

DANIEL 9 | From 70 Years to 490 Years

Daniel's Confession

1 In the first year¹ of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king² over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived/understood/noticed (בין) in the books (ספריים) the number of years that, according to the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the site of ruins (הרבה) of Jerusalem—seventy years.³

3 Then I turned (נתן) my face to the Lord God (אֱלֹהֵי אֲדֹנָי הַאֱלֹהִים), seeking (בקש) him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.⁴ 4 I prayed (פלל) to Yahweh my God (לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי) and confessed (ידה) saying:

O Lord (אֱדֹנָי), the great and awesome God who keeps (שמר) covenant and loyal love (שִׁמְרַת הַבְּרִית וְהַחֶסֶד) with those who love (אהב) him and keep (שמר) his commandments, 5 we have sinned, done wrong, acted wickedly, and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. 6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land (כָּל-עַם הָאָרֶץ). 7 To you, Lord (אֱדֹנָי), belongs righteousness (צְדָקָה), but to us open shame (בְּצֹת), as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against

¹ This was the year [] bc. [] years of desolation had passed. Daniel was about [] years old.

² By agreement with Cyrus.

³ The seventy years are literal, leading to the conclusion other time periods in Daniel are literal. **Je 25:11-12** 11 This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon *seventy years*. 12 Then after *seventy years* are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares Yahweh, making the land an everlasting waste.

See Le 25:2-7; 26:27-35; Is 44:24-28; Je 25:12; 29:10-14; 2 Ch 36:20-23; Ez 1:1.

Ge 5:12 12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he fathered Mahalalel. **Ge 11:26** 26 When Terah had lived 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran. **Is 23:15-17** 15 In that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, like the days of one king. At the end of seventy years, it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the prostitute: 16 Take a harp. Go about the city, O forgotten prostitute! Make sweet melody. Sing many songs, that you may be remembered. 17 At the end of seventy years, Yahweh will visit Tyre, and she will return to her wages and will prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth. **Je 25:12** 12 Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares Yahweh, making the land an everlasting waste. **Je 29:10** 10 For thus says Yahweh: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfil to you my promise and bring you back to this place. **Zec 1:12** 12 Then the angel of Yahweh said, Yahweh of hosts, how long will you have no mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, against which you have been angry these seventy years? **Zec 7:5** 5 Say to all the people of the land and the priests, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth month and in the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for me that you fasted?

⁴ It was about this time that the events in ch. 6 happened. Was Daniel praying the prayer of ch. 9 on the day he was arrested in ch. 6? **Da 6:10-11** 10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. 11 Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and plea before his God.

you. 8 To us, Yahweh, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. 9 To the Lord our God (לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ) belong mercies (רַחֲמִים) and forgivenesses (סְלִיחָה), for we have rebelled/risen in revolt (מרד) against him 10 and have not listened (שמע) to the voice of Yahweh our God by walking (הלך) in his laws that he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has transgressed (עבר) your Torah (תּוֹרָה) and turned aside (סור), refusing to listen (שמע) to your voice. And the curse (אָלָה) and oath (שְׁבוּעָה) that are written in the Torah of Moses (בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה) the servant of God have been poured out (נתך) upon us because we have sinned (חטא) against him. 12 He has confirmed (קום) his words that he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled (שפט) us, by bringing upon us a great calamity (רָעָה). For under the whole heaven (כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם) there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. 13 As it is written in the Torah of Moses, all this calamity (רָעָה) has come upon us. Yet we have not entreated/appealed (חלה) the face (פָּנָה) of Yahweh our God (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ), turning (שוב) from our iniquities (עוֹן) and gaining insight/understanding/comprehending (שכל) by your truth (אֱמֶת). 14 Therefore Yahweh has kept ready the calamity (רָעָה) and has brought it upon us, for Yahweh our God is righteous (צַדִּיק) in all the works that he has done, but we have not listened (שמע) to his voice. 15 And now, Lord our God (אֱלֹהֵינוּ), who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned (חטא). We have done wickedly (רשע).

