

God's plan for Israel – Part 1

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[0 : 00] Good morning. It is a blessed morning. And we are privileged to again gather on the first day of the week to be encouraged to be under His Word.

And so we welcome all of you. We have some guests with us as well. And may the Lord bless you. This morning we have requests for people dying, people sick.

We've had praise items for weddings. And no baby announcements of new life. But yet, the extremes, right?

Life ending here and life beginning and marriage beginning. And it only makes sense as we see God's eternal plan.

And we look at what God has in store for humanity, for those that love Him, and then we can rest with the different stages and be at peace with it.

[1 : 22] And so that's one of the comforts that God gives us, that understanding. We're back to the book of Daniel this morning as we continue the series on eschatology, end times.

And we had looked at chapters 7, chapters 2 and 7 in the last messages, and we saw God's revealing of the human governments that would come upon this world, beginning with the Babylonians in power, followed by the Medes and the Persians, and then the Greeks, and then lastly, the Roman Empire, and then ultimately, God's kingdom, which will be established.

This morning, as we look at our passage from Daniel 9, we're going to see and look at the life of Daniel a little more closely and some of the things he's gone through.

How would you like to outlive five different kings? This is Daniel.

We're kind of in a bad way that way because Queen Elizabeth lived for a long time. And so to outlive her was hard. But nevertheless, as we look at Daniel, when he was taken into captivity in 605 before Christ, under Nebuchadnezzar, the Roman emperor, not the Roman, the Babylonian king, he went through as a wise man, as an advisor to the kings.

[3 : 25] He outlived three Babylonian kings. And then as we transferred into stage two of human government, the Medes and the Persians, he lived into the second king of the Medes.

And that's where our story takes place today. And so he has been an advisor to many rulers in that kingdom for a long, long period of time.

And so our story begins in the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes.

So we have now moved from the Babylonian kingdom into the second one, the Medes and the Persians. And the first year of King Darius was in the year 538 before Christ.

And if you do the math, from 605 to 538, up with 67 years. 67 years, Daniel has been a captive, a servant, an advisor.

[4 : 48] And now he is, the vision that he has in this chapter. So if he was 20 years old when he was taken to captivity, that means he would be Mr. Tychrope's age.

And he is well in his 80s. Most scholars think he was somewhere in his later teens as he was taken captive.

And so he would be well in his 80s as God is now revealing to him. So that's a little bit of a backdrop. And so in his old age, Daniel is reading the scriptures.

He's meditating and he calls to mind the plan of God and what God has promised for his people. And we're going to read a few verses here again.

In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

[6 : 21] So he's reading God promised through Jeremiah that there would be 70 years accomplished where Jerusalem would be desolate or destroyed, forsaken, empty.

70 years. And now, remember, how many years had he been in captivity? 67. So it's almost expired the 70 years that the Lord had promised.

And then, I set my face toward the Lord God to make requests by prayer and with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

And we'll break there. And so Daniel is turning to the Lord as he's reading the scriptures as the prophet Jeremiah has written.

So interestingly, Jeremiah is still alive when Jerusalem is taken captive. He witnesses it.

[7 : 32] In fact, he writes the book of Lamentations which is a lament or almost like a funeral dirge over the city.

Sadness as he sees what happens. And so, in the meantime, Jeremiah has gone home to be with the Lord and now Daniel is reading his words that God spoke through Daniel.

And 70 years of desolation are upon your people. And so as we look at that 70 years, I think we're going to have a little bit of history here this morning.

why 70 years of desolation upon Israel? And let's look at a few scriptures just to glean that.

Leviticus chapter 26. Leviticus chapter 26. And verses 31. 31 to 35.

[8 : 46] And so Leviticus is written as they're in the wilderness before they enter the land of Canaan, the promised land so to speak. And here in this chapter they are warned about the consequences if they disobey God.

So it's before they enter the land and so it's probably 900 years prior to Daniel's time.

