

"THE BOOK OF DANIEL" The Vision Of The Seventy Weeks (9:20-27)

INTRODUCTION

1. We come now to one of the most difficult passages of the Old Testament...
2. With such a difficult passage before us, we should ...
 - a. Approach it with humility, and not dogmatically
 - b. Not draw conclusions that would contradict clear teachings of Scripture

I. THE ARRIVAL OF GABRIEL

A. AT THE TIME OF EVENING OFFERING...

1. Even as Daniel was confessing his sin and the sin of his people, and making supplication for the holy mountain of God (i.e., Jerusalem) - **Daniel 9:20-21;**
2. This was the same person seen in the vision at the beginning - cf. **Daniel 8:16;**

B. TO GIVE DANIEL SKILL TO UNDERSTAND...

1. Commanded to do so even at the beginning of Daniel's prayer - **Daniel 9:22-23;**
2. For Daniel was "greatly beloved" - cf. **Daniel 10:11,19;**

II. THE VISION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS

A. A GENERAL STATEMENT OF WHAT IS TO OCCUR...

1. 70 "weeks" are determined for Daniel's people (Israel) and his holy city (Jerusalem) - **Daniel 9:24;**
 - a. The word "weeks" in Hebrew is actually "sevens" (i.e., 70 "sevens")
 - b. Most agree it likely refers to "weeks", but weeks of what?
2. This period of time will be for the fulfillment of six things, each apparently related to the work of the coming Messiah.
 - a. To finish the transgression
 - 1) The marginal reading has "restrain" for "finish"
 - 2) The idea is that Messiah would provide a restraining power and influence which would check the progress of sin (Barnes) - cf. **Acts 3:25-26;**
 - b. To make an end of sins - The idea is that sins will be sealed up, or closed, or hidden, so that they will not be seen, or will not develop themselves (Barnes) - cf. **Acts 3:19;**
 - c. To make reconciliation for iniquity
 - 1) Literally, to cover iniquity 2) How this would be done is not stated here, but cf. **Isaiah 53:5-6,10-12;**
 - d. To bring in everlasting righteousness - 1) Literally, to cause to come 2) To provide a way by which a man could become righteous and holy - cf. **Romans 3:21-26; 2Corinthians 5:21;**
 - e. To seal up the vision and the prophecy

To complete, to finish, meaning the prophecies would be fulfilled (Barnes) 2) Young suggests that it is referring to OT prophecies, especially those related to the work of the Messiah making an end of sin - cf. **Luke 24:44-47;**
 - f. To anoint the Most Holy – John 2:19-22; Acts 4:27; some believe it may refer to the baptism of Jesus when the Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove - **Matthew 3:16-17;**

B. A SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION OF HOW THIS WOULD OCCUR...

1. There shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks - Daniel 9:25;

a. Beginning with the command to restore and build Jerusalem, until Messiah the prince (the street and the wall shall be built, even in troublesome times)

b. At least three possible decrees may serve as the "terminus pro quo" (starting point) of the 70 "weeks"

1) The decree of Cyrus (539-538 BC) - cf. **Ezra 1:1-4**; To rebuild the temple (and the city, cf. **Isaiah 44:26-28; 45:13**)

2) The decree of Artaxerxes (457 BC) - cf. **Ezra 7:13-14** For Ezra to restore the Law and its worship

3) The second decree of Artaxerxes (445-444 BC) - cf. **Nehemiah 2:1-8**;

2. After the 62 weeks, certain events will occur - Daniel 9:26-27;

a. Messiah will be cut off, but not for Himself

b. People of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary

c. For 1 week, he shall confirm a covenant with many

d. In the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering

e. The abomination and desolation to come -

CONCLUSION

1. Such a brief look at this difficult passage will naturally raise many questions, which are beyond the scope of our study

2. For more detailed study, one might consider the following commentaries which provide several alternative views...

a. Commentary on Daniel, Albert Barnes

b. The Prophecy of Daniel, Edward J. Young

c. Commentary on Revelation, Robert F. Harkrider

d. The Book Of Daniel, Jim McGuiggan

e. Exposition Of Daniel, H. C. Leupold

f. The Study Of Last Things, John F. Walvoord

-- Each of these examines the passage from the amillennial perspective, except John F. Walvoord which teaches the "gap theory" favored by dispensational premillennialists.

While the passage is admittedly difficult, let's not lose sight of the wonderful promises concerning the Messiah's work related to sin and righteousness. For Jesus through His death has truly brought an end to the consequences of sin and introduced everlasting righteousness!