

Text: Dan 9.

Note: these notes come directly from our Thru the Bible series, first preached April 30, 2006.

Now we turn to Daniel 9. This chapter is one of the most important chapters in Biblical prophecy, although the prophetic part of it is confined to only four verses at the end of the chapter.

“Unless the ninth chapter of the book of Daniel is properly understood, the great prophetic discourse of our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 24–25, Mark 13, and Luke 21 will be misunderstood, as will the greater portion of the book of revelation.”¹

The chapter starts with a prayer by Daniel concerning the fate of Israel. The prayer by itself is a worthwhile study. We should all learn to pray like this. However, for our purposes today, it is very important that we use the prayer mostly as a part of the setting for the prophecy at the end.

Let’s get started by reading the actual vision:

Dan 9.24-27

Proposition: The Lord has determined a set period of time to deal with his people, the Jews. The last seven years of this time still await fulfillment in the future.

I. Daniel’s prayer (1-19)

A. Setting of Daniel’s prayer (1-2)

1. First year of Darius (or Cyrus or Gubaru)
2. Daniel’s perception of the timing according to Jeremiah (70 years)
 - a. Jer. 25.11–12
 - b. Jer 29.10–14

“Notice that Daniel interpreted literally the 70 years that Jeremiah predicted as 70 years. As he saw the end of this period approaching, he prayed for the restoration of his people. Daniel’s understanding of a literal fulfillment of prophetic numbers helps us know how we should understand them.”²

¹ Feinberg, p. 117, quoted in Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Dan 8.27.

² Constable, Dan 9.2.

First Deportation (605 BC) to Temple reconstruction begins (536 BC) = 70 years.

Temple Destroyed (586 BC) to Temple completion (515 BC) = 70 years.

B. Subject of Daniel's prayer: Israel (3-15)

1. Restoration
2. Forgiveness

C. Basis of Daniel's prayer (16-19)

1. Plea for mercy
2. Appeal to name (prophecy of Jeremiah)

II. Gabriel's answer (20-23) - Seventy Weeks Determined (24-27)

A. Purpose statement (24)

1. Seventy weeks

- a. Lit. seventy sevens
- b. Could refer to seven days or seven years – as we will see in following verses, it must be years – 490 years

2. Determined on

- a. Your people
- b. The holy city

The determination of God in this prophecy is a plan God has for the Jews as a nation, distinct from all other groups.

1 Corinthians 10:32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

Point: Jews and church are distinct groups in God's mind.

3. Determined for six purposes:

- a. To finish the transgression
- b. To put an end to sin
- c. To atone for iniquity
- d. To bring in everlasting righteousness

- e. To seal both vision and prophet [God's plan for the earth, announced by his prophets]
- f. To anoint a most holy place [a new and more glorious temple, like the one described in Ezek 40ff.]

“By the time these 490 years run their course, God will have completed six things for Israel. The first three have to do with sin, and the second three with the kingdom. The basis for the first three was provided in the work of Christ on the cross, but all six will be realized by Israel at the Second Advent of Christ.”³

B. Timing

1. The first 483 years (25)

- a. Begins with the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (four historical decrees)

- 1) The first was Cyrus' decree in 538 BC (2 Chron. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4; 5:13).
- 2) The second was the decree of Darius I (522-486) in 520 BC (Ezra 6:1, 6-12). This decree actually was a confirmation of the first decree.
- 3) The third was the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus (464-424) in 457 BC (Ezra 7:11-26).

“The first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to finances for animal sacrifices at the temple. These three say nothing about the rebuilding of the city itself. Since an unwalled city was no threat to a military power, a religious temple could be rebuilt without jeopardizing the military authority of those granting permission to rebuild it. No one of these three decrees, then, was the decree that formed the beginning of the 70 sevens.”⁴

³ Pentecost, “Daniel,” p. 1361, quoted in Constable, Dan 9.24.

⁴ J. Dwight Pentecost, “Daniel,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 1362.

4) The fourth decree was also by Artaxerxes Longimanus, issued on March 5, 444 BC (Neh. 2:1-8).

“On that occasion Artaxerxes granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls. This decree is the one referred to in Daniel 9:25.”⁵

b. The first major division of the prophecy ends with the coming of the anointed one, a prince (Messiah) after 7 weeks and 62 weeks

1) A period of 483 years in total

2) The first 7 weeks (49 years) may be the time it took to rebuild the city completely after the decree in Nehemiah was given.

2. The end of the first 483 years (26a)

a. The messiah will be cut off

b. The messiah will have nothing

The Jewish calendar was a lunar calendar totaling 360 days. If you take 483 years from 444 BC you end up with 33 AD. Some of have calculated that the 69 weeks ran out on the day of the Triumphant Entry.

c. Note that Messiah is not cut off ‘in’ the 70 weeks, but ‘after’ the 69th week

The interval period is for the purpose of the building of the church to provoke Israel to jealousy. (Rm 10.19, 11.11, 11.25)

Israel is set aside for the time being (Mt 21.42-43)

3. Subsequent events after the 69th week but not in the 70th week (26b)

a. The destruction of the city and sanctuary by the people of the prince that shall come (70 AD)

1) Note that it is the people of the prince, not the prince

2) Note that the last empire in the Imperial Visions lingers on in decaying form until a little horn arises from it – the last empire is the Roman empire

⁵ Pentecost, 1362.

b. There shall be repeated war until the end (pray for the peace of Jerusalem)

4. The 70th week (27)

a. "He" – who? The prince that shall come

b. Will make a covenant: a peace covenant for the land of Israel

c. Will put an end to sacrifice and offering: stop worship in the temple (a rebuilt temple, but not Ezekiel's temple) – this will cause desolation (compare Mt 24.15)

d. A decreed end will come to the desolater: God has determined his end from eternity past

This covenant cannot be a covenant made by the Messiah during his first advent because:

- His ministry did not last seven years
- His death did not stop sacrifices and offerings
- He did not set up "the abomination that causes desolation" (Matt. 24:15)

Conclusion:

There is much more that could be said about these prophecies and many more verses that need to be linked with these.

But we must conclude.

God has a plan that he has worked out to fulfill the promises he made to Abraham. What were the two components to God's covenant with Abraham?

- Land
- People

The Lord's plan is decreed. God will have a people of faith from Abraham's seed. The pressure of the Great Tribulation will prepare them, and the arrival of Christ in his Second Coming will convince them.

God will then give them the land he promised while they live on the earth serving him for 1000 years during the millennial period.

What are we to take from this?

God's promises are sure. Do you ever doubt God's promises? You can trust God. If He said it, He will perform it.