

DECEMBER 2

Daniel 9-11:1

These are two very interesting chapters in Daniel. Chapter 9 not only contains the second greatest prayer (my opinion) in the Bible, but it has the prophecy of the 70 weeks. Chapter 10 opens the curtain a little on the spiritual warfare going on behind the nations of the world and, actually, all of life. Buckle up.

Daniel 9

V. 1 Notice that this prayer is in the first year of the change of government. This was probably the year that Daniel was thrown into the lion's den. Very few people see the association between chapters 6 and 9, but you do; and it should make chapter 6 seem much more important and understandable. Just for trivia, let me ask you—what is the last visible, obviously supernatural, miraculous event God did in the OT? I think it is found in Daniel 6.

V. 2 What does this imply that Daniel had in his possession? Even Daniel read his Bible every day. Not only would Daniel have had full copies of everything written since Moses, he also had a copy of Jeremiah. Unknown to us, an entire culture of biblical scholarship had grown up and become established in the Jewish community in Babylon, complete with schools and a synagogue type of worship. I wasn't there but I'll bet it was financed and directed by men like Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. I'd bet Ezekiel was part of it.

Vs. 3-19 Here is the prayer. As you read this, think of Daniel being a teen when brought to Babylon, and now, 70 years later, saying this prayer. What a heart he had for God and for his people. I would guess that this is what Daniel was praying three times a day, and was praying on that day when he was thrown into the lion's den.

I only have a couple of observations here.

First, notice that Daniel identifies with his people. He uses "we" and "us" quite often. Notice too that he identifies with and confesses the sins of the fathers. In Ezekiel we read that Daniel was probably the most righteous lover of God on the planet at that time. Why would he identify with the sordid sins of his idolatrous countrymen? Well, I'm sure it was because he was a humble guy, but not only that, he was an obedient man and knew his Bible. Read these two passages and you'll see that Daniel not only knew the Word, but he also obeyed it:

- 1 Kings 8:46-53 - This is Solomon's dedication of the temple.
- Leviticus 26:33-45 - This obscure passage will blow you away. I'm sure that Daniel knew these portions of the Bible and that his knowledge of what God commanded in these sections guided Daniel in his prayer.

Second, notice what Daniel's real concern was in vs. 16-19. Notice the mention of Jerusalem. This isn't just a patriotic desire on his part. God had promised to dwell in that city. Notice, too, the desire that God's name should be honored and glorified in the world. I wish I always had that concern guiding my heart and actions. Interestingly enough, it is the same thought that's in the first line of the Lord's Prayer.

Vs. 20-23 Now I don't know if this was before or after the lion's den that Daniel was praying this and that Gabriel was sent to talk to him. I suspect it was after the lion's den, and that Daniel had proven his desire to live and die for God and his people. Notice that Gabriel came flying. I wonder what that looked like. I don't know if you know this, but in the early Superman comics, Superman often flew standing. Apparently wind resistance isn't a problem if you're super. I wonder if that's what Gabriel looked like. Second, notice in v. 23 that Daniel is greatly loved. God loves us all, but of how many people in the Bible does God say this? For most people, Daniel seems like a very insignificant character in the Bible. God didn't think so.

In Chapter 10 we meet an unnamed angel, but because Daniel had already met Gabriel twice and because of the reference to Daniel being greatly loved, some think that that angel in chapter 10 is also Gabriel.

Vs. 24-27 Here is the interesting thing about the vision of the 70 weeks. It is an answer to the question Daniel was not asking. Daniel wanted to know when the Jews could return to Jerusalem, assuming that would end the desolations of Jerusalem. The answer given tells when Jerusalem will finally be restored forever in peace and when the Jews will enjoy the kingdom with their Messiah. Notice that v. 24 will be all of human history until the beginning of the Millennium. That means that some of this has not yet occurred.

In short, the 70 weeks work out like this. Each week is seven years.

V. 25 The decree to rebuild Jerusalem, not the temple, begins the clock. This decree was given to Nehemiah.

From Nehemiah to Jesus' crucifixion was 69 weeks (7 + 62) or 483 years. There are all sorts of calendars and such, but when you work it out, it is right on the money. If you have the [Bible Knowledge Commentary-OT](#), you can read Dwight Pentecost's discussion of this time between Nehemiah and Jesus on page 1363.

