SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES




THE COMPLETE STUDY

# Daniel

## *Chapter Nine*

*The Prayer & the Seventy Weeks — Deep Dive and Workbook Companion in One*

NASB 1995 | LESSONS 9A · 9B · 9C | DEEP DIVE | THREE VOICES

Every workbook question from *Discovering Daniel* lessons 9a, 9b and 9c — the Scripture written out, each answer in one sentence, cross references, three teachers, critical thinking and a key question — with the **Deep Dive** woven in where it belongs: the Hebrew behind the prayer and the prophecy, **Amir Tsarfati**, **John MacArthur** and **David Guzik** verse by verse, and timelines of the seventy years and the seventy weeks.

THE PASSAGE

**Daniel 9:1–27**

*The Book · the prayer · the answer*

THE METHOD

**Workbook + Deep Dive**

*Capture · Analyze · Compare · Execute*

WHAT'S INSIDE

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*Three workbook lessons, one chapter, and the Deep Dive inside each of them*


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❖

*"O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay." — Daniel 9:19*

BEFORE YOU BEGIN · THE PASSAGE

# Daniel 9:1–27

*A Man Who Prays the Word, and the God Who Answers with a Calendar*

## † How to Read This Study

Each of the three workbook lessons runs in the order you work it at the table — **Capture the Scene**, **Analyze the Message**, **Compare This Passage with the Rest of Scripture**, **Execute** — with every question from *Discovering Daniel* written out, the NASB95 text under it, an answer in one sentence you can copy into the book, a cross reference, the three teachers, a point of critical thinking and a key question. Between *Capture* and *Analyze* each lesson pauses for **Going Deeper**: the Deep Dive movement for those verses — the passage marked, the Hebrew Daniel wrote, and the same three voices at length. Timelines sit where the dates matter. The book ends with the passage set inside the whole Bible, the three voices side by side, and questions for the table.

- **Capture the Scene** — what do I see? Observation, straight from the text.
- **Going Deeper** — the Deep Dive for those verses: Hebrew, history and the three teachers.
- **Analyze the Message** — what does it say and mean? With *Discovering Daniel* open.
- **Compare** — how is it supported elsewhere in the Bible? Every cross reference written out.
- **Execute** — how does this affect my life? Off the page and into the week.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel | JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You | DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

**HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED** God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · DANIEL 9:24

Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

## † Before the Passage

Chapter 9 opens in the first year of Darius the Mede, 539/538 BC. Babylon has just fallen (chapter 5); the handwriting on the wall is a few months old. Daniel was carried off in 605 BC as a teenager, so he is now in his eighties and has been in exile about sixty-seven years. The visions of chapters 7 and 8 lie behind him —

he saw them under Belshazzar — and the last of them left him sick for days and told him the sanctuary would be trampled. Then the empire changed hands overnight, exactly as the Scriptures had said it would.

So Daniel does what a man of the Book does: he opens it. Jeremiah had written that Jerusalem would lie desolate seventy years and that Babylon would be punished when the seventy were complete (Jeremiah 25:11–12; 29:10). From the first deportation in 605 BC the seventy years are almost up, and Babylon has just been punished. Daniel can count. The prophecy is on the verge of fulfillment, and the man who could read it did not sit back to watch it happen — he fasted, put on sackcloth and ashes, and prayed one of the longest and most honest prayers in the Bible. The chapter is two halves: the prayer (vv. 3–19) and the answer (vv. 20–27). The prayer is about seventy *years* and the city; the answer is about seventy *weeks* and the Messiah. God answers more than Daniel asks.

Hold two words over the chapter. **Desolate** (*shamem*) — the ruins of Jerusalem that drove Daniel to prayer (v. 2, a different word, *chorbot*) become the desolate sanctuary he pleads for (vv. 17–18) and the desolations still decreed at the end of the prophecy (vv. 26–27). And **seventy** — Jeremiah's seventy years become Gabriel's seventy sevens. Tsarfati reads the seventy weeks as God's calendar for Israel with a seven-year finale still to come; MacArthur anchors the chapter in the sovereignty that scheduled the Messiah to the day and the prayer that God delights to answer; Guzik walks the arithmetic and the history. All three agree on the sermon: the God who keeps His word to the year keeps it to the day.

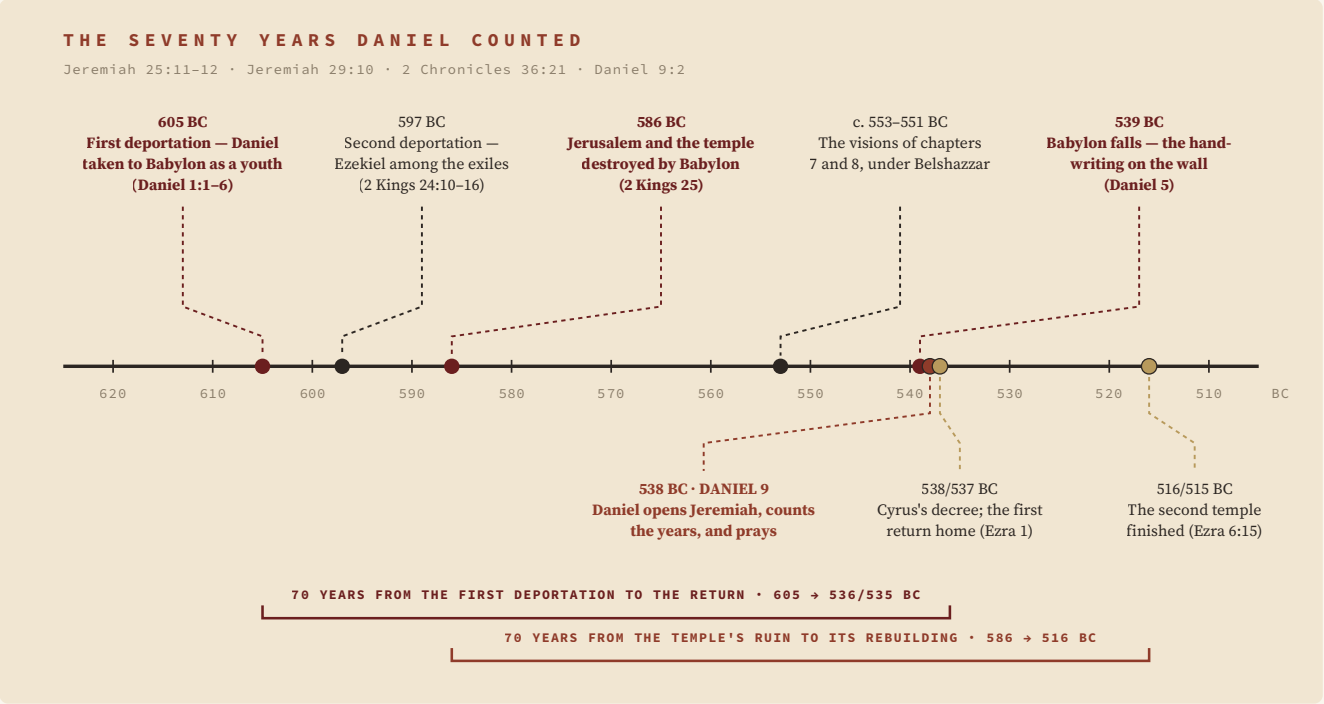



FIGURE 1 · THE SEVENTY YEARS DANIEL COUNTED — TWO WAYS OF RECKONING, BOTH KEPT TO THE YEAR

PART ONE · DISCOVERING DANIEL · LESSON 9A

DANIEL 9:1–19 · THE BOOK OPEN, THE PRAYER PRAYED

# Promises Made, Promises Kept

*An old man reads Jeremiah, does the arithmetic, and discovers that the seventy years are almost up. He does not sit back to watch the promise come true; he puts on sackcloth and prays one of the longest and most honest prayers in the Bible — "we have sinned," "righteousness belongs to You," and "for Your own sake."*

IN THIS PART


- Capture the Scene — four questions on Daniel 9:1–19
- Going Deeper — Movement I, *The Book Open, the Knees Bent* (9:1–3), and Movement II, *The Prayer* (9:4–19)
- Analyze the Message — four questions with *Discovering Daniel*
- Compare — Deuteronomy 28 and the promises of Jeremiah, Numbers, Kings, Psalms and Proverbs
- Execute — Scripture and prayer, taking sin seriously, Hebrews 4:12
- Closing Thoughts

## 01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

*What do I see?*

Using my Bible, working through Daniel 9:1-19 verse by verse.

KEY VERSE · DANIEL 9:18 NASB95

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 are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.

**1 What did Daniel discover while he was reading the prophet Jeremiah (Daniel 9:2)?** P. 169

Daniel 9:1 · NASB95

1 *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—*

Daniel 9:2 · NASB95

2 *in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.*

Jeremiah 25:11-12 · NASB95

*'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.*

IN MY WORDS

I see that Daniel discovered from Jeremiah's own writings that the desolations of Jerusalem were set at seventy years — and since he was reading in the first year of Darius, that period was nearly over.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Chronicles 36:21** "to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete."

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati highlights that Daniel was not waiting for a fresh vision — he was reading the Scripture already given, and the written word was enough to move a prophet to his knees.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur notes that “the books” shows a canon already circulating and recognized among the exiles; Daniel treated Jeremiah's writings as the authoritative word of God while Jeremiah was barely a generation gone.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Daniel had received visions directly from God — chapters 7 and 8 were his own. Yet the thing that drove him to fasting and sackcloth was reading someone else's book. A man with firsthand revelation still submitted himself to the written word, which quietly settles the question of whether experience outranks Scripture.

**KEY QUESTION**

*When did I last let something I read in Scripture actually change what I did that day?*

## 2 What actions did this discovery prompt Daniel to take (verse 3)?

P. 170

Daniel 9:3 · NASB95

3 *So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.*

**IN MY WORDS**

I see that Daniel turned his full attention to the Lord God and sought Him with prayer and supplications, fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Nehemiah 1:4** “When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” Nehemiah responded to news of Jerusalem the same way.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik observes that Daniel did not treat the promise as an excuse to relax — a prophecy of certain deliverance became the reason to pray harder, not the reason to stop praying.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati points to the pairing of Scripture and prayer as the engine of Daniel's life: he read what God said, then he talked to God about what he read.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Sackcloth and ashes were the clothing of the bereaved and the condemned — Daniel dressed like a guilty man at a funeral. He was the one righteous figure in the account, yet he put on the uniform of the mourner, because he understood that reading a promise about the end of judgment is not the same as being ready to receive it.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Does my praying cost me anything — sleep, a meal, comfort — or only a few convenient minutes?*

## 3 What major theme runs all through Daniel's prayer (see verses 5, 8, 10-11)?

P. 174

Daniel 9:5 · NASB95

5 ⚠ *we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.*

Daniel 9:8 · NASB95

8 *Open shame belongs to us, O LORD, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.*

Daniel 9:10-11 · NASB95

10 *nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets.* 11 *Indeed all Israel has ⚠ transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so ◷ the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.*

**IN MY WORDS**

I see that confession of sin runs through the whole prayer — Daniel keeps naming the guilt of the people as their own, never blaming God, Babylon, or circumstances.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Psalm 51:4** "Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge."

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur points out that Daniel stacks up synonyms for sin — sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, rebelled, turned aside, not listened, not obeyed — because honest confession refuses to soften the vocabulary.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that Daniel never once argues that the punishment was excessive; he agrees with God's verdict before he asks God for anything.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Daniel pairs the confession with a second theme that is easy to miss: he repeatedly declares God righteous in the very act of judging (verses 7 and 14). Real confession does not merely admit fault — it justifies God. Anyone can say "I was wrong" while privately thinking the consequence was unfair; Daniel closes that escape hatch.

**KEY QUESTION**

*In my last apology to God, did I actually agree that He was right — or just that I got caught?*

## 4 What specific pleas does Daniel set before the Lord in... P. 178

Daniel 9:16 · NASB95

16 *O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us.*

Daniel 9:17 · NASB95

17 *So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary.*

Daniel 9:18 · NASB95

18 *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 are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.*

Daniel 9:19 · NASB95

19 *O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name."*

**a. verse 16?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> I ask that God turn His anger and wrath away from Jerusalem, His city and His holy mountain, because our sins have made it a reproach to everyone around us.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 79:4** "We have become a reproach to our neighbors, A scoffing and derision to those around us." The shame of the city was a standing argument against God's name.

**b. verse 17?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> I ask that God listen to my prayer and let His face shine on His desolate sanctuary — and I ask it for His sake, not mine.

CROSS REFERENCE **Numbers 6:25** "The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you" — Daniel prays the priestly blessing back over the ruined temple.

**c. verse 18?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> I ask God to incline His ear and open His eyes to our desolations, admitting plainly that I bring no merits of my own — only His great compassion.

CROSS REFERENCE **Luke 18:13** "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!" The tax collector prayed on exactly the same ground and went home justified.

**d. verse 19?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> I ask God to hear, to forgive, to listen and take action — and not to delay — because His own name is attached to this city and these people.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Exodus 32:11-12** Moses likewise appealed to God's reputation among the Egyptians rather than to Israel's worthiness.

> **AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel
>
> Tsarfati observes that every plea is anchored to God's own name and character — 'for Your sake,' 'for Your own sake,' 'called by Your name' — which is why the prayer has such confidence without a trace of presumption.

> **JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You
>
> MacArthur notes the crescendo in verse 19: the sentences get shorter and the verbs get sharper as Daniel moves from reasoning to pleading.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
>
> Daniel asks for four things and grounds none of them in Israel's need. Jerusalem's ruin matters to him mainly because a ruined Jerusalem makes God look weak in front of the nations. That reverses how most of us pray — we lead with our situation and add God's glory as a closing formality.

> **KEY QUESTION**
>
> *If God answered my prayers exactly as I prayed them this week, whose reputation would be served — His or mine?*

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

# Movement I · The Book Open, the Knees Bent

*DANIEL 9:1–3 · A prophecy nearly fulfilled, and the man who read it and prayed*

Before the workbook asks what the prayer means, read the three verses that caused it — with the Hebrew Daniel chose and the three teachers on why a man who already had visions of his own opened someone else's scroll.

> *"[1] In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— [2] in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. [3] So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes."*
>
> DANIEL 9:1–3

בִּינֹתִי בַּסְּפָרִים

BINOTI BA-SEPHARIM · "I OBSERVED IN THE BOOKS"

*Bin* is to discern, to understand with attention. Daniel did not stumble onto Jeremiah; he studied him. "The books" are the scrolls of the prophets, written within Daniel's own lifetime and already received as "the word of the LORD." The chapter begins with a believer reading his Bible, and it will end with an angel telling him to "understand the vision" (v. 23) — the same root, *bin*, at both ends.

שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה

SHIV'IM SHANAH · "SEVENTY YEARS"

Jeremiah's number (25:11–12; 29:10). Measured from the first deportation (605 BC) it runs out at the return under Cyrus (538/537 BC); measured from the temple's destruction (586 BC) it runs to the second temple's completion (516/515 BC). 2 Chronicles 36:21 adds the reason: the land "kept sabbath" for the sabbatical years Israel had ignored. Seventy years of rest for seventy sabbaths missed — 490 years of neglect. Gabriel's answer will use the same multiple.

תַּחֲנוּנִים

TACHANUNIM · "SUPPLICATIONS"

From *chanan*, "to be gracious." A *tachanun* is a plea for grace, a request that has no claim behind it. Daniel will say so outright in verse 18: "not on account of any merits of our own." The word tells you the posture before the prayer begins — empty hands, open mouth.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Here is a man who takes prophecy literally and lets it move him. Daniel read “seventy years” and understood seventy years — not an era, not a symbol — and because he believed the clock was real he acted on it. Tsarfati’s point for today is the same: when the Bible says Israel will be gathered back to the land, scattered no more, it means what it says, and the right response to a promise coming due is not speculation but intercession. Daniel prayed Israel home.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

Notice what the knowledge of prophecy produced in Daniel: not a chart, a prayer. He knew God had promised restoration, and he knew God accomplishes His purposes through the prayers of His people — so he prayed the promise back to God. MacArthur presses the point that sovereignty never cancels supplication; it summons it. The man most certain of God’s plan is the man on his face asking God to do it. “Fasting, sackcloth and ashes” is the body agreeing with the heart.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik takes the historical question first: “Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent” is not Darius I of Persia (522–486 BC) but the Darius of chapter 6 — most likely Gubaru, the governor Cyrus set over Babylon, or a throne-name for Cyrus himself; “was made king” fits a man installed by another. He then counts with Daniel: from 605 BC the seventy years were nearly complete, and Babylon had just fallen as Jeremiah said. Prophecy, Guzik notes, is meant to be understood — and when it is understood it is meant to be prayed.

