DISCOVERING DANIEL

9c
LESSON

WORKBOOK STUDY COMPANION · LESSON 9C

Seventy Weeks *All Accounted For*

DANIEL 9:25-27

Scripture written out in the NASB95, every question answered in one sentence, cross references, verse-by-verse commentary from three trusted teachers — and for each question, a point of critical thinking and a key question to carry into the week.

Amir Tsarfati
DISCOVERING DANIEL

John MacArthur
GRACE TO YOU

David Guzik
ENDURING WORD

01 CAPTURE THE SCENE

What do I see?

Using my Bible, working through Daniel 9:25-27 verse by verse. Remember that "weeks" here refers to weeks of years.

1 According to verse 25, what event will mark the beginning of the first "seven weeks and sixty-two weeks" of this prophecy?

DAN. 9:25

Daniel 9:25 NASB95

"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

IN MY WORDS

The countdown starts at the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem — not at Daniel's prayer, and not at the first return from exile.

CROSS REFERENCE **Nehemiah 2:5** "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." — the request that produced a decree to rebuild the city itself.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati insists the starting point has to be a decree about the city, not the temple. Several Persian decrees touch Judah, but only the one given to Nehemiah in Artaxerxes' twentieth year authorizes rebuilding Jerusalem itself — and that is the one that makes the arithmetic land on Palm Sunday.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur notes how unusual it is for a prophecy to hand over its own starting gun. God does not say "someday"; He ties the clock to a dated, documentable, public act of a pagan emperor.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel is told the clock starts at a decree that has not been issued yet, by a king of an empire that does not yet rule him. Babylon still runs the city he is standing in. God is scheduling His calendar around a signature that no living person could have arranged.

KEY QUESTION

Am I willing to trust a promise from God whose starting conditions are still nowhere in sight?

2 What does verse 25 say will be built again?

DAN. 9:25

Daniel 9:25 NASB95

"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

IN MY WORDS

Jerusalem will be built again — "with plaza and moat" — a real working city with streets and defenses, and it will be rebuilt in times of distress.

CROSS REFERENCE **Nehemiah 2:3** "Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?"

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik points out that God promises the rebuilding and promises the trouble in the same breath. "In times of distress" is not a warning attached to the prophecy; it is part of the prophecy. Nehemiah built with a sword at his side because Gabriel said he would.

CRITICAL THINKING

"Plaza and moat" is a strange pair — one is for public life, the other for defense. God is not promising a monument or a shrine; He is promising a city where people gather and are protected. Daniel had been praying about a ruined sanctuary and a ruined city, and God answers first about a street.

KEY QUESTION

When God finally restores something in my life, do I expect it to come easy — or am I prepared for it to come "in times of distress"?

3 Who will be "cut off" after the 62 weeks (verse 26)?

DAN. 9:26

Daniel 9:26 NASB95

"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

IN MY WORDS

The Messiah — the very Prince named in verse 25 — will be cut off and have nothing.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 53:8** "... who considered That He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due?"

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati highlights the sequence: Messiah arrives, and then Messiah is killed. More than five centuries before a Roman cross existed, the Jewish people were told in their own Scriptures that their Messiah would come and be executed — and that this was the plan, not the failure of one.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik draws attention to "and have nothing." The Hebrew carries the sense of being left with none of what was rightly His — no throne, no kingdom, no people rallying to Him. He dies without receiving what He came for, which is precisely why the seventieth week is still owed to Him.

CRITICAL THINKING

Verse 25 calls Him "Messiah the Prince" and verse 26 says He will be cut off and have nothing. Those two lines sat side by side in the Hebrew Bible for centuries, and it was the second one that made Him unrecognizable to the people looking for the first.

KEY QUESTION

Do I want a Christ who gives me something, or am I willing to follow a Christ who Himself was left with nothing?

4 In the middle of verse 26, we read about a certain group of people who will come. What will these people do, according to the last part of verse 26?

DAN. 9:26

Daniel 9:26 NASB95

"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

IN MY WORDS

"The people of the prince who is to come" will destroy the city and the sanctuary, and the end of it will come like a flood, with war and desolations running all the way to the end.

