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The Mission
April 16, 2025

Revelation 6 Seventy Weeks Prophecy of Daniel

Okay, so like I told you last week I want to digress a bit for a few weeks and talk about two subjects that I believe we really need to understand before we move forward. And those two subjects are the three temples in Jerusalem; two of which are past and one which is future; and the seventy weeks prophecy that we find in the book of Daniel.

Now, we learned about the temples last week and if you missed that teaching it's on the website. And so we're going to tackle the second subject tonight, the Lord willing.

Now, I don't think it's any accident that we find ourselves studying this particular passage tonight since last Sunday was Palm Sunday and Palm Sunday as you're going to see plays a very important role in our study tonight.

So go ahead turn with me if you would to Daniel chapter 9 and I'm going to begin reading with verse 20 and read down through verse 27 and then we'll go back and see if we can decipher what we read.

Daniel 9:20, Now while I was speaking, 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,

21 yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

22 And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

24 “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

25 “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

26 “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who

makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”

So let me give you a little bit of the background.

Judah, which was the southern kingdom of the divided kingdom of Israel, had followed in the same track as the northern kingdom. They had fallen into sin and they were about to experience the same result as the northern kingdom: And by the time we get here the judgment of God has already fallen, and the people of God have long been in Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar came, and conquered the land, and captured the city, and carried away the people as spoil. And it was in that circumstance that Daniel rose to prominence. He was carried away in the first of three deportations, which started in 605 BC and ended in 586 BC, and of course Daniel went in the first group.

He was one of the young leaders, one of the men with great potential that they wanted to get over there and train in Babylonian culture. And if you remember, they had a really difficult time with him at first because he refused to eat and drink from the king's table, and he refused to abandon his commitment to God. But in the end, it was that very character trait that caused him to gain the respect of the Babylonian leaders and eventually rise to prominence. And eventually, he became the prime minister of the country, even though he was a Jew and a captive in the land.

Now, by the time we get to chapter 9, it's now around 537 BC. And Daniel now is an old man. And the Babylonians are no longer in power, and they've been replaced by the Medo-Persians.

And so, Daniel has outlived the Babylonian Empire. He is now in the first year of the Medo-Persian Empire. And it's being ruled by a man named

Cyrus, and a co-regent by the name of Darius. But Daniel still holds his place of high rank, even in the midst of this new Gentile culture.

And in the beginning of chapter 9, it tells us that Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, is king.

Verse 1 says, In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—

And so this the same Darius who we were introduced to in Daniel chapter 6. He is a Mede and he is a co-ruler with King Cyrus who is a Persian.

Verse 2 tells us that this in the first year of his reign.

And we find Daniel reading a scroll which just happens to be that of Jeremiah. And as he was reading the prophecy of Jeremiah, he was reminded that the captivity of the Jewish people was to be a 70-year captivity, and that's what it says there in the last part of verse 2; **that Jerusalem was to be desolate for 70 years.**

And so depending on where God started counting; if he started at the first deportation in 605, and now it was 537, then Daniel knew it must be getting really close to the end of that 70 years.

And so beginning in verse 3, Daniel is praying that God would bring all this to an end, and that God would do as He had promised in Jeremiah's prophecy, and only make it 70 years and no more. And so he was praying they would be able to return to their homeland, and rebuild the holy city and the temple of God.

And so he's pouring out his heart to God, and he's confessing his sin and the sin of his people, and he's asking God to make good on the seventy years and then he says in verse 21,

21 while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

The Old King James says that Gabriel actually touched Daniel while he was praying. And he would have probably had to touch him to get his attention since he was praying, especially the way he was praying here.

Now, it says the man Gabriel touches him., but we know that Gabriel is an angel from other places in scripture but the reason he describes him as man is because that's how he appeared. He came in the form of a man.

And Daniel knew who he was because he had seen him before.

And so Gabriel is a messenger angel. He's the one who announced to Zecharias the birth of John the Baptist. He's the one who announced to Mary, the Lord Jesus Christ. And so here he comes to Daniel with another incredible and very important message.

And in verse 22, he says, And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand."

Gabriel says, I've come to help you think through and understand this vision you're about to receive.

Now, he says six things are going to be accomplished in this period all of which have to do with Israel.

