

DANIEL CHAPTER 9

Chapter 9 focuses on “**the seventy weeks**” prophecy found in **Daniel 9:24-27**. It has often been called the “Backbone of Bible Prophecy” and “God’s Prophetic Clock”. This prophecy tells us that God has put **Israel’s** future on a time clock. The setting for this prophecy is found in verses 1-23 of this chapter.

In verse 2 we see that Daniel was reading from the prophet Jeremiah and understood that the captivity was to be for a period of seventy years and that it was close to its end.

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.*

¹² *And 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.*

Jeremiah 29:10

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.*

In verses 3-19 Daniel prays for the Jewish people confessing their sins and requests the restoration of the people from Babylon.

In verses 20-23 while Daniel is still praying, God sends Daniel an immediate answer by the angel Gabriel.

Verses 24-27 is God’s answer to Daniel’s prayer, but in this response, God goes far beyond the restoration of the Jewish people from Babylon to Israel’s ultimate and final restoration under the Messiah.

A. Verse 24a

“Seventy weeks are determined...”

1. The Hebrew text reads *“seventy sevens are determined...”* The term “week” or “sevens”, refers to sets of seven. It could refer to days, weeks, months, or years. The context of the passage will determine its meaning.

Daniel 9:2

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.*

2. The Jewish people had different groups of sevens.
 - a. Every seventh day was a Sabbath day.

Exodus 20:8-10

⁸ *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

⁹ *Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:*

¹⁰ *But **the seventh day is the sabbath** of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:*

- b. Every seventh year was a Sabbath year for the land in which they were to allow the land to rest.

Leviticus 25:3-4

³ *Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;*

⁴ *But in **the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land**, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.*

- c. At the end of seven sevens of Sabbath years (49 years) was to be the “Year of Jubilee”.

Leviticus 25:8-10

⁸ *And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.*

⁹ *Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month,*

¹⁰ *And ye shall hallow the **fiftieth year**, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a **jubile** unto you;*

- (1.) God told the Jews they would suffer punishment if they broke the Sabbath year which would include removal from the land.

Leviticus 26:33-35

³³ *And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.*

³⁴ *Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.*

³⁵ *As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.*

3. The seventy years of captivity in Babylon came because they neglected to observe the land Sabbath. It came as a direct result of the Jewish people not keeping the land Sabbath for 490 years or seventy Sabbath years (seventy sevens).

2 Chronicles 36:20-21

²⁰ *And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:*

²¹ *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.***

The context tells us then that in Daniel 9:24, "Seventy Sevens", would have the same meaning and also refer to 490 years. So, the total time covered by this prophecy would be seventy weeks of years (490 years).

B. Verse 24b

*"...upon **thy** people {the Jews} and upon **thy** holy city... {Jerusalem}"*

This tells us this prophecy is about Daniel's people, the Jews and the city of Jerusalem. The Jews are God's special people and Jerusalem is God's special city.

Psalm 132:13-14

¹³ *For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation.*

¹⁴ *This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it.*

Ezekiel 5:5

⁵ *Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her.*

C. Verse 24c

The six-fold purpose of the 70 weeks (490 years):

1. *"...To finish the transgression..."*

a. This has special reference to the nation's rejection of the Messiah. At the return of Christ at the end of the tribulation a remnant of the nation of Israel will turn to Christ in faith ending their transgression.

2. "...To make an end of sins..."

a. This will also take place at the end of the tribulation when that remnant of Jews accepts the finished work of the cross.

3. "...To make reconciliation for iniquity..."

a. The basis for reconciliation was laid at Calvary, but because of their rejection of the finished work of the cross, this too is still future for the Jews.

- *These first three have reference to the nation of Israel's sin and to the sacrifice of the Messiah in anticipation of the removal of sin from the nation.*
- *The last three have reference to God's righteousness and the sovereignty of the Messiah, and anticipate the establishment of His reign.*

4. "...To bring in **everlasting** righteousness..."

a. This points to the future Millennial Kingdom when Christ will reign as king and it will be an everlasting kingdom.

5. "...To seal up vision and prophecy..."

a. All that God through the prophets said He would do in fulfilling His covenants with Israel will be fully realized in the Millennial Kingdom.

6. "...To anoint the Most Holy..."

a. The most holy place is a reference to the temple. At the beginning of the Millennium, the temple will be rebuilt (restored) and anointed in Jerusalem and the shekinah glory will return to it. **(Ezekiel 40-44)**

Ezekiel 43:2, 4-5

² *And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. ...*

⁴ *And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.*

⁵ *So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house.*

C. Verse 25a

"...from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem..."

1. Artaxerxes issued a decree giving Nehemiah permission, safe passage and supplies to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the walls on March 5, 444 BC. (**Nehemiah 2:1-8**). This started the clock ticking on the 70 weeks (490 years).

D. Verse 25b

"unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, [7 weeks=49 years] and three score and two weeks [62 weeks=434 years]".

[49 years plus 434 years = 483 years = 173,880 days]

1. Bible scholars tell us that this prophecy was fulfilled to the exact day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem for the triumphal entry. **Luke 19:28-44** indicates that the Jews should have recognized that this particular day was the day on which Messiah the Prince, would visit Jerusalem.

Zechariah 9:9

⁹ 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.

E. Verse 26a

“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself:”

1. “...shall Messiah be **cut off**...” This was fulfilled on March 30, AD. 33 when Christ was crucified.

F. Verse 26b

“...and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;”

1. “The city and the sanctuary” [Jerusalem and the temple] will be destroyed. This was fulfilled on August 6, AD.70 when Titus and the Roman army (*the people of the prince that shall come*) destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.

2. God’s prophetic clock for Israel stopped at the end of the 69th set of seven. We are living in this gap between the 69th and 70th week—called the church age. The church age will end when Christ raptures the church. Remember, the seventy weeks have to do with Israel not the church.