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

# Movement II · The Prayer: Confession and Plea

*DANIEL 9:4–19 · "We have sinned" — and "for Your own sake"*

The whole prayer, in three movements of its own: confession (vv. 4–10), the covenant curse owned (vv. 11–15), and the plea (vv. 16–19). The workbook's questions 3 and 4 of *Capture the Scene* and the whole of *Analyze* grow out of these verses.

> *"4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, △ the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, 5 ⚠ we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. 6 Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land. 7 △ Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us ⚠ open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You. 8 Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9 △ To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; 10 nor have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets."*
>
> DANIEL 9:4–10

הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא

HA-GADOL VE-HA-NORA · "THE GREAT AND AWESOME GOD"

*Nora* is from *yare*, "to fear" — the God who is to be feared, before whom one trembles. Daniel's prayer opens the way Nehemiah's (1:5) and Moses' (Deuteronomy 7:21) do: with who God is. The confession that follows is honest because the God it is addressed to is great; you can afford to tell the whole truth to a God that big.

חֶסֶד

CHESED · "LOVINGKINDNESS"

Covenant-loyal love: the steadfast, promise-keeping kindness of a God who has bound Himself and does not let go. "Keeps His covenant and lovingkindness" is Deuteronomy 7:9 word for word. Daniel's whole plea stands on *chesed*. He will ask God to act "for Your own sake" because God's own faithfulness, not Israel's, is the only ground left.

בֹּשֶׁת הַפָּנִים

BOSHET HA-PANIM · "OPEN SHAME"

Literally "shame of face," the hot face of the guilty (KJV, "confusion of faces"). Verses 7 and 8 set it against *tsedaqah*, righteousness: "Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame." That one sentence is the theology of the whole prayer — and of the gospel. God is right; we are ashamed; only mercy bridges the two.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Count the pronouns. "We have sinned … we have not listened … we have rebelled." Daniel was carried off as a boy and never bowed to an idol, yet he does not pray "they." Tsarfati sees here the posture Israel will take at the end when they look on Him whom they pierced (Zechariah 12:10): national confession, led by the righteous, for the sake of the nation. And he notes the audience Daniel names — Judah, Jerusalem, "all Israel … far away in all the countries" — the whole diaspora, which is exactly the people God is still gathering.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

This is the anatomy of true confession. It names sin with five verbs and no excuses (v. 5); it admits the sin was against God's revealed Word, "Your servants the prophets" (v. 6); it agrees with God's verdict — "Righteousness belongs to You" (v. 7); and it refuses to compare. MacArthur points out that Daniel never once mentions Babylon's cruelty. The problem with Israel was never the Babylonians; it was Israel. A man is not forgiven for the sins he explains, only for the ones he confesses.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik draws attention to how the prayer describes itself: it is a "confession" by Daniel's own word (v. 4) before it is a request — the asking does not start until verse 16. And he reads the exile the way Daniel does, as Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 fulfilled to the letter: God had said in advance what disobedience would cost, and the cost came due. The prayer is built out of Scripture, and so is the judgment it confesses.

*"11 Indeed all Israel has ⚠ transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so ◷ the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. 12 Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. 13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet ⚠ we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. 14 Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for △ the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked."*

DANIEL 9:11–15

הָאָלָה

HA-ALAH · "THE CURSE"

An oath-curse, the sworn sanction attached to a covenant (NASB "the curse," beside *ha-shevuah*, "the oath," v. 11). Deuteronomy 28–29 lists the curses and Deuteronomy 29:12–21 names the covenant "oath." Daniel says God "confirmed His words" (v. 12) — the exile is not bad luck but the Lord keeping the dark half of His covenant as faithfully as the bright half. And Leviticus 26:40 told Israel exactly how to pray under that curse — "if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers" — while Solomon prayed for this very moment at the temple's dedication (1 Kings 8:46–50). Daniel is praying the Bible's own words back to God.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

"Under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem." Daniel is not exaggerating; he is reading Deuteronomy 28 fulfilled. Tsarfati keeps the covenant frame: the curses fell because the covenant is real, and the same covenant promises the regathering (Deuteronomy 30:1–5). A Jew in Babylon and a Jew in Tel Aviv are standing in the same chapter — one under the curse, one under the beginning of the restoration.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

Verse 13 is the sharpest line in the prayer: all this came on us, "yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God." Judgment did not produce repentance; it produced complaint. MacArthur calls that the most damning confession a people can make — that even God's discipline did not turn them. And then verse 14: "the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds." Daniel does not accuse God of being harsh. He vindicates God against himself. That is what repentance sounds like.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the pivot at verse 15: "And now." Daniel reaches back to the Exodus — "brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand" — because that is the God he is asking to do it again. The argument of the prayer is God's own history and God's own name. He has acted for His people before, publicly, and "made a name for Yourself"; that name is now at stake in Jerusalem's rubble.

*"16 O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. 17 So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. 18 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 are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. 19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.""*

DANIEL 9:16–19

רַחֲמִים

RACHAMIM · "COMPASSION"

Plural of *rechem*, "womb." It is the tender, visceral mercy of a mother for her child, and the plural intensifies it: "great compassions." Daniel uses it in verse 9 and verse 18, and in verse 18 it is the stated ground of the whole request: "not on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion." Mercy, not merit — the gospel in Hebrew.

לְמַעַנְךָ

LEMA'ANKHA · "FOR YOUR OWN SAKE"

Verse 17: "for Your sake, O Lord"; verse 19: "for Your own sake, O my God." The deepest appeal in prayer is not our need but God's glory. Jerusalem is "Your city," the people are "Your people," the sanctuary is "Your sanctuary," and the city "is called by Your name." Daniel is reminding God that God's reputation is bound up with God's people — and God loves to be reminded.

שָׁמֵם

SHAMEM · "DESOLATE"

To be appalled, deserted, laid waste. The root runs through the chapter like a scar: the desolate sanctuary (v. 17), "our desolations" (v. 18), and then in the prophecy the desolations determined and the one who makes desolate (vv. 26–27). (Verse 2 uses a different word for Jerusalem's ruins, *chorbot*.) The word Daniel prayed with becomes the word Gabriel prophesies with. The answer speaks the language of the question.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Look at what Daniel is actually asking for: Jerusalem, the holy mountain, the sanctuary, the people — the land and the temple. He does not ask for a comfortable exile. Tsarfati reads this as the heart of every true prayer for Israel: the city and the sanctuary matter to God because He put His name there, and Daniel knows it. Verse 19 is a man pounding on heaven's door — hear, forgive, act, do not delay — and heaven, as the next verse shows, was already open.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

Here is the climax of the prayer, and it has not a word of merit in it. "Not on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion." MacArthur: every acceptable prayer ever prayed stands on that sentence. We do not approach God on the basis of our performance but on the basis of His mercy — which is precisely what praying in Jesus' name means. And the four imperatives of verse 19, from a man who has just confessed national guilt, are not presumption; they are faith. Confession and boldness belong together.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes how the petitions pile up in verse 19 — hear, forgive, listen, take action, do not delay — the words of a man who will not be put off, who has stopped explaining and started pleading. He quotes Spurgeon's longing for prayer that moves from praying to *agonizing*. And he observes the final ground: "Your city and Your people are called by Your name." Daniel's last argument is not Israel's worthiness but God's ownership. What bears His name He will not abandon.

## 02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

*What does it say and mean?*

Using my Bible and my copy of Discovering Daniel.

**1** **Daniel 9:2 tells us the prophet was reading the book of Jeremiah when he noticed a prophecy about the length of Judah's exile in Babylon.** P. 171

Jeremiah 25:11-12 · NASB95

*'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.*

Jeremiah 29:10 · NASB95

*"For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.*

2 Chronicles 36:20-21 · NASB95

*Those who had escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia, to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete.*

Ezra 1:1-3 · NASB95

*Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying: "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. 'Whoever there is among you of all His people, may his God be with him! Let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel; He is the God who is in Jerusalem.*

Jeremiah 29:14 · NASB95

*'I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'*

**a. What passage had Daniel read in the book of Jeremiah (see page 171 in Discovering Daniel)?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> I understand he had read Jeremiah's seventy-year prophecy — Jeremiah 25:11-12, with its companion promise in Jeremiah 29:10 — which fixed the length of the Babylonian captivity.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:2** Daniel names the source himself: "the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet… namely, seventy years."

**b. What promise did God give in this prophecy (see page 171 in Discovering Daniel)?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> God promised that when the seventy years for Babylon were completed He would visit His people, fulfill His good word to them, and bring them back to this place.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Jeremiah 29:10** "I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place." The return was a promise, not a possibility.

**c. What was the near-term fulfillment of this prophecy, and the far-term fulfillment (see page 171 in Discovering Daniel)?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> The near-term fulfillment was the decree of Cyrus and the return of the exiles to rebuild Jerusalem; the far-term fulfillment reaches past that first return to God's final regathering of Israel from all the nations.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Ezra 1:1** Cyrus's decree came "in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah" — the near- term half, dated and documented.

> **AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel
>
> Tsarfati reads the seventy years as a genuine historical term that God kept to the letter, and as a pattern for the larger restoration still ahead — Jeremiah 29:14 speaks of gathering Israel "from all the nations," which the modest return under Zerubbabel never exhausted.

> **DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word
>
> Guzik notes that Chronicles connects the seventy years to the sabbath years Israel had failed to keep — the land collected the rest it was owed, and the number was not arbitrary.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
>
> Notice that the exile lasted exactly as long as the debt Israel had accumulated by ignoring the sabbath years. God did not invent a round number to make a point; He collected what the law had specified all along. The judgment was, in the most literal sense, the bill coming due.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What obedience have I been deferring, assuming the account would never actually be settled?*

## 2 In Daniel 9:3, what clues are we given about the intensity of Daniel's prayer?

P. 172

Daniel 9:3 · NASB95

3 *So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.*

**IN MY WORDS**

I see five clues stacked in one verse — he gave the Lord his full attention, he sought Him, he used prayer and supplications, he fasted, and he put on sackcloth and ashes.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Ezra 9:5-6** Ezra likewise fell on his knees at the evening offering with his garment torn, ashamed to lift his face — the posture matched the grief.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur observes that the verbs describe deliberate effort, not a mood that came over him: Daniel set himself to it, the way a man sets himself to a task he intends to finish.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that supplication is the language of a beggar rather than a citizen — Daniel came asking, not negotiating.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Sackcloth and ashes were public signals in a culture where mourning was visible. Daniel was the senior official of a world empire, and he put on the clothes of the destitute. Whatever this prayer cost him in dignity in front of the Persian court, he decided the answer was worth more than his standing.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What would I be unwilling to look foolish over — and does that tell me where my faith actually stops?*

## 3 As you read through the prayer, observe the many times that Daniel used the words we, us, and our. Though Daniel was a righteous man, he included himself in this prayer of repentance along with the rest of the people of Judah.

P. 177

Daniel 9:5-6 · NASB95

5 *⚠ we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.* 6 *Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land.*

Daniel 9:15 · NASB95

15 *And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked.*

1 Timothy 1:15 · NASB95

*It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.*

**a. Why do you think Daniel included himself in the request for God's forgiveness (see page 177 in Discovering Daniel)?**

IN MY WORDS

I think Daniel included himself because he genuinely counted himself part of the people who had sinned — he stood inside the guilt rather than above it, and a man who has spent his life near God is the last man to think himself exempt.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 6:5** "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips..." The closer the vision of God, the deeper the sense of one's own guilt.

**b. Do you see a parallel here with Paul calling himself the chief of sinners in 1 Timothy 1:15? Explain.**

IN MY WORDS

Yes — Paul, writing as a mature apostle, still called himself foremost of sinners, and like Daniel he was not exaggerating for effect but measuring himself against God rather than against other people.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Timothy 1:15** "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all." Present tense — Paul did not say he used to be.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati draws out that Daniel's intercession is priestly in shape: he stands between God and the nation and speaks as one of them, which is the only place from which anyone can truly intercede.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur notes that neither Daniel nor Paul was performing humility — both had seen enough of God's holiness to know that comparing themselves favorably to other sinners was meaningless.

CRITICAL THINKING

There is no record in Scripture of Daniel committing the sins he confesses here. He is not admitting to acts he did not do; he is refusing the distance that would let him pray "they" instead of "we." The moment intercession becomes a report on other people's failures, it has stopped being intercession.

KEY QUESTION

*When I pray about the sin of my church, my family, or my country, do I say "they" — and what does that reveal?*

**4** **In verse 18, Daniel said, "We do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies." Daniel had a correct understanding of people's inability to be righteous and their need for God's mercy. What do the following passages say about our deeds versus God's mercy?** P. 179

Daniel 9:18 · NASB95

18 *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 are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.*

Romans 5:8 · NASB95

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

Ephesians 2:4-5 · NASB95

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

Ephesians 2:8-9 · NASB95

*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

Titus 3:5 · NASB95

*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,*

**a.** **Romans 5:8**

IN MY WORDS

God proved His love by sending Christ to die for me while I was still a sinner — before I had cleaned anything up, and with nothing in me to recommend the transaction.

CROSS REFERENCE **Romans 5:6** "While we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." Helpless is the operative word.

**b.** **Ephesians 2:4-5**

IN MY WORDS

Because God is rich in mercy and loved me with great love, He made me alive with Christ when I was dead in my transgressions — a dead man contributes nothing to his own resurrection.

CROSS REFERENCE **Colossians 2:13** "When you were dead in your transgressions... He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions."

**c. Ephesians 2:8-9**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> I am saved by grace through faith, and even that is not from myself but is God's gift — not a result of works, so that no one can boast about it.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Romans 3:27** "Where then is boasting? It is excluded." Grace does not merely discourage boasting; it removes the grounds for it.

**d. Titus 3:5**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> He saved me not on the basis of any righteous deeds I had done but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Isaiah 64:6** "All our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment..." Even our best offerings need cleansing.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur ties the four passages to a single point: every one of them names what did not save us before naming what did, because the human heart will smuggle merit back in wherever the text leaves a gap.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati observes that Daniel arrived at this doctrine six centuries before Paul wrote it down — the gospel's logic was already the ground of Old Testament prayer.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The workbook quotes verse 18 in a wording that says "righteous deeds"; the NASB95 renders it "any merits of our own," which is broader. Daniel is not only disclaiming good works — he is disclaiming his reputation, his sixty-plus years of faithfulness, and his standing as a prophet. He brings none of his résumé to the throne.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What part of my record do I quietly expect God to take into account when I ask Him for something?*

## 03 COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

*How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?*

Every cross reference written out in the NASB95.

**1** **In Deuteronomy 28:15-68, God warned the people of Israel about the high cost of disobedience. God then listed the curses the people would experience. Look up the verses below. What specific punishments line up with the fallout that occurred when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and took Hebrew captives into exile?** P. 175

Deuteronomy 28:15 · NASB95

*"But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:*

Deuteronomy 28:20 · NASB95

*"The LORD will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me.*

Deuteronomy 28:25 · NASB95

*"The LORD shall cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you will go out one way against them, but you will flee seven ways before them, and you will be an example of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth.*

Deuteronomy 28:32 · NASB95

*"Your sons and your daughters shall be given to another people, while your eyes look on and yearn for them continually; but there will be nothing you can do.*

Deuteronomy 28:36 · NASB95

*"The LORD will bring you and your king, whom you set over you, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone.*

Deuteronomy 28:48-49 · NASB95

*therefore you shall serve your enemies whom the LORD will send against you, in hunger, in thirst, in nakedness, and in the lack of all things; and He will put an iron yoke on your neck until He has destroyed you. "The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand,*

Deuteronomy 28:52 · NASB95

*"It shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls in which you trusted come down throughout your land, and it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout your land which the LORD your God has given you.*

**a. Verse 20**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Curses, confusion, and rebuke in everything they undertook, until they were destroyed — and the stated reason was that they had forsaken God, which is exactly what Daniel confesses.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:11** "...so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses..." Daniel names Deuteronomy as the document being enforced.