So, even though the walls went up with Nehemiah, seven 7's, or forty-nine years, were needed to completely restore the houses and streets of Jerusalem. Then for the next sixty-two 7's (434 years) Jerusalem existed in very unsure times. The seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks have no break between them. We know this because of Jesus' death.

V. 26 Notice that the anointed one, Jesus, is cut off after the conclusion of the sixty-two weeks (or sixty-nine weeks if you put them together). This is significant in that it shows there is a gap between the 69th week and the 70th week. The anointed one is cut off after the 69th week, yet before the 70th week. The day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the colt of the donkey was the final day of that 69th week. The 70th week will begin with the Tribulation.

Notice also that the *people of the prince who is to come*, not the prince himself, destroy Jerusalem. This is in the gap of time between the 69th week and the 70th week. This happened in 70 A.D. when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. This prince, as we'll see in the next chapter, was the "guardian" angel who will guide Rome. More on this in chapter 10.

V. 27 Now then, the 70th week is the seven years of the Tribulation. *He* is that prince of those people; that is, the prince is the antichrist. Remember in chapter 7 we saw that the last empire would have a "horn" or king who would rise and war against the Jews. This is the antichrist who will make a seven-year peace treaty with Israel, and in the middle of that "week" the antichrist will kill the two witnesses, break the treaty, desecrate the temple and launch a worldwide persecution against the Jews. As we'll see in the book of Revelation, God will judge the earth and bring all nations to a place of ruin during the first 3.5 years of that week, and by doing so, the followers of Christ will have a chance to hide and survive and reach out to any who are willing to hear during the final 3.5 years.

So, the 70 weeks are for Israel, specifically for the city of Jerusalem. After the 69th week there has been a pause in the action for the church to be busy in the harvest. Look at Romans 11:25-26 to see Paul's summary of this. When that 70th week begins, it will be all about Jerusalem and about Israel fulfilling its role in this final chapter of their redemptive mission before the coming of Christ. There really won't be a need for the church per se in this 70th week. The focus of that last week will be the city of Jerusalem and the people of Israel fulfilling their mission as witnesses to the world. Everything will have to do with the Jews and the return of their Messiah. This is a reason why the taking of the church at the beginning of the Tribulation makes good sense. It is about the Jews reaching the world. We'd just be in the way, and it won't be about us.

It will be all about the city of God and the people of God. This won't be hidden to people. Even the most rebellious and godless will be able to see the handwriting on the wall.

Daniel 10

Daniel 10 will actually continue to the end of the book. The angel who comes as a result of Daniel's prayer and fasting will give him the details of chapters 11 and 12. Note that Daniel 11:1 is a parenthetical note by the angel, saying that he was led by God to stand up and support Darius during his first year as ruler over this part of the Persian Empire, even though the "prince of Persia" would not have appreciated that help. We know why the angel strengthened Darius, right? Darius took a huge chance by making Daniel part of his government and chapter 6 shows that the man had faith. As mentioned above, although no name is given for this angel, some people think it is still Gabriel.

V. 1 Daniel was given a word about a conflict involving his people and he understood it and was deeply distressed by it.

Vs. 2-9 As a result of the disturbing content of that word from God, he went before the Lord, fasting and praying for 21 days. Verse 7 reminds me of Acts 9:7 and Paul's conversion. In case you are wondering if this could be Jesus, the angel of the Lord, you'll see why this is impossible.

Vs. 10-14 This is interesting news. This angel was sent to Daniel the first day of his praying, but was held off by *the prince of the kingdom of Persia* for 21 days. Obviously, if this angel had been Jesus, there would have been no battle. This prince of Persia was one of Satan's angels. Satan has been given the authority over nations, as he told Jesus. I think this was part of Satan's guardianship to help humans. Now that humans are in rebellion and under God's judgment, Satan's authority defaulted to a place of a ruling guardianship, controlling mankind as if we were inmates in a prison.

How do angels fight with each other? How was this angel neutralized for 21 days? What difference did it make that Michael helped him? Did Michael have a trick move or bigger biceps?

Vs. 15-19 It seems to me that the normal state of man in the presence of an angel is debilitation. Notice how often the angel has mentioned that Daniel is *greatly loved*.