Number one is "to finish the transgression". This is when Israel as a nation repents and turns back to God. And this won't take place until after the Rapture of the church at the very end of the Great Tribulation Period.

Secondly, God's going to make an end of sins. And again this is talking about the nation of Israel and again this won't take place until Jesus returns

at the end of the Great Tribulation Period, when every eye will see Him then He will deliver Israel and make an end to sin.

And then thirdly, he is going to make reconciliation. And again this is with Israel. Those of us in the church have been reconciled individually as we've come to know Christ one at a time over the years. But we'll be taken away during the Rapture of the church before the Tribulation begins. And only after the Jewish people go through this terrible time and see Jesus return at the very end, only then will they be saved. And they won't be saved individually, the entire nation will be saved at one time.

Now, all three of those, then, have to do with evil and with sin, and God is going to bring an end to all that. He's going to get rid of sin.

And of course, those are the very things that brought Israel into captivity in the first place.

But now, there are three more purposes which God will accomplish during this period as well.

First, God will bring in righteousness that will last forever. No more sin! No no more sadness! Only goodness and gladness! Can you imagine? That's really hard to imagine is it not?

And then secondly, He will "seal up the vision and prophecy". In other words, there won't be anymore prophecy or revelation, because we'll know everything we need to know. There won't be anymore need for revelation or visions or prophecy.

And finally, the third thing God will do is "anoint the most Holy." Literally, the text says to anoint a holy of holies, and most believe this probably has to do with the eternal state of the new heaven and earth, which will include the new Jerusalem, with its' eternal temple, in which will

be an eternal holy of holies, and an eternal throne, on which sits an eternal God. All of which are eternally holy.

And so God's going to bring an end to sin and He's going to bring in an eternal holiness, all in this period of time which He has cut out of history.

And really those first three which deal with sin, were done at the cross. That's really where sin was conquered; when Jesus gave His life to pay for our sins. But the fullness of that conquering, awaits the Second Coming, when these second three things will be fulfilled.

So, let's look at this time period we keep talking about which we call the seventy weeks of Daniel.

Daniel 9:24 “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

Seventy weeks is the time period and then we have the six things we just talked about.

Seventy weeks; how long is that? You say that's 490 days right?

Well, not here. Here it's 490 years! Each week is a week of years, which means each day represents a year.

Now, how do we know that?

Well, we know that from the context.

Daniel 9:2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Daniel, back in verse two tells us that he's talking in terms of years here. And that was a common thing for the Jews to talk about weeks of years. Every seventh year was a Sabbath year, just like every seventh day was a Sabbath day. And just like on the Sabbath day, on the Sabbath year they were to rest, and they were to let their land rest. They weren't to plant their fields; they were to live on whatever the land naturally yielded. And God had promised to take care of them if they would do that.

But the Israelites hadn't trusted God, and they hadn't let the land rest, nor had they rested, and they had gone ahead and plowed and planted their fields and reaped their harvests and that's why they were being exiled to a foreign land for seventy years; so now the land could rest and make up the rest that they didn't give it.

And so that's why they were removed from the land and that's why we know Daniel's talking about years here.

So God's making them pay back every Sabbath year they've neglected. And so if they're being exiled for 70 years, and if each year in exile is a penalty for a Sabbath year, and a Sabbath year is every seven years; then evidently they've been neglecting the Sabbath years for 490 years right?

In other words, they owe God 70 Sabbath years over a 490 year time frame. And so He's making them pay one year for each of those Sabbath years.

And so it's this 490 year time span that we want to concentrate on.

So Gabriel brings Daniel this message from God in a vision and he says, "Look, I'm going to set aside seventy weeks of years, or 490 years out of history, and during that 490 years, I'm going to end sin, and I'm going to bring in everlasting righteousness and holiness for Israel.

Now, as we get into this we're going to find that this 490 years is divided up into three time periods. The first one is seven weeks of years which is 49 years. The second one is 62 weeks of years which is 434 years. And the last one is one week of years which is seven years for a total of 490 years.

Now, in verse 25 He tells Daniel when it's going to begin!

