

LESSON SIX

DANIEL'S PRAYER ANSWERED

TEXT: Daniel Chapter Nine.

A. **IMPORTANCE OF CHAPTER NINE:**

This chapter is one of the most important chapters in the Bible relating to prophesy. It has been spoken of as being the framework of Bible Prophecy.

The key verse of this chapter gives the key to the correct interpretation of Bible prophecy. *"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" (Daniel 9:24).*

Before this revelation came to Daniel by Gabriel he had been praying concerning the future of his people, the Jews, who had been in captivity for nearly seventy years. *"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive: O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name" (Daniel 9:19).*

Daniel prayed for Thy City -Jerusalem and Thy People - Judah. God sent an answer, which concerned the future of Thy People -Judah and Thy Holy City - Jerusalem.

The prophetic truth brought out in this chapter applies to Israel only. It does not deal with the Gentiles or the church. The moment an attempt is made to make it apply to the church, violence is done to God's Word, and as a result there can only be a misunderstanding concerning all prophecy.

Once this is clearly and properly understood then a study may be made of the Tribulation described in Revelation. It applies to the nation of Israel and not to the Gentiles.

B. **TIME:**

The events of chapter nine took place in the first year of the reign of Darius. Daniel was about ninety years of age. He was burdened concerning the future of the nation of Israel. He understood that the seventy years of captivity was coming to an end, and soon it would be time for the Jews to return home to their own land. Again they would be able to worship in the holy city, Jerusalem.

C. **IMPORTANCE OF BIBLE STUDY:**

It is very important to be a student of the Scriptures. Daniel gave us an excellent example of the value of being familiar with the Word of God.

In verse two of this chapter Daniel stated that he understood that the captivity would be seventy years in length. This fact he learned by reading the writings of Jeremiah the prophet. The message that Daniel referred to is Jeremiah 25:11-12, *"And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy*

years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon..."

This must have been very encouraging to Daniel who was also familiar with the truth taught in Leviticus: *"And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths" (Leviticus 26:33-34).*

The children of Israel had been in Palestine from the occupation of the land until the time of the captivity, exactly 490 years. Every seventh year was a sabbatic year. These sabbatic years the Jews had not kept. This meant that there were exactly 70 sabbatic years in that period of time. God said that the land would enjoy rests during the time of scattering among the heathen. This was another proof to Daniel that the time of the captivity was coming to an end.

Daniel would never have been aware of this fact if he had not been a student of the Scriptures.

D. DANIEL'S PRAYER AND CONFESSION:

Just as Daniel left us an example of being a Bible student, he gave us a great example of being a man of prayer. We find here recorded one of the greatest prayers of the Bible. It was in deepest humiliation that Daniel approached the Lord. We can feel the spirit of sincerity, humility and earnestness that was manifested in this prayer.

Although Daniel was one of the perfect men of the Bible, yet he confessed his sins before God. He identified himself with his people, and in this prayer of intercession, confessed the sins of the whole nation. *"And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession..." (Daniel 9:4). "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments" (Daniel 9:4).*

Some of the hardest words to say are: "I have sinned." Here Daniel confesses "We have sinned."

He set his face before God to seek by prayer, fasting and repentance to have the future of Israel revealed. When God's conditions are met, the answer is swift and certain. In fact Daniel's prayer was an unfinished prayer. While he was yet praying, the answer came (Daniel 9:20-21). God sent one of His greatest messengers, Gabriel, with the answer. At the very beginning of Daniel's prayer Gabriel had been commissioned and sent. The length of time it took Gabriel to come was the time Daniel was praying.

E. GREATLY BELOVED:

Gabriel told Daniel that he was greatly beloved. This would teach us that God has special delight in those who serve Him as faithfully as Daniel does.

Is it possible to think of any greater honor than to have God say, *"Thou art greatly beloved?"* This special place in the heart of God can be won by anyone who will be true and faithful as Daniel.

F. THE ANSWER TO DANIEL'S PRAYER:

There was no "Amen" concluding Daniel's prayer. While he was still praying, Gabriel touched him. It was the time of the evening sacrifice. We know that Gabriel appeared as a man for Daniel called him a man.

Gabriel came to give Daniel skill and understanding concerning the future of Daniel's people.

Let it be fully understood that the message Gabriel brought was relative to the nation of Israel only. It referred to "thy people" and to "thy holy city." It had no application as far as the Gentiles nor the church are concerned. This is very important in understanding the book of Revelation.

