

Daniel 9B 70 Sevens/Weeks

(April 21, 2024)

Let's take a look at **Daniel 9:20-27**. In this final section of **Daniel 9**, the angel Gabriel arrives to Daniel to provide him with understanding regarding what he had been praying about.

As a reminder, are there valid reasons to study prophetic discourse in Scripture? Yes, absolutely. Here are just several reasons:

- At least 1/3 of the Bible is prophetic discourse
- Much prophecy has already taken place
- However, some prophetic events have not yet taken place
- **1 John 3:2b-3** tells us that those who look for the appearing of our Savior *purify* themselves
- The Great Commission - rightly dividing the Word of Truth allows us to be better equipped to share the gospel with the lost

Notice in **verses 20-23**, Daniel was speaking, praying, confessing his sin and the sin of his people Israel, and presenting his supplication to God. As he does, Gabriel arrives to give Daniel understanding. God had heard Daniel's prayers and Gabriel tells Daniel that he was "greatly beloved."

In **Daniel 9:24**, Gabriel tells Daniel, "*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.*"

I've bolded the word "weeks" because the first thing we need to do is determine what that word actually means in the context of **Daniel 9**. There are several possible meaning and they are:

- Actual weeks – one week equals 7 days
- Years
- Thousands of years
- 7 years per "week" or "weeks of years"

Ultimately, it *has* to mean "**weeks of years**" because of context of **Daniel 9**:

- 70 weeks equals $70 \times 7 = 490$ years total
- **Daniel 10:2-3** explains normal weeks
 - 21 days = 3 weeks
 - Weeks here means 21 literal days

The Hebrew word that has been translated "weeks" – *shavuim* – *actually* means "sevens," not "weeks" although due to context, "weeks" also fits, but it is not the literal translation. But what does "sevens" mean? It is like saying a "dozen" - "I have a dozen eggs." The dozen *refers* to something but only means a number by itself. We know a dozen means "twelve," but twelve what, golf balls, tennis balls, eggs?

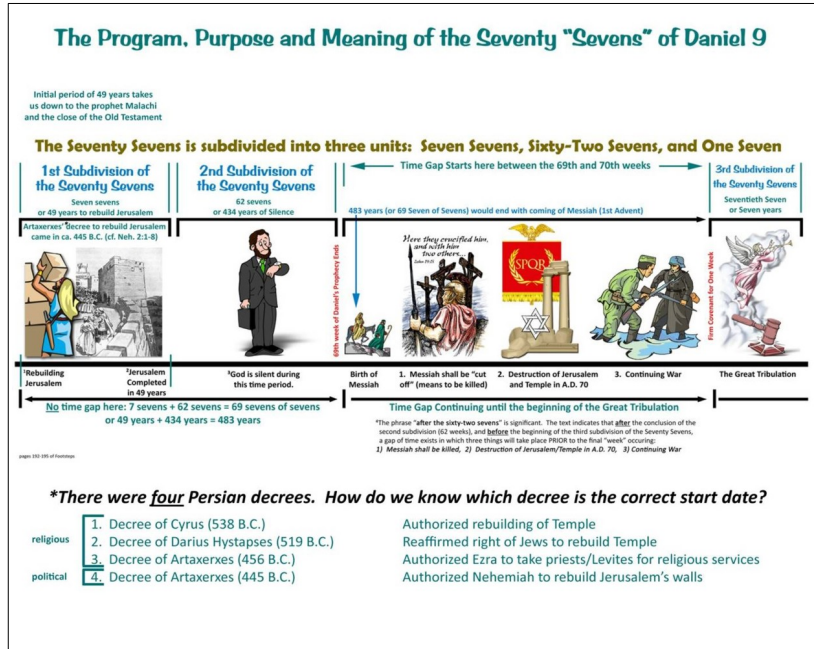
Again, the context of **Daniel 9** demands that we understand "weeks" (sevens) as *periods of 7 years*. The Hebrew word means "sevens," It should have been literally translated as "Seventy sevens" in **Daniel 9:24**. But again, the question then is, seventy sevens of *what*? Since the entire context of **Daniel 9** is referencing *years*, then we can conclude Gabriel is talking about *seventy periods of seven years*.

Originally, Jeremiah prophesied that the people of Israel would be held captive for 70 years (**Jeremiah**

25:11; Jeremiah 29:10). Israel became cursed temporarily due to the years they ignored the Sabbath rest.

Gabriel is really doing a play on words here in the text. Daniel was praying for Israel's release from captivity because the 70 years was almost up, which was true. Hence, God would ultimately release Israel from Babylonian/Medo-Persian captivity allowing Israelites to return home to Judah and Jerusalem.

Gabriel arrives and essentially says to Daniel: "Not 70 years, but 70 "sevens" of years!" Notice this was already pre-determined by God because of Israel's rebellion and unfaithfulness. The 70 "sevens" (weeks) began with rebuilding of Jerusalem. There were a number of decrees but the one that fits the timeline is the one **Artaxerxes** issued (Persia) in ca. 445 BC.



While the Israelites were released from bondage at the end of the 70 year captivity, they remained in bondage to Gentile nations because of the fact that they ignored God's command to allow the land to rest every seven years. We know the reason for the 70 years captivity, but what is the reason for the 70 sevens beyond the 70 year captivity?

The reasons for the additional years of captivity, in other words, what the 70 sevens would be used to accomplish in Israel:

- To finish the transgression
 - to be **done** with sin
 - in essence, it will end rebellion against God
- Make an End of Sin
 - To judge sin finally, once for all
 - Will end human failure to obey God

This is ultimately fulfilled in Jesus - **Hebrews 9:26**.

- To make Atonement to cover human wickedness (**Daniel 9:26; Zechariah 13:1**)
- Bring in Everlasting Righteousness
 - A new society in which righteousness prevails (During Millennial Kingdom reign of Jesus)
- Will bring in the fulfillment of the vision that God has for the earth
- Will result in the anointing Most Holy Place – probably referring to new temple of Millennium period (**Ezekiel 40-48**)

The entire prophecy from Gabriel is presented as a whole in **verse 24**. The first 69 weeks/sevens are

described in **verse 25**. Events *between* the 69th seven and 70th seven are detailed in **verse 26**. The final period of the 70th seven is described in **verse 27**.

We will pick this up from here in our next installment!