

Daniel Chapter 9

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;"

Darius, the Mede, had been a friend of Daniel, and elevated him to high office in his kingdom.

He ruled over Babylon, after Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians.

This may mean that Darius (a title and not a proper name), refers to Cyrus who was made king by God's allowance.

Since Cyrus was the first monarch of the Medo-Persian empire, this tie note was also the first year after the death of Belshazzar, when Babylon fell.

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."

We remember from the study on Jeremiah, that God had revealed to him the Hebrew children would be in captivity about 70 years.

Jeremiah had written this down, and it appears that Daniel had read of this.

You remember, Daniel was an educated man.

Daniel's study of "the books" focused on the years prophesied for the captivity by Jeremiah in Jerusalem.

Since the end of the span was near, he prayed for God's next move on behalf of Israel, where it is indicated that the 70 years of exile were intended to restore the Sabbath rests that Israel had ignored for so many years.

The chronological notice in this verse is important.

The event in the chapter occurred (in 539 B.C.), the year that Darius the Mede assumed the rulership of Babylon.

This momentous change of power provoked Daniel to search the Scriptures to determine the prophetic significance, if any, of the capture of Babylon by the Persians.

By searching the prophet Jeremiah, Daniel realized that Jeremiah had prophesied that the captivity of the Jews would last 70 years.

That period was almost over.

Verses 4-19 are, in essence, a prayer of confession and petition: confession of the nation's sin and petition for God to fulfill His Word.

Daniel 9:3 "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:"

Daniel was a very humble man, who knew his true wisdom came as a gift from God.

The fasting, sackcloth, and ashes, tell us of the seriousness of Daniel's prayer.

He was reaching out to God with a humble spirit, knowing that all truth comes from God.

Verses 4-19

"I prayed":

Various aspects of the passage give rich instruction regarding prayer.

True prayer is:

This in response to the Word (verse 2), characterized by fervency and self denial (verse 3); identified unselfishly with God's people (verse 5), strengthened by confession (verses 5-15); dependent on God's character (verses 4, 7, 9, and 15); and has as its goal, God's glory (see verses 16-19).

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;"

Daniel began his prayer by telling God he was aware of His greatness.

This is very similar to the way Jesus taught the disciples to pray.

"Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name".

In both instances, recognition of God and His power came first.

He knows God does not break covenant with man.

Man breaks covenant with God.

Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments".

Daniel has kept God's commandments.

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:"

Four times in the chapter (verses 5, 8, 11, 15), Daniel acknowledges the people's sin.

Daniel includes himself in the confession of his fellow Hebrews.

He admits guilt for their sins first.

He knows that sins of omission are sin, as well as sins of commission.

As with all great leaders he identifies himself with his people.

Recognizing the fact that we have sinned, comes even before repenting of that sin to God.

This is what Daniel is doing for all of the Hebrews.

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."

God had sent prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah to warn them, but they had not heeded the warning.

They had actually chosen to believe the false prophets over the prophets of God.

They could have repented before all of the problems arose, but they did not.

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."

Israel had committed spiritual adultery, by worshipping the false gods of the heathen people around them.

God is holy.

Israel was driven out of their homeland, because they trespassed greatly against their God.

Their "confusion of face" meant they did not know what to believe anymore.

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."

Their loyalty was to no god.

They wanted to worship God, but all at the same time they worshipped false gods.

Their confusion was obvious to everyone, but themselves.

Romans 6:21 "What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things [is] death."

Daniel 9:9 "To the Lord our God [belong] mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;"

God's people rebelled and rebelled, but God is merciful.

He never let them all be destroyed.

He forgave them, and started them all over again.

Psalms 130:7 "Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD [there is] mercy, and with him [is] plenteous redemption."

Micah 7:18 "Who [is] a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth [in] mercy."

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."

One thing that set the Hebrews aside as being different is they had the law of God.

God had promised to bless them mightily, if they kept His law.

If they did not keep His law, there would be curses.

God had sent prophet after prophet to warn them, they were not keeping His law.

Daniel is admitting to God, they had not kept the law.

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."

This refers to the judgment that God brought, as promised, for Israel's disobedience in the Land (Lev. 26:21-42); dependent on God's character (verses 4, 7, 9, and 15), and has as its goal, God's glory (verses 16-19).

They transgressed the law and followed false gods.

Daniel is aware the captivity came to cause them to repent of their sins, and turn back to God.