**b. Verse 25**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Defeat before their enemies — going out one way and fleeing seven ways — which is what happened when Zedekiah's army broke and scattered before the Babylonians.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Kings 25:4-5** All the men of war fled by night; the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho, and all his army was scattered from him.

**c. Verse 32**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Sons and daughters handed over to another people while the parents watched helplessly — the deportations that carried Daniel and his friends to Babylon as young men.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 1:3-4** Nebuchadnezzar ordered Ashpenaz, the chief of his officials, to bring in youths of the royal family and of the nobles — someone's children, taken while their families looked on.

**d. Verse 36**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> The king carried off with the people to a nation they had never known, where they would serve gods of wood and stone — fulfilled when Jehoiachin and later Zedekiah were taken to Babylon.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Kings 24:15** "So he led Jehoiachin away into exile to Babylon" — the king went with the people, exactly as warned.

**e. Verses 48-49**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Serving their enemies in hunger, thirst, nakedness, and lack of all things under an iron yoke, with a distant nation swooping like an eagle and speaking a language they could not understand.

CROSS REFERENCE **Jeremiah 5:15** "I am bringing a nation against you from afar... A nation whose language you do not know, Nor can you understand what they say."

### f. Verse 52

**IN MY WORDS**

A siege pressed against their towns until the high fortified walls they trusted came down — which is precisely how Jerusalem fell after eighteen months of siege.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **2 Kings 25:1-4** The siege began in the ninth year and lasted until the eleventh, when the city wall was breached.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik points out that Israel was not ambushed by these judgments — the terms had been read aloud and written down roughly eight centuries earlier, and God simply did what He said He would do.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati stresses that Daniel prays with the covenant open in front of him: he is not guessing at God's disposition, he is reading the contract and pleading its mercy clause.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Deuteronomy 28 devotes fourteen verses to blessing and fifty-four to cursing — the warning is nearly four times the length of the promise. That imbalance is itself an act of mercy: God spent most of the chapter describing, in detail no one could later claim was unclear, the exact ruin He hoped they would avoid.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What warning in Scripture have I read so many times that it has stopped sounding like a warning?*

---

**2** **At the same time Jeremiah warned of judgment, he also offered hope. God's promise in Jeremiah 29:10 caught Daniel's attention. Daniel knew with certainty that God keeps His promises — and God said He would fulfill this promise regardless of the spiritual state of His people. Even so, Daniel saw the need for the people to repent.** P. 180

Jeremiah 29:10 · NASB95

*"For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.*

Numbers 23:19 · NASB95

*"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?*

1 Kings 8:56 · NASB95

*"Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant.*

Psalm 32:2-5 · NASB95

*How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.*

Psalm 51:4 · NASB95

*Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.*

Proverbs 28:13 · NASB95

*He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.*

1 John 1:9 · NASB95

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

**a-1. What assurances are we given about God's promises in Numbers 23:19?**

IN MY WORDS

God is not a man that He should lie — if He has said it, He will do it; if He has spoken it, He will make it good.

CROSS REFERENCE **Titus 1:2** "God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago." It is not merely that God does not lie; He cannot.

**a-2. What assurances are we given about God's promises in 1 Kings 8:56?**

IN MY WORDS

Solomon testified that not one word had failed of all God's good promise — the track record was already perfect before Daniel ever prayed.

CROSS REFERENCE **Joshua 21:45** "Not one of the good promises which the LORD had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass."

**b-1. What do we learn about confession in Psalm 32:2-5?**

IN MY WORDS

Silence about sin wore David down physically until he acknowledged it and stopped hiding it — and the moment he confessed, God forgave the guilt.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 32:1** "How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!" The relief is described as blessedness, not merely as relief.

**b-2. What do we learn about confession in Psalm 51:4?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> Real confession recognizes that sin is ultimately against God Himself, and it agrees that God is justified and blameless when He judges.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Genesis 39:9** Joseph called adultery a sin "against God" even though the offense would have been against Potiphar.

**b-3. What do we learn about confession in Proverbs 28:13?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> Concealing my transgressions guarantees I will not prosper, but confessing and forsaking them is how I find compassion — confession and forsaking are named together.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Luke 3:8** "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance," Admission without change is only half of what is asked.

**b-4. What do we learn about confession in 1 John 1:9?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> If I confess my sins, God is faithful and righteous to forgive them and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness — forgiveness is His faithfulness, not His mood.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Micah 7:19** "You will cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea." The cleansing is as thorough as the promise is certain.

> **AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel
>
> Tsarfati draws the pastoral point that God's faithfulness never becomes an excuse for our passivity — Daniel believed the seventy years were certain and prayed as though the outcome depended on repentance, because both are true at once.

> **JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You
>
> MacArthur notes that 1 John 1:9 grounds forgiveness in God being faithful and righteous rather than merely lenient — the cross is what makes forgiving sinners a righteous act rather than an overlooked one.

> **DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word
>
> Guzik observes that Psalm 32 describes the physical cost of unconfessed sin, which is one reason confession is a mercy to the confessor and not only a duty owed to God.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
>
> God told Jeremiah the return would happen after seventy years regardless of Israel's spiritual condition — and Daniel prayed anyway. That is the hardest thing in this chapter to hold together. Prayer is not the mechanism that changes God's mind about His promise; it is the means by which God prepares a people to receive what He had already decided to give.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Do I pray less about the things I am most certain God will do — and what does that say about why I pray at all?*

## 04 EXECUTE

*How does this affect my life?*

Taking Daniel 9:1-19 off the page and into the week.

**1** **Daniel's dedication to understanding Scripture and his devotion to praying fervently made for a powerful combination. Have you ever considered that to carry out one of those habits without the other can be detrimental? Ask yourself:** P. 181

Daniel 9:2 · NASB95

2 *in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as* △ *the word of the LORD* *to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the* ⟳ *desolations* *of Jerusalem, namely,* ◷ *seventy years*.

Daniel 9:3 · NASB95

3 *So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by* ▤ *prayer and supplications*, *with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.*

**a.** **What are the potential dangers of being a good student of God's Word but negligent in prayer?**

**IN MY WORDS**

I can end up with a head full of accurate doctrine and a cold heart — knowing about God without actually knowing Him, and using Scripture to win arguments instead of to meet God.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **John 5:39-40** "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life… and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

**b.** **What are the potential dangers of being fervent in prayer without having a clear understanding of Scripture?**

**IN MY WORDS**

I can pray sincerely for things God never promised, mistake my own desires for His will, and build a private religion on feelings that no text ever supported.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Romans 10:2** "They have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge." Sincerity is not the same as truth.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur frames the two as the two halves of one conversation: in Scripture God speaks to us, in prayer we answer Him, and a conversation with only one side talking is not a relationship.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati points out that Daniel's prayer in this chapter is saturated with the language of Moses and the prophets — he prayed Scripture back to God, which is what keeps prayer from drifting.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Daniel's prayer is not a list of requests with a verse attached at the end; the whole prayer is built out of Deuteronomy, Exodus, and Jeremiah. He was not applying Scripture to his prayer — Scripture had become the vocabulary he prayed in. That is a different order of intimacy with the text than most of us have.

**KEY QUESTION**

*If someone transcribed my prayers this week, how much of the language would be borrowed from Scripture?*

---

**2** **Scripture makes it clear that God takes sin seriously. The question is, Do we take sin seriously enough? As you consider your perspective of sin, answer the questions below:** P. 182

Romans 5:12 · NASB95

*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—*

Isaiah 59:2 · NASB95

*But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.*

Isaiah 53:5 · NASB95

*But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.*

1 Peter 3:18 · NASB95

*For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;*

Galatians 5:16-18 · NASB95

*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.*

**a. What effect did the sin of eating from a specific tree have on the entire human race (see Romans 5:12)?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Through one man's sin, sin entered the world and death came through sin, so death spread to every human being — one act in a garden put the whole race under a death sentence.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Corinthians 15:22** "in Adam all die" — the reach of a single sin is measured in every grave since.

**b. What effect does sin have on us (Isaiah 59:2)?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> My sins put a separation between me and God and hide His face from me, so that He does not hear — sin does not merely offend God, it cuts the line.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 66:18** "If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear..." Cherished sin and answered prayer do not coexist.

**c. What did Christ do to make forgiveness possible for us (see Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 3:18)?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> He was pierced for my transgressions and crushed for my iniquities, and He died for sins once for all — the just for the unjust — to bring me to God.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 5:21** "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

**d. Read Galatians 5:16-18. Is it possible for us to walk in the Spirit and walk in sin at the same time? Explain.**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> No — Paul says the flesh and the Spirit are set against each other in direct opposition, so walking by the Spirit is precisely what keeps me from carrying out the desire of the flesh; I cannot be led two directions at once.

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 6:24** "No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve God and wealth." The principle is the same: divided allegiance is not allegiance.

**e. In light of the above, why do you think God hates sin so much?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Because sin killed His Son and it kills His creatures — it separates people from Him, it cost Christ the cross to undo, and God hates what destroys what He loves.

CROSS REFERENCE **Habakkuk 1:13** "Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, And You can not look on wickedness with favor."

**f. Why is it dangerous for us to downplay the seriousness of sin?**

IN MY WORDS

Because the moment I make sin small, I make the cross small — and a person who does not think he is badly hurt will not take the cure seriously.

CROSS REFERENCE **Jeremiah 6:14** "They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, 'Peace, peace,' But there is no peace."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that Isaiah 59:2 locates the problem in us rather than in God's willingness — God has not moved, and it is our iniquity that has built the wall.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur emphasizes "once for all" in 1 Peter 3:18: the sacrifice does not need repeating, which means the guilt it covers cannot be re-charged to the believer's account.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel's generation is the case study for this question. They did not deny God existed; they simply stopped treating His commands as serious, one small compromise at a time, until the walls came down and the temple burned. Nobody in Judah chose the exile — they chose a hundred small things that added up to it.

KEY QUESTION

*What sin have I stopped calling sin, and started calling a personality trait?*

**3** **According to Hebrews 4:12, what resource has God given us to help examine our hearts and see whether we are allowing sin to reside within us? What does this tell us about the priority this resource should have in our lives?**

P. 182

Hebrews 4:12 · NASB95

*For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.*

IN MY WORDS

God has given me His Word — living, active, and sharp enough to divide soul from spirit and judge the thoughts and intentions of my heart — which tells me it should have first priority, because nothing else I own can show me what is actually in me.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 139:23-24** "Search me, O God, and know my heart... And see if there be any hurtful way in me." The examination David asks for is the one Hebrews says the Word performs.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati closes the loop back to verse 2: Daniel read the Word, the Word exposed his nation's condition, and the exposure drove him to prayer — exactly the sequence Hebrews 4:12 describes.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that the sword image is diagnostic before it is destructive: it is described as judging thoughts and intentions, which is surgery rather than execution.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Hebrews says the Word judges the intentions of the heart — not just the actions. That is a harder standard than any court applies, because it reaches the motive behind the good deed as well as the bad one. It means Scripture can convict me over something I did right, for the wrong reason.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Am I willing to let Scripture examine my motives this week, or only my behavior?*

# Closing Thoughts · Lesson 9A

Daniel realized the seventy years of captivity were nearly up, and that his people would soon be able to return to Jerusalem. But what would they find there? An entire generation of Hebrews had been born in Babylon and died there, having never seen the land of God's promise. Anyone still alive who had watched Judah fall would have been in his sixties or older. The houses, the farms, the fields — someone else was living on them now.

Between the destruction of their homeland and seventy years in Babylon, the people of Judah had been through enough to make them wonder whether God had finished with them for good. The psalmist put the fear into words: “Will the Lord reject forever? And will He never be favorable again? Has His lovingkindness ceased forever? Has His promise come to an end forever? Has God forgotten to be gracious, Or has He in anger withdrawn His compassion?” (Psalm 77:7-9).

But the psalmist did not stay there. Instead of looking down at his circumstances, he looked back at God's record — “I shall remember the deeds of the LORD; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old” (Psalm 77:11). That is the same move Daniel makes in his prayer. He does not ask God to do something new; he asks God to do what He has already said He would do, and he grounds the whole request in God's name rather than in Israel's worthiness.

That is why this lesson is called Promises Made, Promises Kept. Nearly every terrifying thing Deuteronomy 28 warned about had come true, down to the besieged walls and the unfamiliar language of the invaders. Daniel looked at that record of fulfilled warnings and drew the only reasonable conclusion: a God whose threats come true that precisely will keep His promises with the same precision. The judgment was the evidence for the hope.

*“O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”*

Daniel 9:19

Most of us are not waiting on a seventy-year sentence to expire. But we all have something we have been praying about long enough to start wondering whether God has forgotten. Daniel's answer was not to feel better about it — it was to open the book, find what God had actually promised, and pray it back to Him with his face on the ground. God has not been silent about who He is or what He intends to do. The question is whether we have been reading closely enough to know what to ask for.

PART TWO · DISCOVERING DANIEL · LESSON 9B

DANIEL 9:20–24 · GABRIEL, AND THE SEVENTY WEEKS DECREED

# The Messianic Countdown

*Daniel is still speaking when the answer arrives — at the hour of the evening offering, by the angel who will one day stand before Mary. He came to say that Daniel is treasured, and to hand him a calendar: seventy sevens, decreed for his people and his city, with six things to be finished before it runs out.*

IN THIS PART


- Capture the Scene — Daniel 9:20–24 verse by verse
- Going Deeper — Movement III, *Gabriel at the Evening Offering* (9:20–23), and the opening of Movement IV on verse 24
- Two figures — the six purposes of 9:24, and the seventy weeks laid out end to end
- Analyze the Message — ten questions: how God hears prayer, what “weeks” means, the four divisions, the six purposes
- Compare — the problem, the solution, the reign: Romans, Ephesians, John, Isaiah, Daniel 7
- Execute — when the answer is yes, no, or not yet
- Closing Thoughts

## 01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

*What do I see?*

Using my Bible, working through Daniel 9:20-24 verse by verse.

KEY VERSE · DANIEL 9:23 NASB95

At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

**1 What happened while Daniel was praying (see Daniel 9:20-21)?** DAN. 9:20-21

Daniel 9:20 · NASB95

20 *Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God,*

Daniel 9:21 · NASB95

21 *while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.*

IN MY WORDS

While Daniel was still praying—still confessing his own sin and the sin of his people—the angel Gabriel came to him about the time of the evening offering.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 8:16** Gabriel had already been sent to Daniel once before to explain the vision of the ram and the goat; the same messenger returns for the same kind of errand.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati marks the timing: about the time of the evening offering. There had been no temple and no evening sacrifice for decades, yet Daniel was still keeping heaven's clock in a country that did not own one.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik observes that Daniel was not asking about seventy weeks at all. He was confessing sin and pleading for Jerusalem, and the answer God sent went far past the request.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel confesses "my sin and the sin of my people Israel"—and he is arguably the least guilty man in Babylon. The prophet who had every right to pray as a bystander prayed as a participant instead, and that is the prayer heaven interrupted.

KEY QUESTION

*When I pray about what is wrong with my church, my family, or my nation, do I pray as a defendant or as a spectator?*

## 2 What was the purpose of Daniel's visitor (see verse 22)?

DAN. 9:22

Daniel 9:22 · NASB95

22 *He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding.*

IN MY WORDS

Gabriel came to give Daniel insight and understanding—not to rebuke him and not to add a demand, but to teach him.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 12:4** "But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase." Understanding is God's gift, released on His timetable.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur emphasizes that revelation is always God's initiative. Daniel did not reason his way to the seventy weeks; a messenger was dispatched to hand him what no amount of study could have produced.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati notes that Gabriel's assignment across Scripture is announcement—he comes to Daniel, to Zacharias, and to Mary, and the errand is always God's program for Israel and the coming of Messiah's kingdom.

CRITICAL THINKING

Gabriel says he came "to give you insight with understanding"—two words, not one. Daniel already had the information; Jeremiah's scroll was open in front of him. What he lacked was the ability to see what the information meant, and that is a separate gift entirely.

