

Daniel 9 - The timeline until Messiah!



Daniel 9:1-3 “In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.”

So here is how it all started... with Daniel reading the words of the prophets! The year is 538BC and Daniel is a young sprightly 80ish year old. But he is still looking to see what he can learn from God’s word. And he notices something... something important! He notices that Jeremiah gives the amount of time that the Jews would be exiled in Babylon. To be specific, Daniel would have noticed the two following passages:

*Jer 25:8-12 “Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: “**Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,**” declares the LORD, “and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations... **This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.** “But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,” declares the LORD.”*

*Jer 29:8-14 “Yes, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you... They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them,” declares the LORD. **This is what the LORD says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity...”***

Daniel’s awesome prayer of forgiveness

Daniel 9:4-10 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed

How do you judge where God’s people are at?

Daniel 9:11-14 All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away

God and His people are one

Daniel 9:15-19 “Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand

Ever had an angel answer your prayer?

Daniel 9:20-23 While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel So we see that while Daniel is still praying an answer arrives. Quite literally actually, as the angel Gabriel turns up with an announcement for Daniel and his people. Note also that Gabriel tells Daniel that he is '**highly esteemed**'. For Heaven to feel that way about any man is pretty amazing. The word literally means 'precious' and just as **Abraham** is called the '**friend of God**' and **John** '**the beloved**' so **Daniel** is the one '**highly esteemed**' or '**precious**'. Daniel is then told that he, like us, needs to understand this answer that Gabriel is about to declare.

An answer greater than the prayer...

Daniel 9:24 "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression So the message from God is given... "70 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city..." The word decreed literally means determined or 'cut off'. God is saying that He has assigned a period of 70 X 7 (or 490 years) for Daniel's people Israel and their holy city. It needs to be clearly pointed out that this period of time is set aside specifically for God to deal with the nation of Israel and Jerusalem. These 490 years do not involve the church but relate to Daniel's 'people and holy city'. By the end of this time period six remarkable things will have been accomplished.

The six accomplishments of Daniel 9

Gabriel outlines 6 things that will have been fulfilled by the end of the 490 years.

1. **Finish the transgression** – Hebrew word for transgression is a very strong word for sin and literally means 'to rebel'. If used with a definite article in the Hebrew meaning it is a specific act of rebellion. In context, the specific act of rebellion is the rejection of the Messiahship of Jesus.
2. **Put an end of sins** - The Hebrew for sins means to 'miss the mark'. The sins of daily life will be put to an end.
3. **Atonement for wickedness** – This is the means by which the first two purposes are accomplished. This was achieved at the cross when Jesus made atonement for sin but the national fulfilment of this for Israel is still to come.
4. **Bring in everlasting righteousness** – This is the age of righteousness that characterises the Messianic Kingdom – the reign of Jesus on this earth. This will be set up at the end of the 490 year period.
5. **Seal up vision and prophecy** – The word seal up means to 'cause a cessation' or 'to bring completely to fulfilment'. The Hebrew prophets saw as far forward as the Messianic kingdom. When this is setup at the end of the 490 years, their prophecy will have been fulfilled.
6. **Anoint the most holy** – From the Hebrew this should read 'anoint a most holy place'. Daniel had been thinking of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple which lay in ruins. The Messianic Kingdom will have a temple build by the Lord Himself (Zech 6:12-15)

The timeline until Messiah!

Daniel 9:25 "Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble.

a. From the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem: Here Gabriel reveals to Daniel the starting point for the seventy-weeks prophecy. There was a command to restore and build Jerusalem in history that began this specific time period.

i. The Bible presents four possible decrees that might fulfill this description:

- Cyrus made a decree giving Ezra and the Babylonian captives the right to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple in 538 B.C. (Ezra in 1:1-4 and 5:13-17)
- Darius made a decree giving Ezra the right to rebuild the temple in 517 B.C. (Ezra 6:6-12)
- Artaxerxes made a decree giving Ezra permission, safe passage, and supplies to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11-26)

- Artaxerxes made a decree giving Nehemiah permission, safe passage and supplies to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the walls in 445 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1-8)

ii. Only the last of these four decrees was a command to restore and build Jerusalem. The first three each focused on the temple, not on the street or on the wall.

b. Until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks: Gabriel's message to Daniel is simple and striking. 483 years - that is, 69 units of seven years - would pass from the time of the command recorded in Nehemiah 2:1-8 until the appearance of Messiah the Prince.

i. Some say the 483 years were completed at Jesus' birth (5 or 4 B.C.). There is little chronological support for this date.

ii. Some say the 483 years were completed at His baptism, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry (if dated at 26 A.D.). This is possible if one begins with the earlier decree of Artaxerxes, and figures with our present measurement for years instead of the ancient measurement of years (360 days).

iii. Some say the 483 years were completed at the triumphal entry of Jesus (if dated at 32 A.D.)

