

## Study on Daniel

### Chapter Nine –Print timeline

#### Verse 1

The beginning of chapter nine refers to the end of captivity for the Israelites that had lasted about 70 years, this now being about 539 BC. At this time Cyrus gave a decree that all could return home to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the temple ([Isaiah 44: 24f](#), [Isaiah 45: 13](#), [Ezra 1: 1 f](#)) Daniel was reading the book of Jeremiah particularly ([Jeremiah 25: 11](#), [Jeremiah 29: 10 - 14](#)) where Jeremiah prophesied about the end of the Babylonian captivity after 70 years.

Jeremiah wrote this for the benefit of the Israelite captives to give them hope for the end of their exile just as Daniel had the vision in chapter eight, to write about for the benefit of those to come after him, to give them hope. Daniel by now is about 86 years old. Daniel now prays earnestly because, looking at them, he finds the people lacking in faith and is concerned that because of their lifestyle, God may prevent them from returning home.

### Daniel's Prayer

#### Verse 1 – 4

Sackcloth and ashes were a symbol of humility and true repentance. Sackcloth, ashes, fasting and pleading was to show the sincerity and earnestness of Daniel's prayer. As this was not for himself alone but on behalf of all Israel, we will never find a greater example of one praying to God. Notice that Daniel starts his prayer by praising God. (Note: although Daniel was a faithful and righteous servant he still included himself. He wasn't arrogant enough to exclude himself from the prayer)

#### Verses 5 – 6

Daniel confesses again on behalf of the people more than for himself.

#### Verse 7

Tells us that when they were taken out of Israel they were scattered because of their unfaithfulness.

#### Verses 8 – 11

All - including kings, princes and fathers are covered in shame because they have sinned against God. They also had not kept the Law of Moses, which are the first five books of the bible. The Jews called this the Torah ([Deuteronomy 28: 15](#) and [verse 33](#) [God warns them of the consequences of disobedience to His law](#))

#### Verse 12

Daniel knows that the events of the past 70 years have happened just as God said they would because the people would not obey God. Various prophets had prophesied all these events earlier. Daniel is afraid that the people still have not learnt their lesson and that God would change His mind. He keeps repeating himself to emphasise this point.

This is probably a reference to the attack in the year 586 BC on Jerusalem - [Ezekiel 5: 8 – 9](#).

#### Verse 13

Reinforces [verse 12](#) in that the Lord did in fact carry out what he had warned them he would do.

#### Verses 15 – 16

Reinforce [verse 13](#) but Daniel is now asking God to turn away His anger and have mercy on them all.

#### Verses 17 – 19

## Study on Daniel

Is a plea for forgiveness, not that the people have earned it, but because of God's great mercy (throughout the prayer Daniel acknowledges the greatness of God.) **Verses 1, 7, 9, 15 and 16** are examples of this.

### Seven points from Daniel's prayer

1. Daniel prays seriously to God. This was not something off hand. He recognises the need of the occasion and the one in whose presence he would bow.
2. Daniel came reverently e.g. **verse 4**. He could not play around with God, as he liked.
3. Daniel came to God penitent. Although no one else did anything about the situation - Daniel DID. Daniel saw the state of the people and their stubborn rebellion against God
4. Daniel himself is a man of God (**ref. Ezekiel chapter 2 and 3**) yet he includes himself in the repentance i.e. saying, **"We have sinned"** showing his humility.
5. Daniel came to God trusting in His mercy. Although 70 years have passed he knows that God has not forgotten how to be merciful. The idea of God's mercy gave Daniel the confidence (**Hebrews 10:23**) to step into God's presence and approach Him.
6. Daniel comes with specific requests e.g. **Verses 16, 17, 18, and 19**. In **verse 16** he specifically asks that the anger of God be removed
7. **The daring of Daniel**. He argues with God and presents his argument as to why God should honour his prayers e.g.
  - A. Daniel reminded God of Egypt – you did it once so do it again!
  - B. Daniel reminded God of the temple in Jerusalem saying, that it was God's temple and God's Jerusalem. Both the city and the temple were designed to be a token of the glory of God (here's an idea – how about resurrecting it and putting the glory back where it belongs?).
  - C. Daniel reminds God that he is concerned about His glory and honour and wants to avoid the possibility of God's name being dragged through the mud of history. Here is a man pouring his heart out to God for His people

### Verses 20 – 23

Here Gabriel came to Daniel while he was still praying to let him know that God had indeed heard his prayer and would answer it in His own time. Gabriel was sent to give Daniel an explanation through a vision and to assure him that all would be well in time. (Note **verse 23** that God holds Daniel in high esteem – check the various versions)

### Verses 24 – 27

The decree was to let the Jews go back to their homeland. (**Ezra 1: 1 onwards**) Gives King Cyrus decree allowing the Israelites to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. In this first space of time the walls of Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt. See visual aid of temple. The troublesome times can be read about in Nehemiah and Ezra. Seven weeks were allotted to its completion i.e. 49 years.

