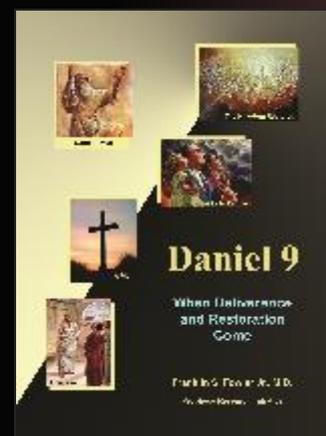


A special commentary that goes along with this Daniel 9 series is available and can be obtained by:

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We now begin our studies on:

The Story of Daniel 9

**Prophecy Research Initiative
presents**

The Story of Daniel 9



Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.

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These conclusions are always tentative since new light constantly unfolds.

Lesson One – Daniel 9

Time Makes Prophecy Relevant



We are now “Between Time and Eternity!”

Prophecy is embedded in a framework of time!

- Without time references, it would be meaningless!
- Hope would be delayed, and much of Scripture would have questionable relevance.
- Repentance would lose its urgency.

Many say: “What difference does it make? We should always be ready. Just know Jesus!”

Amazing! That’s an excuse not to study prophecy that God specifically gave for the last generation, so we wouldn’t be deceived.

Regarding that attitude, Jesus noted: “*So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I ... have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*”
(Rev. 3:16-17)

The Bible is loaded with an “urgency” to study and to know – to prepare and to share.

Prophetic clocks are there to address the “natural delay” that man inherently has in identifying with *Christ’s cleansing blood*, and to warn us that there is a *time* limitation to mercy.

Since all past apocalyptic prophecy had “clocks” attached to them:

Why wouldn't God do the same for all of the end-time events about to occur?

He would!!! They are all loaded with time pieces.

God wants us to know
how to tell end-time!



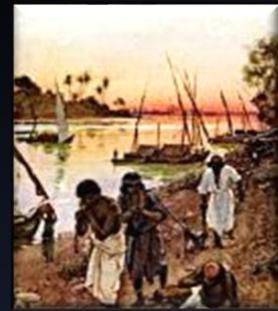
Let's now begin to look at one of the most profound prophecies of the Old Testament – Daniel 9.

It is filled with “events” and “clocks” that cover from 539 B.C. all the way to the Second Coming of Jesus!

“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans...” (Dan. 9:1)

The “first year” of Darius (the Mede) was his first full regnal year (539–538 B.C.).

He is the first “king” of Babylon under the Medo-Persian Empire. Since the first wave of Jewish captives occurred in 605 B.C., AND the captivity was to last 70 years, Israel is now 66½ years into that mandated period – with 3½ years left!



It is so fitting that Daniel is now beginning to focus on that final 3½ years of their captivity. That last “appointment” of time is used over and over in prophecy as a **final period to prepare – to get ready!**

In fact, as we have just noted, that *period* is so important, it is called an “appointed time.” (chs 8, 11 and 12). It will also have meaning in the anticipated fall of Jerusalem and the prophetic fall of “Babylon” at the very end.

When that 3½ years end – God’s people are always “delivered” or set free. (Dan. 11:35, 40; 12:4, 7, 9; Rev. 11:2-3)

“In the first year of his [Darius the Mede’s] reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”
(Dan. 9:2)

Addressing God by His “covenant name” – *Yahweh* – Daniel personally acknowledges that he now understands those Jewish captivity “timing prophecies” from more than one source. This is a refreshing change from 8:27, when he fainted over a misunderstanding of the 2300 years!

Apparently, when taken captive, Daniel was able to take with him a copy of those documents. Parts of Jeremiah would have been just written! Perhaps he was even given the original!

Later (597 B.C.) Jeremiah wrote to the captives already in Babylon (including Daniel), urging them to seek as normal a life as possible because they would be fugitives a long time! But, **now**, Daniel reads:

“For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.” (Jer. 29:10-11)

