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Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York

November 27, 2016

The Seventy Weeks of Daniel

Daniel 9:20-27

Prayer: *Father God, we are just so thankful that we can come into your presence and the only reason we can is because of the blood shed by your Son. Father, thank you for granting us this privilege. Thank you for giving us the privilege of corporate worship where we can offer up to you a song and reading of your word and prayer and the opening of your word. And Lord, this morning as we do just that, we pray for the presence of your Holy Spirit. Guide us, bring us into your truth, give us the ability to make it make sense and to make it once again a permanent part of our lives, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well, we looked last week at Daniel's lengthy corporate confession and it was in the form of a prayer. And this morning we want to look at God's response to Daniel's prayer. And this prayer, as I said last week, was a result of Daniel's realization that the captivity that they were in in Babylon was coming to an end.

Daniel had essentially spent his entire life in Babylon. He had been kidnapped as a young man, he's now somewhere in his mid 80's,

possibly 90, and his reading of the prophet Jeremiah has given him an understanding of one tiny aspect of God's providence in all of this. Daniel says in *Daniel 9:20*: *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 for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.*

How's that for an answer to prayer? I mean, do you ever wonder if sometimes your prayers are just words that are just kind of going aimlessly up into the sky? Well there's a reason why we can be fairly confident that that was never Daniel's problem at all. And the reason why is because we saw Daniel see concrete answers to his prayers again and again and again. There was the miraculous answer to his diet of vegetables, there was this dream that Nebuchadnezzar had that was given to Daniel along with its interpretation, there was the prophesy of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity which unfolded exactly as Daniel said it would, there was the fiery furnace of his companions, the handwriting on the wall and the shutting of the mouths of the lions. Well, now we see an answer to prayer that is so immediate that Daniel's literally interrupted in the middle of his prayer by an angel. Just stop and think about that kind of an

interruption. You know, perhaps you believe already that God does answer prayer, everybody else's prayer, that is, except yours, and again I understand that feeling. I mean we read about all of these miraculous answers to prayer in scripture and it's very easy to conclude that, yeah, God does indeed answer prayer, but those answers are probably reserved for only a select few who are more holy, perhaps more dedicated, more saintly than I am. But here's where we make a large mistake. You see, I think if we look at Daniel's life and more specifically at his prayer life, we can find reasons why God answers his prayers. You see it's easy to draw conclusions that God answers Daniel's prayer because Daniel is somehow his favorite. It's a lot more biblical to conclude that God answered Daniel's prayer because God was Daniel's favorite. *Hebrews 11:6* says: *But without faith it is impossible to please him, for he who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.*

So first of all, Daniel's prayers were heard and answers -- answered because Daniel diligently sought God. Secondly, Daniel asked, but he asked rightly. *James 4:2* says: *You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.* Now James tells us that another reason why prayer sometimes goes unanswered is because we either refuse to ask, it just doesn't even come into our minds, or

else we ask for something designed to advance our kingdom instead of God's. You know despite what the prosperity preachers say, God doesn't necessarily want you in an Armani suit driving a brand new Cadillac. And I'm not saying that because that's forbidden to Christians. I'm saying that because that's not usually part of God's kingdom plan for his people. Folks say, well, didn't Jesus say in *John 14*: *"Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it."* Well, I find it amazing that folks don't notice that there are two huge qualifiers in that sentence. The first qualification is that whatever you ask may be so that the Father maybe glorified in the Son. Armani suits and Cadillacs and the like, they're usually designed for the glory of who, the Father or me? Me. And so are most of the things of this world that we are attracted to. And the second qualification is that your request be made in Jesus' name. I mean that doesn't mean that if I just kind of stick Jesus's name onto any request that I want I'm guaranteed to get it. You see, the two qualifications in this verse, they work together. First your request is made seeking that the Father would be glorified in the Son through that request. And the second is that the request be made in Jesus' name. And what that means is that the request is made as if you were speaking for Jesus. That's what it means to speak in his name. You're speaking with his desires, you're speaking with his intentions, you're