Three events between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel

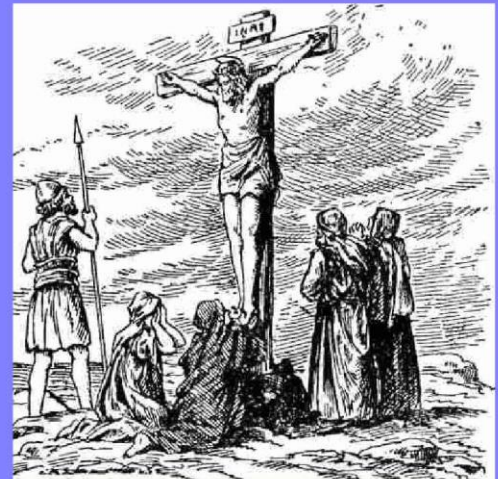
Daniel 9:26 'After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.'

**And after the sixty-two weeks
Messiah shall be cut off ...
Daniel 9:26.**

7 + 62



69 weeks



Three events between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel

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As we can see from the above text, Daniel 9:26 gives us three specific events that have been decreed to occur between the end of the 69th 'seven' (483 years) and the start of the final 'seven'. That there is a time period gap between these is quite evident in the text. Three events are said to occur AFTER the 69th 'seven' but they are not included in the 70th 'seven' which is the subject of the next verse. Let's have a look at these three events.

1. **The Messiah will be cut off.**

'The Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing'

This is what we have briefly looked at above but note a couple of extra things – Firstly, the word for 'cut off' is 'karath'. It means to cut down or kill and is the same word used in Lev 7:27 for the death penalty. There is no doubt that this prophecy tells us that the Messiah would be executed. Secondly, the Bible says that He 'will have

nothing'. The Hebrew can also mean 'but not for Himself' and that is how it is translated in many Bibles. The Messiah would die... but He wouldn't die for Himself. He would die for others. Amazing prophecy!

2. The Destruction of Jerusalem

'The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood'

The second event decreed is the destruction of Jerusalem. Remember, this occurs after the end of the 69th week yet before the start of the 70th week. And yet this event occurred 40 years after Jesus was crucified. Again this shows that God 'stopped the prophetic time clock' with Israel's rejection of their Messiah. The text says that the people of the coming ruler will destroy the city and the sanctuary. Note that it is the people not the ruler who do this. The ruler's coming is said to be still future. We know from history that it was the Roman army that destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD after a 4 year long siege on the city. This ruler or 'prince' will be discussed later, but for now it is important to see that this coming ruler will be from the area held by the Roman Empire.

3. Continued War

'War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed.'

The third and final decree for after the 69th 'seven' and before the start of the 70th 'seven' is ongoing war and desolations for Jerusalem. Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem! The most fought over city. From the time that Babylonians destroyed it in 586 BC it has been held by Greeks, the Romans, the Moslems, the Crusaders... and the conflict goes on today. The decree given by Gabriel is that war would continue right to the time of the end and history has verified that to be true.

The coming prince

Daniel 9:27 "He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

We come now to the last verse in Daniel 9 and it thrusts into the future. Verse 26 spoke of three things that occurred leading up to this final seven years (known generally as Daniel's 70th week). Now we see from the text how this final seven years will begin... it says that 'He will confirm a covenant with the many for one 'seven''. The 'He' takes us back to the last person mentioned which was the 'ruler who shall come' in verse 26. This is the coming ruler proceeding out of the area that was formally the Roman Empire. In Christian circles this coming one is generally called by a different title – the antichrist.

From verse 27 above, we learn the following points:

- **He shall make a covenant with the many** – in the context of Daniel's prophecy 'the many' are from the nation of Israel. Daniel's 70th week begins then when a coming ruler will make a covenant with the nation of Israel for 7 years. Not all will go along with this covenant but 'the many' will accept it. This coming ruler must then be in a position of high power at this time to be able to establish and guarantee this peace agreement.
- **He will break this covenant at the mid-point** – in the middle of the seven years (or after 3 ½ years) the coming ruler (antichrist) will break this agreement and put a stop to the Jewish sacrifice and offerings.
- **He will set up the 'abomination of desolation'** – The Hebrew word for abomination refers to an image or idol that is setup to take the place of God. At the mid point of the 7 years the antichrist will setup such an abomination and desolate the coming Jewish temple. This image is mentioned in Rev 13:14. It is also this event that Jesus spoke about and said that when those in Judea see this they are to do one thing – run.
- **The desolation lasts until the coming ruler is destroyed** – This period of wrath will only last for a limited period of time. We know from Daniel that this ruler will have power only for the final 7 years – of which the last 3 ½ years is the period of intense persecution for the Jewish nation and all those that worship the true God. This period of time in which the antichrist is given power is confirmed in other scriptures such as Rev 11:2-3, 12:6, 13:5, Dan 7:25, 12:11. In all cases the scripture is clear that there are two 3 ½ years periods that comprise the final 7 years – Daniel's 70th week. But thank God that the antichrist's time is limited and this one who will cause such desolation *'the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.'*