

DANIEL

Chapter 9 – Notes

Summary

Daniel 9 is set in the first year of Darius, connecting it thematically to the vision of Daniel 7, dated to the first year of Belshazzar. In this chapter, Daniel is driven to the Lord in repentant, intercessory prayer—on behalf of both himself and his people—as the period of exile draws to its close. In response to this plea, the Lord reveals that Daniel’s prayer will indeed be answered. He therefore sends the angel Gabriel to explain what is to come, showing how Daniel’s prayer will ultimately find its fulfillment.

Chapter 9 Outline

- Daniel’s Prayer (vv. 1-19)
 - Confession of sin (vv. 5-14)
 - They failed to heed God’s Word in the scriptures and by the prophets.
 - Yahweh has been just in destroying them.
 - Request for redemption (vv. 15-19)
 - They have become a reproach to the nations and a stain on God’s name.
 - Appeal only to God’s compassion
 - Appeal for God to glorify Himself
- Gabriel Brings Understanding (vv. 20-27)
 - Gabriel sent by God (vv. 20-23)
 - Prophecy given (vv. 24-27)
 - Summary of time and events

- Rebuilding the temple
- Coming of Messiah
- Jerusalem and temple destroyed

Notes on the Prayer

- In reviewing the prophetic timeline for the exile laid out by Jeremiah, Daniel has deduced that the time of God's judgement on His people has come to an end.
- Daniel adopts a physical condition which matches and identifies himself with the desolate state of Israel before God (fasting, sackcloth, and ashes).
 - When Gabriel appears, he touches Daniel and restores his strength, mirroring his interaction with him in chapter 8.
 - In this we again see Daniel physically represent the state and future state of the people. Israel is weary and exhausted from judgement, but God is going to revitalize them once more and restore them.
 - Daniel serves as a type of Christ here. He comes before the Lord to plead their cause and deliver them from judgement. And he does this by taking their sin upon himself and humbling himself, even nearly to death, to do so.
- What authority does Daniel have in praying on behalf of all Israel? He is a prophet, and moreover, he has been made a civil ruler over Israel in their exile. Daniel is like a king in this regard. He thus has ability to petition God as a representative of the whole people.
 - In this we note that Christians, who have received the kingdom of God in Christ, likewise carry authority and ability to petition God on behalf of the whole world, for we have been given the world in Christ.

- We see that Daniel is offering this prayer during the time of the evening offering. The evening offering refers to the Tribute offering, which was said to be a memorial offering before the Lord. It was a type of call to God for Him to remember His people, to come and act, to deliver or judge. Thus Daniel's prayer serves as a type of tribute offering to God.
- This whole prayer, as well as the circumstances that Israel finds themselves in, is anticipated in Leviticus 26:14-46. Daniel understands this, and thus makes an appeal to God on the basis of His own promises given in that passage.
- Note that Daniel identifies the importance of acknowledging their sin, confessing it, and repenting of it. Next he appeals to God on the basis of God's own staked reputation and glory, and not on the worthiness of the people. He reminds God of His promises, and His need to be faithful to them, even when the people aren't.
- We also see that Daniel acts in an intercessory role. He comes before God as one who carries favor with the Lord. Daniel pleads on behalf of the people, and manages to accomplish what they presumably could not.
 - This reminds us of Moses, who interceded on behalf of Israel in the wilderness, and ultimately, Christ, who is the great intercessor. Moreover, we are shown an example for how we might pray as Christians on behalf of others.
- Finally, we see that Daniel ultimately appeals to God's loving compassion. He asks for grace, not for justice. He asks for what he knows they don't deserve. This
 - his salvific theme is traced throughout Scripture, and lays the groundwork for understanding the basis of our salvation in Christ. We are saved, not because we

have earned it, but because Christ, the favored one, has successfully appealed to God on our behalf, and secured salvation for us.

Notes on Gabriels Words

- Gabriel is sent by God, and we're told that the command was issued immediately, at the beginning of Dael's prayer.
 - Thus we note that God delights in answering His people when they call, not just after they have met some quota of penance or suffering.

