

# **Daniel**

## **From Confession to Consultation**

Lesson #10 for March 7, 2020

Scriptures: Daniel 9; Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10; 2 Kings 19:15-19; Matthew 5:16; James 5:16.

1. Daniel 9 contains one of the great prayers of the Bible. The entire chapter is Daniel's prayer and God's response. Daniel was praying because he had studied the prophecies found in Jeremiah 25:11-12 and 29:10 in which God had told Jeremiah that the time of exile in Babylon would be 70 years. Daniel recognized that that time period was about to come to an end.
2. Ten years earlier, Daniel had been given the message we now find in Daniel 8 regarding the ram and the he-goat. At the end of that prophecy, Daniel was told: "It will continue for 2,300 evenings and mornings, during which sacrifices will not be offered. Then the Temple will be restored." (Daniel 8:14, *GNB*\*) At the time, it made Daniel sick because he could not understand it. Was God really going to delay the coming of His kingdom for many years?
3. Daniel was still studying the Scriptures available to him to try to determine what that prophecy meant.

**Daniel 9:1-2:** Darius the Mede, who was the son of Xerxes, ruled over the kingdom of Babylonia. <sup>2</sup>In the first year of his reign, I was studying the sacred books and thinking about the 70 years that Jerusalem would be in ruins, according to what the LORD had told the prophet Jeremiah.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation\** (2nd ed., Daniel 9:1-2). New York: American Bible Society.

4. By a careful study of the chronology, we can determine that this prayer was offered in 539 B.C.—the very year that the Medo-Persian Empire replaced Babylonia. Daniel felt certain that something very important for the Jewish people was about to happen. But, he also recognized that the sins of God's people were continuing to "pile up."
5. Read Leviticus 26:14-45. Did Daniel have access to many of the Old Testament scrolls? If so, how do you think he got them? Jeremiah did his writing in Jerusalem or maybe even in Egypt. How would those scrolls have reached Daniel? There was no "mail service" in those days.
6. As a young student in Jerusalem, it is very likely that Daniel carefully studied the book of Leviticus. Had he memorized it? How carefully are we studying God's Word in order to understand what the implications are for our time?
7. Read Daniel 9:3-19. This is an incredible prayer of intercession. Daniel recognized how sinful his people had been, and he included himself among the sinners. But, he also recognized that God's name was being mocked because of the condition of His people. **Most of all, Daniel wanted God's reputation to be defended.**
8. Daniel was not asking for an explanation of his peoples' sins. He was fully aware of them! He was still trying to understand the details of the prophecy in Daniel 8. He recognized that only God could answer the questions that he had. And he appealed to God's grace.

**Daniel 9:17-19:** <sup>17</sup>"O God, hear my prayer and pleading. Restore your Temple, which has been destroyed; restore it so that everyone will know that you are God. <sup>18</sup>Listen to us, O God; look at us, and see the trouble we are in and the suffering of the city that bears your name. We are praying to you because you are merciful, not because we have done right. <sup>19</sup>Lord, hear us. Lord, forgive us. Lord, listen to us, and act! In order that everyone will know that you are God, do not delay! This city and these people are yours."—*Good News Bible*.\*

9. How many of us like Daniel are praying for God's reputation? Daniel was not the only one who appealed for something to be done to protect God's reputation. See 2 Kings 19:15-19. Elijah

also pleaded for God's people and for the LORD to bring rain. He not only prayed for it, but he also took action, directly challenging Jezebel's 850 prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. And God's reputation was resoundingly upheld. Look also at the prayer of Hezekiah (Isaiah 37:16-20) when Jerusalem was surrounded by the Assyrian army and Sennacherib through his messenger directly challenged God.

10. We do not have recorded in Scripture either in the book of Daniel or any other reference to him that Daniel committed any sins. Of course, we know that he was a sinner like the rest of us. But, Daniel did not hold himself aloof from his people. He continually referred to himself, along with the Jewish people as having done wrong. See **Daniel 9:5-14**.

11. There are other incredibly important prayers that followed the same pattern in many respects. See the prayers of Moses recorded in Exodus 32:11-14 and Numbers 14:13-19.