G. SEVENTY WEEKS ARE DETERMINED:

1. DETERMINED:

The seventy weeks are determined or "fixed." This period of time is settled and planned by God. There will be no changing in the length of time.

2. WEEK OF YEARS:

The expression "seventy years" literally meant "seventy sevens." Seven is the perfect number of God. In the Bible we find a week of days, a week of months, a week of years, a week of millennia, and a week of ages. The context in each instance makes clear the exact meaning. In this case, it is clear that it is a week of years.

In Genesis we read that seven years are called a week. *"Fulfill her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years" (Genesis 29:27).*

When Laban deceived Jacob by giving him Leah instead of Rachel, he told him that he could fulfill her week or work another seven years.

Therefore, when Gabriel told Daniel that seventy weeks are fixed for the nation of Israel, he actually said that there are 490 years determined for God's plan to be fulfilled for Israel.

It is worthy of consideration to note that God dealt with Israel in periods of 490 years: From Abraham to Canaan (490 years or 70 weeks); From Joshua to setting up kingdom (490 years or 70 weeks); From kingdom to captivity (490 years or 70 weeks); and From return of Jews to the close of God's dealing with Israel (490 years or 70 years).

3. SEVENTY WEEKS:

These seventy weeks were to be divided into three periods of time: a) 7 weeks (49 years); b) 62 weeks (434 years); and 1 week (7 years).

This period of seventy weeks was to begin with the decree to restore and build Jerusalem. From this point of time there would be exactly 483 years to the crucifixion of Christ. To find the date when this decree went forth we turn to Nehemiah 2:1, *"And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king."*

According to this Scripture we begin our calculation from the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. Not all reference books agree as far as the date and the calculation of the 69 weeks are concerned. However, the writer of these notes, after reading many references on the subject has concluded that this date would be the month of April, 445 BC. Taking the prophetic year to be 360 days in length, it has been calculated that this would end in April, 32 AD.

Much time could be spent on calculating the dates, but whether this would be profitable is doubtful. The simple statement of God's Word should be sufficient. The 69 weeks of years would go until the "Messiah be cut off." After this Jerusalem would be destroyed not by Antichrist, but by the "people of the prince" or the people of Antichrist. Antichrist does not come upon the scene in person until the 70th week. Between the 69th and 70th week is the fullness of the Gentiles or the church dispensation.

H. PROPHETIC PARENTHESIS BETWEEN THE 69TH AND THE 70TH WEEKS:

A prophetic parenthesis of time takes place between the 69th and 70th weeks for the following reasons:

1. The fulfillment of the tremendous events in verse 24 cannot be found anywhere in known history. These events are still future.
 - to finish the transgression.
 - to make an end of sins.
 - to make reconciliation for iniquity.
 - to bring in everlasting righteousness.
 - to seal up the vision and prophecy.
 - to anoint a most holy place.

Note: The phrase "to anoint the most Holy" is given in the original as "to anoint the most holy place. Some teachers claim that this is referring to the anointing of Jesus at Jordan, but it refers to the building of the Temple in the Millennium.

2. The reason the prophecy is silent about the church age is because it deals solely with Israel. The church is the "fullness of the Gentiles" and this was not revealed to Daniel.
3. Our Lord gives the conclusive and final proof of this truth in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24) two days before He was to be "cut off" (crucified). He dealt with events that were to take place during the 70th week and which John described in Revelation 5-19.

Matthew 24:4-14	First half of the week	- Beginning of sorrows.
Matthew 24:15-19	Middle of the week	- Abomination of Desolation.
Matthew 24:20-22	Last half of the week	- Great Tribulation.

Note: Revelation can only be understood when we understand the prophetic parenthesis and that the 70th week is still future.

LESSON SIX

SELF HELP TEST

State whether the following is TRUE or FALSE:

1. Daniel confessed his peoples' sin and his own. _____
2. The Seventy Weeks prophecy has to do with the Jews. _____
3. The Jews were to be in captivity 120 years. _____
4. Michael told Daniel he was greatly beloved. _____
5. Gabriel came to give Daniel skill and understanding. _____
6. "Seventy weeks" literally meant "seventy-sevens." _____
7. The Seventy weeks cover 490 years. _____
8. The Seventy weeks are divided up into five sections. _____
9. A prophetic parentheses takes place between the 69th and 70th weeks. _____
10. The Seventy weeks are still future. _____