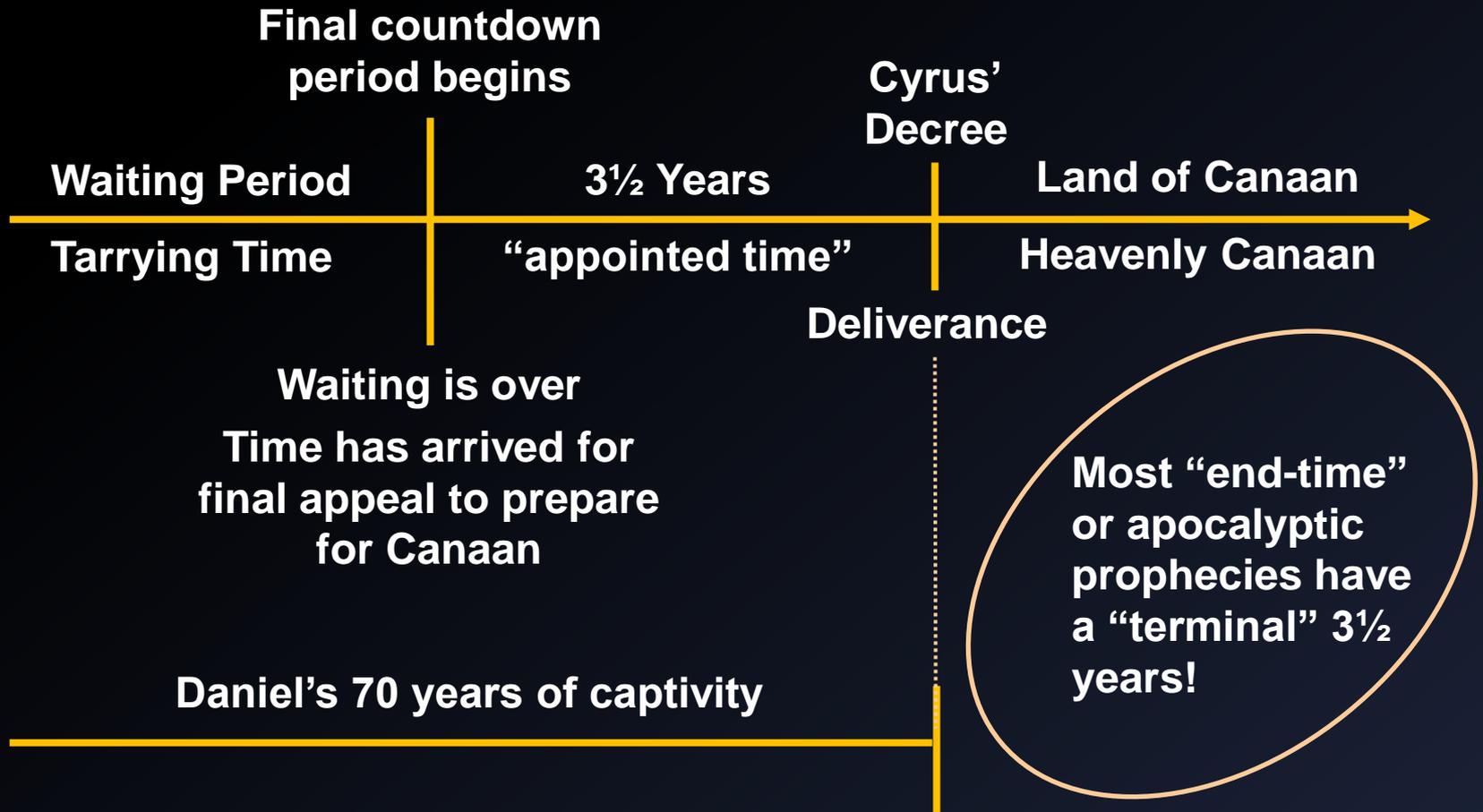
It is so interesting that Jeremiah's book was mentioned. He was never taken into captivity that we are aware of. But his writings made their way into Daniel's hands and later became part of the Canon.



Jeremiah 25:11-12 was written shortly before the first attack on Jerusalem – likely around 609 B.C. There, he warned that the land was to be destroyed – **to lie in waste** during the 70 years.

So specific were these prophecies that Jeremiah said that the Jewish people would be under Babylonian rule that whole time. (25:19-26)

This timing model is a historical template, which is replicated at the very end of time!



Daniel knew that the “end” was approaching. This became a “driving opportunity” to passionately approach God!

What follows is one of the Bible’s most dramatic prayers, pleading for the covenant restoration of God’s people.

In a highly symbolic way, Daniel's petition lays out *words* that become important metaphors to Gabriel's Daniel 9 prophecy.

Jerusalem – God's people

Zion – where God and His people meet

Temple – God's Church

“With faith founded on the sure word of prophecy, Daniel pleaded with the Lord for the speedy fulfillment of these promises. He pleaded for the honor of God to be preserved. In his petition he identified himself fully with those who had fallen short of the divine purpose, confessing their sins as his own.” (PK 554-555)

There was an urgency in Daniel's prayer. He not only understood the *timing prophecy* of the captivity, but the review of Biblical records informed him of something else very dramatic!