And so let's read verse 31. I will lay your city's waste sanctuaries to desolation and I will not smell the fragrance of your sweet aromas.

I will bring the land to desolation and your enemies who dwell in it shall be astonished at it. I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you.

Your land shall be desolate and your cities waste and then the land shall enjoy its sabbaths as long as it lies desolate and you are in your enemy's land.

[10 : 00] Then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbaths. As long as it lies desolate it shall rest. For the time it did not rest on your sabbaths when you dwelt in it.

And so back in the law what had God commanded them as far as anyone know? So every seventh year they were forbidden to sow a crop and they were to leave it lay fallow or empty and let grow naturally what would grow and it would be a year where they would not reap or harvest and it was a year where where the poor and the strangers could go and glean.

And God said I will provide for you that you have enough to cover two years the year before that. And so now that was that was the command every seventh year to let the land lay fallow or empty to allow it to go back to nature.

And obviously the children of Israel forgot disobeyed and did not do that. The next passage 2nd Chronicles So if you have your scriptures turn with me 2nd Chronicles 36 verse 20 and 21 2nd Chronicles 36 verse 20 and those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath to fulfill 70 years.

So 70 years of Sabbaths every seventh year 70 times 7 is 490 and if we add 490 to 605 we go up to close to the year 1100 before Christ and it's exactly that time frame when the kings started King Saul and from there on during the reign of the kings they have disobeyed and not kept the land Sabbath or the kept the Sabbath Jerusalem was truly a beautiful place the temple was magnificent rulers people came from all around to look to see the blessings of

[13 : 29] God upon his people and he warned if you do not obey me I will destroy I will make desolate all the beauty and I will take you into captivity and lo and behold that is what happened and so we see God's faithfulness in his promises nothing that he says will remain undone everything is fulfilled even details about keeping the land at rest every Sabbath or every seventh year the Lord finds a way or has a way to make that happen let's turn to the book of

Jeremiah and read a few verses there as well Jeremiah chapter 25 Jeremiah 25 11 and 12 he says and this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years and it will come to pass when seventy years are completed that I'll punish the king of Babylon and that nation the land of the Chaldeans for their iniquity says the Lord and it will make it a perpetual desolation and then chapter twenty nine Daniel twenty nine and one verse there verse ten twenty nine verse ten for thus the

Lord says the Lord after seventy years are completed at Babylon I will visit you and perform my good word toward you and cause you to return to this place so now you know what Daniel is meditating on he is reading these scriptures and and he realizes the time has come where God will cause my people to return back to Israel out of captivity to rebuild that city so let's go back to the book of Daniel I'll start again in verse two his reign

I Daniel understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem and then I set my face toward the Lord God to make requests by prayer and supplications with fasting sackcloth and ashes and I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession and said O Lord great and awesome God who keeps his covenant and mercy with those who love him and with those who keep his commandments we have sinned and committed iniquity we have done wickedly and rebelled even by departing from your precepts and your judgments and so Daniel as he's reading and he realizes what's happening and and he brings the nation of

Israel the Jewish race before God on his knees and he confesses Lord we are guilty we are guilty we have done exactly what you warned us not to do and we have suffered the consequences and so Daniel right through 19 the passage that Dale read is describing Daniel's prayer and his request for God to forgive for God to restore back to them as he has promised so Daniel is putting faith God will keep his promises he will keep his promises this morning we heard in the children's story that God is preparing a place for us

[18 : 53] Jesus told the disciples he told the church sure it's the hope of every believer as we look forward to that I'm going to skip down to verses verse 17 and Daniel 9 as Daniel finishes his prayer now therefore our God hear the prayer of your servant and his supplications and for the

Lord's sake cause your face to shine in your sanctuary which is desolate or empty oh my God in your ear and hear open your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by your name for we do not present our supplications before you because of our righteous deeds but because of your great mercies he's appealing to God to listen to restore not based on our righteousness but Lord on yours on your mercies not on our basis and so is Daniel Daniel is beloved of the Lord it's very clear he has a deep relationship with his father that he can pray like this with confidence with understanding and we may look at