16 Lord (אֱדוֹן), according to all your righteousness (צַדִּיקוֹת), let your anger (אַף) and your wrath (חֶמָה) turn away (שוב) from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a taunt (הֶרְפָּה) among all who are around us. 17 Now therefore, our God, listen (שמע) to the prayer (תְּפִלָּה) of your servant (עֶבֶד) and to his pleadings (תְּחִנּוֹת), and for your own sake, Lord (אֱדוֹן), make your face to shine (אור) upon your sanctuary (מִקְדָּשׁ) that is desolated/deserted (שָׁמָם). 18 Oh my God (הֵשִׁי אֱלֹהָי), stretch out (נטה) your ear and hear (שמע). Open (פקח) your eyes and see (ראה) our desolations (שְׁמָמֹתַי) and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleading (תְּחִנּוֹת) before you because of our righteousness (צַדִּיקָה), but because of your great mercies (רַחֲמֵיךָ הַגְּדוֹלִים). 19 Lord (אֱדוֹן), listen (שמע). Lord, forgive (סלה). Lord, pay attention (קשב) and act. Do not delay/hesitate (אחר), for your own sake, my God, because your city (עיר) [Jerusalem] and your people (עם) are called by your name (שם).

Gabriel Comes

20 While I was speaking and praying (פלל), confessing (ידה) my sin (חַטָּאת, sing.) and the sin (חַטָּאת, sing.) of my people Israel, and presenting my pleading (תְּחִנָּה)⁵ before Yahweh my God for the holy hill of my God (הַר־קְדֹשׁ אֱלֹהָי) [Jerusalem], 21 while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel (הָאִישׁ גַּבְרִיאֵל), whom I had seen in the vision at the first,⁶ touched me in my

⁵ “[P]leading, pleading for compassionate attention” (*HALOT*, 1718).

⁶ **Da 8:16** 16 I heard a man’s voice between the banks of the Ulai, and it called, Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.

extreme weariness (מַעֲרָף בִּיעָרָף)⁷ at the time (עֵת) of the evening sacrifice.⁸ 22 He made me understand (בִּין), speaking with me and saying:

Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight (שָׂכַל) and understanding (בִּינָה). 23 At the beginning of your pleadings (תַּחֲנוּן) a word (דְּבָר) went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly treasured (תְּמִדוֹת).⁹ Therefore consider/pay attention to (בִּין, qal.) the word and understand (בִּין, hif.) the vision.

Seventy Weeks

24 Seventy weeks of years (שִׁבְעֵים שָׁבָעִים)¹⁰ are determined/imposed (חָתַר) about your people and your holy city (עַל-עַמְּךָ וְעַל-עִיר קִדְשֶׁךָ),¹¹ to finish the transgression (לְכַלֵּא הַפְּשָׁע), to put an end to sin (וּלְהַתִּים חַטָּאוֹת), and to atone¹² for iniquity (וּלְכַפֵּר עֲוֹן), to bring in everlasting righteousness (וּלְהַבְיֵא עֲלֵמִים), to seal vision and prophet (וּלְהַתִּים חֶזוֹן וְנָבִיא), and to anoint the holy of holies (וּלְמַשִּׁחַ קֹדֶשׁ קֹדְשִׁים). 25 Know (יָדַע) therefore and understand (שָׂכַל) that from the pronouncement of a word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (מִזֶּמְצָא דְבָר לְהַשִּׁיב וּלְבַנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) to Messiah-leader (עַד-מָשִׁיחַ נָגִיד)—seven weeks (שִׁבְעֵים שָׁבָעָה). Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be restored and rebuilt again

⁷ Or, “arrived in swift flight” (see *HALOT*, 421).

⁸ **Ex 29:39** 39 One lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight. The temple is in ruins, and there are no sacrifices being offered at the time. Yet Daniel still honours that time of day.

⁹ “[P]recious things, treasure” (*HALOT*, 326). **Da 10:11** 11 O Daniel, man greatly treasured, understand the words that I speak to you, and stand upright, for now I have been sent to you. **Da 10:19** 19 O man greatly treasured, fear not, peace be with you; be strong and of good courage.