This man – over 100 years before he was even born – was revealed by name to Isaiah as the one who would be the deliverer of Daniel's people!

Cyrus the Great!

That is absolutely stunning! He was the Medo-Persian general who captured Babylon and was actually above Darius the Mede. When Daniel prayed, they had just come into power!

No wonder Daniel was so anxious, and his prayer was so intense and urgent.

But there's more to this saga:

Since Cyrus came from the east, since he was to bring deliverance to God's people, Isaiah was told to talk about Cyrus as a **messiah!** – looking forward to that final event when Messiah Jesus would come from the east!!!

Cyrus was, **and is,** an end-time metaphor!

This is what Daniel knew!

Cyrus – for Daniel

My shepherd

(Isa. 44:28)

His anointed

(Isa. 45:1)

Came from the east

(Isa. 46:11)

Set captives free

(Isa. 45:13)

Called righteous

(Isa. 45:13)

Jesus – for us today

Good shepherd

(John 10:11, Heb. 13:20)

God anointed Him

(Acts 10:38)

Comes as lightning
from the east (Matt. 24:27)

Deliverance of captives

(Luke 4:16)

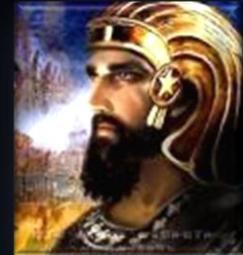
The Righteous

(I John 2:1)

“Within about two years [from the fall of the Babylonian Empire] ... Cyrus succeeded to the throne, and the beginning of his reign [536 B.C.] marked the completion of the seventy years since the first company of Hebrews had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar from their Judean home to Babylon.” (PK 556)

That ended the 3½ yrs.

Daniel knew this man! He knew that God identified him by name, long before he was born – “Cyrus.”



No wonder his prayer was filled with such urgency. But – there was something else that Daniel must have discovered shortly after Babylon fell:

Those prophecies of Jeremiah noted that one of the great reasons for the captivity was the breaking of the Sabbatical year or “land Sabbath.”

That was one of the “celebration links” between God and man. That was a time when God’s people “played heaven” for a whole year.

The original counsel for this “Sabbath” or what was called a *Shemita*, was given in Leviticus 26. That was so important to God, He warned that failure to keep it would lead to devastation of the land.

If the land rested, so would man. If man rested, he would have time to reflect on God. But – God’s people rebelled. Each of the 70 years in Babylon was a “sentence” for one of those *Shemitas* missed. Since they came every 7 years, that would be 490 years of sin against God’s Sabbatical year wishes!

“And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

“To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.” (II Chr. 36:20-21)

Why is all this important?

1. What happened to Daniel's people is a warning and a “model” of what will happen right at the end of time.
2. This earth is about to enter another “land rest” as a curse – the **“abomination of desolation!!!”**



What a prayer Daniel now makes!

He addresses God with the commitment to do whatever is necessary for a covenant restoration!

- He confesses Israel's sins against God. (9:3-6)
- He recognizes God's judgments against Israel as just. (9:12-14)
- He pleads that God would avert His anger. (9:15-16)
- Finally, he pleads that God would shine His face of mercy on the city, Jerusalem, and the sanctuary (church), for we are "called by thy name." (9:17, 19)

God heard that prayer. Before we look at what follows, we must address an important prophetic item:

There is confusion whether God's answer, through Gabriel, refers to the physical or spiritual restoration of Jerusalem.

Daniel 9 is totally spiritual!

Here is the challenge! God already designated Cyrus as the leader who would rebuild not only the temple but the city of Jerusalem. Please know that! Note carefully what He said:

“This is what the Lord says, your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the Lord, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself ... who says of Cyrus, ‘He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, ‘Let it be rebuilt,’ and of the temple, ‘Let its foundations be laid.’ (Isa. 44:28, 45:13)

That was a prophecy God decreed over a hundred years before. Cyrus was to be the king designee to decree the rebuilding of Jerusalem – the physical city.

Cyrus – who just assumed power – would be the man to make that physical decree. The onset of the 490-year decree, then, would not be physical but a spiritual command!

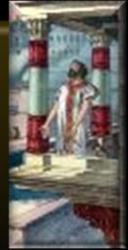


Cyrus' prophecy, as we will see, would not fit the proper timing of the 490-year events **if** he were that man.

Thus – a later king must be addressing spiritual issues of restoration that would fully answer Daniel's spiritual restoration prayer!