12. Are there reasons why we should be praying similar prayers in our day?

**James 5:16:** <sup>16</sup>So then, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you will be healed. The prayer of a good person has a powerful effect.—*Good News Bible*.\*

13. Don't you wish we could have access to all of Daniel's prayers over the previous 10 years? Surely, this prayer was not the first time he had prayed about that subject. Furthermore, it is very unlikely that the entire prayer is recorded. We can be reasonably certain that in his three times a day, praying with his windows open toward Jerusalem, Daniel had developed a very close relationship with God.

14. Daniel's intercession for his people was in some ways like the intercession offered by Christ Himself. But, there is one significant difference: Christ was God, and He never sinned. (Hebrews 4:15; 7:26-27) Nevertheless, as we know, Jesus identified Himself with our sins.

**Hebrews 7:26-27:** <sup>26</sup> Jesus, then, is the High Priest that meets our needs. He is holy; he has no fault or sin in him; he has been set apart from sinners and raised above the heavens. <sup>27</sup>**He is not like other high priests; he does not need to offer sacrifices every day for his own sins first and then for the sins of the people. He offered one sacrifice, once and for all, when he offered himself.**—*Good News Bible*.\*†

If you would gather together everything that is good and holy and noble and lovely in man and then present the subject to the angels of God as acting a part in the salvation of the human soul or in merit, the proposition would be rejected as treason.—Ellen G. White, *Faith and Works*\* 24.

15. What do these words teach us about our need for an Intercessor?

16. What work was to be done within the 70-week period? Why can only Jesus accomplish it?

**Daniel 9:21-27:** <sup>21</sup> 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. <sup>22</sup> And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. <sup>23</sup> 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:

<sup>24</sup> **"Seventy 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.**

<sup>25</sup> “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 sixty-two weeks;  
The street shall be built again, and the wall,  
Even in troublesome times.

<sup>26</sup> “And after the sixty-two weeks  
Messiah shall be cut off, but 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,  
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

<sup>27</sup> Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;  
But in the middle of the week  
He shall bring an end to sacrifice 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.”—*The New King James Version*.\* (1982). (Daniel  
9:21–27). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.†

17. The language used in these verses may be confusing to us. But, there are six very important things mentioned in these verses:

1. “To finish the transgression.” The Hebrew word for “transgression” (*pasha*) suggests the willful violations by an inferior against a superior (*for example, Prov. 28:24*). This word also occurs in the Bible with regard to open defiance of God by humans (*Ezek. 2:3*). Through the blood of Jesus, however, rebellion against God is quashed, and humans are offered the merits that flow from Calvary. [What does this mean? Do we receive Jesus’s “merits”?]

2. “To make an end of sins.” The verb carries the meaning of “to seal,” and here it means that sin is forgiven. Since the Fall, the human race has been unable to live up to God’s standards, but the Messiah will take care of our failures.

3. “To make reconciliation for iniquity.” As Paul says: “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross” (*Col. 1:19, 20, NKJV*). Here, too, only Jesus can bring about this reality.

4. “To bring in everlasting righteousness.” Christ took our place on the cross and thereby bestowed upon us the blessed condition of “being right” with God. Only by faith can we receive this righteousness that comes from God.

5. “To seal up vision and prophecy.” When Christ offered Himself in sacrifice, the Old Testament prophecies that pointed to His atoning work were sealed up in the sense that they were fulfilled.

6. “And to anoint the Most Holy.” The Most Holy mentioned here is not a person

but a place. So, the statement refers to the anointing of the heavenly sanctuary as Christ was inaugurated there as our great High Priest (*Heb. 8:1*).—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Wednesday, March 4.<sup>‡§</sup>

18. Why do you think God gave Daniel that confusing message in Daniel 8 and waited 10 years to give Daniel the key information to understand it?
19. This is a very important passage to Seventh-day Adventists. We began to see the importance of it after the careful study of William Miller in the 1820s and 1830s during which time he determined that the 70-week prophecy was linked to the 2,300-year prophecy by being “cut off” from it. Something can only be “cut off” from either the beginning or the end of something else. And Daniel was told that:

According to the biblical text, the 70 weeks are “determined,” or “cut off.” This indicates that the time period of 490 years has been cut from a larger time period; that is, from the 2,300 years designated in the vision of chapter 8. It follows from this that the 2,300 years and the 490 years must have the same starting point, namely, 457 B.C.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Thursday, March 5.