CROSS REFERENCE **Luke 19:44** "they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation." Jesus said it over the same city, roughly forty years before it happened.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes the careful wording: the people come and destroy, but the prince himself does not. The armies of Titus leveled Jerusalem in A.D. 70; the prince they belong to is still future. The passage separates a people from their prince by an unspecified stretch of time.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that verse 26 puts the destruction after the Messiah is cut off, in that order. The city was not destroyed and then the Messiah rejected — He was rejected first, and the city followed.

CRITICAL THINKING

Gabriel does not say the prince destroys the city. He says the prince's people do. That single grammatical gap is where the entire church age fits — the soldiers arrived in the first century, and the man they answer to has not shown up yet.

KEY QUESTION

Am I reading prophecy carefully enough to notice what it actually says — or only carefully enough to confirm what I already assumed?

5 According to verse 27, what will be confirmed, and for how long?

DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

IN MY WORDS

He will make a firm covenant with the many, and it is set to run for one week — one period of seven years.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 13:5** "authority to act for forty-two months was given to him" — forty-two months is three and a half years, the back half of the seven.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati stresses that this seventieth week is the only one of the seventy left unspent. Sixty-nine ran on schedule and expired; the clock stopped when Messiah was cut off, and it restarts the day this covenant is signed.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur points out that the covenant is confirmed "with the many" — language for a broad national agreement, not a private treaty. Whatever it is, Israel is a party to it and it looks, at signing, like the answer to the problem.

CRITICAL THINKING

This man does not seize Jerusalem — he negotiates with it. The seventieth week opens not with an invasion but with a signing ceremony, which is why the people who agree to it will not see it as a disaster until three and a half years in.

KEY QUESTION

What have I said yes to because it arrived as protection, when I should have asked who was offering it?

6 What will happen at the middle of that week (or period of seven years)?

DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

IN MY WORDS

In the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering — he breaks the covenant halfway through and shuts down the worship he had promised to protect.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 12:11** "From the time that the regular sacrifice is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes the plain requirement buried in this line: you cannot stop a sacrifice that is not happening. A functioning temple with a functioning altar has to exist in Jerusalem before verse 27 can occur — which makes this one of the few prophecies with a visible, physical prerequisite.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik observes that the covenant is broken at its exact midpoint. This is not a relationship that gradually soured; it is a deadline. The betrayal was scheduled from the day the ink dried.

CRITICAL THINKING

Three and a half years is long enough for people to build their security around a promise and short enough that most of them will still be defending it when it breaks. The timing is not incidental — it is how the deception works.

KEY QUESTION

Whose promises am I currently building on that I have never actually tested?

7 When the last part of verse 27 talks about "one who makes desolate," what does that seem to suggest?

DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

IN MY WORDS

It suggests that the man who signed the covenant and the man who brings the desolation are the same person — the protector turns out to be the desecrator.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Thessalonians 2:4** "who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik reads "on the wing of abominations" as pointing to something set up in the temple itself — an idolatrous act placed where God alone belongs. Desolation here is not merely military ruin; it is a holy place emptied of its holiness.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur connects this figure to Paul's man of lawlessness. He does not appear as an enemy of religion but as the object of it, which is exactly why the temple is where he goes.

CRITICAL THINKING

The word is "desolate," not "destroyed." The building can still be standing, the crowds can still be coming, and the place can already be empty — because the One who made it holy has been evicted from it.

KEY QUESTION

Is there anything in my own life that still looks intact from the outside while God has quietly been crowded out of it?

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8 Daniel 9:27 says this will happen "until the consummation, which is determined." What do you think the fact this "is determined" suggests? DAN. 9:27

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

IN MY WORDS

It suggests God has already fixed the ending — the desolator is running on a clock God set, and his career has an expiration date that was written down before it began.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 46:10** "My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure" — God declaring "the end from the beginning."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur emphasizes that "determined" is a word about God, not about the villain. Evil in this passage is never autonomous; it is permitted, measured out, and terminated on schedule by the God who decreed the seventy weeks in the first place.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati points out that this is the pastoral payoff of the whole chapter. Believers are not told the identity of the man — they are told the length of his leash.

CRITICAL THINKING

Notice that the destruction is poured out "on the one who makes desolate." The last thing to be made desolate in this prophecy is the desolator himself. God does not merely stop him; He ends him with the same word He used for what he did to others.