KEY QUESTION

*Am I asking God for more information when what I actually need is understanding of what He has already told me?*

## 3 What special sentiment does this visitor communicate to Daniel (see verse 23)?

DAN. 9:23

Daniel 9:23 · NASB95

23 *At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.*

**IN MY WORDS**

That Daniel is highly esteemed—treasured by God—and that the command to answer him went out at the very beginning of his supplications.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Jeremiah 29:11** "'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'" The God who planned Judah's return answered Daniel mid-sentence.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the answer left heaven at the beginning of the supplications. Before Daniel had finished his first request the messenger was already on the way.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati draws the contrast with chapter 10, where an answer sent immediately was held up twenty-one days by opposition in the heavenlies. Immediate departure and immediate arrival are not the same thing.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

"Highly esteemed" is not a wage Daniel earned with this prayer; Gabriel states it as a settled fact about who Daniel already is. God's affection is the reason the answer was sent, not the result of the asking.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Do I believe God delights in me before I pray, or am I still trying to pray my way into His favor?*

---

## 4 Read Daniel 9:24.

DAN. 9:24

Daniel 9:24 · NASB95

24 "*Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*

**a. What time span does this prophecy cover?**

**IN MY WORDS**

Seventy weeks—seventy sevens—which the rest of the chapter shows to be seventy periods of seven years, a total of 490 years.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:25** "...there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress." The seventy are divided, which only works if a "week" is a fixed unit.

**b. Whose people and which city is this prophecy for?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> It is decreed for Daniel's people, Israel, and for Daniel's holy city, Jerusalem—not for the church and not for the nations at large.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:20** Daniel had just prayed "in behalf of the holy mountain of my God." God answers about the very people and place Daniel was praying for.

**c. What does this prophecy say will be accomplished?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Six things: to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place.

CROSS REFERENCE **Hebrews 9:26** "...but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

> AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel
>
> Tsarfati stresses the address on the envelope—"your people and your holy city." Read it as anything other than Israel and Jerusalem and the arithmetic of the whole chapter collapses.

> JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You
>
> MacArthur notes that all six purposes are stated as decreed, not proposed. The seventy weeks are not a forecast of what might happen but a schedule of what will.

> CRITICAL THINKING
>
> Daniel asked about seventy years and was handed seventy sevens. God did not merely answer the question about the exile; He folded the exile into a far longer program that runs past Daniel, past the return, and past the cross. The small question was answered by enlarging it.

KEY QUESTION

*Where have I asked God for a small thing and quietly refused the larger answer He was actually offering?*

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

# Movement III · Gabriel at the Evening Offering

*DANIEL 9:20–23 · An answer already on its way, at the hour of the sacrifice*

The hinge of the chapter. Daniel prayed about seventy *years*; the answer is about seventy *weeks*. Read the four verses in which the answer arrives, then the word study on *chamudot* — heaven's name for the man who had just called himself wicked.

> *"20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. 22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision."*
>
> DANIEL 9:20–23

**מִנְחַת־עֶרֶב**

MINCHAT-EREV · "THE EVENING OFFERING"

The afternoon sacrifice, about the ninth hour, three o'clock (Exodus 29:39; compare Acts 3:1). There had been no altar for nearly fifty years; Daniel had last seen its smoke as a boy in Jerusalem, yet he still kept its hour. The Jewish day of prayer was shaped by a sacrifice he could not offer. And at that hour, in that same city, the Messiah would one day cry out and die (Matthew 27:46). Daniel prayed at three in the afternoon; so, centuries later, did the darkened sky.

**גַּבְרִיאֵל**

GAVRI'EL · "GABRIEL"

"Man of God," *gever* + *El*. The angel who interpreted the ram and the goat (8:16) is "the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously." He appears twice more in Scripture, to Zacharias and to Mary (Luke 1:19, 26), announcing the forerunner and the Messiah — the very Messiah he is about to put on the calendar here. Gabriel's whole recorded ministry is the coming of Christ.

**חֲמוּדוֹת**

CHAMUDOT · "HIGHLY ESTEEMED"

Precious things, treasures — the plural of *chamud*, desirable (the root of "covet" in the tenth commandment). KJV: "greatly beloved." Heaven's name for Daniel, given three times (9:23; 10:11, 19). The man who has just confessed "we have been wicked" is told, in the same hour, that he is treasured. That is how grace works: the honest confessor is the beloved.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

The command went out “at the beginning of your supplications.” Before Daniel got past “Alas, O Lord,” the answer was dispatched. Tsarfati loves this verse for Israel: God is not slow to hear the cry of His people; the delay is on our end, not His. And the answer comes about the holy mountain, the city and the people — the very things Daniel prayed for — but it is bigger than the return from Babylon. Daniel asked for a restoration; God gave him the whole road to the Messiah and the end.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

Three things about how God answers prayer. First, immediately: “at the beginning of your supplications the command was issued” (compare Isaiah 65:24). Second, through His Word: Gabriel comes to give “insight with understanding,” not a feeling but revelation. Third, more than was asked: Daniel prayed about Jerusalem’s seventy years and received God’s plan for Israel through the age. MacArthur adds the tenderness of “highly esteemed.” God does not merely answer the man; He honors him.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that Daniel was “still speaking” when the answer came — a reminder that God sometimes interrupts prayer with the answer. He draws out the evening offering: as a young man in Jerusalem Daniel had watched the smoke rise from the temple, and nearly fifty years after that altar was destroyed he still kept its hour — the hour Guzik connects to the darkness over the cross (Matthew 27:45). He also observes that “the vision” (v. 23) Daniel is told to understand had not yet been given; Gabriel is telling him to pay attention to what follows — the most precise prophecy of the Messiah in the Old Testament.

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

# Movement IV · The Seventy Weeks — the Decree and Its Six Purposes

*DANIEL 9:24 · God's calendar for Israel, cut to a length*

Verse 24 is the headline; verses 25–27 (Lesson 9c) are the schedule. Here the Deep Dive settles what a "week" is, what *decreed* means, and which of the six purposes are already paid for.

> *"24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place."*
>
> DANIEL 9:24–24

שָׁבֻעִים שִׁבְעִים

SHAVU'IM SHIV'IM · "SEVENTY WEEKS"

*Shavua* is simply "a seven," a heptad — like our "dozen." Context decides the unit. Jacob served a "week" of years for Rachel (Genesis 29:27), and Israel kept sabbatical *years* every seventh year (Leviticus 25:1–7). Daniel has just been thinking in sabbatical years (2 Chronicles 36:21), so "seventy sevens" are seventy sevens of years: 490. Jeremiah's seventy years answered seventy neglected sabbaths; now seventy more sevens are laid out for Israel's future.

נֶחְתַּךְ

NECHTAK · "HAVE BEEN DECREED"

From *chatak*, "to cut, to cut off, to determine." It occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible. The 490 years are *cut out* of history and marked off for "your people and your holy city" — Israel and Jerusalem. The decree is as fixed as a cut in stone; the church is not the subject, Israel is.

לְכַפֵּר עָוֹן

LEKHAPPER AVON · "TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR INIQUITY"

*Kaphar*: to cover, to purge by a substitute — the verb of the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16). Six purposes are listed: finish transgression, end sin, atone for iniquity, bring everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, anoint the most holy. The first three are about sin and were paid for at the cross; the last three are about the kingdom and await the King. The seventy weeks run from Persia to the end of the age.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

"Your people and your holy city." The calendar is addressed to Israel and Jerusalem; it is not about the church, which did not yet exist and is nowhere in Daniel. Tsarfati reads the six purposes literally and asks the simple question: has sin ended in Jerusalem? Is everlasting righteousness ruling there? Is the most holy place anointed? Then the seventy weeks are not finished. The first sixty-nine were kept to the day; the seventieth is Israel's future, and it is the seven-year Tribulation of Revelation.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

This verse is the backbone of biblical chronology. God gives His people a timetable, and He gives it in units they understand — sevens of years. MacArthur stresses the sovereignty in *decreed*: history is not drifting toward an end; it is *cut* to a length. And he stresses the gospel in the six purposes — transgression finished, sin ended, iniquity atoned. Everything Israel's long sin had broken, God has scheduled to repair, and the repair runs through a Messiah who dies.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

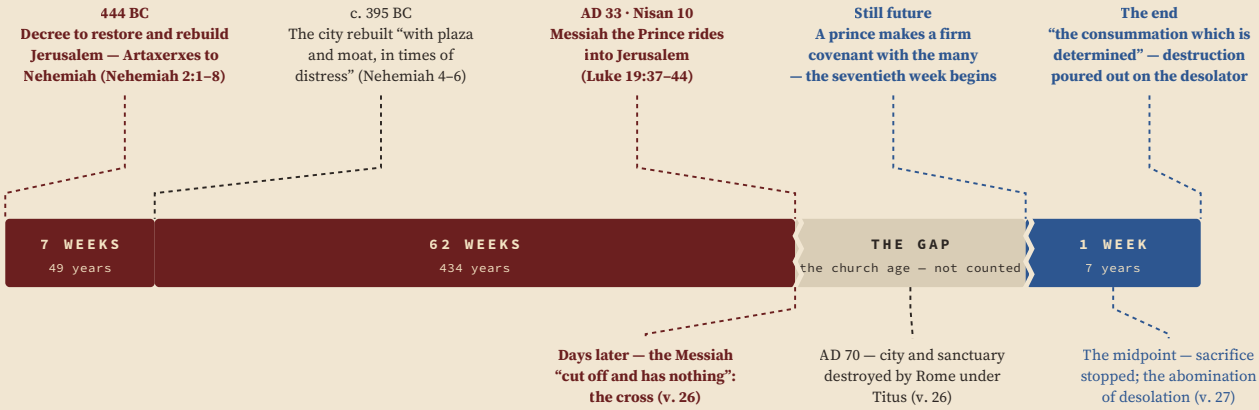
Guzik lays the arithmetic plainly: a week is seven; seventy weeks are 490; and because Daniel was praying about years, these are years. He notes the common pattern in Daniel of prophecy stacking a near fulfillment under a far one, and takes the six purposes at face value: atonement was accomplished at Calvary, but the end of sin and everlasting righteousness are visibly not yet here, so the seventieth week waits. God's calendar for Israel has a pause in it — the age we live in.




FIGURE 2 · THE SIX PURPOSES OF DANIEL 9:24 — THREE AT THE CROSS, THREE AT HIS RETURN

## THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL 9:24–27 · 70 × 7 = 490 YEARS

7 weeks + 62 weeks = 69 weeks (483 years) · then a gap that is not counted · then the seventieth week (7 years)




### THE ARITHMETIC OF THE SIXTY-NINE WEEKS

69 weeks × 7 = 483 prophetic years · 483 × 360 days (the biblical year: Revelation 12:6 with 12:14; 11:2–3) = 173,880 days

Nisan 1, 444 BC (Artaxerxes' 20th year, Nehemiah 2:1) + 173,880 days = Nisan 10, AD 33 — the Sunday Jesus rode into Jerusalem

Sir Robert Anderson (The Coming Prince, 1894) worked the sum from 445 BC to AD 32; Harold Hoehner refined the dates to 444 BC → AD 33.

FIGURE 3 · THE SEVENTY WEEKS END TO END — 69 WEEKS KEPT TO THE DAY, A GAP, AND ONE WEEK STILL TO RUN

## 02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

*What does it say and mean?*

Using both my Bible and my copy of the book Discovering Daniel.

### 1 Do we ever need to wonder whether God is hearing our prayers, and why (see page 187 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 187

Daniel 9:23 · NASB95

23 *At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.*

1 John 5:14 · NASB95

*This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*

**IN MY WORDS**

No—Gabriel was dispatched at the very beginning of Daniel's supplications, and Scripture assures the believer that God hears whatever we ask according to His will.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **1 John 5:15** "And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him."

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati points to Daniel 9:23 as the settled answer to the question every praying believer eventually asks. The command went out at the beginning of the supplications, not at the end.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur cautions that being heard is not the same as being granted. God hears every prayer and answers according to His will, which is a mercy rather than a loophole.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The doubt is rarely about God's hearing—it is about His timing. Daniel got his answer inside a single prayer; the same Daniel later waited three weeks for a message that had also left immediately. Silence is not evidence of absence.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What prayer have I quietly stopped praying because the silence started to feel like a no?*

### 2 What four words in 1 John 5:14 define how we are to pray (see page 188 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 188

1 John 5:14 · NASB95

*This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*

**IN MY WORDS**

"According to His will"—that is the condition attached to the confidence we have in prayer.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Isaiah 55:8** "'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' declares the LORD." Praying according to His will starts with admitting His will is not automatically mine.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur observes that praying according to God's will is not a formula for getting what we want. It is the process by which what we want is slowly conformed to what He wants.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the promise is deliberately bounded. An unbounded promise would make God a servant of our appetites, and John will not write that sentence.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Notice what the four words are not. Not "according to my faith," not "according to my sincerity." The measure sits outside of me, which is exactly why an unanswered prayer is not proof that I prayed it badly.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Do I actually want God's will, or do I want His signature on mine?*

---

## 3 What is the best way for us to understand the Hebrew word translated "weeks" in Daniel 9:24 (see pages 189-190 in Discovering Daniel)?

PP. 189-190

Daniel 9:24 · NASB95

24 "*Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*

**IN MY WORDS**

The Hebrew word simply means a unit of seven—a "seven"—so it should be read as seventy sevens rather than as seventy calendar weeks.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Leviticus 25:8** Israel already counted time in sevens of years—seven sabbaths of years, seven times seven, making forty-nine—so a "seven" of years was a familiar unit, not an invention.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati explains that the word is simply a "seven." Context decides whether the sevens are days or years, and here the surrounding context of the seventy years of exile makes years the only reading that works.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that Israel's sabbath-year cycle had been ignored across roughly 490 years, which is why the exile ran seventy years— one year of rest for each missed sabbath. The number was already on the ledger before Gabriel spoke it.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The 490 years of ignored sabbaths that produced a seventy-year exile and the 490 years of the seventy weeks are the same figure running in opposite directions—judgment measured out, then redemption measured out. God settles accounts in the same currency He was owed.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What have I let quietly accumulate, assuming God was not keeping the books?*

## 4 With that in mind, what period of time was Gabriel referring to (see page 190 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 190

Daniel 9:25 · NASB95

25 *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

**IN MY WORDS**

A total of 490 years—seventy sevens of years—decreed for Israel and Jerusalem.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:25** "...from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks..."

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur notes that these are prophetic years of 360 days—the calendar behind Daniel's "time, times, and half a time" and Revelation's 1,260 days and forty-two months, which are all the same three-and-a-half-year span.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati insists the count begins with a specific decree, which is why the starting gun matters as much as the total. A prophecy with a date attached can be tested.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Gabriel gives a number, not a mood. Prophecy here is arithmetic, and arithmetic can be checked—which is precisely why this passage has been attacked harder than almost any other in the Old Testament.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Am I willing to let Scripture be checkable, or do I prefer it vague enough to stay comfortable?*

## 5 What four divisions do we see within the 70 weeks (see pages 190-191 in Discovering Daniel)?

PP. 190-191

Daniel 9:25 · NASB95

25 *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

Daniel 9:26 · NASB95

26 *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

Seven weeks (49 years) to rebuild Jerusalem, then sixty-two weeks (434 years) until Messiah the Prince, then a gap after Messiah is cut off, and finally the seventieth week of seven years still ahead.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:26** "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing…" The cutting off falls after the sixty-ninth week and before the seventieth begins.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati treats the gap as the key to the whole passage. Verse 26 places Messiah's death and Jerusalem's destruction after the sixty- ninth week, yet the seventieth has plainly not run. The clock stopped.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the text itself divides the seventy—seven, sixty-two, and one. If the seventy were meant to run straight through without interruption there would be no reason to break them up at all.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The gap is not a device invented to rescue the math; the text creates it. Between the end of the sixty-ninth week and the start of the seventieth, Scripture places two events—Messiah cut off, and the city and sanctuary destroyed—and history separated those two by roughly forty years.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Do I live as though the clock on the seventieth week could start again in my lifetime?*

## 6 List the six purposes or goals that were to be accomplished through this 70-weeks prophecy (Daniel 9:24; see page 191 in Discovering Daniel—note that each one of these purposes or goals begins with the word to)?