If we keep that in mind, the beauty of this prophecy will unfold in a remarkable way.

“And whiles 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; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.” (Dan. 9:20-21)



This reveals the **urgency** that God placed on answering Daniel! He now gives to him one of the Bible's most important prophecies! **It is all about how AND when God will have a “holy people!!!”**

The Daniel 9 490-year prophecy about to be given is an “emergency apocalyptic message.” The highest created being (we assume) has been commissioned to come to Daniel once again. [He had been there for Daniel 8 (Dan. 8:16)]. Even before his prayer was ended, Gabriel had arrived with God’s response.



It was not only a message for Daniel – it is a message for God’s people at the very end of time. It is a preparation missive for the arrival of everlasting righteousness in the universe!!! *[NEVER, ever to stop!]*

***“Listen, my people,
this is what you
must do!”***



“[he] ... touched me about the time of the evening oblation.” (Dan. 9:21b)

This is so interesting! That was about 3:00 p.m., when the “evening sacrifice” would have occurred. BUT – God’s people were in captivity, so it was not a “temple worship happening” or possibility!



Daniel – made it part of his prayer experience to pray at that time each day! (Dan. 6:10-11) Thus, when the temple priest would ordinarily make “contact with heaven” – heaven made special contact with Daniel!

“And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.” (Dan. 9:22)

We might think that this is only for Daniel and his people, *but it isn't!* It's also for us.

Have you noticed how personal and special Daniel talks about this visit?

1. He “touched” me
2. He “informed” me
3. He “talked” with me
4. To give me “skill” and “understanding”



Let's repeat these things and assume Gabriel is talking to us! For he really, really is.

All this must now be put into perspective.

1. God gave a special prophecy in 8:14 that was called the *mareh* vision. (Dan. 8:26a)
2. Daniel didn't understand that "vision," which made him so emotional that he "fainted." (Dan. 8:27)
3. Jesus saw this and actually told Gabriel to explain that *mareh* vision to help Daniel. (Dan. 8:16)
4. That task was never completed. BUT now Daniel 9 is *what Gabriel has been waiting all these years to share!*

This is why Gabriel's "personal touch"
AND words are so vital. We are about
to hear the "rest of the *mareh* story!"

It is a continuation of that amazing
"2300-year" *prophecy* – of
Daniel 8:14!!!



“At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.” (Dan. 9:23)

When Daniel began to pray, the answer was given! That reminds us of a wonderful promise:

“Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” (Isa. 65:24)

How beautiful! That is what happened to Daniel! This is an illustration of God in action. Did you notice again how personal God is?

**The heavenly message
now begins!**

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city.” (Dan. 9:24)

The great purpose of this visit now unfolds!

- Daniel had just studied about the “70” that was associated with “**desolation.**”
- That “captivity” was about to end.
- Now another “70” is being given. **What could all this now mean?** We will later see that it, too, ends in “**desolation.**”
- This seems to be starting out on a very serious note!



This prophecy explains the last probation that will ever be given to man. It started out to be for Daniel's people.

But – it doesn't end up that way!



“Seventy weeks are determined”

- The word for “**seventy**” is *shibim*. It is the same word used in Jeremiah for the **seventy**-year captivity.
- The word for “weeks” is *shabua* and generically refers to a “**period of seven.**”

Again, the context of Daniel 9 relates to the Sabbatical years “abused” over 490 years and a 70-year “numeric period” of punishment for that rebellion!

Shibim shabua relates to a new and similar time period – another 70 Sabbaticals, making up another 490 years!

Most interesting is another associated timing issue. In Christ's counsel to the disciples, related to the destruction of Jerusalem and earth's apocalyptic end, he told them go to Daniel, where an **abomination leads to desolation**.

Apocalyptic ends are always associated with "desolation!" "Desolation" is a key reference word to understand end-time prophecy. Daniel 12 has a 3½-year prophecy that ends in desolation, just as this 490-year period does! Jesus said: "GO THERE!"

For those appealing to A.D. 34, it simply is out of context with God's apocalyptic template!

Desolation occurred for the Jews (having failed the original purpose of the 490 years) in A.D. 70, after a “gap” of time.



There is “desolation” at the end of a 1290-day period in Daniel 12:11. That unique block of time simply isn’t “floating by and by” in prophecy. It ties directly to the end of another timing prophecy waiting to be finished with another “timing gap,” or delay, as we will soon see!