speaking with his will first and foremost in your mind. I can say almost without a doubt that Jesus is not highly concerned with Armani suits and Cadillacs. He is concerned about the glory of his Father. And that's exactly what Daniel was concerned about as well. And that's why Daniel received so many answers to prayer. You see, God, God delights in giving us good things but you know what the greatest thing God wants to give to everyone of us is? It's himself. That's who God wishes to give -- that's what God wishes to give to everyone. *James 1:17 says: Every good and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.* So that is God sending us every good and perfect gift but the gifts are designed for our good and his glory. And his greatest desire is to shape and mold us into the image of his Son whose greatest desire was for the glory of his Father. See, it's God's desire and goal to shape and mold us so that we start lining up our desires with his desires. And that's just what Daniel did. I mean the reason why God delighted in Daniel is simple. It's because Daniel delighted in God. You see, Daniel thought first and foremost of the kingdom. And because that was his delight, God answered his prayers. *Psalm 37 says: Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.* And it was Daniel's great desire for the kingdom that endeared him so to the kingdom because God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. And so Daniel

is there and he's diligently seeking God in prayer and as he's seeking God in prayer, the angel Gabriel responds in verse 22, it says: *And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision: Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophesy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks, Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."*

What? I mean Daniel's answer to that prayer is a visit from an angel and a very complicated prophesy that's had scholars literally arguing for years. J. A. Montgomery described the interpretation of this text as a "dismal swamp." And he described it that way because the text is so difficult, it's so complicated and it's subject to so many different ways of interpretation. And for hundreds of years now people have been struggling with understanding this passage, particularly the latter parts that have to do with the end times. But there's a few things in here that I think we can say with some certainty. I think one thing we can know here is that Gabriel has given Daniel the blueprint for the ages. And it's broken down into different time periods and there's some back and forth between the prophecies made that have to do with the near future and some have to do with the distant future, some have to do with the end of time. The near future deals with the rebuilding of the temple and it starts with the command to rebuild and restore Jerusalem. And that happens through Nehemiah. If you remember what happened, Jerusalem is now in ruins, the wall is completely shattered, the city's in ruins and Nehemiah who is the wine taster to the king has just been struck with how terrible that state of Jerusalem is and so his countenance is down and he's thoroughly bummed out and he comes before the king and the king asks him why he is so depressed. And he picks it up in *Nehemiah 2:5*: *And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your*

servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it."

Nehemiah has made a request of the king who asked him why he's so depressed and he said, I'm so depressed because of what has happened to my homeland. It's in shatters, it's in tatters. And so he asks the king and the king literally is pleased to respond. And he's pleased to respond and if you go back and you read Nehemiah, he was terrified at first, I mean, the king sees his countenance, and the king basically asks, "Are you sick?" You know, he's the wine taster, if he's the wine taster, if he's sick, then that means he wasn't really caring about the king and he could lose his head. So he just blurts out why he's so depressed and he's so depressed because of what's happened to Jerusalem. Well, wonder of wonders, the king is pleased with what he says, because God starts moving in his heart. This is occurring exactly a century or so after this prophesy of Gabriel. This is occurring when King Artaxerxes gives Nehemiah permission to start rebuilding Jerusalem. Gabriel says this is not an isolated incident. Gabriel says this is the start of the timetable. In verse 25, he says: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times."*

Well, we know that Artaxerxes gave the go-ahead to start the process but we also know that it was fraught with difficulty and fraught with troubles. But it clearly marked the beginning of a timetable that Gabriel used to describe the events that would follow. He goes on to say in verse 26: *"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself."* So here we have the angel Gabriel and he's laying out a timetable and he's using the king's proclamation to Nehemiah to start the timetable and he tells Daniel the precise day when the Messiah would enter Jerusalem. Now figuring this out can get very, very complicated. And to reduce it to its simplest terms, the angel says it's going to be sixty-nine weeks of years from the rebuilding of Jerusalem until the coming of the Messiah who then is going to be cut off or killed. Well, sixty-nine weeks of years is sixty-nine times seven or 483 years from that command to begin rebuilding Jerusalem to Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Not only do we know the time frame, but we also know something of the style of what's going to be taking place because we know from Zechariah 9:9 how the Messiah is going to enter Jerusalem on that day. *Zechariah 9:9 says: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey."*