Daniel as a superhero of scripture and he is he is highlighted in scripture for his faithfulness and yet each and every one of us can have that same relationship the same depth with God in fact this is the Lord's desire that we can pray with confidence with understanding but we too like Daniel need to commit to being in the word to grow to understand what the plan of God is and that gives us the ability to pray with that kind of confidence verse 19 O Lord hear O Lord forgive O Lord listen and act do not delay for your own sake my

God for your city and your people are called by your name so in a sense what is Daniel saying God your reputation is on the line God you promised and for your name sake and for your people's name sake for they bear your name I'm calling to memory not that God needed to be reminded but Daniel is sharply aware and he's praying he's revealing requesting so that's the backdrop to God's next revealing revelation to the Jewish people and it's it's a very important prophecy this morning as we're going to touch into it so verses 20 through 23 is God's response and let's move on and read that now while I was speaking praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people

Israel and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the for the holy mountain of my God yes while I was speaking in prayer the man Gabriel whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning being caused to fly swiftly reached me about the time of the evening offering so as Daniel is praying requesting God sends the angel Gabriel and the angel Gabriel reaches him it says in the evening with a response with an answer that's an amazing as God reflecting responding in that way to Daniel to send an angel with a message and he informed me and talked with me and said oh

[24 : 33] Daniel I have now come forth to give you skill to understand at the beginning of your supplications the command went out and I have come to tell you for you are greatly beloved therefore consider the matter and understand the vision and so the angel is now going to reveal the verses 24 to 27 which is a prophecy of the future of Israel so what has Daniel been doing he is contemplating what's in store for Israel we've been in captivity for 70 years God has promised to take us back what's going to happen and so now God sends a messenger to tell him what is in store for his people so let's read the next four verses 24 through 27 and we won't get through it this morning but we'll introduce it it's one of the most prophecies regarding

Israel in the Old Testament 70 weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city to finish the transgression to make an end of sins to make reconciliation for iniquity to bring in everlasting righteousness to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the prince there shall be seven weeks the street shall be built and again there shall be seven weeks and sixty two weeks the street shall be built again and the wall even in troublesome times and after the sixty two weeks

Messiah shall be cut off and not for himself and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary the end of it shall be with a flood until the end of the war desolations are determined and he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week but in the middle of the week he will bring an end to sacrifices and offering and on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate even until the consummation which is determined is poured out on the desolate so a few thoughts here as we as our time is running short this morning but he starts off with this prophecy and he says 70 weeks are determined upon your people and your holy city now who is

Daniel's people the Jews this is a prophecy that God is speaking that will take place for the Jewish people by the way in scripture in the whole theme of scriptures God has a program as he's working with the Jewish people from the calling of Abraham right to the second coming of Christ the return of Christ he has a program for his people the Jewish people the church is not part of that program and the church is a second program that is played in between in an interlude in the Jewish program and we need to understand that that we don't mix the two up and that there are some prophecies that belong what

God is going to accomplish through the Jews and some through the church and so as we study scripture we need to be clear on that and so this is upon the Jewish program so 70 weeks and in the Hebrew it literally means 77 77 are determined upon your and your holy city so it's for the Jews and it's for Jerusalem and 77 are determined upon them and so the question that then comes up 77 of what 77 of what and of course again 70 times 7 is 490 and so is it days is it hours is it weeks months years what is

[30 : 10] God referring to here and in in this passage we are not told we are not told history tells us and and the last week scripture tells us and so the passage the passage is broken down into three sections there is first seven weeks and then there is six and then there is the last week the 70th week and that's in in our scripture that I just read so the first seven weeks or seven times seven 49 and then there's 62 times seven which is a bigger number can't calculate that fast and then the last week is seven and so we know from scriptures that this is referring to years not to months or days or little weeks but to years it corresponds also to the years of 70 that they were in captivity the unit there is years and also the 70th week is spelled out in scripture both in