The Prophecy Outline

- Introductory summary of the prophecy (vv. 24)
- Timeline for the rebuilding of the temple and the coming of Christ (vv. 25)
- Timeline for the works of the Christ once He arrives (vv. 26-27)

Interpreting the Prophecy

- A major key to understanding the prophecy is understanding the Hebrew word translated, "weeks." The word literally means, "a set or series of 7." In every day usage, it is commonly used to refer to a week, as in a set of 7 days. However, it could also be used in a range of other contexts, such as a set of 7 years. It might be understood as being akin to the English word, "dozen." Dozen means 12, but we apply it in a variety of contexts. Thus, in this text, we note that "weeks" is referring to a set of 7 years. Therefore, we can also render "70 weeks" as, "70 sets of 7 years." In other words, 490 years.
- With this in mind, we can break out the given times in a more digestible (for us) way.
 - 70 weeks: 490 years
 - 7 weeks: 49 years

- 62 weeks: 434 years
- 1 week: 7 years
- $7+62+1=70$ / $49+434+7=490$
- Thus, we note that Gabriel is giving a definitive timeline/chronology for the events being detailed. From the time of the going out of the decree to rebuild the city and the temple, to the coming of Christ, is 483 years (or 7 weeks + 62 weeks).
- Artaxerxes (Persian king) makes the decree to rebuild all of Jerusalem in 457 BC. It was completed in 49 years (7 weeks). Then, 434 years (62 weeks) on from there, we arrive at 27 AD, Jesus' baptism. Mark 1:15 records Jesus say, "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." The expectations set down in Daniel – the coming of the kingdom of God and this timeline – is fulfilled in Jesus.
- Jesus' baptism and conformation by God concludes the 62 weeks. Next comes the events to transpire in the "1 week" (7 years).
 - In the middle of the week (3-4 years), the Christ is to be cut off and the traditional worship and fellowship offerings will cease. This is seen in Jesus' crucifixion, which sees Him "cut-off," and the old offerings perfectly fulfilled in His one offering. This of course happened roughly 3 years after Jesus' baptism.
 - "He will make a firm covenant with the many" – Many commentators believe this refers to the Jews. During this 1 week (7 years), God will strengthen His relationship to the true Jews, and bring many of them into the perfected covenant with Christ. This is seen in Jesus' and the apostles ministry to the Jews.
 - The final significant detail of the 1 week is the judgement and destruction of the city and temple. This comes at the hands of "the people of the prince," with a

“flood,” war, and other “desecrations” by “abominations.” Many commentators identify this as the judgement and destruction of Jerusalem, the temple, and its leaders in 70 AD, as declared by Christ. The judgement is carried out due to the condemnation brought on it by the preaching of the Apostles, and the Romans, who Christ wielded to His ends. This was a direct result of the wicked priests and leaders, who were “abominations” carrying out “desecrations” (killing Christians).

- But you may have noticed that from the time of Jesus’ baptism and 70 AD is not 7 years! That’s correct. There is a significant gap of about 40 years between the time after Jesus’ resurrection and the anticipated judgement. So what gives?
- Many commentators point to this being a time of merciful delay, a significant theme and example we see throughout the Bible when it comes to anticipated judgement. Rather than exacting judgement promptly, God tarries, so as to allow for an opportunity to repent. We see this in the garden with Adam and Eve, in Jesus’ various parables, and in Peter’s musings in 2 Pet. 3:3-4. It’s not that God has forgotten, or changed His mind, but that He has chosen to delay, so as to buy time for those who might repent.
- Some commentators will name Stephen’s prayer at his stoning (Acts 7) as the catalyst and cause for this delay in judgement.
- Thus, we understand that the totality of Gabriel’s prophecy came to pass, even if there was a delay in the execution of the judgement.

Final Observations

- This chapter is richly communicating the message of the gospel in a veiled sense. We see and understand that God's people are hopelessly sinful, and without any defense. Were it not for God's compassion and lovingkindness, paired with the intercessory work of a righteous representative, we would all stand justly condemned by God. Moreover, we see that our ultimate hope for reconciliation and peace with God lies in the hands of the Christ. The one who came to suffer and be cut off, so as to present Himself as a perfect sacrifice on our behalf's, uniting us to God. Finally, it is the Christ who holds the power and authority to bring judgement on His enemies.