“Desolation” is the final end to any probation for sin and to those who fail to heed the end-time warnings. Thus, apocalyptic messages are always filled with urgent summary notices, just like here!

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city.” (Dan. 9:24)

The verb “determined” is *hatak* and, most interestingly, is in the *niphal* or passive tense.

Though it could mean “to be severed” or “cut off,” this is the only place in the Old Testament where it is used passively. Thus, there is a different message!

Ancient Hebrew Rabbinic references help us.

The emphasis is on “decreed” or “determined,” as here in the KJV. Since Gabriel is “reporting” on God’s covenant terms within a timing context, heaven’s expectations are decreed.

The conditions are set – formulated. It is now up to man to respond to these. Thus, the outcome to heaven’s judicial mandate comes passively. Heaven waits!

(Steinmann, Andrew E.; *Daniel* (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis – 2008), p. 445.

You might still be thinking: “That doesn’t seem to make sense. If God is decreeing something, that isn’t very passive!”

Let’s look again at the wording. 490 years are being given to the Jewish people to respond to God – on His terms. They do the responding. He outlines the covenant conditions to bring an end to sin under a “decree” that you will see is really a wonderful legal promise.

God won’t act until that timing period is finished. How? Through desolation or salvation. BUT – He passively waits 490 years, in mercy, for man to respond!

You will be interested to know that Daniel's people didn't respond. That is why God changed who His mercy would be extended to in that Book!



In Daniel 12:1, “Daniel’s people” are redefined as “*all those written in the book*” of life. Since that new definition started at the Cross, there is a “gap” or “tarrying time” in waiting for the last 3½ years to be completed!

The final “desolation message” of Daniel 9 (verse 27) is on hold. God is waiting (passively) for a people to respond to Him. That’s exciting! “We have a chance to be in that group!”

That decree was for “thy people” and the “holy city.”



Those who are “literalists” in their Biblical interpretations, will say these represent the Jewish people and ancient Jerusalem.

But – a growing number of scholars are now viewing this as “spiritual Israel!” “Jerusalem” is a metaphor for God’s people. Jesus introduced that in Matthew 23:37 within the context of the failure of the Jewish people to meet these very expectations!

There, it represents apostasy of God’s special people. The 490 years was their chance to be holy people – forever! At the Cross it became clear that that would not happen.

Thus – the “great purpose” for the 490-year prophecy has not yet been accomplished!

God is still waiting for a “covenant people.” He is still waiting for a “family” who can be His forever.

The book of Revelation says that will occur! The Philadelphia Church will receive the “family names” God has reserved for that “holy people.”

THEN – the 490-year prophecy will be complete!



“Time pieces” we’ve looked at so far:

1. Daniel’s people were in captivity during 70 years of desolation for breaking Sabbatical laws over a 490-year period.
2. They are now 3½ years from deliverance.
3. God is giving His people another 490 years or 70 more Sabbatical opportunities to reform.
4. This will be the last probationary period that God’s people will ever receive. Ever!



5. Since the Jewish probationary offer was thwarted at the Cross (3½ years from its end!), the great purpose of this prophecy remains yet to be fulfilled at a final 3½-year period!
6. That is why there are so many 3½-year prophecies yet to be completed in Revelation!

Gabriel now begins to tell God's people, through Daniel, what they must complete during that 490-year period:



Notice that there are two divisions:

“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.”
(Dan. 9:24b)

1. What God's people must do – the conditions
2. What God promises if they obey – the results

Let's now study those "conditions:"

"to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity"

(Dan. 9:24b)

“to finish transgression”

“To finish” implies that it won’t rise again. This suddenly suggests an end-time focus within this decree!

“Transgression” is *bepesha* and refers to a deliberate act against God. This is the worst of all sins to the Hebrew people!

Isaiah had given us wonderful hope regarding this: *“But he was wounded for our transgression [bepesha].”* (Isa. 53:5)

Though the Hebrew ordinances provided no atonement for this wrong, we are assured that the blood of Jesus covers/cleanses *bepesha*!



Bepesha or *pesha* is a willful, intentional sin against God's authority, His law and His covenant. Those three things, collectively, are a key to many end-time prophecies!



1. God's authority
 2. God's law
 3. God's covenant
- } This is summarized
in the 7th-day Sabbath
of the Decalogue

The 7th-day Sabbath will be a central issue in the apostasy at the end of time. Intriguingly, Gabriel, addressing God's people, notes that the first item of restoration concern is honoring the Sabbath day! Honoring God!

“Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

“It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.” (Ex. 31:13, 16-17)

Within the Sabbath, most beautifully outlined in Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:14-15, is:

1. God's authority (Creator) – Ex. 20:11
2. God's law (part of the Decalogue) – Ex. 20:3-17
3. God's covenant (restoration) – Deut. 5:15

The ultimate mark of loyalty to God is keeping the 7th-day Sabbath. It is not a “Jewish” Sabbath, per se! Long before the Jewish people came onto the scene, God instituted this sacred day – at creation. The ultimate mark of rebellion is *bepesha*, desecrating that Sabbath which honors God.



The next condition:

“to make an end of sins” (Dan. 9:24)



God requires of His people another willful decision to address something He hates. Here the word “sin” is *hattat* (plural), which is primarily against man. (I Sam. 20:1, Psa. 59:3)

This alludes especially to commandments 5–10 of the Decalogue. The first group of people to have victory over this will be the 144,000 (white horse, Philadelphia Church and pure woman – Rev. 7, 12; 14:1)

Giving up *hattat* is one of God's final wishes for His people. The decision will be fully theirs. The heavenly missive reveals what occurs if they give this up and escape desolation.

The language is invitational! Different from all other prophecies or covenants, this is the last opportunity, which moves forward to an eschatological end.

All thoughts, acts or past indiscretions against another, will be resolved and repented of.

Finally:

Those who will enter the portals of heaven will:
“make reconciliation for iniquity.” (Dan. 9:24)

This is one of the phrases that has had intense variations in interpretation. Many see this as the completion of the Messianic expiation (along with the other two “conditions.”) **BUT the “Messiah” is not the subject of these phrases.** “Your people” and the “holy city” are!

The great purpose/theme of Daniel 9 is restoration of God’s people. He wants to have a holy people. All these directives end in that one overriding objective.

“Reconciliation” is from the Hebrew word *kippur*. It means to atone, to cover or wipe away.

The immediate allusion by many expositors is some act associated with the ordinance of sprinkling blood on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement, *Yom Kippur* (Lev. 16:15-16). There appears to be a better way to view *kippur* for this “iniquity,” however! First, let’s look at this sin:

The word for “iniquity” is *awon*. It is a noun embodying the collective misdeeds of man, especially against one’s self. It is the “idolatry” of one’s own sinful nature that includes secret sin.

In that setting, the word *kippur* can take on a new and rich meaning. Man (your people) and the Church (the holy city) are the subjects.

Rebellion against God and sins against man have been addressed by the first two infinitives. They are like a judicial summary dealing with the two great parts of the Decalogue (related to God and man).

Here, all other sins, not covered in the Decalogue, are addressed. *Awon* looks at all other sins not obvious in this law, especially against one's self, such as self-lust.

Kippur is in the *piel* tense, making the action intense. Gabriel notes that God wants His people to urgently do whatever is necessary to wipe away or remove *awon* or any cause for sin!

(Parashat Hashavua Parasha: Yom Kippur, p. 4
Date: 10 Tishrei 5769, 9/10/2008. "The Best of Parashat Hashavuah" articles printed for members of Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu (Ed.: Arie Yarden)
<http://parasha.sde.org.il/eparasha.php>)

It addresses anything that encourages evil propensities that might not even directly affect another. Expiation is anticipated when this is done!

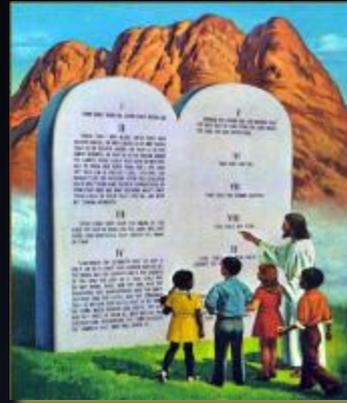
The context of this exchange is amazing. It is still pre-Cross. But the sacrificial animals are not noted. The focus is on the bonding, the covenant relationship that is anticipated when man addresses wrong at the very end of time!

1. “to finish transgression” – ending all rebellion against God and His sacred Sabbath.
2. “to make an end of sins – ending all wrongs against others.
3. “to make reconciliation for iniquity” – ceasing all wrongs against one’s self. Avoiding all sympathy toward our evil propensities.

When will this happen?

Soon – very soon – when the final 3½-year period of probation begins. We know when that will occur.

That will, then, finish the great purpose of Daniel 9.





God is now looking to you to be part of that “holy people.” Will you accept Him and His atoning wishes?

The End

Next Lesson:

***Amazing Promises
Soon to Explode
Into the Present!***



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