

70 Week Prophecy (Daniel 9:1-3, 20-27)



1. Background of Daniel's 3rd Vision

- a. Time: the 1st year of Darius' reign – 538BC. Daniel has now lived 68 years in Babylon. He was exiled in 606BC with the 1st deportation of Judah. Assuming Daniel was taken to Babylon in his teens, he must be now 80+ years of age. He has been studying Jeremiah's prophecies about the 70 years of the Jewish exile and return to their land (Jer 25:11-12, 29:10-14; 36:23, 28).
- b. Urgency: There are now only 2 years left for the fulfillment of the prophecy. What does Daniel do? He seeks God with prayer and fasting and self-humbling. This is what Jeremiah called for (Jer 29:10-14). Daniel's prayer was one of identification with his people's sins and repentance.
- c. Daniel's prayer life: Daniel's prayer habit is recorded in 6:10. He has been praying through his two major revelations in Chapters 7-8 for 15 years. Daniel is now in his 80's and still fasting and praying. The most fruitful season in Daniel's life is in his 80s – Vintage Daniel. Following Daniel's prayer, Cyrus' edict goes forth in 538BC for the first wave of the Jews to return to their land (Ezra 1:1-4, c.f. Three more edicts by subsequent kings would follow, releasing the Jews to return to Jerusalem.
- d. Daniel's revelation: However, far more revelation was given to Daniel than what he had prayed for - which was simply for his people to return to their land according to God's prophetic promise through Jeremiah the prophet. Gabriel appeared to Daniel twice (8:16; 9:21) to help him understand the vision of the end. 'O Daniel, I have now come forth give you skill to understand...consider the matter and understand the vision...' (Dan 9:21-23). In each of the four visions of Daniel, the emphasis always falls on understanding (7:16, 19; 8:15, 17; 9:3, 22-23, 25; 10:3, 11-14; 11:33, 35; 12:4, 8-10.) Daniel is a man 'greatly beloved'. This is the mark of his deep friendship with God. God shares His secrets with him (John 15:15).

2. Overview of Daniel 9:24-27

- a. The uniqueness of 70 weeks prophecy – This is Daniel's third vision and encounter, and the shortest of his four visions. Only 4 verses, yet a prophecy unparalleled in its scope, content, and mathematical precision! This is the only prophecy in the Bible that predicts Jesus' first coming and His sacrificial death with time reference and also of His second coming - in relation to the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the temple. This is *the prophetic reference* Jesus alluded to in His end-time teaching (Matt 24:15) We are living in a privileged time of fulfillment!
- b. Overview:
 - ✓ v24: The scope of 70 weeks prophecy - God's six-fold blessing for Israel's complete return.
 - ✓ v25: The events before the Messiah's first coming - the restoration of Jerusalem (7 wks & 62 wks).
 - ✓ v26: The events at the Messiah first coming - He is cut off & Jerusalem is destroyed again (@69 wks)
 - ✓ v27: The events during the 70th week up to the Messiah's return - the antichrist causes desolation and is destroyed.

3. Scope of the 70 Weeks Prophecy (v24)

- a. God determined it would take '70 weeks' to prepare Israel to receive her full salvation. 'Weeks' (Heb. Shabuim) can mean either in days or in years. E.g., Jesus said to forgive 70x7 times. Here 70 weeks means in years – 70 units of 7 years, i.e. 490 years.

Daniel was praying for his people the Jews to return to their land after 70 years of exile in Babylon, but God planned to completely deal with Israel in their land, and it will take 70 x 7 years!

'Your people and the holy city' – Gabriel's focus is on Jerusalem. God's prophetic clock of 490 years only ticks forward when Israel is in the promised land, living in the restored city of Jerusalem with a functioning temple.

b. The Promise of Six Blessings:

- i. *'To finish the transgression'* – To deal with the power behind all of Israel's national transgressions. The definite article 'the' may refer to the ultimate transgression of Israel – the rejection of their Messiah. (c.f. Rom 11:26)
- ii. *'To make an end of sins,'* i.e., plural – To put away all individual sins.
- iii. *'To make reconciliation of iniquity'* – reconciliation (Heb. 'Kaphar' to atone or to cover), i.e., to neutralise the curse caused by the generational iniquities of the past (Zech 13:2).
- iv. *'To bring in everlasting righteousness'* – The righteous rule of God is brought into Israel so that they are not subject to sin ever again (Is 11:2-5 c.f. Acts 3:21).
- v. *'To seal up the vision & prophecy'* – To authenticate, approve the vision. (C.f. *'Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples' Is 8:16*)
- vi. *'To anoint the most holy'* – (Heb. 'godes gada') To prepare for the Anointed Messiah to rule and to sanctify the millennial temple (Ezek 43:5-7).

