers 28:16-18).

The Gospels make it clear that the crucifixion week had two Sabbaths. Mark 16:1 says a group of women bought spices to anoint the body of Jesus after the Sabbath was over. But in Luke 23:56 it says they bought the spices before the Sabbath and then rested on the Sabbath before proceeding to the tomb.

In the year 31 A.D. Passover fell on Wednesday. Jesus was crucified that morning and buried that evening. The next day, Thursday, was a High Sabbath. On Friday, after the High Sabbath, the women bought the spices and then rested on the regular Sabbath (Saturday) before going to the tomb on Sunday morning.

Further Collaboration

The time span I am proposing from 457 B.C. to 27 A.D. is also supported by another amazing piece of evidence. Do you remember how Daniel divided the first 483 years into two periods of time, first 49 years and then 434 years? Why did he do that? Go back and re-read Daniel 9:25 and notice that he makes specific reference to the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. Did he divide the period into two parts to indicate that the rebuilding of the city would occupy the first 49 years?

In a recent booklet entitled “The Daniel Papers,” a publication of the Radio Bible Class, the author, Herb Vander Lugt, notes:

According to Barnes and several other trustworthy Bible commentators, the historian Prideaux declared Nehemiah’s last action in rebuilding the city occurred in the 15th year of the Persian ruler Darius Nothus (423 - 404 B.C.). His 15th year was the 49th year from the 457 B.C. decree. Josephus seems to support this idea in his remarks about the death of Nehemiah.

A Prophetic Gap

One puzzle remains about Daniel’s prophecy. What about the 70th week? Is it past or future? I believe there is no doubt whatsoever that it is future. The reason for that conclusion is simple. The prophecy begins by stating that the 490 years will produce six consequences among the Jewish people.

I began this article by outlining those six prophetic events in detail. If you will look back at them, you will readily see that they are still unfulfilled. The Jews are still in rebellion against God, they are still caught up in their sins, they are still refusing to accept the atonement for their iniquity, everlasting righteousness has not come to the earth, all prophecy concerning the Messiah has not yet been fulfilled, and “the most holy” has not been anointed.

There must, therefore, be a gap in the prophecy. This may seem strange to the casual reader. But students of prophecy are familiar with prophetic gaps. They are very common in prophetic literature because of the peculiar nature of the prophetic perspective. God would show His prophets great future events and the prophets would present them as if they were happening in rapid succession because that’s the way they appeared. The prophet was like a person looking down a mountain range seeing one mountain top after another, seemingly pressed up against each other, but in reality separated by great valleys which could not be seen.

Jesus Himself recognized this characteristic of prophecy when He read a prophecy from Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth. If you will check what He read (Luke 4:18- 19) against what Isaiah wrote (Isaiah 61:1-3), you will see that Jesus stopped reading in the middle of a sentence because the rest of the sentence had to do with His Second Coming.

The Implications

For Christians, Daniel’s prophecy should serve to underscore the supernatural origin of the Bible. It should also serve as confirmation that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah.

For Jews, the prophecy should be deeply disturbing for two reasons. First, it clearly teaches that the Messiah had to come before the Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. That

means that either God failed to keep His promise or else the Jews missed recognizing their Messiah. Second, the prophecy clearly teaches that a terrible time of tribulation for the Jews still lies ahead.

Moses said it would be a time of “distress” that would occur in “the latter days” (Deuteronomy 4:30). Jeremiah called it “the time of Jacob’s distress” (Jeremiah 30:7). Daniel characterized it as “a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time” (Daniel 12:1). Zechariah says two-thirds of the Jews will “be cut off and perish” during that terrible time (Zechariah 13:8).

The process will be horrible. But the result will be glorious, for the remaining remnant will at long last turn their hearts to God, accept their Messiah, and cry out, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!”⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Daniel’s 70 Weeks Of Years, by Dr. David R. Reagan

**The Seventy Weeks of Daniel
As Understood by Sir Robert Anderson in *The Coming Prince***

Daniel 9:24-25 says that from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah there will be 483 years.

$$7 + 62 \text{ "weeks"} = 69 \text{ groups of seven years. } 7 \times 69 = 483 \text{ years}$$

Anderson sees a prophetic year as 360 days. This is based both on ancient history and on Revelation 11:2, 13:5, 11:3, and 12:6 which indicate that 42 months 3 ½ years are equal to 1,260 days.

$$\text{Therefore, } 483 \text{ years} \times 360 \text{ days} = 173,880 \text{ days}$$

Artaxerxes started his reign in 465 B.C. The decree to rebuild Jerusalem was given on the first day of Nisan, in the 20th year of Artaxerxes. In our calendar system (the Julian calendar) that date is March 14, 445 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1)

Jesus started His ministry in the 15th year of Tiberius (see Luke 3:1). Tiberius started his reign in 14 A.D., so Jesus' ministry started in 29 A.D. Anderson believes that Jesus celebrated four Passovers during His ministry, one each in 29, 30, 31 and His final Passover in 32. With the help of lunar charts, we can calculate the exact date of ancient Passovers, so it is possible to calculate the exact day of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem as April 6, 32 A.D.

From 445 B.C. to 32 A.D. there are 476 years on the Julian calendar
(not 477 years, because there is no year zero)

$$476 \text{ years} \times 365 \text{ days} = 173,740 \text{ days}$$

Adjusting for the difference between March 14 and April 6 adds 24 days
Adjusting for leap years over a period of 476 years adds 116 days

The total number of days from March 14, 445 B.C. to April 6, 32 A.D.
 $173,740 + 24 + 116 = 173,880 \text{ days}$

According to his calendar, Daniel told us there would be 173,880 days between
the decree and the arrival of Messiah the Prince.

Jesus said to the Jews of this day: *If you had known, even you, especially IN THIS YOUR DAY, the things that make for your peace!* (Luke 19:42) David said of this day in Psalm 118:24: *THIS IS THE DAY which the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*