P. 191

Daniel 9:24 · NASB95

24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

**IN MY WORDS**

To finish the transgression; to make an end of sin; to make atonement for iniquity; to bring in everlasting righteousness; to seal up vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most holy place.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Romans 11:26-27** "...and so all Israel will be saved... 'THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.'"

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur groups the six as three that deal with sin and three that establish righteousness—the whole program of redemption compressed into a single verse.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati reads the six as spanning both comings: the first three settled at the cross, the last three completed when Messiah returns and reigns.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Every one of the six is an infinitive—"to finish," "to make," "to bring in." Not one of them is something Israel does. The seventy weeks are decreed for Daniel's people, but the six accomplishments are God's work on them, not their work for Him.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Which of these six am I still trying to accomplish in myself?*

## 7 What do the first three purposes have in common (see pages 192-195 in Discovering Daniel)?

PP. 192–195

Daniel 9:24 · NASB95

24 "Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

1 Peter 2:24 · NASB95

*and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.*

IN MY WORDS

All three deal with sin—finishing the transgression, making an end of sin, and making atonement for iniquity—and all three were secured at the cross.

CROSS REFERENCE **1 Peter 2:24** "and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness..."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the three escalate rather than repeat: rebellion finished, sin brought to an end, guilt covered by atonement—three different problems, each answered in turn.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur insists atonement is the hinge. Without a substitute the first two purposes are impossible, which is why Messiah must be cut off before the seventy weeks can close.

CRITICAL THINKING

Three different Hebrew words for wrongdoing sit side by side here—transgression as willful revolt, sin as missing the mark, iniquity as crookedness. God did not deal with sin in general terms; He named every category of it and closed each one separately.

KEY QUESTION

*Which category of my sin do I still treat as unfinished business?*

**8** **In Daniel 9:24, the first purpose of Jesus' second coming is "to bring in everlasting righteousness." When will this happen, and what Scripture passage supports this (see pages 196-197 in Discovering Daniel)?** PP. 196-197

Jeremiah 23:5-6 · NASB95

*"Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"*

Isaiah 11:9 · NASB95

*They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.*

IN MY WORDS

When Messiah returns to reign—the millennial kingdom, when righteousness is established on the earth and the knowledge of the LORD covers it as the waters cover the sea.

CROSS REFERENCE **Jeremiah 23:6** "...and this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati places "everlasting righteousness" squarely in the kingdom. Righteousness was imputed at the cross, but righteousness is enforced on the earth only when the King is physically present.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik points out the word is everlasting. Whatever righteousness the kingdom brings does not expire when the thousand years do; it carries on into the new heavens and the new earth.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Righteousness is available now and unavoidable then. The difference between this age and that one is not whether God's righteousness exists but whether anything on earth is still permitted to contradict it.

**KEY QUESTION**

*If Christ enforced His righteousness in my house today, what would have to go?*

## 9 The next purpose of Jesus' second coming is "to seal up vision and prophecy." Does this mean there are no more prophecies that will need fulfillment? Explain (see page 197 in Discovering Daniel).

P. 197

Daniel 9:24 · NASB95

24 "*Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*

**IN MY WORDS**

No—it means the opposite: to seal up vision and prophecy is to bring every remaining prophecy to complete fulfillment, closing the book because nothing is left outstanding.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Luke 24:44** "...all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur reads "seal up" as authenticate and complete. A sealed document is a finished one. Prophecy is not silenced here; it is fulfilled and therefore closed.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati notes that as long as a single prophecy remains unfulfilled the seal cannot be applied—which is itself proof that the seventy weeks have not yet run out.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

A seal in the ancient world did two jobs: it closed a document and it certified who wrote it. Both meanings apply here. When the last prophecy lands, the fulfilled record becomes the signature of its Author.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Do I treat unfulfilled prophecy as speculation, or as God's signature not yet dry?*

**10** **In Daniel 9:24, the phrase "Most Holy" likely refers to the fourth temple. Why does it make sense to conclude it's about the fourth temple and not the third (see page 199 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 199

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

Ezekiel 43:4-5 · NASB95

*And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. as it is written, "THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE; THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS, THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD; ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE." for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'" "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed. Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. But when Jesus heard this, He said, "This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it." "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.*

IN MY WORDS

The third temple is the one the coming prince defiles in the middle of the seventieth week, so it cannot be the holy place God anoints; the anointing belongs to the millennial temple Ezekiel describes, which the glory of the LORD Himself fills.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:27** "...but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate..."

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati counts the temples—Solomon's, the second temple built under Zerubbabel and later expanded by Herod, the tribulation temple that gets defiled, and the millennial temple of Ezekiel 40–48. Only the last one is anointed rather than desecrated.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the phrase can be rendered "the most holy place" (NASB95) or "the Most Holy" (NKJV, which the workbook quotes), and some take it of Messiah Himself—but either reading points past the tribulation temple to what comes after it.

CRITICAL THINKING

The temple that receives the abomination and the temple that receives the anointing cannot be the same building, because the seventy weeks close with an anointing, not with a defilement. The order of events does the arguing here, not the architecture.

KEY QUESTION

*Am I more interested in the buildings God will one day fill than in the one He already lives in?*

## 03 COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF

*How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?*

When we look at the purposes of Christ's first and second comings, ultimately, they can be broken down into three parts: the problem, the solution, and the reign.

**1 The Problem: What do the following passages say is the dilemma of every human on Earth?**

**a. Romans 3:10-11**

IN MY WORDS

There is no one righteous—not even one—and no one who understands or seeks after God on his own.

CROSS REFERENCE **Romans 3:12** "ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS; THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

**b. Romans 3:23**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Every person has sinned and falls short of the glory of God, so the problem is universal with no exceptions.

CROSS REFERENCE **Ephesians 2:3** "...and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." The shortfall is not merely what we have done but what we are.

**c. Ephesians 2:1-3**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> Apart from Christ we were spiritually dead in trespasses and sins, walking under the influence of the world and of the prince of the power of the air, and by nature children of wrath.

CROSS REFERENCE **Romans 3:23** "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"—dead, not merely weakened; short, not merely slow.

> JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You
>
> MacArthur presses the diagnosis: the problem is not that we are weak and need help but that we are dead and need life. A dead man does not need improvement.

> AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel
>
> Tsarfati ties this back to Daniel 9:24. Finish transgression, end sin, atone for iniquity—those three purposes exist because of a condition no one could fix from inside it.

> CRITICAL THINKING
>
> Paul stacks three indictments—none righteous, none understanding, none seeking. The third is the sharpest. The natural man is not searching for God and falling short; he is not searching. Grace is not God rewarding a search; it is God starting one.

> KEY QUESTION
>
> *Do I still secretly believe I found God, rather than that He found me?*

## 2 The Solution: According to the verses below, what is the one and only answer to every person's greatest need?

**a. John 3:16**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> God's love gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life.

CROSS REFERENCE **Hebrews 9:26** "...once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

**b. 2 Corinthians 5:21**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Jeremiah 23:6** "...this is His name by which He will be called, 'The LORD our righteousness.'"

**c. 1 Peter 2:24**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> He bore our sins in His own body on the cross so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:26** "Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing..." Daniel saw the cross more than five and a half centuries before it happened.

> **DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word
>
> Guzik calls 2 Corinthians 5:21 the great exchange—my sin credited to Him, His righteousness credited to me, and nothing of mine involved in the transaction except the need.

> **JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You
>
> MacArthur notes the solution is a person, not a program. Daniel's seventy weeks turn on one man being cut off; every other religion turns on what the worshiper manages to do.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
>
> Watch the direction of all three verses—God gave, God made Him to be sin, He bore. Every active verb belongs to God. The only thing the sinner contributes is the sin that made the substitution necessary.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What am I still trying to add to a transaction that was finished without me?*

## 3 The Reign: What promised renewal can we look forward to?

**a. Isaiah 2:2-4**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> In the last days the nations will stream to the mountain of the LORD to be taught His ways, and He will judge between them until war itself is unlearned.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Isaiah 11:9** "They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea."

**b. Jeremiah 23:5-6**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> God will raise up for David a righteous Branch who reigns as king, acts wisely, and does justice and righteousness in the land—called "The LORD our righteousness."

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:24** "...to bring in everlasting righteousness..." The Branch and the everlasting righteousness are one promise seen through two prophets.

**c. Daniel 7:13-14**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> The Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven and receives an everlasting dominion that will not pass away and a kingdom that will not be destroyed.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Revelation 20:6** "...they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."

> **AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel
>
> Tsarfati ties the three into one scene: the King arrives in Daniel 7, He reigns in righteousness in Jeremiah 23, and the nations come to Jerusalem to learn His ways in Isaiah 2. That is the last purpose of Daniel 9:24 in motion.

> **DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word
>
> Guzik notes Isaiah does not say the weapons are destroyed; he says they are converted. Swords become plowshares—the same iron, finally put to the use it should have had all along.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
>
> Isaiah says the nations will never again "learn war," which quietly admits that war is learned. Peace on earth is not humanity finally maturing; it is a curriculum change imposed by a King who is physically present to enforce it.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Do I actually long for Christ to reign, or only for my circumstances to improve?*

## 04 EXECUTE

*How does this affect my life?*

Daniel got an immediate answer. Sometimes the answer is no, and sometimes it is wait.

**1** **Daniel received an immediate answer to his prayer. That can happen to us as well. But there are also times when the Lord says no or wait. Consider the following:**

**a·1. When the Lord Says No — Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. When the apostle Paul asked God to remove "a thorn in the flesh," what did God say?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> God said no, and gave His reason: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 12:8** "Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me." The no came after persistent asking, not after a single half-hearted request.

**a·2. What was Paul's attitude when God said no, and why?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> He boasted gladly in his weaknesses, because the thorn was the very thing that caused the power of Christ to rest on him.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Corinthians 12:10** "...for when I am weak, then I am strong."

**a·3. Can you think of two or three reasons God might say no to a prayer request?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> To guard me from pride, to give me something better than what I asked for, and because what I asked for was outside His will and would have cost me more than I could see.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 55:9** "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts."

**b·1. When the Lord Says Wait — When Lazarus was seriously ill, his sisters Mary and Martha sent for Jesus. But Jesus did not visit them right away. In the meantime, Lazarus died. What does the last part of John 11:4 give as the reason for Jesus' delay?**

> IN MY WORDS
>
> "For the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it"—the delay existed so that God would be glorified in it.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:23** "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued..." Daniel's answer left at once; Jesus deliberately waited two days more, and reached Bethany only after Lazarus had been four days in the tomb. Both answers arrived on time.

**b·2. What are two or three other reasons God might delay an answer to prayer?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> To grow faith and patience in me, to line the answer up with people and events not yet in place, and because the waiting itself is doing something the answer never could.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Psalm 27:14** "Wait for the LORD; Be strong and let your heart take courage; Yes, wait for the LORD."

**b·3. Can you think of a time in your own life when a delayed answer turned out to be the best answer?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
>
> Yes—the doors I most wanted opened are the ones I now thank God He held shut until I was ready to walk through them.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Jeremiah 29:11** "'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.'"

> **JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You
>
> MacArthur observes that Paul's thorn was given, not merely permitted. God authored the affliction to protect Paul from the pride that revelation breeds; a no can be more protective than a yes.

> **DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word
>
> Guzik notes that Jesus loved Lazarus and stayed where He was two days longer. Love was the reason He came, and love was also the reason He waited.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
>
> Daniel, Paul, and Martha all prayed rightly and got three different responses—an immediate yes, a settled no, and a deliberate delay. The variable was never the quality of the praying. Any teaching that promises one uniform outcome has to ignore two of these three.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Which of the three am I living in right now—and am I willing to call God good in it?*

**2** **As we continue into the next lesson, we'll learn more about the 70-weeks prophecy. But already, we're getting a clear picture of how precisely God had planned out the rest of history from Daniel's day all the way to the millennial kingdom—a span of thousands of years that involves an amazing number of moving parts that have to be perfectly orchestrated in order for God's plans to be fulfilled.**

**a.** **What does this tell you about God?**

IN MY WORDS

That He is sovereign over history down to the year, and that no empire, no delay, and no failure of mine can knock His schedule off.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 7:14** "His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed."

**b.** **How should this influence the way you live?**

IN MY WORDS

It should make me faithful in the small, unseen obedience of today, because the God who counts out 490 years is also counting this one.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Peter 1:19** "So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place..."

**c.** **How should this affect any fears or concerns you have about the future?**

IN MY WORDS

It should quiet them—if God kept the first sixty-nine weeks to the letter, my future is not uncertain to Him, only unrevealed to me.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 21:3** "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them..."

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati's argument through Discovering Daniel is that fulfilled prophecy is the believer's evidence. What God did on schedule behind us is the guarantee of what He will do on schedule ahead of us.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur adds that a God who can be trusted with 490 years can be trusted with tomorrow morning. The same sovereignty governs both.

CRITICAL THINKING

The moving parts are the point. A Persian decree, a rebuilt wall, a Roman census, a cross—none of the people involved knew they were keeping an appointment. God's precision does not require anyone's cooperation, which is exactly why it does not depend on mine either.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What am I carrying about the future that I would set down today if I truly believed the calendar is already written?*

# Closing Thoughts · Lesson 9B

Daniel opened Jeremiah's scroll looking for a date. He found one—seventy years, and nearly up—and it drove him to his knees in confession rather than to a calendar. The answer God sent back was not a correction of his arithmetic but an enlargement of his horizon: seventy sevens, running from a decree not yet issued to a kingdom not yet come.

Much of that countdown is now behind us. A decree was issued. A city was rebuilt in troubled times. A Messiah was cut off and had nothing. A city and a sanctuary were destroyed. Every one of those landed where Gabriel said it would, centuries before anyone involved was born.

That is what makes the remainder trustworthy. Fulfilled prophecy is not a curiosity; it is a credential. No one predicts history at this resolution by accident, and no one arranges it but God. The seventieth week has not run—but the first sixty-nine did, on time, and that is the fact the honest skeptic still has to answer.

And notice where the six purposes of verse 24 land. Three of them were settled by one man on a cross outside Jerusalem. Three of them wait on that same man returning to that same city. The problem, the solution, and the reign—Daniel was handed all three inside a single verse, while he was still on his knees apologizing.

*So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.*

2 PETER 1:19 NASB95

Daniel prayed about seventy years and God answered about seventy sevens. Ask small if you must—but do not be surprised when the God who keeps a 490-year appointment answers with far more than you had the nerve to request.

PART THREE · DISCOVERING DANIEL · LESSON 9C

DANIEL 9:25–27 · THE DECREE, THE MESSIAH CUT OFF, THE LAST WEEK

# Seventy Weeks All Accounted For

*Sixty-nine weeks from a Persian king's decree to the day Israel's King rode into Jerusalem; then the Messiah cut off, the city and sanctuary destroyed, and a seventieth week still to run — a covenant confirmed, broken at its midpoint, and brought to a consummation that is already determined.*

IN THIS PART

- Capture the Scene — eight questions on Daniel 9:25–27 verse by verse
- Going Deeper — Movement IV continued: *Messiah the Prince*, *cut off*, and the *firm covenant* (9:25–27)
- Two figures — which decree starts the clock, and the seventieth week split in the middle
- Analyze the Message — eleven questions: the good news, the bad news, what kind of Messiah, Isaiah 53, the abomination
- Compare — Galatians 4:4, Lazarus, Zechariah 9:9, and the cross foreseen in 9:26
- Execute — Psalm 31:15, Psalm 139:16, Luke 12:6–7: our times in His hand
- Closing Thoughts, and the study helps that close the book

## 01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

*What do I see?*

Using my Bible, working through Daniel 9:25-27 verse by verse. Remember that "weeks" here refers to weeks of years.

KEY VERSE · DANIEL 9:26 NASB95

Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

**1** **According to verse 25, what event will mark the beginning of the first "seven weeks and sixty- two weeks" of this prophecy?** DAN. 9:25

Daniel 9:25 · NASB95

25 *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

IN MY WORDS

The countdown starts at the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem — not at Daniel's prayer, and not at the first return from exile.