KEY QUESTION

When evil looks like it is winning on the news, do I believe it is loose — or do I believe it is on a leash with a length God has already measured?

02 ANALYZE THE MESSAGE

What does it say and mean?

Using both my Bible and my copy of the book Discovering Daniel.

1 What good news did Gabriel first share about Jerusalem in Daniel 9:25 (see page 202 in Discovering Daniel)? P. 202

Daniel 9:25 NASB95

"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

IN MY WORDS

The good news is that Jerusalem — the ruined city Daniel had just spent his whole prayer mourning — was going to be rebuilt, and the Messiah Himself was coming to it.

CROSS REFERENCE **Nehemiah 2:6** "So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time." The decree Gabriel promised arrived roughly ninety years later.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati frames this as God answering the prayer Daniel actually prayed before answering the one he did not know to pray. Daniel asked about a desolate city; God says it will be rebuilt — and then keeps going, all the way to the Messiah.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel had been reading Jeremiah about seventy years of exile. Gabriel answers with seventy sevens. The good news came wrapped in a number ten times larger than the one Daniel was studying — God's answer did not fit inside Daniel's question.

KEY QUESTION

Have I ever shrunk what I ask God for down to the size of what I could already picture?

2 What bad news did Gabriel then share in verse 26 (see page 208 in Discovering Daniel)? P. 208

Daniel 9:26 NASB95

"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

IN MY WORDS

The bad news is that the Messiah would be cut off and have nothing, and that afterward the city and the sanctuary Daniel had just been promised would be destroyed all over again.

CROSS REFERENCE **John 1:11** "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur notes that the good news and the bad news are the same event seen from two sides. The cutting off of Messiah is the darkest line in the prophecy and the reason any of the six purposes in verse 24 can ever be accomplished.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik observes that Gabriel does not soften it. Daniel is told his people will kill their Messiah and lose their city — and this is delivered as an answer to prayer, because truth about the future is a mercy even when it hurts.

CRITICAL THINKING

The rebuilt city of verse 25 is the destroyed city of verse 26. God promised Daniel the restoration and the second ruin in consecutive sentences — which means the answer to his prayer was never going to be a permanent fix, only a chapter in a much longer plan.

KEY QUESTION

Can I accept an answer from God that is honest about what is coming, instead of only one that makes me feel better today?

3 What kind of Messiah were the Jews looking for (see page 208 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 208

IN MY WORDS

They were looking for a conquering king — a political and military deliverer who would throw Rome out, take David's throne, and restore Israel's national glory right then.

CROSS REFERENCE **Zechariah 9:9** "Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation" — the King they wanted was genuinely promised; they simply skipped the next word, "Humble."

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati explains that this expectation was not invented out of nothing — it came from real prophecies about a real reigning Messiah. The error was not in what they expected but in when they expected it, collapsing two comings into one.

CRITICAL THINKING

They were not wrong about the throne; they were wrong about the order. Everything they were waiting for is still coming — they just refused a Messiah who arrived to die first.

KEY QUESTION

Where am I holding God to a real promise of His, but on my timetable instead of His?

4 What kind of Messiah did they get instead (see pages 208-209 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 208-209

IN MY WORDS

They got a humble servant who rode in on a donkey, kept no army, took no throne, and went to a cross — a Messiah who came to deal with their sin before He would ever deal with their occupation.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 53:5** "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that the crowd's disappointment was a matter of diagnosis. They believed their worst problem was Roman; God knew their worst problem was moral. A Messiah who solves the wrong problem looks like a failure.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes that Jesus never denied He was the King — He accepted the title openly on Palm Sunday. He simply refused to take the crown on the terms the crowd was offering it.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel 9:24 lists six things the seventy weeks are for, and the first three are all about sin — finishing transgression, ending sin, making atonement. The Messiah they got was doing exactly what the prophecy said He came to do. They were reading verse 25 and ignoring verse 24.

KEY QUESTION

What am I asking God to fix right now that is downstream of something in me He would rather fix first?

5 **A point came when the Jewish leaders were hostile and the people were disillusioned. What did they demand be done to the Messiah (see page 209 in Discovering Daniel)?** P. 209

IN MY WORDS

They demanded that He be crucified — the same city that had shouted "Hosanna" on Sunday was shouting "Crucify Him" before the week was out.