Now I don't have time to go into a great deal of depth here but trust me, many, many scholars have. God said there would be sixty-nine weeks of years from the time of the start of the rebuilding of Jerusalem till the very day that Jesus would enter into this town of Jerusalem riding on a donkey. And by the ancient calendar that comes out to 173,880 days. These scholars can demonstrate that 173,880 days to the exact day after the command was made, Jesus was sitting on a donkey outside the gates of Jerusalem. Not that that's any big deal. I mean, this prophesy was so uncannily accurate that many folks say it was faked; it had to have been. You see, God through Gabriel is giving Daniel a vision of the future and you have to understand, this vision for Daniel had to be filled with mystery particularly because Daniel's perspective as a Jew was that sin was dealt with through the sacrifice and shed blood of an animal. I mean that's the way it was done. That's how you did it. And the idea of God becoming a man and living perfectly and then dying for the sins of his people would never have naturally occurred to Daniel. For thousands of years the Jews understood that their sin had separated them from God and they understood without the shedding of blood, there's no remission of sin. Daniel probably could not have envisioned that all of those animals and all of those sacrifices and all of that blood was just painting a picture of the one sacrifice that would take place for all time. It would be the one sacrifice that once and for all

settled the debt of sin by having the sacrificed one be not a bull or a goat or a pigeon or an animal but be the very Son of God. Jesus centuries after this prophesy was given by Gabriel would be born in Bethlehem to peasant parents, he would live out his life perfectly and then he would be the very one orchestrating his own sacrifice as that perfect Lamb of God. Hundreds of years before it was to take place we hear Gabriel speaking of that very sacrifice. And he speaks about six different aspects of it. He says in verse 24: *"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophesy, and to anoint the Most Holy."*

Well, the first point that he speaks of is *"to finish the transgression."* Well, to finish the transgression is to commit the ultimate transgression. I mean remember what Jesus said at the cross the very end, he said, *"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."* What were they doing? They were doing the most hideous thing a human being could ever do. This was God's own creation murdering their creator. I have no idea what would have happened if Jesus hadn't uttered that prayer asking God to forgive the very ones who were involved in the act, but the transgression is the slaughter of God himself as an act of sacrifice.

Secondly, it says it is *"to make an end of sins."* And that is God had established this once and for all to provide by his sacrifice an end to the need for all of these repeated cleansings, the repeated sacrifices that marked what life was like in Daniel's time in the old testament.

Thirdly, he said, *"to make reconciliation for iniquity."* And this was to provide and as the cross, we know it did, was to provide a place for justice to take place. You see, God's judgment of sin was never dismissed, it was never God saying, I'll look the other way and you can just trundle on into heaven. God had to execute justice and it was executed but it wasn't executed on you and me. It was executed on his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And fourth, he said, *"to bring about everlasting righteousness."* Well, the righteousness that you and I enjoy now is by faith, and it is a righteousness that is never diminished or dismissed by our sin. And what that means is that positionally we are perfect right here, right now in Christ. And that means when God looks at me, he sees me through the lens of his Son's perfection and shed blood. I mean, when Satan accuses me, hey, I can hardly agree with him that I am a sinner but I can also tell him categorically I am a sinner saved by the blood of the Son of God. I'm a sinner saved by grace. And that will never change. That will last forever.

And fifthly, he says, "*to seal up vision and prophesy.*" Well, Hebrews tells us that Jesus is God's final word on everything. In the past he spoke to the prophets. Now he's speaking to us and there's only one language he speaks and that language is Jesus. That's the language. That's who it is. That solves and sends everything to its end point and its appointed ending. Hebrews tells us that Jesus is God's final word on everything, from vision to prophesy. And having done it once and for all, it is now done, it is now finished, it is now sealed.

And then sixth, he says "*to anoint the most holy.*" Well you know, only Jesus and Jesus only has the right by virtue of his position and perfection to enter into the most holy place there ever was and that was the Holy of Holies. And by offering up the sacrifice of his own perfect blood, Jesus paid that price that kept us apart from God. If you remember the moment that Jesus gave up his spirit on the cross, the veil that separated us from the holy of holies, it was torn in two and it was torn in two by God himself because it was the barrier that separated God and man, it represented that barrier itself and it was now torn down because Christ had paid the price of our sin.