25 “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

Now, this is a little confusing so let me explain it to you. Two of the three time periods that make up the 490 years are here in this one verse. The first is seven weeks, which is 49 years; the second is 62 weeks, which is 434 years. The 49 years is the time from the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the actual completion of that restoration project.

And the second time period, the 62 weeks or the 434 years is from the end of that time, the end of the restoration of Jerusalem to the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday just prior to His crucifixion.

Now, in the book of Ezra, there are three different decrees for the rebuilding of the temple. But none of those is the right decree, because those were decrees to build the temple, not the city. It says here, **“from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.”**

(Not the temple)

So where is that?

Well, look at **Nehemiah 2:1. And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was**

before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. **2** Therefore the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart.”

So I became dreadfully afraid, **3** and said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?”

4 Then the king said to me, “What do you request?”

So I prayed to the God of heaven. **5** And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”

6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), “How long will your journey be? And when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Furthermore I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, **8** and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy.” And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.

And so that’s going to be the beginning of this first time period. Artaxerxes is the king. He makes the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. It’s the

month of Nisan - which is the month of March; the day is the 14th; the year is 445 BC. That begins the 490 years: 445 BC, March 14th.

Now, we know from history that the city was rebuilt and even though just like the scripture says, they did face plenty of opposition and trouble along the way, we also know that it was finished around 396 or 397 BC, which is also when the Old Testament Canon was closed, and so that concluded this first time period of seven weeks, or 49 years. And so that's

25 From the going forth of the command; to restore and build Jerusalem.

And then the next time period, the 62 weeks or 434 years will be from that point until **Messiah the Prince comes on the scene.**

And that time period culminated with the triumphal entry of Christ on what we know as Palm Sunday which just happened to be last Sunday.

And then it says in verse 26

26 “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off,
(and we know it was a week after He rode into town that He was crucified)
but not for Himself;

And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

And so after the 62 weeks and if you figure it up from that start date I gave you of March 14th, 445 BC, and take into consideration the difference in the Roman calendar of 360 days and our calendar of 365 days, and count the leap years and count the three days you loose over the difference in a solar year versus a calendar year, then it comes out to be very, very accurate as to the exact day Jesus would have actually rode into the city of Jerusalem

on that donkey, which again would have been one week before His crucifixion. And so this an amazingly accurate prophecy!

And so after 62 weeks the Messiah is cut off or crucified on the cross. And then it says the people of the prince come and destroy the city and the sanctuary.

Now, the city we know is the city of Jerusalem. And the sanctuary we know is the temple in Jerusalem. And we know from history that in 70 AD less than 40 years after Jesus was crucified, the Romans did destroy that temple in Jerusalem. And so the flood mentioned here is not a flood of water, but rather a flood of soldiers.

And by the way, it wasn't just the temple that was destroyed, it was the whole city that was devastated. History tells us that Titus attacked with Roman artillery, and he smashed the walls of the city and they caught everybody they could and crucified as many as 500 people a day.

Historians tell us that there was an unbearable stench that hung over the entire countryside. Over a million people died in the massacre. Hundreds of thousands of bodies were thrown out over the wall. And then the city was sealed off, and the people inside were left there to starve, even to the point where they actually ate their own children. And robbers ran through the streets and stole the clothes off the dead bodies. And the Romans did it in 70 AD, just as Daniel said they would.

But now there's one week left; look at verse 27.

27, Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”

Now, who is he? Look back in verse 26 - **“The prince who is to come.”**

Now, remember, it said that the people who destroyed the city were what? They were people of the Prince that was to come. And we know from history they were Romans. So, it only stands to reason that the prince will be coming out of the Romans. In other words, there will be a prince to rise out of the Roman Empire, or a ruler, who will arise out of the revived Roman Empire, who will “confirm a covenant with many for one week”. That’s seven years. That’s the tribulation period. That’s the rest of the 490 years that make up the seventy weeks of Daniel.

And then it says that in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate. That’s when the half way through the tribulation period the antichrist will set up an idol in the temple and demand that the world worship him and we know of course this is what Jesus spoke of in Matthew chapter 24 as the abomination of desolation and is the beginning of what is known as the Great Tribulation.

And the latter half of this seven-year period is a holocaust like the world has never known. And that’s where we’re going to pick things up when we get back next time Lord willing.