Daniel and repeatedly as seven physical literal years and so we know this prophecy is 70 times seven years 490 years are determined upon the people Israel and that's important for us to clue in on in the next message I'm going to reveal further scriptures that prove that but as we close this morning he gives the purpose in verse 24 for this time period for these 490 years and he says 70 weeks are determined and then he gives the points of what what is its purpose and there's six of them he says to finish the transgression to make an end of to make reconciliation for iniquity to bring in everlasting righteousness to seal up vision and prophecy and lastly to anoint the most holy the first three have a negative context and they and they're referring to our sin problem our disobedience problem so to finish the transgression and so remember this is written to the

Jews and to finish the transgression it is a reference to Israel's continuing disobedience to bring that to an end Israel's disobedience to make an end of sins and so more specifically our sinful nature and that that sin needs to be judged and punished and so he says this time frame is given in which all of these things will come to an end thirdly to make reconciliation for iniquity and reconciliation is atonement it's so it's to cover our sins to cover them up Jesus

Christ has started that process he came and he died for our sins but in the Jewish context they are still living in disobedience to this day in rejecting their Messiah for the church age this is fulfilled but in the Jewish context all six of these are unfulfilled and it will only happen as the Lord Jesus comes back down to set up his kingdom let's look at the last three bring in everlasting righteousness and so that is the reference to the millennial kingdom a kingdom of righteousness where Jesus will be king to seal up vision and prophecy and all prophecy will come to fulfillment at the return of

Christ so the Bible will be fulfilled when Jesus comes back and then lastly to anoint the most holy and I understand that as a reference to anoint Jesus as king here as he sets up his kingdom so all six of these in the context are yet unfulfilled and he says 70 weeks of years are determined for your people to bring this to pass I'm going to bring or quickly mention the time frames of this and then we'll close and leave the details for next time the first seven weeks of years or seven times seven started the clock when

[36 : 46] Nehemiah was sent out to rebuild Jerusalem and in verse 25 says know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the prince there shall be seven weeks and Nehemiah went out in the year 445 before Christ back to Israel to rebuild and so the clock started there the first seven weeks or 49 years was a time of rebuilding Jerusalem and it says even in troublesome times and if you read the book of Nehemiah you know it was troublesome there was troublesome times the second section after 62 weeks the

Messiah shall be cut off but not for himself so the first the seven and then the 62 times seven and if you add them up we have 69 times seven years which is 483 and after 483 years Messiah shall be cut off and in that prophecy works out to a poem Sunday to the day where Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to die 483 years later from the day Nehemiah was sent God is precise God is precise and this scripture is thus fulfilled and then we have the last week of years left and we have a delay in time because that week of years as is described where a covenant will be made where the antichrist will come out never been fulfilled and so next in the next message we're going to look at that in detail and how

God will bring that about as well so as we close here this morning a lot of this is history and yet our faith our faith grows as we get to know God in the past his faithfulness his his preciseness and his ability to keep everything yet to come with the exact same preciseness he had back there and as I as I study Old Testament as you study Old Testament our God grows bigger and bigger and bigger as we understand him this is right it is honorable it is awesome he must increase decrease and as we fit these things together that's what happens in our hearts and our souls may the

Lord bless you and by all means feel free to study up and to read I encourage you to do that so that you're prepared for what's to come if you want to know about the 70th week read Daniel or Daniel Revelations chapter chapter 12 Daniel chapter 12 and we'll touch into that next time Revelations chapter 12 let us pray in closing Lord we stand in awe this morning as we look back at Old Testament scriptures we look back at the calling of your people through Abraham the promises made through him the promises made through

Moses while yet in the wilderness and in Daniel's time the fulfillment of much of that the accuracy Lord of your prophecies we marvel at that Lord may your kingdom come as we anticipate the return of Christ we know it's sure we know it will be glorious and it will be a time of righteousness which we all long for Lord let each one of us anticipate your coming to your glory in Jesus name amen