20. Having been confused and even having felt sick for 10 years, how do you think Daniel felt as he was beginning to see what that prophecy meant? The 70-week prophecy is divided into three sections. A 7-week section, a 62-week section, and then the very important 70<sup>th</sup> week.

The seven weeks (49 years) most likely refer to the time during which Jerusalem will be rebuilt. After these seven weeks, there will be 62 weeks (434 years) leading to “Messiah the Prince” (*Dan. 9:25*). Thus, 483 years after Artaxerxes’s decree, that is, in the year A.D. 27, Jesus the Messiah is baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit for His Messianic mission.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Thursday, March 5.<sup>§</sup>

**Daniel 9:25:** Note this and understand it: from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem, until God’s chosen leader comes, seven times seven years will pass. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defences, and will stand for seven times sixty-two years, but this will be a time of troubles.—*Good News Bible*.\*

During the seventieth week, other crucial events will take place: (1) “Messiah shall be cut off” (*Dan. 9:26, NKJV*), which refers to the death of Christ. (2) The Messiah “shall confirm a covenant with many for one week” (*Dan. 9:27, NKJV*). This is the special mission of Jesus and the apostles to the Jewish nation. It is undertaken during the last “week,” from A.D. 27 to 34. (3) “But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering” (*Dan. 9:27, NKJV*). Three and a half years after His baptism (that is, in the middle of the week), Jesus brings the sacrificial system to an end—in the sense that it no longer has any more prophetic significance—by offering Himself as the final and perfect sacrifice of the New Covenant, thus voiding the need for any more animal sacrifices. The last week of the 70-week prophecy ends in A.D. 34, when Stephen is martyred and the gospel message begins to reach not only the Jews but the Gentiles, as well [because intense persecution started in and around Jerusalem. (*Acts 8:1*) However, the message did not really begin to be spread to the Gentiles until some time later. (See *Acts 11:19-26*.)]—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Thursday, March 5.<sup>‡§</sup>

21. As far as we know, William Miller, one of the main movers in the advent movement in the early 1800s, was the first one to work out the details of the 2,300-year-day prophecy. From 457 B.C. down to 34 A.D., is a period of 490 years or 70 weeks/490 days. Then, from 34 A.D. to 1844 A.D.

is a period of 1810 years, thus completing the 2,300 years.

**2,300 days (2,300 years)**

490 years                      1,810 years

457 B.C.-----34 A.D.-----1844

22. Seventh-day Adventists are looking forward to the second coming of Jesus. But, we do not have a 70-year prophecy like Daniel had to determine when that event will happen. We have often boastfully claimed that we have the truth. Do we feel superior to others for this reason? Would Jesus have something to say to us as He did to Simon at his feast as recorded in Luke 7:40-47?
23. What is so amazing in that story is the fact that Mary was Simon's niece, and he had led Mary into sin. Mary's life of sin probably began with that incest which led her all the way to demon possession. (See *The Desire of Ages* 558.4-563.0.) But, there is more to this story.

Christ might have extinguished every spark of hope in Mary's soul, but He did not. The Heart-searcher read the motives that led to her actions, and He also saw the spirit that prompted Simon's words. "Seest thou this woman?" He said to him; she is a sinner; "I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven."

**Those present, thinking of Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead by Christ, and who was at this time a guest in his uncle's house, began to question, saying, "Who is this that forgiveth sins also?" But Christ continued, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."**—Ellen G. White, *Signs of the Times*,\* May 9, 1900, par. 14-15.† Compare *Daughters of God* 239.3-4.

