

SUNDAY SCHOOL HANDOUT, 3-24-24

DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF SEVENTY WEEKS

- Notes about Daniel chapter 9, Prophecy of Seventy Weeks
- Many Bible commentaries believe that Daniel chapter 9 is the most important chapter in the book of Daniel, and also one of the most important books in the whole Bible.
- Chapters 1-6 of Daniel are historic and chronological. In these chapters, Daniel interpreted dreams for others.
- Chapters 7-12 are visions that Daniel himself received.
- Daniel is now in his mid to late eighties. He has seen a new world empire come to power: the Medes and Persians, who conquered the Babylonian empire in 538 B.C.
- The Medes and Persians were represented in the great statue that Nebuchadnezzar dreamed of as the “breast and arms of silver.”
- Daniel himself provides a timeline for the events in this chapter. He says they happened during the first year of the reign of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, probably around 537 B.C.
- Daniel has been thinking about the future of his people. His concern for the Jews, causes him to turn to the Word of God, and more specifically the writings of Jeremiah.
- Daniel had read Jeremiah's prophecy that the Israelites will be in captivity for seventy years; so he knows the time is almost complete.
- Daniel is a Jew, a captured Israelite living in Babylon. Jeremiah's prophecy about their captivity is very personal to him.
- Daniel's concern for his people, and the power of God's Word, cause Daniel to call out in prayer.
- He prays to God about his people (Jews), their situation, and their future.
- Daniel prays at 3:00 PM, the time for the evening sacrifice/offering at the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Daniel is far away from Jerusalem, and he has been far away for nearly seventy years. Yet, he still faithfully follows the practices of the Jewish faith.
- In verses 1-21, we read about the prayer of Daniel, and in the remaining six verses we read about the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks.
- As Daniel prays, he connects himself with the Israelite people. He prays very specifically about their sins, their transgressions, and failures before the Lord.
- Daniel also recognizes the faithfulness of God, His watchfulness over the nation of Israel, and His covenants with the Jews.
- Daniel asks for the Lord to again deliver the Jews, not because they are worthy, but because God is righteous and merciful.
- Daniel says that while he was speaking in prayer (sounds like he was praying out loud), the Angel Gabriel reached him.
- One commentary said “as Daniel was praying, God told Gabriel, I want you to go give Daniel information and I want you to go now.”
- Another commentary said it takes about three minutes to repeat Daniel's prayer in Hebrew.
- Scripture says Gabriel flew swiftly to Daniel. I'm not sure how far away Heaven is from the earth, but Gabriel made the trip in less than three minutes.
- Gabriel tells Daniel, “at the beginning of your supplications the command went out.”
- God knew Daniel. God knew his heart, and even what he would pray before he prayed it. That is one reason why God would send Gabriel to Daniel as he started to pray.

- J. Vernon McGhee says in his commentary, that Daniel was “greatly beloved” in heaven.
- McGhee says “the believer in Jesus Christ is seen by God as being in Christ. According to Ephesians 1:6 we are accepted in the Beloved—so the believer is loved in heaven because he is in Christ.”
- Gabriel’s job was to help Daniel understand the vision and prophecy.
- In Daniel 9:24, the Angel Gabriel says:

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, 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.”

- The word for week in the Old Testament means “seven.”
- If we substitute the word seven for weeks, the verse says “seventy sevens are determined”
- So, the next question is seventy sevens of what?
- Daniel has been reading in Jeremiah about the seventy years of captivity.
- Daniel was thinking about “years.”
- So, considering the context of this scripture, the subject is years; seventy sevens of years.
- This is very much in agreement with other scripture.
- The Jews are in captivity because they failed to keep the Sabbath year. God had told them in Leviticus 25:3-4

“Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard.”

- In Leviticus 25:8-9, the Bible speaks of the Jubilee year, which comes after seven times seven years (50th year).
- In the Old Testament, the word “seven” was often used to describe not a week of days as we think today, but a week of years.
- One week = One seven = 7 years Seventy weeks = Seventy sevens = 490 years
- Daniel 9:25 says

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

- Nehemiah tells us in chapter 2:1 that in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes reign (444 B.C.), on the first day of Nissan (March 14 on our calendar), the command was given to rebuild the walls.
- Many scholars recognize the timeline for the 483 years described in Daniel 9:25, as beginning with the decree of Artaxerxes.
- The prophecy of Seventy Weeks has three divisions:
 - 1st division, 7 sevens or 49 years, for the rebuilding of Jerusalem
 - 2nd division, 62 sevens or 434 years, was fulfilled in A.D. 33, Palm Sunday, when Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem, and offered Himself as Messiah the King (Zechariah 9:9).
 - A few days later, on Friday before the Passover of A.D. 33 Christ was crucified

- God’s calendar for the Jews “paused” when Christ was rejected and crucified. From then till now, we have been and are living in the “time of the Gentiles.”
- At this point in history (2024), sixty-nine of the seventy weeks of this prophecy have been fulfilled; but the seventieth week is still ahead in the future.
- When the Rapture happens, and the church is caught away, God’s time clock for the Jews will start again, with only the 70th week, the 3rd division of 7 years remaining. .
- In church prophecy, this seven year period is called the Tribulation Period. The last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation are often called the Great Tribulation.
- Daniel 9:26-27 says:

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

- Daniel chapter 9 mentions two princes.
- First, he mentions “Messiah the Prince”, this is Jesus Christ.
- Second, he mentions “the prince who is to come”, this is the little horn, the man of sin, the Antichrist
- Verse 26 says “shall the Messiah be cut off”, this was fulfilled in Christ’s crucifixion
- Verse 26 says “and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary”, this was fulfilled when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in A.D. 70
- Verse 27 says “he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week”, this will be fulfilled in the future, when the Antichrist makes a covenant with the Jews during the Tribulation Period
- Verse 27 says “in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”, this will be fulfilled in the future, when at the mid-point of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will break the covenant he made with the Jews

Daniel’s Prphecy of Seventy Weeks is part of God’s Word, the Bible. God’s Word is without error. Every word is True, and has stood the test of critics for centuries. Every prophecy has come to pass, or is yet to be fulfilled. The responsibility of every believer is to stay ready to meet Christ, to watch and pray, and to walk faithfully in His calling for us.

R. Skidmore

Resources: David Jeremiah’s “The Handwriting on the Wall”,

J. Vernon McGee’s commentary on Daniel, and Pastor Danny Penny’s handout on Daniel’s 70 Weeks