CROSS REFERENCE **Matthew 27:22** Pilate said to them, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said, "Crucify Him!"

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati points to the terrible precision of it: Daniel 9:26 said Messiah would be "cut off," and the crowd chose the method. Even the rejection was inside the prophecy.

CRITICAL THINKING

Five days separate the palm branches from the demand for a cross. Nothing about Jesus changed in those five days — only the crowd's realization that He was not going to do what they had cheered Him in to do.

KEY QUESTION

Is my devotion to Christ attached to who He is, or to what I am still expecting Him to do for me?

6 **Read Isaiah 53:4-6 on pages 209-210 of Discovering Daniel. What comes to your mind as you read this description of what happened at the cross?** P. 209-210

Isaiah 53:4 NASB95

Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.

Isaiah 53:5 NASB95

But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.

Isaiah 53:6 NASB95

All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

IN MY WORDS

What strikes me is how personal the pronouns are — our griefs, our transgressions, our iniquities — and that the last line makes the LORD the one who laid it all on Him, which means the cross was not something done to Jesus so much as something done by God through Him.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:24** "to make atonement for iniquity" — Gabriel named the purpose roughly a century and a half after Isaiah described the method.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur draws out verse 6: the problem is universal ("all of us") and individual ("each of us") in the same sentence. Every person contributed a different sin, and all of it landed on one man.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes the correction in verse 4. Watching the crucifixion, people assumed God was punishing Jesus for something Jesus had done. They were half right — God was punishing Him, but for something we had done.

CRITICAL THINKING

Isaiah says "we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God." The onlookers got the theology right and the object wrong. They correctly identified divine judgment falling; they simply assumed it was falling on the guilty party.

KEY QUESTION

Do I still, somewhere in me, think of my sin as a thing I need to manage — rather than a thing that already crushed Him?

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7 On page 211 of Discovering Daniel, we read that "looking forward to the fulfillment of prophecy is like looking at a mountain range." What is meant by this? P. 211

IN MY WORDS

It means that from a distance the peaks look like they are all standing together, when in reality there are miles of valley between them — so prophecies that sit in one sentence can be separated by thousands of years of actual history.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:26** "the Messiah will be cut off" and "the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city" sit in one verse; roughly forty years separate them, and two thousand more separate them from the prince himself.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati uses this to explain why Israel missed the first coming. Isaiah 61:1-2 is the classic case: Jesus read it aloud in Nazareth, stopped mid-verse, and sat down. The half He read was fulfilled that day. The half He did not read is still a mountain further out.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik cautions that this cuts both ways. The gaps are only visible from the far side, which is a reason for humility about the exact shape of what is still ahead.

CRITICAL THINKING

The church age itself is one of these valleys — the whole span between verse 26 and verse 27, invisible in the text. Every one of us is living in the white space of Daniel's prophecy, in a gap the prophet could not see from where he stood.

KEY QUESTION

Do I hold my prophetic chart humbly enough to admit there may be valleys in it I cannot see from here?

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8 Who is the person identified as “he” in verse 27, and what does the fact there is sacrifice going on tell us (see page 212 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 212

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

IN MY WORDS

“He” is the coming prince of verse 26 — the Antichrist, not the Messiah — and the fact that he can stop sacrifice and grain offering tells us a functioning temple with a working altar has to be standing in Jerusalem before this happens.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Thessalonians 2:3-4** “the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction... so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.”

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati is emphatic that the nearest antecedent to “he” is “the prince who is to come,” not “Messiah the Prince.” Reading the Messiah into verse 27 turns Christ into the one who breaks a covenant and desecrates a temple — which is the opposite of everything He came to do.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur adds that the grammar settles what sentiment cannot. Whoever confirms this covenant is the same one on whom destruction is finally poured out at the end of the verse. That cannot be Christ.

CRITICAL THINKING

Verse 27 is the single most misread line in Daniel, and the whole misreading rests on one pronoun. The difference between Christ and Antichrist in this verse is a matter of which noun “he” points back to.

KEY QUESTION

When I read Scripture, am I actually tracing what the text says — or filling in the pronoun with whoever I expected to be there?