God had given His Word. He had sworn by Himself that He would bless them, if they kept the law, and curse them, if they did not keep the law.

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."

To whom much is given, much is required.

Zechariah 7:12 "Yea, they made their hearts [as] an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts."

God does exactly what He says He will do.

He gave them ample time and warning to repent, and they did not.

They sinned in full knowledge of the law, and God greatly punished them for it.

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."

They brought all the trouble upon themselves.

The law was plainly written down, that they might know God's will.

They disregarded God's law, and did what was pleasing in their own sight.

Daniel is speaking of Israel as a whole, and not individually of himself.

He knew that if they had repented in sackcloth and ashes and returned to God, He would have forgiven them.

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."

God is loving, kind, forgiving, and merciful; but He is also the Righteous Judge.

He cannot, and will not, overlook their unfaithfulness to Him.

They were not obedient to God, and their punishment is justified.

Verses 9:15-19

After praying his confession (in verses 4-14), Daniel offers a petition.

He prayed, negatively for God's wrath against His people to be assuaged and positively, for God's grace, mercy and forgiveness to be displayed in the people's restoration to their land (verses 17-19).

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."

We must remember from the lessons in some of the other prophetic books that even the heathen, who were fighting them, knew their problems were a judgment of God upon them.

When God delivered almost 3 million of them from Pharaoh of Egypt, all the countries around knew it was God.

They were God's chosen people.

Their sins have gotten them in this situation they are now in.

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."

Daniel is pleading for Jerusalem and all of God's people.

Where they had been highly respected, because of their God before, now they are ridiculed.

Daniel says that even Jerusalem is falling to some ridicule.

Notice, Daniel asks forgiveness according to God's righteousness, not the people's righteousness.

Daniel knows when God stops being angry with them, He will turn and bless them.

Daniel prayed for restoration in 3 aspects.

In effect, he asked God to bring back "(Thy city" (verses 16 and 18), "Thy sanctuary that is desolate (verse 17), and "our people" (verse 19).

God's answer embraced all three (verse 24).

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."

The sanctuary in Jerusalem had been a place where all the believers in the world had looked to.

Daniel himself, opened his window toward Jerusalem, when he prayed.

Notice, Daniel calls himself, servant of God.

The beautiful part of this prayer is the reason: "for the Lord's sake".

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."

No one, then or now, wants to be judged by his own righteousness.

We do not want justice, we want mercy.

Daniel appeals to the mercy of God towards His people and His city.

Daniel cries out, "O my God".

Whatever the answer, God is still Daniel's God.

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."

Daniel intercedes in prayer to God with all the strength he has.

Look at the progression of the prayer.

Hear, forgive, hearken and do, don't put it off, is his request.

He knows God still loves them, so Daniel says, for thine own sake.

All the people of the world associate the Hebrews and Jerusalem with God.

Daniel 9:20-21 "And while 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;" "Yea, while 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."

What a wonderful way to know that God has heard your prayer.

We do not know how long Daniel prayed, but we do know this prayer was accompanied by fasting and wearing of sackcloth.

God heard his prayer, while it was still coming from his mouth.

Gabriel is an archangel, who seems to be associated with Father God.

He is like the Father's top General.

The Father sends messages to the earth by Gabriel.

This angel, called a “man” because he appeared in the form of a man, appeared also (in 8:16).

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."

This will be a gift of understanding.

His understanding will be far above the natural man's.

God will equip Daniel to do the job He has sent him to do.

The answer of God to Daniel's prayer came immediately through the angel Gabriel.

Although Daniels's prayer was primarily for God's forgiveness and the restoration of the Jews to their land, his initial concern for God's program for Israel (verse 2) caused the Lord to reveal to him an outline of Israel's future from that point on.

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."

God heard his prayer immediately, and sent Gabriel to him.

The commandment that came forth was God commanding Gabriel to bring the message to Daniel.

One of the most wonderful things any of us could hear is that we are greatly beloved of God.

I am sure this was the greatest thing Daniel could ever hope to hear.

Daniel is to carefully consider the vision, and then understand.

Verses 24-26

“Seventy weeks”:

These are weeks of year, whereas week of days are described in a different way (10:2-3).

The time spans from the Persian Artaxerxes’ decree to rebuild Jerusalem (ca. 445 B.C.; Neh. 2:1-8), to the Messiah’s kingdom.

