

THE BIG PICTURE OF SCRIPTURE THROUGH THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS  
Week 9 – Daniel’s 70-Weeks Prophecy; The Backbone of Prophecy  
March 19, 2024

Daniel means “God is my Judge.” What does this say of GOD? What does “God is my Judge” say of Daniel?

Time of the writing of Daniel: between 536 BC and 530 BC.

Daniel records in the Hebrew Scriptures what is occurring in Babylon during his time of exile in Babylon with his Jewish people while he is being given visions and dreams concerning the future of Israel, the Messiah, and the antichrist!

The book of Daniel and the prophecy revealed in this book of Daniel has been labeled as “the backbone of prophecy.” Daniel’s 70-weeks prophecy addresses “end times.” Daniel 9:24-27 is the foundation for “end times” prophecy. Therefore, all end times prophecy must align with Daniel’s 70-weeks prophecy.

Additionally, the book of Daniel is the first great book of apocalyptic literature in the Bible. The Gk. word *apokalypsis*, from where we get “apocalypse” in English, means an unveiling, a disclosing, or a revelation!

Re: interpreting apocalyptic lit., with visions, symbols, and signs, I can’t emphasize enough the benefit of cross-referencing Bible verses/passages with other Bible verses/passages.

REMEMBER – the Bible is ONE NARRATIVE. God is unfolding His plan for Israel, for the world, and for the Church. You’ll find passages in the Bible that provide support for other passages in the Bible. Scripture interprets Scripture!

The book of Daniel was written in two languages: Dan. 1:1-2:4 and chapters 8-12 are written in Hebrew. Chapters 2:4b – 7:28 are written in Aramaic. Hebrew was/is the language of Israel. Aramaic was the language of the Gentile world. Within the book of Daniel we are introduced to the Gentile nations of the world. The Prophet Daniel was used as God’s mouthpiece to the Gentile world and to the Jewish world!

Two major emphases in Daniel:

- God’s program for the Gentile nations (Dan. 2:4b-7:28).
- God’s program for the nation of Israel and the influence or effect of the Gentiles on Israel (Dan. 1:1-4:4a and chapters 8-12).

Purposes of the book of Daniel:

- Daniel was taken into exile – taken captive into Babylon. Daniel was a young faithful Jewish man.
  - And here is Daniel in the midst of a Gentile nation!

- Daniel shared the God of Israel with King Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar came to faith in the God of Israel (Dan. 4:28-37).
- Daniel was written to encourage the exiled Jews by revealing God’s program for them during and after the time of Gentile power in the world (Millennial Kingdom). That Gentile power continues today. (It will continue until the end of the tribulation [Rev. 11:1-2] when Israel will be restored as a nation [Zech. 12:10]).

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- Daniel served as an outstanding example of godliness to his Jewish brethren living in exile in Babylon and in Persia after Persia conquered Babylon.
- The book emphasizes God’s sovereign authority over Gentile nations and how He establishes and deposes kings and empires to serve His purpose!

King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that disturbed him (Dan. 2). God revealed the dream to Daniel and gave Daniel the interpretation: Nebuchadnezzar’s dream was of a great image comprised of Gentile kingdoms which would rule over the land and people of Israel. The head of the image was gold which represented Babylon; the chest and arms of silver represented the Persian Empire; the belly and thighs of bronze represented Greece; and legs of iron represented the Roman Empire. Of these Gentile empires, we are reading in Aramaic. And God speaks to Daniel of the future and the crushing of these Gentile Empires by the stone that became a mountain (Kingdom). That stone is Jesus. In Scripture we find a stone referring to Jesus, Israel’s Messiah (Psa. 118:22; Isa. 8:14; 28:16).

Dan. 2:44-45a - ...Daniel focused on the overthrow of these Gentile kingdoms. In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar had seen a stone hit and smash the image (Dan. 2:34).

Dan. 2:35 – (READ) Jesus is the striking stone!

And the stone became a mountain (a Kingdom) that filled the whole earth. God had promised Israel a Kingdom through David’s lineage with a Descendant, the Messiah, sitting on King David’s throne...ruling from Jerusalem.

Dan. 2:44-45 - *And in the days of these (Gentile) kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.* <sup>45</sup> *Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.*

The stone, the Messiah, will crush and end all the kingdoms of the world. This is the Millennial Kingdom following the tribulation.

Daniel 2:44-45 previews for us a monumental, dramatic formation of the Kingdom of God on earth!

In Daniel 7 we read of Daniel’s dream and visions of the world empires and of the Ancient of Days. God gave Daniel the complete rundown of the empires of the world. And, again we read of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome – and a unique empire – in the future – the antichrist’s kingdom (Dan. 7:7-9). Daniel then saw God in His majesty and judgment. And, Daniel saw the

antichrist destroyed (Dan. 7:11-12). And Daniel then saw the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven (Dan. 7:13) and He saw God's Kingdom established (Dan. 7:14).

The Kingdom of Judah was taken into exile for their sins of idolatry and rebellion against God specifically concerning God's command to let the land lie fallow one year out of seven!?!? This was the Sabbath law for the land (Lev. 25:1-4 [READ]).

For 490 years the Jewish people did not let the land rest on the 7<sup>th</sup> year. (This is a bit difficult to follow. Keep going!) God told Judah – until the land enjoys her Sabbaths – she will lay desolate as the people will be carried into exile for a total of 70 years (II Chron. 36:21).

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In Daniel 9, which contains the 70-weeks prophecy, it appears that Israel has been in exile in Babylon for 66 years. Daniel was reading the portion of the scrolls of Jeremiah which spoke to the total number of years that the Jewish people would be in exile in Babylon – 70 years (Dan. 9:1-2). From Jer. 25:11, Daniel read - *And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

In fervent prayer, Daniel poured out his heart to God with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. Daniel knew that Israel's restoration...restored to its unique place in God's plan...depended on national repentance. There had been no national repentance. How could God bring them back to the land?