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9 How do we know from the Hebrew text of verse 27 that the covenant mentioned here is no ordinary covenant? And what might make this covenant so momentous (see page 212 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 212

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

“And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

IN MY WORDS

The Hebrew is pointed — the verb is higbir, “make strong” or “confirm,” not the ordinary idiom for cutting a brand-new covenant, and it is made “with the many,” a definite group rather than an unnamed crowd — and what makes it momentous is that it evidently settles the question of Israel’s worship and security in Jerusalem, which is the one problem no one on earth has ever managed to solve.

CROSS REFERENCE **Daniel 9:27** “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week” — a strengthening or confirming of an agreement, not merely the drafting of a new one.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati suggests the man who brokers this will be received as the greatest peacemaker in history. Solving Jerusalem is the credential that would make the world hand someone everything else.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik cautions against pressing the Hebrew further than it will go, while agreeing on the substance: whatever this covenant is, Israel signs it, it involves the temple, and it is the event that starts the final seven years.

CRITICAL THINKING

The verb is closer to "confirm" or "strengthen" than "create." That suggests he may not invent the agreement at all — he may simply be the one who finally makes an existing one hold. The Antichrist's opening move is not conquest; it is competence.

KEY QUESTION

Would I be able to tell the difference between a man doing genuine good and a man buying my trust with it?

10 What is the significance of the Antichrist bringing "an end to sacrifice and offering" (verse 27)? How will the Antichrist profane the temple (see page 213 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 213

Daniel 9:27 NASB95

"And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

IN MY WORDS

Ending the sacrifices is his public declaration that Israel's worship of God is finished and his own is beginning, and he profanes the temple by setting up the abomination of desolation and taking God's place in God's own house.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Thessalonians 2:4** "so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God."

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that this is the oldest sin in Scripture wearing its final form. From the serpent's offer in Eden to this man in the temple, the ambition has never changed — only the scale.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati points out that Antiochus IV did a version of this in 167 B.C., slaughtering a pig on the altar. That was the rehearsal; Jesus, speaking two centuries after Antiochus, still put the abomination of desolation in the future.

CRITICAL THINKING

He does not burn the temple down — he moves in. Destroying it would only prove he opposed God; occupying it lets him claim he replaced Him. That is why the word is "desolate" rather than "destroyed."

KEY QUESTION

What good thing in my life have I let something else quietly move into the center of?

11 Read Matthew 24:15-18. What did Jesus warn the Jewish people to do when they saw the "abomination of desolation" (see also page 213 in Discovering Daniel)?

P. 213

Matthew 24:15 NASB95

"Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

Matthew 24:16 NASB95

then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

Matthew 24:17 NASB95

"Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

Matthew 24:18 NASB95

"Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

IN MY WORDS

He told them to run — flee to the mountains immediately, without going back into the house for belongings or back across the field for a coat.

CROSS REFERENCE **Revelation 12:6** "Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days" — 1,260 days is the same three and a half years.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati notes that Jesus treats Daniel 9:27 as a literal future event and even cites Daniel by name. Whatever a reader does with the seventy weeks, he has to reckon with the fact that Jesus read them the same way.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik points out the urgency built into the instruction. This is not "prepare" or "resist" — it is "do not go back for your coat." The moment the abomination appears, deliberation is already too expensive.

CRITICAL THINKING

"Let the reader understand" is Jesus telling people to go read Daniel. He assumed that the generation living through it would have this prophecy open in front of them — which is a strong argument that studying Daniel is not an optional hobby.

KEY QUESTION

If obeying God suddenly cost me everything I own, how much would I hesitate over the coat?

03 COMPARE THIS PASSAGE WITH THE REST OF SCRIPTURE

How is it supported elsewhere in the Bible?

When God carries out His work, He is never too early or too late. Considering the following, in relation to Jesus.