CROSS REFERENCE **Nehemiah 2:5** "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." — the request that produced a decree to rebuild the city itself.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati insists the starting point has to be a decree about the city, not the temple. Several Persian decrees touch Judah, but only the one given to Nehemiah in Artaxerxes' twentieth year authorizes rebuilding Jerusalem itself — and that is the one that makes the arithmetic land on Palm Sunday.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur notes how unusual it is for a prophecy to hand over its own starting gun. God does not say "someday"; He ties the clock to a dated, documentable, public act of a pagan emperor.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel is told the clock starts at a decree that has not been issued yet, by a king of an empire that does not yet rule him. Babylon still runs the city he is standing in. God is scheduling His calendar around a signature that no living person could have arranged.

KEY QUESTION

*Am I willing to trust a promise from God whose starting conditions are still nowhere in sight?*

## 2 What does verse 25 say will be built again?

DAN. 9:25

Daniel 9:25 · NASB95

25 *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

IN MY WORDS

Jerusalem will be built again — "with plaza and moat" — a real working city with streets and defenses, and it will be rebuilt in times of distress.

CROSS REFERENCE **Nehemiah 2:3** "Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?"

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik points out that God promises the rebuilding and promises the trouble in the same breath. "In times of distress" is not a warning attached to the prophecy; it is part of the prophecy. Nehemiah built with a sword at his side because Gabriel said he would.

CRITICAL THINKING

"Plaza and moat" is a strange pair — one is for public life, the other for defense. God is not promising a monument or a shrine; He is promising a city where people gather and are protected. Daniel had been praying about a ruined sanctuary and a ruined city, and God answers first about a street.

KEY QUESTION

*When God finally restores something in my life, do I expect it to come easy — or am I prepared for it to come "in times of distress"?*

## 3 Who will be "cut off" after the 62 weeks (verse 26)?

DAN. 9:26

Daniel 9:26 · NASB95

26 *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

IN MY WORDS

The Messiah — the very Prince named in verse 25 — will be cut off and have nothing.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 53:8** "... who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?"

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati highlights the sequence: Messiah arrives, and then Messiah is killed. More than five centuries before a Roman cross existed, the Jewish people were told in their own Scriptures that their Messiah would come and be executed — and that this was the plan, not the failure of one.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik draws attention to "and have nothing." The Hebrew carries the sense of being left with none of what was rightly His — no throne, no kingdom, no people rallying to Him. He dies without receiving what He came for, which is precisely why the seventieth week is still owed to Him.

CRITICAL THINKING

Verse 25 calls Him "Messiah the Prince" and verse 26 says He will be cut off and have nothing. Those two lines sat side by side in the Hebrew Bible for centuries, and it was the second one that made Him unrecognizable to the people looking for the first.

KEY QUESTION

*Do I want a Christ who gives me something, or am I willing to follow a Christ who Himself was left with nothing?*

**4** **In the middle of verse 26, we read about a certain group of people who will come. What will these people do, according to the last part of verse 26?** DAN. 9:26

Daniel 9:26 · NASB95

26 *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

IN MY WORDS

"The people of the prince who is to come" will destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end of it will come like a flood, with war and desolations running all the way to the end.

CROSS REFERENCE **Luke 19:44** "they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation." Jesus said it over the same city, roughly forty years before it happened.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur observes the careful wording: the people come and destroy, but the prince himself does not. The armies of Titus leveled Jerusalem in A.D. 70; the prince they belong to is still future. The passage separates a people from their prince by an unspecified stretch of time.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that verse 26 puts the destruction after the Messiah is cut off, in that order. The city was not destroyed and then the Messiah rejected — He was rejected first, and the city followed.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Gabriel does not say the prince destroys the city. He says the prince's people do. That single grammatical gap is where the entire church age fits — the soldiers arrived in the first century, and the man they answer to has not shown up yet.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Am I reading prophecy carefully enough to notice what it actually says — or only carefully enough to confirm what I already assumed?*

## 5 According to verse 27, what will be confirmed, and for how long?

DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many* ◷ *for one week, but* ◷ *in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of* ⚠ *abominations will come* ⚠ *one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

He will make a firm covenant with the many, and it is set to run for one week — one period of seven years.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Revelation 13:5** "authority to act for forty-two months was given to him" — forty-two months is three and a half years, the back half of the seven.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati stresses that this seventieth week is the only one of the seventy left unspent. Sixty-nine ran on schedule and expired; the clock stopped when Messiah was cut off, and it restarts the day this covenant is signed.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur points out that the covenant is confirmed "with the many" — language for a broad national agreement, not a private treaty. Whatever it is, Israel is a party to it and it looks, at signing, like the answer to the problem.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

This man does not seize Jerusalem — he negotiates with it. The seventieth week opens not with an invasion but with a signing ceremony, which is why the people who agree to it will not see it as a disaster until three and a half years in.

KEY QUESTION

*What have I said yes to because it arrived as protection, when I should have asked who was offering it?*

## 6 What will happen at the middle of that week (or period of seven years)?

DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many* ◷ *for one week, but* ◷ *in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of* ⚠ *abominations will come* ⚠ *one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

IN MY WORDS

In the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering — he breaks the covenant halfway through and shuts down the worship he had promised to protect.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 12:11** "From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days."

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati notes the plain requirement buried in this line: you cannot stop a sacrifice that is not happening. A functioning temple with a functioning altar has to exist in Jerusalem before verse 27 can occur — which makes this one of the few prophecies with a visible, physical prerequisite.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik observes that the covenant is broken at its exact midpoint. This is not a relationship that gradually soured; it is a deadline. The betrayal was scheduled from the day the ink dried.

CRITICAL THINKING

Three and a half years is long enough for people to build their security around a promise and short enough that most of them will still be defending it when it breaks. The timing is not incidental — it is how the deception works.

KEY QUESTION

*Whose promises am I currently building on that I have never actually tested?*

## 7 When the last part of verse 27 talks about "one who makes desolate," what does that seem to suggest?

DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many* ◷ *for one week, but* ◷ *in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of* ⚠ *abominations will come* ⚠ *one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

It suggests that the man who signed the covenant and the man who brings the desolation are the same person — the protector turns out to be the desecrator.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **2 Thessalonians 2:4** "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik reads "on the wing of abominations" as pointing to something set up in the temple itself — an idolatrous act placed where God alone belongs. Desolation here is not merely military ruin; it is a holy place emptied of its holiness.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur connects this figure to Paul's man of lawlessness. He does not appear as an enemy of religion but as the object of it, which is exactly why the temple is where he goes.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The word is "desolate," not "destroyed." The building can still be standing, the crowds can still be coming, and the place can already be empty — because the One who made it holy has been evicted from it.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Is there anything in my own life that still looks intact from the outside while God has quietly been crowded out of it?*

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**8** **Daniel 9:27 says this will happen "until the consummation, which is determined." What do you think the fact this "is determined" suggests?** DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

*27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

It suggests God has already fixed the ending — the desolator is running on a clock God set, and his career has an expiration date that was written down before it began.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Isaiah 46:10** "My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure" — God declaring "the end from the beginning."

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur emphasizes that "determined" is a word about God, not about the villain. Evil in this passage is never autonomous; it is permitted, measured out, and terminated on schedule by the God who decreed the seventy weeks in the first place.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati points out that this is the pastoral payoff of the whole chapter. Believers are not told the identity of the man — they are told the length of his leash.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Notice that the destruction is poured out "on the one who makes desolate." The last thing to be made desolate in this prophecy is the desolator himself. God does not merely stop him; He ends him with the same word He used for what he did to others.

**KEY QUESTION**

*When evil looks like it is winning on the news, do I believe it is loose — or do I believe it is on a leash with a length God has already measured?*

GOING DEEPER · FROM THE DEEP DIVE

# Movement IV · The Seventy Weeks — Messiah the Prince, the Cross, and the Last Week

*DANIEL 9:25–27 · To the Messiah, to the cross, and to the end*

The schedule itself. For each verse: the text marked, the Hebrew that decides the reading (*Mashiach Nagid*, *yikkaret*, *higbir berit*), and the three teachers on the decree, the arithmetic, the gap, and the prince who is to come.

> *"25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress."*
>
> DANIEL 9:25–25

מָשִׁיחַ נָגִיד

MASHIACH NAGID · "MESSIAH THE PRINCE"

*Mashiach*, "anointed one" — used of priests and kings throughout the Old Testament, but only here (vv. 25–26) does the KJV and NASB render it "Messiah," because only here is it plainly *the* Anointed One, dated. *Nagid* is a leader, a ruler — the word for David (1 Samuel 13:14). The Anointed Ruler, Priest and King, will arrive at a fixed point on the calendar.

רְחוֹב וְחָרוּץ

RECHOV VE-CHARUTS · "PLAZA AND MOAT"

An open square and a cut trench — the civic center and the defensive ditch. The decree in view is one to rebuild the *city* as a fortified city, not merely the temple. "In times of distress" is Nehemiah's story exactly: a trowel in one hand and a weapon in the other (Nehemiah 4:17).

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Sixty-nine sevens — 483 years — from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince. Tsarfati stands with the reading that the decree is Artaxerxes' word to Nehemiah in 445/444 BC, the only one that authorized the city and its wall, and that the 483 years land on the week Jesus rode into Jerusalem as King. God told Israel the day her King would come. Jesus wept over the city because it "did not recognize the time of your visitation" (Luke 19:44) — it was knowable, and it was missed.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

Note the two stages: seven weeks (49 years) and sixty-two weeks (434 years). The first forty-nine fit the rebuilding of the city under Nehemiah and the close of the Old Testament canon; the next 434 run through the silent centuries to Christ. MacArthur's emphasis falls on precision: God does not give approximate prophecy. He named the empire in chapter 8; here He dates the Messiah. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day had this text and should have been counting.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik weighs the four candidate decrees — Cyrus (Ezra 1, 538 BC), Darius (Ezra 6, c. 520), Artaxerxes to Ezra (Ezra 7, 458), and Artaxerxes to Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2, 445/444) — and argues only the last authorized rebuilding the city and wall. He then sets out Sir Robert Anderson's classic calculation: 483 prophetic years of 360 days (compare Revelation 12:6 with 13:5) = 173,880 days, from Nisan 1, 445 BC to the Triumphal Entry, AD 32 — while noting that most chronologists favor AD 30 or 33 for the crucifixion. Either way, Guzik says, the Messiah arrived on schedule. (Harold Hoehner's later revision of Anderson — 444 BC to AD 33 — reaches the same 173,880 days by different dates.)

*"[26] Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined."*

DANIEL 9:26–26

יִכָּרֵת מָשִׁיחַ

YIKKARET MASHIACH · "THE MESSIAH WILL BE CUT OFF"

*Karat*: to cut down, to cut off — the verb for a death sentence (Genesis 9:11; Exodus 31:14) and, strikingly, the verb for *cutting* a covenant. Isaiah 53:8 uses the same picture: "cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people." The Anointed One is not merely rejected; He is executed — and the execution is how the new covenant is cut.

וְאֵין לוֹ

VE-EIN LO · "AND HAVE NOTHING"

Literally "and there is nothing to Him / no one for Him." The KJV reads "but not for himself." Both are true: He dies with nothing — no throne, no crowd, no clothes — and He dies not for Himself but for others. Then "the people of the prince who is to come" destroy city and sanctuary: Rome under Titus, AD 70, within a generation of the cross, exactly in that order.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

"After the sixty-two weeks" — after the sixty-ninth, not inside the seventieth — the Messiah is cut off. Then a people destroys the city, and *their* prince "is to come." Tsarfati reads the grammar carefully: the people are first-century Rome; the prince is a future ruler who rises from that same Roman world — the little horn of chapter 7, the Antichrist. The cross, then AD 70, then a gap, then the prince. Daniel's calendar leaves the space where the church age sits, and then resumes.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

The Messiah comes and is killed. That is the prophecy, dated, five centuries ahead. MacArthur presses the apologetic weight: the Jews of the first century had a prophecy that their Messiah would arrive after 483 years and *die* before the second temple fell, and both happened within forty years of each other. Then the sovereignty: "desolations are determined." Even the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 was not Rome's doing finally but God's decree, executed by Rome. Nothing in the story is out of His hand — not even the murder of His Son.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik walks the fulfillment: Jesus crucified about AD 32/33; Jerusalem and the temple destroyed by Titus in AD 70, the sanctuary burned and leveled, as Jesus had foretold — "not one stone upon another" (Luke 19:44). He draws out the order the verse fixes — the Messiah had to come *and be cut off* before the second temple fell — which means any Messiah still expected cannot be the one of Daniel 9. The Messiah has already come; the question is whether we recognized Him.

*"[27] And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.""*

DANIEL 9:27–27

הִגְבִּיר בְּרִית

HIGBIR BERIT · "MAKE A FIRM COVENANT"

*Gabar*, "to be strong," in the causative: to make strong, to enforce. Not "make a covenant" (*karat berit*) but "make a covenant strong" — an arrangement imposed and guaranteed by a strong man. "The many" (*ha-rabbim*) is Israel's majority. The nearest antecedent of "he" is "the prince who is to come" (v. 26), not the Messiah: the Messiah was cut off and has no covenant left to break.

שִׁקּוּצִים מְשֹׁמֵם

SHIQQUTSIM MESHOMEM · "ABOMINATIONS ... ONE WHO MAKES DESOLATE"

*Shiqquts*: a detestable thing, an idol (1 Kings 11:5–7; 2 Kings 23:13). *Meshomem* is *shamem* again — the desolating one. Together they are the "abomination of desolation" (11:31; 12:11) that Antiochus rehearsed in 167 BC and that Jesus said was still ahead (Matthew 24:15). The chapter that began with the desolations of Jerusalem ends with the desolator — and with his destruction, "decreed."

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

This is the seventieth week, and it is still future. A prince confirms a seven-year covenant with Israel, breaks it at the midpoint by stopping the sacrifice — which means a temple with sacrifices will stand again — and sets up the abomination Jesus warned of. Three and a half years, the "time, times, and half a time" of 7:25, the forty-two months of Revelation 13:5. Tsarfati: everything after the cross in this verse is Israel's unfinished future, and Israel is back in the land so that it can happen. Then the one who makes desolate has his own end "poured out" on him. God finishes the sentence.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

The clock stopped at the cross and will restart at a covenant. MacArthur reads the gap the way the New Testament does: Jesus (Matthew 24:15) and Paul (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4) both place the abomination and the man who commits it in the future, which means verse 27 did not happen in AD 70 and did not happen under Antiochus. And the last clause is the comfort of the whole book in one line: the desolator meets a destruction "one that is decreed." God has already written the end of the Antichrist. The seventieth week is severe, measured, and already judged.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik takes "he" as the coming prince, notes the covenant is "with the many" for one week — seven years — and that the break comes "in the middle," which gives the three-and-a-half-year figure Revelation repeats so often. The text itself rules out the usual alternatives: Antiochus did not come after the Messiah was cut off, Titus made no covenant, and Jesus put the event ahead of His own day. Guzik lands where the chapter lands: the "complete destruction" is for the desolator, not for the people of God.

**WHICH DECREE STARTS THE CLOCK? · FOUR CANDIDATES**

*Daniel 9:25 — "from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem … it will be built again, with plaza and moat"*

| YEAR | DECREE | TEXT | WHAT IT AUTHORIZED | REBUILD THE CITY? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 538 BC | Cyrus | Ezra 1:1–4; 6:3–5 | Rebuild the temple | No — temple only |
| 520 BC | Darius I | Ezra 6:1–12 | Finish the temple | No — confirms Cyrus |
| 458 BC | Artaxerxes to Ezra | Ezra 7:11–26 | Beautify the temple; appoint judges | No — nothing about walls |
| **444 BC** | **Artaxerxes to Nehemiah** | **Nehemiah 2:1–8** | **Rebuild the city and its walls** | **Yes — "plaza and moat"** |

FIGURE 4 · THE FOUR CANDIDATE DECREES — ONLY ONE AUTHORIZED THE CITY AND ITS WALLS

**THE SEVENTIETH WEEK · DANIEL 9:27 — SEVEN YEARS, SPLIT IN THE MIDDLE**

*"He will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice …"*




**The same three and a half years, elsewhere in Scripture**

**Daniel 7:25**
*"a time, times, and half a time"*

**Revelation 12:6, 14**
*1,260 days · "time, and times, and half a time"*

**Daniel 12:7, 11**
*"time, times, and half a time" · 1,290 days*

**Revelation 13:5**
*"authority to act for forty-two months"*

**Revelation 11:2–3**
*42 months · 1,260 days*

**Matthew 24:15–21**
*the abomination, then great tribulation*

FIGURE 5 · THE SEVENTIETH WEEK — SEVEN YEARS, A MIDPOINT, AND AN END ALREADY DECREED

## 02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

*What does it say and mean?*

Using both my Bible and my copy of the book Discovering Daniel.

