DANIEL 9

The Prayer & the Seventy Weeks

Daniel 9 — A Deep Dive

> *"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*
> DANIEL 9:24

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · THREE VOICES: TSARFATI · MACARTHUR · GUZIK

The Book open, the knees bent

DANIEL 9:2

in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

THE BOOK OPEN, THE KNEES BENT

The year is five thirty-nine B.C. The first year of Darius the Mede.

THE ORIGINAL **From 605 BC the seventy years are almost up — and Babylon has just been punished, as Jeremiah said.**

“We,” not “they”

DANIEL 9:4

I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,

“WE,” NOT “THEY”

The prayer opens with who God is. Great.

THE CURSE, KEPT TO THE LETTER

The exile was not bad luck. Daniel says God confirmed His words.

MERCY, NOT MERIT

Here is the climax of the prayer, and it has not a word of merit in it. Not on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.

THE ORIGINAL **Rachamim — the plural of “womb.” Great compassions.**

At the hour of the evening offering

DANIEL 9:21

while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.

AT THE HOUR OF THE EVENING OFFERING

While I was still speaking. Before Daniel got past Alas, O Lord, the answer was dispatched.

Seventy sevens

DANIEL 9:24

"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

SEVENTY SEVENS

Daniel asked about seventy years. God answers with seventy weeks.

SIXTY-NINE WEEKS TO THE MESSIAH

From the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince. Seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.

CUT OFF, AND HAVE NOTHING

After the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off. Yikkaret.

THE SEVENTIETH WEEK

He will make a firm covenant with the many for one week. Who is he?

THE ORIGINAL **Nechtak — "cut." The word occurs only here in the Hebrew Bible.**

What to carry from this chapter

1. The chapter is a prayer before it is a prophecy. Prophecy understood is prophecy prayed.

2. “Righteousness belongs to You … to us open shame.” Five verbs, no excuses, no mention of Babylon.

3. Mercy, not merit. Rachamim is the only ground of prayer — that is what praying in Jesus’ name means.

4. The answer left heaven at Daniel’s first word, at the hour of the evening offering — the hour the Messiah would die.

More to carry

5 Seventy years answered with seventy sevens — 490 years cut out (nechtak) for “your people and your holy city.”

6 Sixty-nine weeks landed on the Messiah to the day; Jerusalem was held accountable for not knowing it (Luke 19:44).

7 The Messiah is cut off before the temple falls — cross c. AD 32/33, temple AD 70. Any Messiah still awaited is too late.

8 The seventieth week is still future, and the desolator’s end is already decreed. God finishes the sentence.

Talk it through

1. Three questions for your table this week. Daniel read a promise about to be fulfilled and responded with fasting and prayer, not a chart. What does God's Word usually produce in you?

2. Daniel, who never bowed to an idol, prayed, we have sinned. Where are you praying they prayers when God is waiting for a we?

3. And what are you quietly bringing to God as merit, when mercy is the only ground you have, and it is enough?

CLOSING

An old man opened the Book, counted the years, and prayed, for Your own sake. And before he finished, heaven had sent the calendar. Seventy sevens to the Messiah, to the cross, and to the end. Sixty-nine have been kept to the day. The God who keeps His word to the year keeps it to the day.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study, reflection journal and film: see the Daniel study page.