1 According to Galatians 4:4, when did God send forth His Son?

GAL. 4:4

Galatians 4:4 NASB95

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

Galatians 4:5 NASB95

so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

IN MY WORDS

God sent His Son when the fullness of the time had come — at the exact moment He had already appointed, not a year early and not a year late.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 46:10** "Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'"

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur points out that "fullness" means the time was filled up, like a vessel — every condition God required was finally in place. Rome's roads, Greek as a common language, a scattered Jewish population with synagogues in every major city. God was not waiting on a date; He was waiting on a world.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik adds the harder half of the same truth: the fullness of time was also the fullness of failure. Israel had exhausted every arrangement God gave her, and only then did the Son arrive.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel 9:25 gives the deadline and Galatians 4:4 gives the reason. One says when God moved; the other says why that particular when. Prophecy supplies the schedule, and providence supplies the readiness — and they land on the same day.

KEY QUESTION

Am I treating a season of waiting as God being slow, when He may be filling something up that is not full yet?

2 When Lazarus was ill, his sisters Mary and Martha sent for Jesus, who did not come right away. Lazarus ended up dying before Jesus arrived.

JOHN 11

John 11:21 NASB95

Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

John 11:32 NASB95

Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

John 11:37 NASB95

But some of them said, “Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?”

John 11:41 NASB95

So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

John 11:42 NASB95

“I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me.”

a. What assumption did Martha make in John 11:21?

IN MY WORDS

Martha assumed that Jesus’ presence was the only thing that could have saved her brother — that being late and being powerless were the same thing.

CROSS REFERENCE **2 Peter 3:9** “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you” — what looks like lateness is usually purpose.

b. In verse 32, what did Mary assume?

IN MY WORDS

Mary assumed exactly what Martha assumed — word for word, the same sentence — which tells me the two sisters had been saying it to each other for four days.

c. In verse 37, what question did some of the crowd ask?

IN MY WORDS

They asked why the man who opened the eyes of the blind could not have kept Lazarus from dying — a question that sounds like sympathy but is really an accusation.

d. In words spoken to the Father, what reason did Jesus give for waiting until Lazarus died before doing anything?

IN MY WORDS

He said He spoke aloud for the sake of the people standing around, so that they would believe the Father had sent Him — the delay existed to produce faith in the watchers.

e. What does this tell you about Jesus’ timing?

IN MY WORDS

It tells me His timing is never late, only later than mine, and that He will sometimes let a thing die because a resurrection preaches something a healing never could.

CROSS REFERENCE **Habakkuk 2:3** “Though it tarries, wait for it; For it will certainly come, it will not delay.”

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik observes that Jesus was not absent from the grief — He wept at the tomb of a man He was about to raise. Divine timing is not divine coldness. He can fully intend the outcome and still weep at the cost of the delay.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur notes that both sisters were right: had Jesus come, Lazarus would not have died. What they could not imagine was that Jesus had something better than not dying.

CRITICAL THINKING

Four days matters. Later rabbinic sources record the belief that the soul lingered near the body for three days, so by day four every hope of a revival had expired. Jesus did not arrive after the emergency — He arrived after the last possible explanation, which is exactly where He arrived in Daniel's prophecy too.

KEY QUESTION

What have I already given up on and quietly filed under "too late for God"?

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3 **In Zechariah 9:9, we read a prophecy about Israel's King entering Jerusalem on "a colt, the foal of a donkey." Now read carefully about the fulfillment of this prophecy (hundreds of years later) in Matthew 21:1-9. Do you think that when Jesus commanded two of His disciples to find and bring the colt of a donkey, that this was merely a random event? Why or why not?** ZECH. 9:9

Zechariah 9:9 NASB95

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Matthew 21:2 NASB95

saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to Me.

Matthew 21:4 NASB95

This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:

Matthew 21:9 NASB95

The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; Hosanna in the highest!"

IN MY WORDS

Not random in the least — Matthew says outright it happened "to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet," and Jesus told the disciples exactly what animal they would find and where, which means He was deliberately and publicly claiming a five-hundred-year-old prophecy in front of the whole city.

CROSS REFERENCE **Luke 19:44** "because you did not recognize the time of your visitation" — Jesus wept on that same ride, over people watching the fulfillment and missing it.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati ties this day directly to Daniel 9:25. From Artaxerxes' decree to Nehemiah until this ride into Jerusalem runs 173,880 days on the classic reckoning — sixty-nine weeks of prophetic years, to the day. This is the moment "until Messiah the Prince" expires.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes what Jesus chose to ride. A conquering king came on a warhorse; a king coming in peace came on a donkey. Jesus picked His own mount, and the mount was itself a message about what kind of King had arrived.