¹⁰ With Jeremiah’s 70 years coming to an end, Daniel would be surprised to learn there are now going to be 70 weeks of years. “You have just spent 70 years in captivity in Babylon, and you’ll soon go back to the land of Israel. But Messiah won’t come anytime soon. You’ve got a long time to wait. It’ll be 490 years before Messiah finishes everything up and inaugurates the messianic kingdom you are hoping for.”

¹¹ This prophecy strictly concerns the Jewish people and Jerusalem.

¹² Again, atonement is required.

with street/plaza and moat (תָּשׁוּב וְנִבְנְתָה רְחוֹב וְתָרוּץ), but in times of distress/trouble/mourning (וּבְצֹק הָעֵתִים). 26 And after the sixty-two weeks, Messiah will be cut off and have nothing (יִכָּרֵת מֵשִׁיחַ וְאֵין לוֹ).¹⁴ And the city and the sanctuary will be destroyed (וְהָעִיר וְהַקֹּדֶשׁ יִשְׁחָתוּ) by the people of the coming leader (עַם נֹגֵיד הַבָּא). Its end will be a flood/inundation/deluge/cataclysm (וְהִצְיָו בְּשֹׁטֶף), and to the end there will be war (עַד לְקֵץ),¹⁵ destructions that have been determined (נִחְרָצָת שְׁמֹתוֹת).¹⁶ 27 And he [the coming leader] will make a strong covenant with the many for one week (וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית וְהָרְבִים שָׁבֹעַ אֶחָד),¹⁷ and for half of the week¹⁸ he will cease/stop sacrifice and offering (וְהִצִּי הַשְּׂבוּעַ יִשְׁבִּית יָבֵחַ וּמִנְחָה).¹⁹ And on a wing/skirt/edge of abominations/monsters/horrors comes one who desolates/ravages/devastates (וְעַל כַּנָּף שְׁקוּצִים²⁰ מְשַׁמֵּם), until the

¹³ “[I]n Jerusalem... a particular, more precisely designated plaza... Jerusalem rebuilt with streets and watercourses, a plaza and a moat” (*HALOT*, 1212). **Je 5:1** 1 Run to and fro through the *streets* of Jerusalem, look and take note! Search her *squares* to see if you can find a man, one who does justice and seeks truth, that I may pardon her. **La 2:11-12** 11 My eyes are spent with weeping. My stomach churns. My bile is poured out to the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, because infants and babies faint in the streets of the city. 12 They cry to their mothers, Where is bread and wine? as they faint like a wounded man in the *streets* of the city, as their life is poured out on their mothers’ bosom. **La 4:18** 18 They dogged our steps so that we could not walk in our *streets*. Our end drew near. Our days were numbered, for our end had come. **Ezr 10:9** 9 Then all the men of Judah and Benjamin assembled at Jerusalem within the three days. It was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month. And all the people sat in the *open square* before the house of God, trembling because of this matter and because of the heavy rain. **Ne 8:1-3** 1 And all the people gathered as one man into the *square* before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the Torah of Moses that Yahweh had commanded Israel. 2 So Ezra the priest brought the Torah before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he read from it facing the *square* before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the Torah. **Ne 8:16** 16 So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their *courts* and in the *courts* of the house of God, and in the *square* at the Water Gate and in the *square* at the Gate of Ephraim. **Zec 8:4-5** 4 Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the *streets* of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. 5 And the *streets* of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its *streets*.

¹⁴ This is the death of Jesus. See Harold Hohner.

¹⁵ **Mt 24:6-7** 6 You will hear of wars and rumours of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various places.

¹⁶ “Da 9:26 נִחְרָצָת שְׁמֹתוֹת destructions that have been planned, literally what has been decided for destruction, so Plöger *Daniel* 133, 135” (*HALOT*, 1564). The church age takes place between v. 26 and v. 27.

¹⁷ Many believe there is no gap between the 69th and 70th weeks and that Daniel predicts 490 consecutive years.

¹⁸ **Mt 24:15-16** 15 So when you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by the prophet Daniel, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), 16 then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.

