

While Daniel was still on his knees praying and interceding for the rebellious nation of Israel, God sent Gabriel with the answer to Daniel's request (20-23). God has said that there will be days like this, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24). Though the answer to Daniel's prayer was immediate, it was likely not what he expected. God answered with more light and with that light came new responsibilities, new challenges, and above all, new strength. Daniel had prayed that the nation of Israel would repent and that God would restore His people and His sanctuary. Gabriel told Daniel that whereas Jeremiah had predicted 70 years of desolations for Jerusalem, God had still another prophetic period in mind for Israel. This period would be 70 sevens of years (the Hebrew word for week means seven). Just as God punished Israel for 70 years, God would now accomplish His purposes for His people over a period of 490 years.

1. The Purposes of the Seventy Weeks (24)

- a. "To finish the transgression"
 - i. The transgressions of the nation of Israel that Daniel was confessing would come to an end during this period.
 - ii. We know that this is referring to Israel because the prophecy is said to concern Daniel's people (the Jews) and Daniel's holy city (Jerusalem).
- b. "To make an end of sins"
 - i. This verb means, to close up, to seal, to make an end, mark, seal, stop.
 - ii. In this period the sins of Daniel's people brought under full restraint.
 - iii. This will correspond to the time that Satan is sealed up in the pit during the millennial reign of Christ, bringing his activities to an end as well (Revelation 20:1).
- c. "To make reconciliation for iniquity"
 - i. Israel will be reconciled to God.
 1. Zechariah 12:10 "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."
 2. Revelation 1:7 "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
 - ii. Israel will repent.
 1. Jeremiah 50:4-5 "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.
 2. Jeremiah 50:20 "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve."
- d. "To bring in everlasting righteousness"
 - i. Jeremiah 31:34 "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."
- e. "To seal up the vision and prophecy"
 - i. With no more national sin to correct, the disciplinary words of the prophets will cease to be needed.
- f. "To anoint the most holy"
 - i. With the bringing in in of righteousness, a new temple will be anointed and set aside for worship.
 - ii. The glory of the presence of the Lord will return (Ezekiel 43:1-7).
 - iii. God will manifest His presence in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night (Isaiah 4:5).
 - iv. This new temple will outshine all previous temples (Haggai 2:9).

2. The First 69 Weeks (25)
 - a. It would take 49 years for the Jews to rebuild the city walls.
 - i. The time between the decree to build Jerusalem and the appearance of the Anointed One, the Messiah, would be 7 weeks (49 years), plus 62 weeks (434 years) for a total of 69 weeks (483 years).
 - ii. This decree was made by Artaxerxes Longimanus in 445 BC and was carried out by Nehemiah.
 - b. It would take an additional 434 years until Jesus presented Himself as the Messiah.
 - i. Jesus presented Himself to the Jews by riding into Jerusalem as prophesied (Matthew 21:5-6; Zechariah 9:9).
 - ii. Previously Jesus had commanded His disciples not to proclaim Him as Messiah (Matt. 16:20).
 - iii. On this day, Jesus affirmed those who praised Him as Messiah (Luke 19:40).
 - iv. This prophecy predicted Christ's presentation to the very day, exactly 483 years after 445 BC!

3. The Lapse of Time "After" the 69 Weeks but Before the 70th Week (26).
 - a. The Messiah Prince is cut off.
 - i. Shortly after presenting Himself as the King of the Jews, He would be cut off.
 - ii. Isaiah 53:8 "He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."
 - iii. Isaiah 53:4 "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.
 - iv. Matthew 27:46 "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"
 - b. The Roman destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70 marked a change in God's program.
 - i. The destruction came in as a flood as chastisement for their rebellion against God (Romans 11).
 - ii. God has temporarily set aside Israel to manifest His grace through church (Ephesians 3).
 - iii. Tragically, Israel, the people of the covenant, is not enjoying the blessings of the covenant because of their unbelief and worldliness. This should sober us as believers (Romans 12:1-2).

4. The 70th Week (27)
 - a. The prince that will come, the Antichrist, will make a 7-year covenant of peace with the nation of Israel.
 - b. After 3 and 1 half years the Antichrist will break his covenant and begin to persecute Israel (7:25).
 - c. The Antichrist will seize the temple, place his image there, and force the world to worship him (Rev. 13).
 - d. Matthew 24:15-16 "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place...Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:"
 - e. This period is referred to as 3 ½ years (42 months; 1,260 days) 5 times in Revelation (11:2-3; 12:6, 14; 13:5).

Conclusion:

1. In ways that we don't understand, God used Daniel's intercession to advance His eternal plan to redeem His people and the world. Never forget that God uses your prayers to accomplish His eternal plan!
2. Israel's sin could not overthrow the plan of God. God sent His Son into this world knowing He would be crucified by his own people, but He did so to redeem all who would trust in Him. Have you trusted His redeeming work for you?
3. For almost 2,000 years, the nation of Israel has not experienced the blessings of God's covenant with Abraham because of their unbelief. Do not think that because you have taken part in the New Covenant that God will not set you aside because of your sin. If you have wandered from God, now is the time to repent; don't wait until He returns!
4. Aren't you glad that God places limits on the chastening of His people? God has not cast the Jews off forever! "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7).