CRITICAL THINKING

For three years Jesus repeatedly told people to keep quiet about who He was. On this one day He staged the loudest possible announcement and rebuked the men who wanted the crowd silenced. He was not swept up in a parade — He was keeping an appointment that had a date on it.

KEY QUESTION

Do I really believe Jesus is running the calendar of my life as deliberately as He ran that Sunday?

4 **Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem — and His being "cut off" through the crucifixion — is foreseen in Daniel 9:26, a passage that lays out God's prophetic timetable with amazing mathematical precision. What affect does this have on how you view Christ, and how you view Bible prophecy?** DAN. 9:26

Daniel 9:26 NASB95

"Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

IN MY WORDS

It takes prophecy out of the category of religious poetry for me — if God can name the week of the Messiah's death more than five centuries in advance, then Christ is exactly who He claimed to be, and the parts of this chapter still unfulfilled are just as certain as the parts already behind us.

CROSS REFERENCE **Isaiah 46:9** "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me" — God offers fulfilled prophecy as the proof of His own uniqueness.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur argues this is the strongest evidence available for the inspiration of Scripture. No human being writes history at this resolution centuries early, and no committee arranges its fulfillment. Daniel 9 is either God speaking or it is inexplicable.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati adds the pastoral use: sixty-nine of the seventy weeks have already run exactly as written. That is not trivia — it is the reason a believer can rest about the seventieth.

CRITICAL THINKING

Fulfilled prophecy functions as a credential, not a curiosity. The honest skeptic does not have to accept the seventieth week — but he does have to explain the first sixty-nine, and nobody has.

KEY QUESTION

Do I let the prophecies God has already kept do their intended work — steadying me about the ones He has not kept yet?

04 EXECUTE

How does this affect my life?

God sent forth His Son "when the fullness of the time had come" (Galatians 4:4). This aspect of God's sovereignty is not limited to the work He did through Jesus.

1 Where does Psalm 31:15 say that our times are?

PS. 31:15

Psalm 31:15 NASB95

My times are in Your hand; Deliver me from the hand of my enemies and from those who persecute me.

IN MY WORDS

My times are in God's hand — not in my employer's hand, not in a doctor's hand, and not in my own.

CROSS REFERENCE **Acts 17:26** "and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation"

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik notes the deliberate contrast David draws in a single verse: my times are in Your hand, deliver me from the hand of my enemies. Two hands are mentioned, and only one of them is actually holding anything.

CRITICAL THINKING

David wrote this while being hunted, not while safe. The verse is not a comfortable sentiment from a settled life — it is what a man said out loud when other hands were very obviously reaching for him.

KEY QUESTION

Whose hand am I actually behaving as though my times are in this week?

2 In Psalm 139:16, we read, "Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them." What does this passage tell us God has done with the days of our lives?

PS. 139:16

Psalm 139:16 NASB95

Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.

IN MY WORDS

God wrote out every one of my days in His book before a single one of them existed — my life was authored before it was ever lived.

CROSS REFERENCE **Ephesians 1:11** "having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will"

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur observes that the same God who scheduled Messiah to the day keeps a book on an unformed embryo. The precision that governs world history is not a different precision from the one that governs a single ordinary life.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati connects this straight back to Daniel: a God who can be trusted with 483 years of Jewish history can be trusted with the years He assigned to me.

CRITICAL THINKING

The verse says the days were written "when as yet there was not one of them." God was not recording my life as it happened; He was reading from a book that already existed. That is a very different comfort than a God who is merely watching closely.

KEY QUESTION

If my days were written before I lived them, am I living today as something given — or as something I own?

3 Read Luke 12:6-7. How detailed is God's knowledge of us?

LUKE 12:6-7

Luke 12:6 NASB95

"Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.

Luke 12:7 NASB95

"Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows.

IN MY WORDS

Detailed down to the hair — God keeps a running count of things about me that I have never once bothered to count myself.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 139:16** "in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me" — the same God who numbers days numbers hairs.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik points out the economics in the illustration. Sparrows were the cheapest thing in the market, and the fifth one was thrown in free with the purchase of four. Jesus deliberately chose the throw-in to make His point about what God does not forget. (Matthew 10:29 prices them two for a cent; Luke has five for two.)

