

“Discovering God’s Timetable”
“Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God” - Part 10
Daniel 9

1. Daniel discovers God’s immediate plans.

In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

Daniel 9:1-2

Therefore the Lord Almighty says this: "Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon," declares the Lord, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Jeremiah 25:8-11

This is what the Lord says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."

Jeremiah 29:10-14

2. Daniel responds to the truth he has discovered.

So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

Daniel 9:3

Notice the content of Daniel’s prayer:

Worshipping God— “the great and awesome God.”

Confessing sin— “we have sinned”; “we have rebelled”; “we have turned away from your commands”; “we have not listened to your servants.”

Acknowledging their current state— “We are covered with shame”; “you have scattered us.”

Acknowledging God’s faithfulness— “You have fulfilled the words spoken against us”; “for the Lord our God is righteous in everything He does.”

Asking for God's mercy—

Give ear, O God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name." Daniel 9:18-19

***“God in His grace gives us what we don’t deserve,
and God in His mercy doesn’t give us
what we do deserve.”***

Special note: God answered Daniel's prayer. The next year, Cyrus issued a decree that permitted the Jews to return to their land, take the temple treasures with them, rebuild the temple, and restore the worship.

3. God shares with Daniel His future plans for Israel.

While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the Lord my God for his holy hill—while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision: "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy. Daniel 9:20-24

The seventy 'sevens':

The angel Gabriel speaks to Daniel about 490 years specifically related to Israel and Jerusalem.

During those 490 years God would accomplish 6 specific purposes.

The 490 years are broken up into three periods.

Period #1 = 49 years. The Jews will rebuild Jerusalem during troubled times. (The key issue is the date of the decree.)

Period #2 = 483 years. The angel Gabriel affirmed that 483 years are involved from the giving of the decree to the crucifixion of the "*Anointed One*".

Period #3 = 7 years. *The final seven year period will begin with a peace covenant that will be broken after 3 1/2 years. In the middle of the 7 years the covenant will be broken and the temple will be defiled and sacrifices cut off. In the last 3 1/2 years God will defeat His enemies and Christ will return.*

The strange parenthesis:

Gabriel didn't tell Daniel what would happen between the 69th and 70th "seven". Remember this prophecy of the seventy "sevens" focuses on the Jews and the temple, not the church.

The gap between the death of Christ and the tribulation has to do with the Church, the body of Christ, which was a mystery hidden in the Old Testament times.

Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 3:2-6

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 3:10-11

Application: How do you respond to the truth of God's Word as you study it? Does it move you to worship and prayer? How do you respond to God's discipline? Does it move you to confession and acknowledging God is right in all He does?

"Discovering God's Timetable" is tenth in a series titled, "Daniel—A Testimony to the Power of God." August 4, 2013. All verses are from the New International version unless noted.