But think about this for a second, think about Daniel, he's in prayer, Gabriel is telling him all of these things, and it all had

to be a complete mystery to Daniel. I mean Daniel had only known about the sacrificial system of sin. He didn't know anything about the fulfillment of that system that the animal sacrifices pointed to. But then while Gabriel is giving Daniel this vision, he also widens the scope of his plan and what he does in speaking to Daniel is he cuts off any possibility whatsoever of a return to that animal sacrifice after the cross. Listen to what he says in *Daniel 9:26*. He says: *"And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary."* Well here's where history helps us. See, we know that 37 years after Messiah was cut off, we know that the Emperor Titus completely destroyed the city and the sanctuary. The city was Jerusalem and the sanctuary was the temple. It was the only place where sacrifices could be made. And you see what God is doing here? What God is doing is he's removing forever even the possibility of a return to animal sacrifices by removing the only place that it was sanctioned to take place in, and that was the temple. The prince destroyed the city and the temple when he utterly crushed the Jews in A.D. 70. And so Gabriel is giving Daniel the bad news centuries before it would take place because Christ was the ultimate sacrifice never, never to be repeated. And what God through Gabriel gave to Daniel was a timetable so precise that it would prove God's hands are never off his creation or his

creation's history. It would also prove that his hand on history was not random or reactionary. And the precision of the prophecy is breathtaking. Again in verse 24, he says: *"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."* Well this is what God intended to do and he breaks the prophecy down into three separate subdivisions. In verse 25, he says: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times."* Then in verse 27, he says: *"Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week."*

So here we have it laid out. There's going to be one week of years followed by sixty-two weeks of years followed by an indeterminate time characterized by one final week that would include a future that is yet to unfold. And Daniel describes that in verse 27. He says: *"And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for a half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator."* Folks have been arguing about this for thousands of years. And

that final week I believe is still ahead of us and I believe it is still a mystery. See, the first week along with the sixty-two weeks of years is where the 173,880 days comes from and I don't think that's a mystery at all. Once again, just to break it down, the first week was seven times seven or 49 years. The second was 62 times 7 or 434 years, and together that makes 483 years, and you multiply that times the lunar calendar, not the Gregorian one but the lunar one, and you get 173,880 days, and that's where the prophesy is established. Verse 26: *"And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself."* And so 173,880 days from Palm Sunday backwards, Gabriel's demonstrating to Daniel that God's hand on our history is so overwhelmingly precise and trustworthy that just as God promised in *2 Peter*, he said: *With the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Now I want you to understand that everything that Jesus did in his 33 years on earth was fitted into this plan, and it was by design and it was stunningly precise. And make no mistake about it, Jesus knew precisely what day was what. At numerous times during his ministry he referred to a very precise timetable and his adherence to it was absolutely impeccable. You want an example? Near the end of his ministry we have Jesus's own brothers and they're insisting that he goes up to a feast because they wanted to

publicly demonstrate who he was. Understand, at this point even his own family didn't believe him. But they thought, well, if you go up to this feast and you demonstrate your lordship, well, then people will really get it; maybe we'll get it as well. But the timing was off. And Jesus said no. He refused to go. Let me just read to you how this unfolds. It says -- this is *John 7* starting at verse 2. It says: *Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples may also see the works you are doing. For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." For not even his brothers believed in him. Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. You go up to the feast. I'm not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come."*

See, this wasn't the Passover feast, this was the Feast of Booths and Jesus's own family is clueless, but Jesus knew exactly when and where he was going to present himself as the sacrifice. And because he knew he was on a very strict timetable, Jesus knew to the exact day when that time would fully come. Again we go back to Gabriel's words to Daniel in verse 26: *"After the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself."* Jesus knew the

exact day that Gabriel was referring to when he spoke to Daniel, and he knew it would never be at the Festival of Booths as well, I mean, it had to be during the Passover celebration in order to fulfill what the Passover was all about because that was the timetable in which Messiah would be cut off but not for himself. And when that day came, when that day finally arrived, Jesus identified it and then he willingly stepped into it. This is *Matthew 26:18: He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'"* You get a picture here? Do you see what Jesus is doing here? You see, as Jesus enters into Jerusalem we see a promise being fulfilled. It's the promise that Gabriel made to Daniel 173,880 days previously. We see the picture being perfectly drawn. *"Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself."* You know, to be cut off means to be cast out. And we know the Messiah was going to be cast off from earth itself by the rejection that Jesus would receive not only from those that he came to serve but also from his own disciples. We also know that he was to be cut off as well from his own perfect Father because he was about to bear our sin. *2 Corinthians 5:21 says: For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