Vs. 20-21 More interesting information. This angel had to go back and fight with the prince of Persia and when that was done, the prince of Greece was coming. Apparently every nation has a "prince" assigned over it. According to Deuteronomy 32:8-9, *When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. ⁹But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.* Those sons of God are angels. God only kept one nation for Himself to further His redemption of mankind and that nation was Israel. Therefore, God assigned His own "prince" for Israel, the archangel Michael. We don't know who this unnamed angel is, although it is probably Gabriel, but only he and Michael fight for Israel.

Daniel 11:1

As mentioned above, this seems like a parenthetical thought, that this angel began giving spiritual support to Darius back in the first year of his reign. Since this angel fights for Israel, he needed to strengthen Darius for the events surrounding the lion's den, the making of that decree allowing the Jews to worship only Yahweh, and for Cyrus to make the decree for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.

It seems to me, that for us to do our work in the harvest, there must be unseen forces protecting and strengthening us too. Our battle begins in the Word and on our knees. Thankfully, we have the Spirit of God within us.

1 John 2:18-3:6

1 John 2:18-29

Vs. 18-20 John is now directly addressing the issue of false teachers. It seems that what John is saying is that now that we are in the last times, and that the antichrist is coming, little antichrists will arise. Notice that these came from within the church, but John says they were not believers, or they would have stayed in the church.

The anointing by the *Holy One* is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at rebirth.

Vs. 21-25 This is the key issue here. People were denying that Jesus was the Messiah. I don't know if this was a Jewish influence, but obviously you can't have the Father without the Son (John 5:23). The Jews would have been pressing to have the Father, but not Jesus. Though a believer can still be a child of God in disobedience and rebellion to his Father, a person who is religious, but doesn't believe that Jesus is the Christ and Savior, was never in the family.

Vs. 26-29 Notice that everyone is being spoken to as *little children*. I think John is calling on them to live in simplicity of faith and devotion. (See Luke 18:17.) We have read many encouragements to Christians to hold fast to their confession. In both Galatians and Hebrews, there was a call to people to remember that they began in Christ and received salvation through faith in Him. Having begun that way, they needed to hold fast to the teaching they were given at the beginning.

1 John 3:1-6

Vs. 1-3 This is the key to true salvation and following as disciples, knowing the love of God. Of course, this love is seen in and defined by Jesus and the plan of God. John has just called them little children and now he is talking about how they became *children*, by the love of God.

V. 3 This is the yearning as children to be with Christ. I was reading this morning that Jesus told, even warned, His disciples to have their loins girded and their lamps burning and to be like men waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast that they might open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. There should be that yearning and excitement born out of love.

Vs. 4-6 This gets into the gray areas of who is and who isn't saved, but God knows. Paul knew this was a problem in the church and told Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:19, "*The Lord knows those who are his,*" and, "*Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity.*" Paul and Timothy both struggled with this. The sure indicator of true faith is that a believer loves Christ, and though they sin, they keep coming back and asking for forgiveness, and they keep following.

In all we are reading here, you understand the need for good, godly elders in a church who are themselves following Christ in the harvest, and who are shepherds and protectors of the flock. When Paul says elders need to be able to teach, it is not just for making disciples, but for protecting the church.

Psalm 121

In this song of ascents, as the pilgrims were traveling to Jerusalem, because of Jerusalem's height, all roads led up to Jerusalem. In this sense, looking up to the hills was looking toward Jerusalem, to the house and throne of God.

Vs. 1-2 This is easy to say, but trusting it in the storm proves our hearts.

Vs. 3-4 I was just reading about what Jesus said in Luke 12:6, concerning the sparrows, *and not one of them is forgotten before God*. And we are of more value to God than many sparrows.

Vs. 5-8 God is not only our "sunscreen" but also our shield and defender. It's good to know this truth in our heads, but even better when it is in our souls and hearts.

Remember, as the people obeyed God and went to Jerusalem, they often had to leave their homes and possessions unguarded. They needed a protector and God had promised to be that for them.

Proverbs 28:27-28

V. 27 Jesus said that disciples were to give to everyone who begged of them. A disciple shouldn't have an emotional hang-up here.

V. 28 Amen!