24. The reading of Scripture was central to Daniel's prayer and his hope. Because of his trust in God, he was sure that the Jewish people would soon be rescued from their exile. Daniel's importunate prayers to God led to the information we have in this chapter which is so important to Seventh-day Adventists. If we were praying in the same way as Daniel was, would God reveal further things to us? Are we coming "boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need"? (Hebrews 4:16, *NKJV*\*)
25. Daniel waited 10 years for an answer to his questions. The Hebrew of this passage makes it very clear that he was particularly concerned about the 2,300 evenings and mornings. Daniel was getting old. Nearly 70 years had passed since he had been taken into Babylonian captivity. He was pleading with God not only for an answer to his prayers, but also for something to be done for Jerusalem and Judea. We can be quite sure that Daniel was aware not only of the passage in Leviticus 26:40-44 but also of the blessings and curses as recorded in the rest of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 7; 27:11-26; 28; and 30. Had Daniel memorized "The Books of Moses" while back in Jerusalem?
26. This prayer obviously focused on the condition of God's people in exile in Daniel's day. With how many of his fellow Hebrews did Daniel have an opportunity to interact?
27. In light of what we have learned in this lesson, should we continue to pray for God's people in our day?
28. **Even more important, what are we praying for, doing, and witnessing about to vindicate God's character? The great controversy cannot come to an end until these issues are resolved.**
29. Let us review the very important aspects of what we have studied (Note that I have omitted the first section because it is not directly related to this question.):

Second, this prophecy is given within a chronological framework of 70 weeks

(70 x 7 = 490), which is tantamount to 10 jubilees (10 x 49). The emphasis on the number seven may indicate the perfect salvation to be accomplished through the Messiah. Moreover, this prophetic timetable indicates that God knows the future and acts within space-time to carry out His saving plan.

Third, Gabriel comes to make Daniel “understand the vision” (*Dan. 9:23, NKJV*). The verb “understand” points back to Daniel 8, which concluded with Daniel’s not understanding the vision (*Dan. 8:27*). The word “vision” (*mar’eh*) is the same Hebrew word employed to designate the appearance of the two angelic beings and the cleansing of the sanctuary after 2,300 evenings and mornings (*Dan. 8:13, 14*).

Fourth, the prophecy of Daniel 9 provides a crucial piece of information to understand the beginning of the 2,300 evenings and mornings and, therefore, ascertain its end. According to Gabriel, 70 weeks are “determined”; this Hebrew verb means “cut,” which implies that the 70 weeks are cut, or severed, from a larger period. So, both prophecies have the same starting point, which is “the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem” (*Dan. 9:25, NKJV*). This command refers to the decree of Artaxerxes in 457 B.C. authorizing the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem (*Ezra 7*).

Fifth, the 70 weeks (490 years) started in 457 B.C. and ended in A.D. 34. The events that would take place during the last week took place as predicted. At the beginning of the week, Jesus the Messiah made His public appearance, being baptized by John the Baptist (A.D. 27). In the middle of the week Jesus was crucified (A.D. 31). And at the end of the week (and of the 490 years), the martyrdom of Stephen propelled the gospel message to be taken to the Gentiles.

Sixth, another crucial event that would occur during the seventh week was the anointing of the “Most Holy” (*qodesh qodashim*), which refers to the inauguration of the heavenly sanctuary when Christ ascended to heaven in A.D. 31 and commenced His intercessory ministry there. This sanctuary must be the heavenly one because the Jerusalem temple had ceased to have saving relevance in A.D. 31 when Jesus’ death made the sacrificial system no longer effective. [This is not accepted by any other group except SDAs.]

Seventh, because 457 B.C. also is the starting point of the 2,300 evenings and mornings, the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary announced in Daniel 8:13, 14 must have begun in 1844. In that year, Christ entered the Most Holy Place in order to carry out the investigative judgment.

Eighth, amid the complexity of the prophetic figures and other details, let us not lose sight of Jesus. The events described by the prophecy culminate in the atoning work of the Messiah and indeed would benefit not only Israel but also the whole world. So, Daniel received much more than he asked for. How often God does the same for us! He can answer our prayers in ways that exceed our expectations.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* 134-135.‡

30. All these biblical time prophecies are now in the past. We can spell them out in detail. Daniel waited 10 years to get the answers we have studied in this lesson. How patient are we in waiting for the second coming? How vigorously are we working to intercede for God’s people in our day and especially for the very important reputation of God?

© 2019, Kenneth Hart, MD, MA, MPH. Permission is hereby granted for any noncommercial use of these materials. Free distribution of all or of a portion of this material such as to a Bible study class is encouraged. \*Electronic version. †Bold type is added. ‡Text in brackets is added. §Italic type is in the source.

[Info@theox.org](mailto:Info@theox.org)

Last Modified: February 8, 2020

Z:\My Documents\WP\SSTG-Hart\Daniel\SS-10-Daniel-2020\_03\_09-Fin+.wpd