Remember we talked about the various numbers in the bible each having a specific interpretation that the Jews would recognise e.g. 7 being the perfect number. Christ also used numbers as examples when he said we were to forgive other 77 times (Matthew 18: 22) he did not mean a literal seventy seven times only, but as an example of how abundantly we should be prepared to forgive.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks has been variously interpreted. One conclusion however, seems self-evident. Each week or "Heptad" (Heptad is a Greek word meaning a group or series of seven) must be a period of seven years or a total of 490 years. Daniel divides this period into three parts. The first has seven weeks or 49 years (7 x 7), the second has sixty-two weeks or 434 years (7 x 62) and the third has one week or 7 years. Where we would count in days they count in years.

## Study on Daniel

Daniel sums up here all the previous Messianic prophecies separating them into their individual phases. What the prophets had seen, the temporary deliverance from captivity and the final Messianic deliverance

The seven weeks or 49 years is a period of revelation God making known to men truths and realities that men could not discover for themselves.

In the 62 weeks or 434 years, Jerusalem is restored so a place has been prepared for the Messiah to fulfil his prophesied works confirming the Covenant -verse 27. (A covenant is the term applied to various transactions between God and man and man and his fellow man) Adding 49 and 434 years together we get 483 years which takes us up to 25 /26 A.D. This is when Jesus came to earth and made himself known to John to be baptised. (The start of Christ's ministry)

7 weeks to rebuild the city – (49 years) plus 62 weeks from Cyrus decree until the Messiah comes is 69 weeks (483 years). The Messiah then comes at the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> week. - The one week (period of 7 years) in the midst of that week i.e. 3 ½ years this takes us up to the time of Christ's crucifixion. Christ's ministry was three and half years.

The one week or 7 years the Messianic time, is the Sabbath of Israel's history (represents a special time) in which it had the offer of all God's mercies but in which it was cut off for a time because it rejected God's mercies( i.e. Rejected Christ)

When the Jews persecuted the church and stoned Stephen (**Acts 7**), the respite of grace granted to them was at an end (**Luke 13:7–9**.) The parable of the Barren Fig Tree has primary reference to the nation of Israel. For centuries God had been expecting Israel to bring forth fruit unto repentance, but there had been none. Now Christ had come but even He had been rejected, however as this parable teaches, God who is long suffering will grant more time for Israel to repent and turn at last to Him but if the chosen people persist in their refusal to turn to God, they will finally be cut off.

Israel having rejected Christ was rejected by Christ and henceforth is counted dead Actual destruction by Titus of the Temple in 70 A.D (They were no longer able to offer up daily sacrifices or trace their genealogy) being the consummation of the removal of the Kingdom of God from Israel to the Gentiles (**Matthew 21; 43**) which is not to be restored until Christ's second coming when Israel shall be at the head of humanity (**Matthew 23; 39, Acts 1:6–7, Romans 11:25 and Romans 15:10, 11.**)

To Summarise

**Verse 1** Refers to the end of the captivity of the Israelites

**Verse 1–19** Daniel prays fervently for his people and himself

The daring of Daniel when he argues with God

**Verse 20–23** The Lord sends Gabriel to interpret to Daniel about the decree

**Verse 24–27** is very numerical and talks about the rebuilding of the temple, the coming of the Messiah and the subsequent rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah.

### The Vision of the Seventy Weeks.

Daniel's persistent, promise - claiming prayer

**So you think you can pray?** Daniel outshines us all in his humble and righteous prayer

1. **What book was Daniel reading when he read about the number of years that would pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem?**

## Study on Daniel

2. How did Daniel prepare himself before praying to the Lord?
3. Why was Daniel praying so anxiously?
4. What was God's opinion of Daniel?
5. What does a week signify in Daniel's vision?
6. How many years would it take to rebuild Jerusalem?