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur notes that the conclusion Jesus draws from all this detail is a command: do not fear. God's exhaustive knowledge is not offered as a doctrine to admire but as an antidote to take.

CRITICAL THINKING

Jesus does not say the hairs are noticed — He says they are numbered, tallied down to the last one. And He says it to men He was in the same breath warning would be dragged before authorities. Detailed knowledge is not the same as guaranteed comfort; it is the guarantee that nothing happening to them was unnoticed.

KEY QUESTION

What am I carrying right now as though God has not noticed it?

4 **Based on the above passages, how much do you think God is involved in your life? How does that encourage you?** EXECUTE

IN MY WORDS

Completely involved — the same God who scheduled the Messiah to the day is running the calendar of my very ordinary week, and that steadies me most on the weeks that feel like they are running me.

CROSS REFERENCE **Acts 17:26** God has "determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation" — the era I live in and the place I live in were both assigned.

Amir Tsarfati DISCOVERING DANIEL

Tsarfati makes the application the whole point of Daniel 9: a prophecy this exact is not given to satisfy curiosity but to settle anxiety. God shows His work so His people will stop panicking.

CRITICAL THINKING

Encouragement here does not come from believing God will do what I want. It comes from the demonstrated fact that He does what He said — and Daniel 9 is the receipt.

KEY QUESTION

Is my confidence in God based on what I am hoping He will do, or on what I can already document that He has done?

5 **As Psalm 139:16 says, God wrote out your days before you were born. With that in mind, do you feel you are making the best use of the time God has entrusted to you? In what two or three areas do you see room for growth or improvement?** EXECUTE

IN MY WORDS

Honestly, no — my unhurried time in the Word, my undivided attention at home, and the hours I hand over to a screen are the three places where I am spending days God numbered on things that will not survive the week.

CROSS REFERENCE **Psalm 31:15** "My times are in Your hand" — if the time is His, then how I spend it is stewardship, not preference.

John MacArthur GRACE TO YOU

MacArthur frames time as the one asset that cannot be recovered, replaced, or borrowed against. Every other loss in life admits some remedy; a spent hour admits none.

David Guzik ENDURING WORD

Guzik cautions against turning this into guilt. The point of a numbered life is not frantic productivity but deliberate faithfulness — God assigned the days, and He assigned what belongs in them.

CRITICAL THINKING

Daniel spent seventy years in a pagan government and still had time to be reading Jeremiah and praying three times a day. His schedule was not lighter than mine. His priorities were simply not up for renegotiation.

KEY QUESTION

What is the one thing I would have to actually stop doing this week for the two things I say matter most to get real hours?

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Sixty-nine weeks ran on time. A pagan king signed a decree he did not understand the significance of. A discouraged cupbearer rebuilt a wall in troubled times, exactly as promised. And 173,880 days after that signature a man rode into that rebuilt city on a borrowed colt while the crowd shouted Hosanna, and the sixty-ninth week expired that afternoon. Days later He was cut off and had nothing. Roughly forty years after that, the people of a prince still to come left not one stone upon another.

None of the participants were cooperating. Artaxerxes was not trying to fulfill Daniel. The crowd on Palm Sunday was not consulting a chart. Titus was not reading Hebrew prophecy over his siege maps. God did not need their agreement, only their existence — and He got the timetable He announced to an old man on his knees in Babylon more than five centuries before any of it happened.

That is why the remaining week can be held without anxiety. One seven-year period is still owed. A covenant will be confirmed, broken at its exact midpoint, and answered with a destruction that was decreed before the man who provokes it was born. We are not told his name. We are told the length of his leash.

The workbook closes this lesson at Pilate's judgment hall, and it is the right place to land. The most powerful man in Judea told Jesus he had authority to release Him or crucify Him. Jesus answered that he had no authority at all except what had been given him from above. Pilate then used that borrowed authority to do precisely what Daniel 9:26 said would be done — and he did it while trying to avoid it.

You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.

JOHN 19:11 NASB95

God's sovereignty is sobering, because it means I am accountable to Someone who is never surprised and never late. But it is also the only reason the future is safe. The same hand that held Pilate's authority on the worst Friday in history holds my times this week — and He has never once missed an appointment.

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