This panorama includes:

(1) 7 weeks or 49 years, possibly closing Nehemiah’s career in the rebuilding of Jerusalem as well as the end of the ministry of Malachi and the close of the Old Testament.

(2) Then add 62 weeks or 434 more years for a total of 483 years to the first advent of Messiah. This was fulfilled at the triumphal entry (on 9 Nisan, A.D. 30). So this particular dispensation, which was among God’s secret things in the Old Testament but is a mystery revealed in the New Testament, falls within this gap. The 70 weeks began from the only biblical decree authorizing the rebuilding of Jerusalem and it was. It is dated in the Jewish month of Nissan (445 B.C.). Using a 360 day year (twelve 30 day months; Sir Robert Anderson calculated the end of the 69th week to fall on Palm Sunday, just before the Lord’s crucifixion. The Messiah will be “cut off”, a common reference to death. And then:

(3) The final 7 years (is Tribulation), or 70th week of the time of Antichrist.

Roman people from whom the Antichrist will come, will “destroy the city” of Jerusalem and its temple (in 70 A.D.).

Just as the events of the first 69 weeks have been literally fulfilled, so will be the events of the final week.

The Christian should realize that God is not yet through with Israel.

There is still one more week to come.

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."

These seventy weeks is actually four hundred and ninety years.

The most Holy who will come is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus reconciles the Father to fallen man.

Jesus fulfills the law, and brings in grace.

God not only forgives the sinner, but makes provision for his forgiveness to be lawful.

Jesus became the substitute for all of mankind.

He reconciles us to the Father with His precious shed blood.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks is crucial for understanding biblical prophecy.

Every statement (in verses 24-27), is important and deserves special attention.

The first interpretive problem is the meaning of the expression seventy weeks.

The word “weeks” is a Hebrew word shabua that can refer to any period of seven: seven days, seven months, seven years, and so on.

Only the context indicates what period of seven is intended.

There are four good reasons for believing that the “seven” intended here is a period of seven years:

- (1) Daniel has just been concerned about years.
- (2) It is impossible to fit the events (of verses 24-27), into 490 days or weeks.
- (3) In the only other place where Daniel uses the word week, he qualifies it by adding the word days.
- (4) Finally, the fact that (verse 27), speaks of a covenant being broken at the half way point of the seventieth seven agrees well with (Daniel 7:25, 12:7 and Revelation 12:14), which speak of three and one half years as one half of a week. In sum (verse 24) declares that God had determined a period of 490 years to accomplish six key activities on behalf of Israel. Each divine act is marked out by an infinitive: to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, and so on. The first three are negative and the last three are positive.

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."

The temple was 49 years in the building (7 weeks).

From Nehemiah building the temple till the coming of Messiah is 434 years (62 weeks).

These were very troublesome times.

Nehemiah and Ezra both, were involved in the reconstruction of the temple.

The commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem is said to be the point of commencement for the 490 year period.

At least four decrees mentioned in Scripture have been set forth by various scholars as the fulfillment of this prophecy: the decree of Cyrus (in 539 B.C.; 2 Chr. 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-4); the decree of Darius I (in 519/518 B.C.; Ezra 6:1, 6-12); the decree of Artaxerxes I to Ezra (in 457 B.C.; Ezra 7:11-26); and the decree of Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (in 444 B.C.; Neh. 2:1-8).

Only the last decree however, could have fulfilled this statement, since it was the only one of the four that specifically concerned the rebuilding of the city.

Cyrus's decree was for the purpose of rebuilding the temple.

Darius's decree simply confirmed the intent of Cyrus's earlier decree.

Artaxerxes' decree to Ezra was concerned only with the return of additional exiles and with the beautification of the temple.

Only Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah refers directly to the restoration of the city.

According to (Nehemiah 2:1-8); this decree was given in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes (in the month Nisan, or March-April, 444 B.C.).

From this date to the Messiah will transpire a period of seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, or 483 years (see the note on verse 24 for the explanation of the week as seven years).

The reason the first 69 "weeks" are subdivided into two periods of seven and 62 is uncertain, but clearly these 69 weeks run consecutively with no gap between them.

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."

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off":

This phrase assumes that the first seven weeks have already transpired and thus serves to summarize the passing of 69 weeks of years or 483 years.

This does not mean that Jesus was cut off immediately after the 434 years.

It just means that after that time He was cut off.

Notice, He was cut off not for Himself.

He did it for all who would believe and receive the gift of salvation.

There is a gap of time between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks.