So being cut off, well that was never a surprise to Jesus. In fact

Jesus knew this was coming and he said to his disciples way before it happened in *John 16*, he said, "*Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.*" But even Jesus knew that was temporary. I mean, Jesus who knew no sin was about to become sin for us and he knew he was about to be cut off from everything including his Father. I mean his father's perfection required him to cut off Jesus as well. So 173,880 days after Gabriel had uttered those words, we find Jesus standing outside of Jerusalem waiting to be the Messiah who was cut off. And finally after 483 years we see the prophecies being perfectly fulfilled. And it wasn't just the "when" of a precise date, there was also the exquisite precision of the "how" part of what took place on Palm Sunday. We know from Zechariah 9:9 how the Messiah was going to present himself to Jerusalem because hundreds of years earlier we had the prophet Zechariah saying in *Zechariah 9:9*: "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.*"

So we look at Daniel and we look at Zechariah and we see that we have there prophesied not just the "when" but the "how" of the very moments that would take place. And Jesus made sure it would happen

that way. If we look at *John 12:12*, it says in verse 14, it says: *And Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written, "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"* You see, Jesus made certain of every single detail of time, place and circumstance of how Messiah would be cut off and he did it with absolute precision. I think we tend to think of Palm Sunday as a series of chance encounters by Jesus and his disciples. You know, oh, look, here's a donkey. Why don't you ride on that? Sure. Here, give me the donkey. We'll do that. Nothing could have been further from the truth.

This was Jesus' instructions to his disciples as he's preparing to enter Jerusalem on that momentous day. This is *Mark 11*. He says: *Now when they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, 'Why are you doing this?' say, 'The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately.'"* And they went away and found a colt tied at a door outside in the street, and they untied it. And some of those standing there said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" And they told them what Jesus had said, and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on

it, and he sat on it.

Well, couple of questions if this thing was just to unfold by chance, I mean, first of all, how did Jesus know that there was a colt tied outside the village before they'd even entered into the village? And how would he know that no one had ever ridden on it before? And how did he know that the owner was going to part with it merely at the words of the disciples saying Jesus said so?

Well, the answer is actually very simple. The answer is 173,880 days before Jesus had seen these events unfold. Jesus was no ordinary man. This was God in the flesh fulfilling a promise he had made from the Garden of Eden. This was God painting a picture that Israel had painted thousands of times before in the Passover sacrifice fulfilling the prophecies of time and Daniel and style in Zechariah by entering Jerusalem on a baby donkey. And make no mistake about it, Jesus had come for one purpose and one purpose only: He had come to die. Daniel could never have even imagined that God would not only take on flesh but that he would live his life flawlessly so that he could glorify his Father by being the final sacrifice for sin. But Gabriel's prophecy said it all.

"Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself." Listen to the way Isaiah puts this very same issue. He says this in *Isaiah 53*: *But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,*

and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned -- everyone -- to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

See, everything about Jesus was not for himself. He was born not for himself. He lived his life not for himself. He was cut off from the living not for himself. And he was cut off from his heavenly Father not for himself. It was for us. It was for you and me that Jesus was cut off. And what Daniel saw only in vision we now see in full. What Daniel saw in prophesy we get to see in history. And the precision with which prophesy became history only goes to prove something we've known all along and which I will conclude with. It's *John 3:16*: "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.*" Let's pray.

Father God, we are just astounded and amazed at the control that you have over history, over your sovereign control of every single moment of every single day and how your Son came to earth with a plan. We are amazed at the precision of that plan and we are so thankful that 173,880 days after Gabriel is meeting with Daniel the events took place exactly as you said. And we are thankful that they took place because you loved us enough to send your Son to die for us. Father, give us the grace, give us the wisdom, give us the

power and the courage to share this news, to let everybody know that there is a God in heaven who loves them enough to die for them. Give us the grace to do that and the courage, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.