Daniel read God's promise to Israel from Jeremiah's scrolls in Jer. 29:10-14 - *For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive. And so...Daniel set his face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications (Dan. 9:1-7 [READ]).*

Dan. 9:16, 18-19 - *O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us...<sup>18</sup> O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. <sup>19</sup> O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name." Daniel apparently expected the immediate and complete fulfillment of Israel's national restoration with the conclusion of the 70-year captivity and return to the land.*

## The 70-Weeks Prophecy – The Backbone of Prophecy

Dan. 9:20-23 - *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 (Kingdom) of my God,* <sup>21</sup> *yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel (the angel), whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.* <sup>22</sup> *And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.”* <sup>23</sup> *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:* As soon as Daniel began to pray, God answered by sending the angel Gabriel to Daniel to give him skill in understanding.

Dan. 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.*

Gabriel told Daniel that 70 *sevens* (in Hebrew weeks is Shavuot which means sevens) have been determined. The word for “determined” means “carved out” for the Jewish people and for

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Jerusalem. And Gabriel was specific re: what would be accomplished at the end of 70 *sevens* which equates to 490 years.

SUMMARIZATION THUS FAR: we are reading about God’s plan of restoration! The nation of Israel had disobeyed God’s commandment for a total of 490 years. During the course of 490 years, they did not let the land lie fallow for a total of 70 years... 1 year out of 7 years during a 490-year timeframe equals 70 years. REGARDING RESTORATION – GOD IS GIVING ISRAEL BACK **BEYOND** THE 70 YEARS IN CAPTIVITY.

In Matt. 18:21-22, Peter asked Jesus, *Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times? Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’* Might Jesus have been telling Peter to remember what God has done for Israel in essentially forgiving them for those 490 years?

The goals that would be accomplished for the Jewish people/for Jerusalem during the 490 years:

*To finish* (to restrain; to shut up) *the transgression* (the rebellion)

*To make an end* (to seal up) *of sins*, (punishment of sin, the condition of sin)

*To make reconciliation* (to cover; make atonement) *for iniquity* (depravity; guilt),

*To bring in everlasting righteousness* (justice, righteousness; in right relationship)

*To seal up* (to lock up) *vision* (divine communication) *and prophecy* (to speak by inspiration),

*And to anoint* (to consecrate; dedicate) *the Most Holy* (to be set apart; to be holy)

The first three goals are based on the sacrifice of the Messiah which makes atonement/reconciliation for iniquity. The second three goals refer to the establishment of the Messiah’s earthly reign in Jerusalem. This prophecy anticipates the ENTIRE work of the Messiah. Restoration is based on Jesus work on the cross! AND, because restoration is based on Jesus, His first coming and the timing of the cross is laid out in this prophecy.

Because there are specifics concerning the timing in this prophecy, let's note the starting point for this 70-weeks prophecy.

Dan. 9:25 - - *Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince...* The starting point of the 70-weeks prophecy is based on the command "to restore and build Jerusalem" in 445 B.C. (Neh. 2:1-8).

WAIT!!! ALL that is mentioned in Dan. 9:24 will be accomplished starting from 445 BC to Israel entering the Millennial Kingdom? And those years will amount to 490 years?

Focusing on the timing of the Messiah...

Dan. 9:25 - *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 (total of sixty-nine weeks – 483 years), the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.* Jesus, Messiah the Prince, 4 days before His crucifixion, rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey and He was hailed as King...483 years from the command to restore and build Jerusalem!

Dan. 9:26 – *And after the 69 weeks/483 years, Messiah shall be cut off (executed), but not for Himself (for others); 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 (judgment), and till the end of the war (battle) desolations are determined (destruction will occur).* Who are the people who destroyed

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Jerusalem and the Temple? The Romans. And when? 70 AD. The timeframe of the 70 weeks was stopped after Jesus died and rose from the dead. We move from 29-33 AD to 70 AD!?? And, we are confronted with the antichrist who is noted as the other prince? What happened to the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel's prophecy – the last week of Daniel's 70-weeks prophecy? The time clock re: the 70<sup>th</sup> week prophecy stopped after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection...and it has NOT resumed!!

Dan. 9:27 - *Then he (the other prince/antichrist) shall confirm (strengthen) a covenant with many (abundant; or to become many) for one week (there's the last 7 years – the 70<sup>th</sup> week!!); but in the middle of the week (3.5 years into the last 7 years) he (the other prince; antichrist) shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering (by desecrating the Temple with his image. The false prophet will demand that the earth dwellers worship the beast/antichrist). And on the wing (to cover) of abominations (detestable things; Matt. 24:15 – horrific idolatry – the idolatry of the antichrist sitting as God in the temple of God [II Thess. 2:3-4]) shall be one who makes desolate (to devastate; to cause horror) even until the consummation (the completion), which is determined (decreed), is poured out on the desolate (the ruined – the one who makes desolate). Rev. 19:20!*

#### QUESTIONS:

What impacted you in general regarding the book of Daniel?

What do you think about the Gentile empires?

Have you studied Daniel's 70-Weeks Prophecy previously?

How has Daniel's 70-Weeks Prophecy filled in any details in your understanding of all the prophetic books?

How would you describe your understanding of these 17 prophetic books?  
What are you going to do with the book of Daniel?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 9 w/ the Biblical references.

Continue writing in your journal – observations/questions from Daniel.

Continue finding answers to your questions.

Share what you're learning with...

Invite a Jewish person to the upcoming Passover Seder (4/16).

Read Week 10 when you receive it.