This is indicated by the statement that the Messiah will be cut off after the 69 weeks.

Daniel used a calculation of time based upon prophetic years (360 days), rather than solar years of 365 days.

The same calculation is used in the Book of Revelation where “a time, and times, and half a time” (Rev 12:14), equals 1260 days or 42 months.

In each case the calculation is based upon 30 day months.

The Messiah’s being cut off refers to the crucifixion of Christ (which probably occurred on April 3, 33 A.D.).

The sixty-ninth week ended just prior to His crucifixion, probably at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

The time span from Artaxerxes’ decree to rebuild the city (in March 444 B.C.), until Christ’s crucifixion (in April 33 A.D.), covered 483 prophetic years (173,880 days)

This calculation agrees perfectly with our own solar calendar.

Thus, Daniel predicted that 483 prophetic years would lapse from Artaxerxes’ decree until the death of the Messiah.

The final week of years (Daniel’s seventieth week), is left unexplained and is best taken to be the equivalent to the seven years of tribulation that are yet determined for Israel.

The prince that shall come is the little horn (of 7:8), who will emerge from the fourth, or Roman Empire.

He is known elsewhere in Scripture as the Antichrist.

However, the present verse states that the people of the prince, and not the prince himself, will destroy the city.

This prophecy was fulfilled (in 70 A.D.), when Titus the Roman general, destroyed the city of Jerusalem, killing thousands.

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."

And now we come to the Antichrist.

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week”:

The pronoun he here refers to its nearest antecedent, “the prince that shall come,” or Antichrist (in verse 26).

The commencement of the future seventieth “week” then occurs when the Antichrist makes a covenant with the Jews for a seven year period.

It will evidently be a covenant intended to provide peace for Israel.

However, in the middle of this period, the Antichrist will break this covenant and cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, that is, put an end to Jewish worship and set himself up as an object of worship (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:8).

The statement that “for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate” refers to what Jesus called “the abomination of desolation” (Mat. 24:15).

It foreshadows the act of sacrilege when the Antichrist ends organized religion and demands that he be worshiped.

This final seventieth week is also known in Scripture as the Tribulation (Matt. 24:21).

Revelation (chapters 4-19), is an exposition of what will take place during this period.

The seventieth week will end when Christ returns to the earth to establish His kingdom (Rev. 19:11-21).

The Antichrist stops all worship of the one true God at the middle of the 7 years of tribulation (one week).

He will appear to bring peace, but he will cause true Christianity to stop.

He will set himself up in the temple in Jerusalem to be worshipped the last 3-1/2 years of the tribulation period.

The wrath of God will come upon the earth during this period.

Daniel Chapter 9 Questions

1. Where did Darius reign?
2. What kind of relationship did he have with Daniel?
3. What other prophet is mentioned in verse 2?
4. What had Daniel read, that made him know of the 70 years of Babylonian captivity?

5. Daniel was an _____ man?
6. Where did Daniel's wisdom come from?
7. What do the fasting, sackcloth, and ashes tell us of Daniel's prayer?
8. What is the first thing to do in prayer?
9. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my _____".
10. Who was Daniel confessing for?
11. What two types of sin does he specifically mention in 5?
12. Who had the people chosen to believe, instead of the prophets of God?
13. What sin had Israel committed?
14. Why does God not retain His anger forever?
15. What made the Hebrews different from the countries around them?
16. Why was God's curse poured out on them?
17. God is loving, kind, forgiving, and merciful; but He is the _____.
18. When God delivered them from Egypt, who noticed?
19. Daniel asks forgiveness according to what?
20. No one, then or now, want to be judged by his own _____.
21. We do not want _____, we want _____.
22. Explain the progression of Daniel's prayer.
23. What happened, while Daniel was speaking his prayer?
24. How long had Daniel prayed?
25. When had God heard the prayer?
26. What association does Gabriel appear to have with God?
27. What is different about Daniel's understanding?
28. What wonderful thing did Gabriel tell Daniel?
29. How many years do the 70 weeks symbolize?

30. Who is the perfect High Priest?
31. God not only forgives the sinner, but makes provision for that forgiveness to be _____.
32. How did Jesus reconcile us to the Father?
33. How many years did it take to build the temple?
34. From the building of the temple to Messiah, there were _____ years.
35. Who was Messiah cut off for?
36. Who destroyed the temple?
37. What is meant by the sacrifice and oblation stopping in the middle of the week?