4. The Messiah's Coming & Rebuilding of Jerusalem: Events before 69 wks (v25)

- a. From the command to the rebuilding of Jerusalem (7 wks = 49 years), and to the Messiah's first coming (62 wks = 434 years) takes **483** years in total. *'streets'* = town square, plaza / main mall. *'wall'* = city's boundary defined & defence system working, i.e., fully functioning city. Why? The Messiah was to come after Jerusalem was restored. *'Until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.'* (v25), i.e., Ezra, Nehemiah was preparing for the first coming of the Messiah.
- b. *'even in troublesome times'* (Neh 4:1-23). When God's promise is given to us, it doesn't mean our pathway to fulfilment will be trouble-free. It is often the opposite.
- c. *'Four Commands' went forth from Persia for the Jews' return.* So which one?
 - i. Cyrus - 538BC (Ezra 1:1-4) [538BC - 483BC = 55BC]
 - ii. Darius - 518 BC (Ezra 6:1-12) [518 - 483 = 35BC]
 - iii. Artaxerxes - 458BC (Ezra 7:11-26) [Artaxerxes' 1st command]
458BC (Command) to 409BC (Jerusalem rebuilt & Ezra retires in 407BC) : 49 years (1 wk)
409BC to 26AD (Beginning of Jesus' ministry) : 434 years (62 wks)
** Elephantine Papyri mentioned the man who replaced Nehemiah as the governor of Judah in 407 BC indicating that by 407BC Nehemiah's work of rebuilding the city was done.*
 - iv. Artaxerxes - 445BC (Neha 2:1-8) [Artaxerxes' 2nd command]
** Sir R. Anderson, by using 360 days/year, arrives at the 6th of April 32AD as Jesus' triumphal entry to Jerusalem. Which one? Depends on the date of Jesus' birth. 4BC or 1BC (most modern data seems to point to 4 BC to be the year of Jesus' birth).*
- d. This means Jesus came to Jerusalem at the exact time predicted by Daniel! It was the time of divine visitation. (C.f. Luke 19:41-44, *'If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes...[destruction of Jerusalem prophesied] because you did not know the time of your visitation.'*)

5. Messiah Killed & Jerusalem Destroyed: Events after 69 wks (v26)

- a. After 7 + 62 weeks, the Messiah will be 'cut off,' i.e. 'killed.' (C.f. Is 53:8 – *'For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He was stricken.'* But not for himself. It was the 'substitutionary death for us.') This must have shocked Daniel. Why then rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple? The Messiah was to come only after Jerusalem was restored. This Messiah is the Son of Man who will come in the clouds to receive the kingdom from the Ancient of the Days (Dan 7:13-14).

- b. This event was the turning point in history that led to the destruction of Jerusalem by *the people of the prince* (i.e. Roman soldiers – Titus, 70AD). When Jesus was killed, God’s prophetic clock was put on pause again for the last 2000 years - until Israel is back in the land with their temple functioning again.
- c. ‘Flood’ or ‘overflowing outrage’ - Jerusalem was ransacked in 70AD by Titus in a flood of violence, destroying the city and the temple, and the Jewish people were dispersed over 100+ nations. So the desolation of Jerusalem was determined, lasting nearly 1900 years until the final 1 week of the 70 weeks.

6. Antichrist’s Covenant & his destruction: Events during the 70th week (v27)

- a. Israel is God’s prophetic clock. The 70 weeks prophecy concerns God’s dealings with Israel in their land with a functioning temple. Since Jesus’ death (the true temple) until now, that prophetic clock is on pause - until v27 starts. The last 2000 years while God’s prophetic clock was on pause – Paul referred to this period as a mystery of the times of the gentiles (Romans 11:25-33). In the final 70th week, evil and wickedness will surface worldwide before they will be removed from the earth forever by the Lord.
- b. Since the prophecies of the 69 weeks have come to pass in such precision, the 70th week and the promise of the six blessings for Israel will also come to pass precisely when God’s prophetic clock starts ticking again.
- c. When does it start again? When the one who ‘brings desolation’ comes – the antichrist is likened to ‘the people of the prince’ who destroyed the temple. When the antichrist ‘confirms the covenant’ with many, i.e. with Israel and the surrounding hostile nations for 1 week (7 years), it will allow the Jews to start the temple sacrifice. This means the Jerusalem temple must first be rebuilt.

Right now the Jews are back in their land once again (1948), and the Jerusalem city was taken and rebuilt (1967), but the temple is not rebuilt and functioning yet. Why? There is another temple standing on its site – the Dome of the Rock or Al Aqsa Mosque. (There is a debate about the actual site where the original temple stood.) What the covenant or treaty must involve is the permission that Israel can rebuild their third temple and worship YHWH.

Perhaps the two temples will stand side by side? C.f. *Rev 11:1-2, ‘...Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar and those who worship there. But leave out the court, which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread on the holy city underfoot for forty-two months.’*

- d. However, in the middle of the 70th week, i.e., after 3 ½ years, the antichrist will stop the Jewish people’s temple sacrifice and start the ‘abomination of desolation,’ demanding the worship of himself. (C.f. Each time daily sacrifices are taken away it is the work of the evil man. 8:11-13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11 Four times it is linked to the abomination of desolation. C.f. 1 Thess 5:3-4 & 2 Thess 2:3-4). When this happens, we know the time is short because this is the beginning of the great tribulation by Jesus’ definition (Matt 24:15, 21, 29). He will destroy the evil forever. - i.e. The desolator will be desolated.

Overview of

KEY END TIME EVENTS

REVELATION STUDY