### 1 What good news did Gabriel first share about Jerusalem in Daniel 9:25 (see page 202 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 202

Daniel 9:25 · NASB95

25 *So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

**IN MY WORDS**

The good news is that Jerusalem — the ruined city Daniel had just spent his whole prayer mourning — was going to be rebuilt, and the Messiah Himself was coming to it.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Nehemiah 2:6** "So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time." The decree Gabriel promised arrived roughly ninety years later.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati frames this as God answering the prayer Daniel actually prayed before answering the one he did not know to pray. Daniel asked about a desolate city; God says it will be rebuilt — and then keeps going, all the way to the Messiah.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Daniel had been reading Jeremiah about seventy years of exile. Gabriel answers with seventy sevens. The good news came wrapped in a number ten times larger than the one Daniel was studying — God's answer did not fit inside Daniel's question.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Have I ever shrunk what I ask God for down to the size of what I could already picture?*

### 2 What bad news did Gabriel then share in verse 26 (see page 208 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 208

Daniel 9:26 · NASB95

26 *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

IN MY WORDS

The bad news is that the Messiah would be cut off and have nothing, and that afterward the city and the sanctuary Daniel had just been promised would be destroyed all over again.

CROSS REFERENCE **John 1:11** "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur notes that the good news and the bad news are the same event seen from two sides. The cutting off of Messiah is the darkest line in the prophecy and the reason any of the six purposes in verse 24 can ever be accomplished.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik observes that Gabriel does not soften it. Daniel is told his people will kill their Messiah and lose their city — and this is delivered as an answer to prayer, because truth about the future is a mercy even when it hurts.

CRITICAL THINKING

The rebuilt city of verse 25 is the destroyed city of verse 26. God promised Daniel the restoration and the second ruin in consecutive sentences — which means the answer to his prayer was never going to be a permanent fix, only a chapter in a much longer plan.

KEY QUESTION

*Can I accept an answer from God that is honest about what is coming, instead of only one that makes me feel better today?*

## 3 What kind of Messiah were the Jews looking for (see page 208 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 208

IN MY WORDS

They were looking for a conquering king — a political and military deliverer who would throw Rome out, take David's throne, and restore Israel's national glory right then.

CROSS REFERENCE **Zechariah 9:9** "Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation" — the King they wanted was genuinely promised; they simply skipped the next word, "Humble."

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati explains that this expectation was not invented out of nothing — it came from real prophecies about a real reigning Messiah. The error was not in what they expected but in when they expected it, collapsing two comings into one.

CRITICAL THINKING

They were not wrong about the throne; they were wrong about the order. Everything they were waiting for is still coming — they just refused a Messiah who arrived to die first.

KEY QUESTION

*Where am I holding God to a real promise of His, but on my timetable instead of His?*

## 4 What kind of Messiah did they get instead (see pages 208-209 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 208-209

IN MY WORDS

They got a humble servant who rode in on a donkey, kept no army, took no throne, and went to a cross — a Messiah who came to deal with their sin before He would ever deal with their occupation.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 53:5** "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed."

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur observes that the crowd's disappointment was a matter of diagnosis. They believed their worst problem was Roman; God knew their worst problem was moral. A Messiah who solves the wrong problem looks like a failure.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that Jesus never denied He was the King — He accepted the title openly on Palm Sunday. He simply refused to take the crown on the terms the crowd was offering it.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel 9:24 lists six things the seventy weeks are for, and the first three are all about sin — finishing transgression, ending sin, making atonement. The Messiah they got was doing exactly what the prophecy said He came to do. They were reading verse 25 and ignoring verse 24.

KEY QUESTION

*What am I asking God to fix right now that is downstream of something in me He would rather fix first?*

## 5 A point came when the Jewish leaders were hostile and the people were disillusioned. What did they demand be done to the Messiah (see page 209 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 209

IN MY WORDS

They demanded that He be crucified — the same city that had shouted "Hosanna" on Sunday was shouting "Crucify Him" before the week was out.

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 27:22** Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Crucify Him!"

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati points to the terrible precision of it: Daniel 9:26 said Messiah would be "cut off," and the crowd chose the method. Even the rejection was inside the prophecy.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Five days separate the palm branches from the demand for a cross. Nothing about Jesus changed in those five days — only the crowd's realization that He was not going to do what they had cheered Him in to do.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Is my devotion to Christ attached to who He is, or to what I am still expecting Him to do for me?*

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**6** **Read Isaiah 53:4-6 on pages 209-210 of Discovering Daniel. What comes to your mind as you read this description of what happened at the cross?** P. 209-210

Isaiah 53:4 · NASB95

*Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.*

Isaiah 53:5 · NASB95

*But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.*

Isaiah 53:6 · NASB95

*All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.*

**IN MY WORDS**

What strikes me is how personal the pronouns are — our griefs, our transgressions, our iniquities — and that the last line makes the LORD the one who laid it all on Him, which means the cross was not something done to Jesus so much as something done by God through Him.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:24** "to make atonement for iniquity" — Gabriel named the purpose roughly a century and a half after Isaiah described the method.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur draws out verse 6: the problem is universal ("all of us") and individual ("each of us") in the same sentence. Every person contributed a different sin, and all of it landed on one man.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the correction in verse 4. Watching the crucifixion, people assumed God was punishing Jesus for something Jesus had done. They were half right — God was punishing Him, but for something we had done.

CRITICAL THINKING

Isaiah says "we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God." The onlookers got the theology right and the object wrong. They correctly identified divine judgment falling; they simply assumed it was falling on the guilty party.

KEY QUESTION

*Do I still, somewhere in me, think of my sin as a thing I need to manage — rather than a thing that already crushed Him?*

## 7 On page 211 of Discovering Daniel, we read that "looking forward to the fulfillment of prophecy is like looking at a mountain range." What is meant by this?

P. 211

IN MY WORDS

It means that from a distance the peaks look like they are all standing together, when in reality there are miles of valley between them — so prophecies that sit in one sentence can be separated by thousands of years of actual history.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:26** "the Messiah will be cut off" and "the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city" sit in one verse; roughly forty years separate them, and two thousand more separate them from the prince himself.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati uses this to explain why Israel missed the first coming. Isaiah 61:1-2 is the classic case: Jesus read it aloud in Nazareth, stopped mid-verse, and sat down. The half He read was fulfilled that day. The half He did not read is still a mountain further out.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik cautions that this cuts both ways. The gaps are only visible from the far side, which is a reason for humility about the exact shape of what is still ahead.

CRITICAL THINKING

The church age itself is one of these valleys — the whole span between verse 26 and verse 27, invisible in the text. Every one of us is living in the white space of Daniel's prophecy, in a gap the prophet could not see from where he stood.

KEY QUESTION

*Do I hold my prophetic chart humbly enough to admit there may be valleys in it I cannot see from here?*

**8** **Who is the person identified as "he" in verse 27, and what does the fact there is sacrifice going on tell us (see page 212 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 212

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many* ◷ *for one week, but* ◷ *in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of* ⚠ *abominations will come* ⚠ *one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

"He" is the coming prince of verse 26 — the Antichrist, not the Messiah — and the fact that he can stop sacrifice and grain offering tells us a functioning temple with a working altar has to be standing in Jerusalem before this happens.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** "the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction… so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati is emphatic that the nearest antecedent to "he" is "the prince who is to come," not "Messiah the Prince." Reading the Messiah into verse 27 turns Christ into the one who breaks a covenant and desecrates a temple — which is the opposite of everything He came to do.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur adds that the grammar settles what sentiment cannot. Whoever confirms this covenant is the same one on whom destruction is finally poured out at the end of the verse. That cannot be Christ.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Verse 27 is the single most misread line in Daniel, and the whole misreading rests on one pronoun. The difference between Christ and Antichrist in this verse is a matter of which noun "he" points back to.

**KEY QUESTION**

*When I read Scripture, am I actually tracing what the text says — or filling in the pronoun with whoever I expected to be there?*

**9** **How do we know from the Hebrew text of verse 27 that the covenant mentioned here is no ordinary covenant? And what might make this covenant so momentous (see page 212 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 212

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many* ◷ *for one week, but* ◷ *in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of* ⚠ *abominations will come* ⚠ *one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

The Hebrew is pointed — the verb is higbir, "make strong" or "confirm," not the ordinary idiom for cutting a brand- new covenant, and it is made "with the many," a definite group rather than an unnamed crowd — and what makes it momentous is that it evidently settles the question of Israel's worship and security in Jerusalem, which is the one problem no one on earth has ever managed to solve.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Daniel 9:27** "And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week" — a strengthening or confirming of an agreement, not merely the drafting of a new one.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati suggests the man who brokers this will be received as the greatest peacemaker in history. Solving Jerusalem is the credential that would make the world hand someone everything else.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik cautions against pressing the Hebrew further than it will go, while agreeing on the substance: whatever this covenant is, Israel signs it, it involves the temple, and it is the event that starts the final seven years.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The verb is closer to "confirm" or "strengthen" than "create." That suggests he may not invent the agreement at all — he may simply be the one who finally makes an existing one hold. The Antichrist's opening move is not conquest; it is competence.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Would I be able to tell the difference between a man doing genuine good and a man buying my trust with it?*

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**10** **What is the significance of the Antichrist bringing "an end to sacrifice and offering" (verse 27)? How will the Antichrist profane the temple (see page 213 in Discovering Daniel)?**

P. 213

Daniel 9:27 · NASB95

27 *And he will make a firm covenant with the many* ◷ *for one week*, *but* ◷ *in the middle of the week* *he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of* ⚠ *abominations* *will come* ⚠ *one who makes desolate*, *even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."*

**IN MY WORDS**

Ending the sacrifices is his public declaration that Israel's worship of God is finished and his own is beginning, and he profanes the temple by setting up the abomination of desolation and taking God's place in God's own house.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **2 Thessalonians 2:4** "so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur observes that this is the oldest sin in Scripture wearing its final form. From the serpent's offer in Eden to this man in the temple, the ambition has never changed — only the scale.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati points out that Antiochus IV did a version of this in 167 B.C., slaughtering a pig on the altar. That was the rehearsal; Jesus, speaking two centuries after Antiochus, still put the abomination of desolation in the future.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

He does not burn the temple down — he moves in. Destroying it would only prove he opposed God; occupying it lets him claim he replaced Him. That is why the word is "desolate" rather than "destroyed."

**KEY QUESTION**

*What good thing in my life have I let something else quietly move into the center of?*

**11** **Read Matthew 24:15-18. What did Jesus warn the Jewish people to do when they saw the "abomination of desolation" (see also page 213 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 213

Matthew 24:15 · NASB95

*"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),*

Matthew 24:16 · NASB95

*then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.*

Matthew 24:17 · NASB95

*"Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.*

Matthew 24:18 · NASB95

*"Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.*

**IN MY WORDS**

He told them to run — flee to the mountains immediately, without going back into the house for belongings or back across the field for a coat.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Revelation 12:6** "Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" — 1,260 days is the same three and a half years.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati notes that Jesus treats Daniel 9:27 as a literal future event and even cites Daniel by name. Whatever a reader does with the seventy weeks, he has to reckon with the fact that Jesus read them the same way.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik points out the urgency built into the instruction. This is not "prepare" or "resist" — it is "do not go back for your coat." The moment the abomination appears, deliberation is already too expensive.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

"Let the reader understand" is Jesus telling people to go read Daniel. He assumed that the generation living through it would have this prophecy open in front of them — which is a strong argument that studying Daniel is not an optional hobby.

**KEY QUESTION**

*If obeying God suddenly cost me everything I own, how much would I hesitate over the coat?*

## 03 COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

*How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?*

When God carries out His work, He is never too early or too late. Considering the following, in relation to Jesus.

### 1 According to Galatians 4:4, when did God send forth His Son?

GAL. 4:4

Galatians 4:4 · NASB95

*But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,*

Galatians 4:5 · NASB95

*so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

**IN MY WORDS**

God sent His Son when the fullness of the time had come — at the exact moment He had already appointed, not a year early and not a year late.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Isaiah 46:10** "Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'"

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur points out that "fullness" means the time was filled up, like a vessel — every condition God required was finally in place. Rome's roads, Greek as a common language, a scattered Jewish population with synagogues in every major city. God was not waiting on a date; He was waiting on a world.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik adds the harder half of the same truth: the fullness of time was also the fullness of failure. Israel had exhausted every arrangement God gave her, and only then did the Son arrive.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Daniel 9:25 gives the deadline and Galatians 4:4 gives the reason. One says when God moved; the other says why that particular when. Prophecy supplies the schedule, and providence supplies the readiness — and they land on the same day.

**KEY QUESTION**

*Am I treating a season of waiting as God being slow, when He may be filling something up that is not full yet?*

**2** **When Lazarus was ill, his sisters Mary and Martha sent for Jesus, who did not come right away. Lazarus ended up dying before Jesus arrived.** JOHN 11

John 11:21 · NASB95

*Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.*

John 11:32 · NASB95

*Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."*

John 11:37 · NASB95

*But some of them said, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?"*

John 11:41 · NASB95

*So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.*

John 11:42 · NASB95

*"I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me."*

**a.** **What assumption did Martha make in John 11:21?**

**IN MY WORDS**

Martha assumed that Jesus' presence was the only thing that could have saved her brother — that being late and being powerless were the same thing.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **2 Peter 3:9** "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you" — what looks like lateness is usually purpose.

**b. In verse 32, what did Mary assume?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
> Mary assumed exactly what Martha assumed — word for word, the same sentence — which tells me the two sisters had been saying it to each other for four days.

**c. In verse 37, what question did some of the crowd ask?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
> They asked why the man who opened the eyes of the blind could not have kept Lazarus from dying — a question that sounds like sympathy but is really an accusation.

**d. In words spoken to the Father, what reason did Jesus give for waiting until Lazarus died before doing anything?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
> He said He spoke aloud for the sake of the people standing around, so that they would believe the Father had sent Him — the delay existed to produce faith in the watchers.

**e. What does this tell you about Jesus' timing?**

> **IN MY WORDS**
> It tells me His timing is never late, only later than mine, and that He will sometimes let a thing die because a resurrection preaches something a healing never could.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Habakkuk 2:3** "Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay."

> **DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word
> Guzik observes that Jesus was not absent from the grief — He wept at the tomb of a man He was about to raise. Divine timing is not divine coldness. He can fully intend the outcome and still weep at the cost of the delay.

> **JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You
> MacArthur notes that both sisters were right: had Jesus come, Lazarus would not have died. What they could not imagine was that Jesus had something better than not dying.

> **CRITICAL THINKING**
> Four days matters. Later rabbinic sources record the belief that the soul lingered near the body for three days, so by day four every hope of a revival had expired. Jesus did not arrive after the emergency — He arrived after the last possible explanation, which is exactly where He arrived in Daniel's prophecy too.

**KEY QUESTION**
*What have I already given up on and quietly filed under "too late for God"?*

**3** **In Zechariah 9:9, we read a prophecy about Israel's King entering Jerusalem on "a colt, the foal of a donkey." Now read carefully about the fulfillment of this prophecy (hundreds of years later) in Matthew 21:1-9. Do you think that when Jesus commanded two of His disciples to find and bring the colt of a donkey, that this was merely a random event? Why or why not?** ZECH. 9:9

Zechariah 9:9 · NASB95

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Matthew 21:2 · NASB95

*saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me.*

Matthew 21:4 · NASB95

*This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:*

Matthew 21:9 · NASB95

*The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!"*

**IN MY WORDS**

Not random in the least — Matthew says outright it happened "to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet," and Jesus told the disciples exactly what animal they would find and where, which means He was deliberately and publicly claiming a five-hundred-year-old prophecy in front of the whole city.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Luke 19:44** "because you did not recognize the time of your visitation" — Jesus wept on that same ride, over people watching the fulfillment and missing it.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati ties this day directly to Daniel 9:25. From Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah until this ride into Jerusalem runs 173,880 days on the classic reckoning — sixty-nine weeks of prophetic years, to the day. This is the moment "until Messiah the Prince" expires.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik notes what Jesus chose to ride. A conquering king came on a warhorse; a king coming in peace came on a donkey. Jesus picked His own mount, and the mount was itself a message about what kind of King had arrived.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

For three years Jesus repeatedly told people to keep quiet about who He was. On this one day He staged the loudest possible announcement and rebuked the men who wanted the crowd silenced. He was not swept up in a parade — He was keeping an appointment that had a date on it.