¹⁹ **Da 8:12** 12 And a host will be given over to it together with the *regular burnt offering* because of transgression, and it will throw truth to the ground, and it will act and prosper.

²⁰ “Da 9:27, Q var., Matthew 45 *πτερύγιον τοῦ ἱεροῦ*, arch. tech. term, battlement of the temple, Montgomery *Daniel* 386ff.: lintel; JJeremias ZDPV 59:195ff., :: Eissfeldt *Kl. Schr.* 2:433f., rd. בעל כנף, Ug. as title of שָׁמַם, cf. El, Illustrated London News, (December 1967):281; c) military: 1 עַל-כַּנָּפִים QM 911, cf. Latin *ala*, Yadin *War Scroll* 192f., 301” (*HALOT*, 486).

²¹ “עַל כַּנָּף שְׁקוּצִים מְשַׁמֵּם and a destroyer comes on a wing (on the wings) of the monster (monsters) Da 9:27; so with Bentzen *Daniel*² 68; also Plöger loc. cit. 133, 135 :: Porteous ATD 23² (1968) 108: cj. with Sept. and 11:31 12:11 pr. שְׁקוּצִים prop. sg. שְׁקוּץ a monster of destruction; the explanation of the text is disputed” (*HALOT*, 1640).

determined destruction/annihilation will gush forth on the desolator/devastator (וְעַד-כָּלֵהָ וְנִחַרְצָהּ תִּתֵּן עַל-שָׁמַיִם).²²

²² See Re 19. Many believe vv. 24-27 were fulfilled when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in ad 70. **Lk 21:20-24** 20 But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its *desolation* has come near. 21 Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, 22 for these are days of vengeance, to fulfil all that is written. 23 Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. 24 They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the nations, until the times of the nations are fulfilled.

Thoughts

1. Major events are happening around the time of this chapter (539 bc). The Medo-Persian empire has just replaced the Babylonian empire as leader of the Middle East. Cyrus is about to send back the Jews to rebuild Jerusalem. It is at this time Daniel receives in-depth revelation about the future of Israel, the coming of Messiah, and the final end of history.
 - a. **2 Ch 36:22-23** 22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of Yahweh by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, Yahweh stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing: 23 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, Yahweh, the *God of heaven*, has *given* me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may Yahweh his God be with him. Let him go up.
2. There is huge debate about the 70th week. Is it past or future to us? Much depends how we answer this question.
 - a. Amillennialists teach:
 - (1) The Messiah is cut off in the middle of 70th week, not after the 69th week.
 - (2) Jesus was anointed at his baptism, not at his triumphal entry. His baptism ends the 69th week, not his death.
 - (3) The first half of the 70th week is the 3 1/2 years of Jesus' ministry; the second half of the 70th week is the 3 1/2 years the apostles preached in Jerusalem.
 - (4) V. 27a refers to Messiah, not the antichrist. Jesus put an end to sacrifice and grain offering through his substitutionary death. Vv. 26-27 are concurrent, not consecutive.
 - b. Premillennialists teach:
 - (1) The events of Da 9:25-27 are sequential.
 - (2) The Messiah-leader (vv. 25-26) differs from the coming leader (vv. 26-27).
 - (3) Messiah is cut off before the 70th week, not during the 70th week. The firm covenant with the many for one week comes after the Messiah is cut off, not before.
 - (4) There is an unforeseen gap between vv. 26-27, between the 69th week and the 70th week. That gap is what we know of as the church age.
 - (a) The two comings of Messiah are often fused in the Old Testament (Is 9:6; Zec 9:9-10).
 - (5) The stopping of sacrifice and offering (v. 27) is bad, not good. It has nothing to do with Jesus' death on the cross.
 - (a) It is true sacrifice and grain offering were no longer valid after Jesus' death, but they did in fact continue after Jesus' death and resurrection until ad 70.
3. Lessons for Life.
 - a. It is right for godly people to take responsibility for and confess corporate sin, even when they themselves are not personally at fault.
 - b. Humble desperation is appropriate when confessing corporate sin.
 - c. It is good and right for us to have deep hunger, like Daniel, to understand God's plan.

- d. God reveals more to those who want his revelation.