KEY QUESTION

*Do I really believe Jesus is running the calendar of my life as deliberately as He ran that Sunday?*

**4** **Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem — and His being "cut off" through the crucifixion — is foreseen in Daniel 9:26, a passage that lays out God's prophetic timetable with amazing mathematical precision. What affect does this have on how you view Christ, and how you view Bible prophecy?** DAN. 9:26

Daniel 9:26 · NASB95

26 *Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.*

IN MY WORDS

It takes prophecy out of the category of religious poetry for me — if God can name the week of the Messiah's death more than five centuries in advance, then Christ is exactly who He claimed to be, and the parts of this chapter still unfulfilled are just as certain as the parts already behind us.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 46:9** "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me" — God offers fulfilled prophecy as the proof of His own uniqueness.

JOHN MACARTHUR · Grace to You

MacArthur argues this is the strongest evidence available for the inspiration of Scripture. No human being writes history at this resolution centuries early, and no committee arranges its fulfillment. Daniel 9 is either God speaking or it is inexplicable.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati adds the pastoral use: sixty-nine of the seventy weeks have already run exactly as written. That is not trivia — it is the reason a believer can rest about the seventieth.

CRITICAL THINKING

Fulfilled prophecy functions as a credential, not a curiosity. The honest skeptic does not have to accept the seventieth week — but he does have to explain the first sixty-nine, and nobody has.

KEY QUESTION

*Do I let the prophecies God has already kept do their intended work — steadying me about the ones He has not kept yet?*

## 04 EXECUTE

*How does this affect my life?*

God sent forth His Son "when the fullness of the time had come" (Galatians 4:4). This aspect of God's sovereignty is not limited to the work He did through Jesus.

**1** **Where does Psalm 31:15 say that our times are?** PS. 31:15

Psalm 31:15 · NASB95

*My times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me.*

IN MY WORDS

My times are in God's hand — not in my employer's hand, not in a doctor's hand, and not in my own.

CROSS REFERENCE **Acts 17:26** "and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation"

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes the deliberate contrast David draws in a single verse: my times are in Your hand, deliver me from the hand of my enemies. Two hands are mentioned, and only one of them is actually holding anything.

CRITICAL THINKING

David wrote this while being hunted, not while safe. The verse is not a comfortable sentiment from a settled life — it is what a man said out loud when other hands were very obviously reaching for him.

KEY QUESTION

*Whose hand am I actually behaving as though my times are in this week?*

**2** **In Psalm 139:16, we read, "Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them." What does this passage tell us God has done with the days of our lives?** PS. 139:16

Psalm 139:16 · NASB95

*Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.*

IN MY WORDS

God wrote out every one of my days in His book before a single one of them existed — my life was authored before it was ever lived.

CROSS REFERENCE **Ephesians 1:11** "having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will"

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur observes that the same God who scheduled Messiah to the day keeps a book on an unformed embryo. The precision that governs world history is not a different precision from the one that governs a single ordinary life.

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati connects this straight back to Daniel: a God who can be trusted with 483 years of Jewish history can be trusted with the years He assigned to me.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

The verse says the days were written "when as yet there was not one of them." God was not recording my life as it happened; He was reading from a book that already existed. That is a very different comfort than a God who is merely watching closely.

**KEY QUESTION**

*If my days were written before I lived them, am I living today as something given — or as something I own?*

## 3 Read Luke 12:6-7. How detailed is God's knowledge of us?

LUKE 12:6-7

Luke 12:6 · NASB95

*"Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.*

Luke 12:7 · NASB95

*"Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.*

**IN MY WORDS**

Detailed down to the hair — God keeps a running count of things about me that I have never once bothered to count myself.

**CROSS REFERENCE** **Psalm 139:16** "in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me" — the same God who numbers days numbers hairs.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik points out the economics in the illustration. Sparrows were the cheapest thing in the market, and the fifth one was thrown in free with the purchase of four. Jesus deliberately chose the throw-in to make His point about what God does not forget. (Matthew 10:29 prices them two for a cent; Luke has five for two.)

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur notes that the conclusion Jesus draws from all this detail is a command: do not fear. God's exhaustive knowledge is not offered as a doctrine to admire but as an antidote to take.

CRITICAL THINKING

Jesus does not say the hairs are noticed — He says they are numbered, tallied down to the last one. And He says it to men He was in the same breath warning would be dragged before authorities. Detailed knowledge is not the same as guaranteed comfort; it is the guarantee that nothing happening to them was unnoticed.

KEY QUESTION

*What am I carrying right now as though God has not noticed it?*

**4** **Based on the above passages, how much do you think God is involved in your life? How does that encourage you?** EXECUTE

IN MY WORDS

Completely involved — the same God who scheduled the Messiah to the day is running the calendar of my very ordinary week, and that steadies me most on the weeks that feel like they are running me.

CROSS REFERENCE **Acts 17:26** God has "determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation" — the era I live in and the place I live in were both assigned.

AMIR TSARFATI · Discovering Daniel

Tsarfati makes the application the whole point of Daniel 9: a prophecy this exact is not given to satisfy curiosity but to settle anxiety. God shows His work so His people will stop panicking.

CRITICAL THINKING

Encouragement here does not come from believing God will do what I want. It comes from the demonstrated fact that He does what He said — and Daniel 9 is the receipt.

KEY QUESTION

*Is my confidence in God based on what I am hoping He will do, or on what I can already document that He has done?*

**5** **As Psalm 139:16 says, God wrote out your days before you were born. With that in mind, do you feel you are making the best use of the time God has entrusted to you? In what two or three areas do you see room for growth or improvement?** EXECUTE

IN MY WORDS

Honestly, no — my unhurried time in the Word, my undivided attention at home, and the hours I hand over to a screen are the three places where I am spending days God numbered on things that will not survive the week.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 31:15** "My times are in Your hand" — if the time is His, then how I spend it is stewardship, not preference.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

MacArthur frames time as the one asset that cannot be recovered, replaced, or borrowed against. Every other loss in life admits some remedy; a spent hour admits none.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik cautions against turning this into guilt. The point of a numbered life is not frantic productivity but deliberate faithfulness — God assigned the days, and He assigned what belongs in them.

**CRITICAL THINKING**

Daniel spent seventy years in a pagan government and still had time to be reading Jeremiah and praying three times a day. His schedule was not lighter than mine. His priorities were simply not up for renegotiation.

**KEY QUESTION**

*What is the one thing I would have to actually stop doing this week for the two things I say matter most to get real hours?*

# Closing Thoughts · Lesson 9C

Sixty-nine weeks ran on time. A pagan king signed a decree he did not understand the significance of. A discouraged cupbearer rebuilt a wall in troubled times, exactly as promised. And 173,880 days after that signature a man rode into that rebuilt city on a borrowed colt while the crowd shouted Hosanna, and the sixty-ninth week expired that afternoon. Days later He was cut off and had nothing. Roughly forty years after that, the people of a prince still to come left not one stone upon another.

None of the participants were cooperating. Artaxerxes was not trying to fulfill Daniel. The crowd on Palm Sunday was not consulting a chart. Titus was not reading Hebrew prophecy over his siege maps. God did not need their agreement, only their existence — and He got the timetable He announced to an old man on his knees in Babylon more than five centuries before any of it happened.

That is why the remaining week can be held without anxiety. One seven-year period is still owed. A covenant will be confirmed, broken at its exact midpoint, and answered with a destruction that was decreed before the man who provokes it was born. We are not told his name. We are told the length of his leash.

The workbook closes this lesson at Pilate's judgment hall, and it is the right place to land. The most powerful man in Judea told Jesus he had authority to release Him or crucify Him. Jesus answered that he had no authority at all except what had been given him from above. Pilate then used that borrowed authority to do precisely what Daniel 9:26 said would be done — and he did it while trying to avoid it.

*You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.*

JOHN 19:11 NASB95

God's sovereignty is sobering, because it means I am accountable to Someone who is never surprised and never late. But it is also the only reason the future is safe. The same hand that held Pilate's authority on the worst Friday in history holds my times this week — and He has never once missed an appointment.

STUDY HELPS · CROSS-REFERENCES

# The Passage in the Whole Bible

*The seventy years behind the prayer, and the Messiah and the end ahead of it*

> *""For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place."*
>
> JEREMIAH 29:10

> *"to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths. All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath until seventy years were complete."*
>
> 2 CHRONICLES 36:21

> *"'If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me— I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land."*
>
> LEVITICUS 26:40-42

> *"I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it.""*
>
> NEHEMIAH 2:5

> *"By oppression and judgment He was taken away; And as for His generation, who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?"*
>
> ISAIAH 53:8

> *"saying, "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.""*
>
> LUKE 19:42–44

> *"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),"*
>
> MATTHEW 24:15

> *"Leave out the court which is outside the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the nations; and they will tread under foot the holy city for forty-two months."*
>
> REVELATION 11:2

**AMIR TSARFATI** · Discovering Daniel

Read the chain forward. Jeremiah's seventy years end exactly as written; Nehemiah's decree starts the sixty-nine weeks; Isaiah 53:8 and Daniel 9:26 paint the same picture of the same death — cut off for the transgression of the people; and Jesus weeps over a city that missed "the time of your visitation" — a time that was on the calendar. Then He points past AD 70 to an abomination still ahead, and John gives it forty-two months. Tsarfati's rule from chapter 8 holds here too: the near fulfillment proves the far one. Sixty-nine weeks kept to the day guarantees the seventieth.

**JOHN MACARTHUR** · Grace to You

Leviticus 26:40–42 is the key to the prayer and 2 Chronicles 36:21 is the key to the number. God told Israel how exile would end — confession — and Daniel confessed; God explained the seventy years as sabbaths — sevens — and Gabriel answered in sevens. MacArthur draws the lesson: God's answers are always consistent with God's Word. He does not improvise. The Messiah dated in Daniel 9 is the Servant cut off in Isaiah 53 and the King who rode in on the day in Luke 19; one plan, one Author.

**DAVID GUZIK** · Enduring Word

Guzik's conclusion is that this chapter is about Jesus, and the cross-references bear him out: the "cut off" of Isaiah 53:8, the exact-day arrival implied by Luke 19:42–44, the destruction of the temple foretold in the same breath, and the abomination Jesus still placed in the future in Matthew 24:15 — four texts from two Testaments reading Daniel 9 the same way. Guzik adds that the second temple's construction, finished about 516 BC, closed Jeremiah's seventy years from the destruction of the first; God kept both ways of counting.

STUDY HELPS · THREE VOICES

# At a Glance

*Three voices, one chapter*

The same chapter, read three ways. Tsarfati listens for Israel and the end of the age; MacArthur presses the sovereignty of God and the prayer and confession it calls for; Guzik walks the history, the arithmetic, and the text. Together they keep Daniel 9 from becoming either a math puzzle or a vague hope.

| THE MOMENT | TSARFATI · the times | MACARTHUR · sovereignty | GUZIK · text & history |
|---|---|---|---|
| **The Book (9:1–3)** | Seventy literal years; a promise coming due calls for intercession. | Prophecy produced a prayer, not a chart. | Darius the Mede = Gubaru or Cyrus's throne-name; count from 605 BC. |
| **Confession (9:4–15)** | "We," not "they" — the posture of Zechariah 12:10. | Five verbs, no excuses, no mention of Babylon. | Built from Leviticus 26 and 1 Kings 8. |
| **Plea (9:16–19)** | The city, the mountain, the sanctuary — the land matters to God. | "Not on account of any merits of our own." | Hear, forgive, listen, act, do not delay — agonizing prayer. |
| **Gabriel (9:20–23)** | God is not slow; the delay is ours. | Answered at once, by the Word, more than asked. | The evening offering — the hour Jesus died. |
| **Seventy weeks (9:24–26)** | Israel's calendar; sixty-nine kept to the day. | God dates the Messiah and His death. | Nehemiah's decree; 173,880 days (Anderson/Hoehner). |
| **The last week (9:27)** | Future covenant, a temple, the Antichrist, 3½ years. | Clock stopped at the cross; the desolator's end decreed. | "He" = the coming prince, the Antichrist, with Roman roots. |

DANIEL 9 · A COMPARATIVE READING

## † Key Insights to Carry

- **The chapter is a prayer before it is a prophecy.** Nineteen verses before the calendar begins, sixteen of them prayer; four verses of calendar. Daniel read Jeremiah, believed it literally, and fell on his knees (vv. 2–3). Prophecy understood is prophecy prayed. GUZIK

- **"Righteousness belongs to You … to us open shame."** The whole theology of confession in one sentence (v. 7). Daniel names sin with five verbs, never mentions Babylon, and vindicates God against himself (v. 14). MACARTHUR

- **Mercy, not merit.** "Not on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion" (v. 18). *Rachamim* — womb-mercy — is the only ground of prayer; that is what praying in Jesus' name means. MACARTHUR

- **The answer left heaven at Daniel's first word.** "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued" (v. 23; Isaiah 65:24) — and it came at the hour of the evening offering, the ninth hour, the hour the Messiah would die. TEXT

- **Seventy years answered with seventy sevens.** Jeremiah's seventy years paid for 490 years of missed sabbaths (2 Chronicles 36:21); Gabriel lays out 490 more, *decreed* (*nechtak*, cut) for "your people and your holy city" — Israel. TEXT

- **Sixty-nine weeks landed on the Messiah to the day.** From Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah (445/444 BC) 483 years run to the Triumphal Entry; Jesus held Jerusalem accountable for not knowing it (Luke 19:44). GUZIK

- **The Messiah is cut off before the temple falls.** *Yikkaret* — executed, and the verb for cutting a covenant (v. 26); Isaiah 53:8 paints the same death. Cross c. AD 32/33, temple AD 70. Any Messiah still awaited is too late. TSARFATI

- **The seventieth week is still future, and the desolator's end is already decreed.** Jesus (Matthew 24:15) and Paul (2 Thessalonians 2) put the covenant-breaker ahead; his seven years are bounded, his destruction "poured out." God finishes the sentence (v. 27). TSARFATI

## † Questions for the Table

**1** **Daniel read a promise that was about to be fulfilled and responded with fasting and prayer, not with a chart. When God's Word shows you what He is going to do, what does it usually produce in you — and what would it look like to pray the promise instead of only studying it?**

A promise understood is a promise to be prayed; I will take what God has said and ask Him to do it.

DANIEL 9:2-3

**2** **Daniel, who never bowed to an idol, prayed "we have sinned." Where are you praying "they" prayers — about the culture, the church, the men who fall — when God is waiting for a "we"?**

Confession that points at others is not confession; I own my part in the sin of my people.

DANIEL 9:5-8

**3** **"Not on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion." What are you quietly bringing to God as merit, and how would your praying change if you came on mercy alone?**

I have nothing to bring but my need; mercy is the only ground I stand on, and it is enough.

DANIEL 9:18

**4** **The answer was dispatched at the beginning of Daniel's prayer and arrived at the evening offering. What are you waiting on that may already be on its way — and does believing that change how you keep praying?**

God hears at the first word; I will keep praying as a man whose answer is already moving.

DANIEL 9:20-23

**5** **Sixty-nine weeks were kept to the day and Jerusalem "did not recognize the time of your visitation." Where might you be missing what God is plainly doing because you were not expecting Him to keep His Word so exactly?**

God keeps His calendar precisely; I want to be a man who is watching when He moves.

DANIEL 9:25-26; LUKE 19:44

**6** **The desolator's seven years are bounded and his end is "decreed." What evil around you feels open-ended, and how does a pre-written ending for the worst man in history steady you for the ordinary hard things in yours?**

If God has already written the end of the Antichrist, He has measured whatever I am facing too.

DANIEL 9:27

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*An old man opened the Book, counted the years, and prayed "for Your own sake" — and before he finished, heaven had sent the calendar: seventy sevens to the Messiah, to the cross, and to the end. Sixty-nine have been kept to the day. The God who keeps His word to the year keeps it to the day.*

*Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ*

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