



The Messengers: Daniel

When Will You Come?

SCRIPTURE

Daniel 9:20–27 (NIV)

²⁰ While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill—²¹ while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision [see Daniel 8], came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. ²² He instructed me and said to me, “Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. ²³ As soon as you began to pray, an answer was given, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the message and understand the vision:

²⁴ “Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy.

²⁵ “Know and understand this: From the issuing of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. ²⁶ After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed One will be cut off and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. ²⁷ He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven.’ In the middle of the ‘seven’ he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing of the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him. “

UNCOVERING SOME HIDDEN TREASURE

While I was still speaking in prayer At this point, Daniel is over 80 years old. He prayed earnestly at least three times a day for many of those years. Daniel knew his God, yet God never ceased surprising him and He does it here by sending an angel with the answer.

- Take a moment to look at Isaiah 65:2 and Matthew 6:8. What are the correlations between the three scriptures?

Came to me in swift flight This is one of the few places in the Bible where we are told that angels fly. Gabriel came quickly because there is no great distance between heaven and earth—and that is *VERY* good news!

About the time of the evening sacrifice This was a special time when Moses offered the Passover lamb (Exodus 12:6) and when Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:45). A day never passed that Daniel didn't remember the sacrifices that should have been occurring but weren't because of captivity.

- Look up Psalm 141:1-2. What did David offer instead of incense? What did he offer instead of an evening sacrifice?

“Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding” In his prayer, Daniel didn't ask for understanding. His prayer demonstrated that his heart was close to God's heart, so God reveals much to Daniel as His friend.

- Look at John 15:15. What does Jesus call us?

“As soon as you began to pray an answer was given” We know that *while* Daniel was praying, Gabriel appeared to him, but the answer was given as soon as Daniel began. God read Daniel's heart before He heard a single word (see Psalm 39:4). Now ponder this: *If God was this anxious to speak, why didn't he save Daniel the trouble and send Gabriel in advance? If God is sovereign and all knowing, why pray at all?* Word Biblical Commentary says this: “One person's prayer brings about the restoration of the people of God; but it is a matter of releasing that restoration which God already purposed.”

- In your own words, what do you think this scholar means? A clue: think relationship...and look at Psalm 31:19 for support of this.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE “SEVENS”

“Seventy ‘sevens’ are decreed” (verse 24) There is almost universal agreement among Biblical scholars and commentators that this refers to seventy sets of seven years, or “weeks of years,” i.e., $70 \times 7 = 490$ years. This period of time is focused on the Jews and Jerusalem and not the church age.

“Seven ‘sevens’ and sixty-two ‘sevens’” (verse 25) $7 \times 7 = (49) + 62 \times 7 = (434) = 483$ years. The Jewish calendar is based on a 360-day lunar year. Forty-nine years are intimated to completely rebuild Jerusalem. (See Nehemiah 2:1-8. This sets the date at the month of Nisan (Mar/Apr) 444 B.C.) The consecutive 434 years would last until the “Anointed One” (translated in Hebrew: MASIYAH), would come. Gabriel's message is striking: 483 years—69 units of 7 years—would pass from the time of the command recorded in Nehemiah until the appearance of Messiah the Prince! A 483-year period equals 173,880 days (Jewish calendar).

- What occurred this many days *to the day* after the first of Nisan (March 5), 444 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:1)? (See Luke 19:29-40.)

“After the sixty-two ‘sevens’ the Anointed One will be cut off...” (verse 26) “Cut off” means executing the death penalty and points to the crucifixion. Able chronologists have shown that the crucifixion occurred immediately after the expiration of 483 prophetic years, of 360 days each.

“He will confirm a covenant with many for one ‘seven’” (verse 27) The final block of seven years will begin with a covenant signed between the “ruler” (the “little horn” [Daniel 7]) and the people (Israel).

“In the middle of that ‘seven’” The coming prince will break the covenant with Israel in the middle of the seven years, the final “week.” (See Revelation 12:6, 13-14; 13:5-9, 14-15.)

TAKEAWAYS AND APPLICATION

Daniel was in exile. He had been taken from his home and all that he knew. He was sorely pressed on every side. And yet! Oh, how I love those words...and yet. And yet His God was with him, teaching him, transforming him, protecting him, loving him. In my own personal walk with Papa over the last few weeks, I have found some parallel truths from Daniel’s life illuminated in my own.

- When we say “yes” to God, we are to live out of our new spiritual inheritance. We are from the seed of kingship. Look at Daniel 1:3, Colossians 1:13, Philippians 3:20, 1 Peter 2:9, and Revelation 1:6. *What is the correlation between these scriptures?*
- But, being creatures of habit, we tend to live out of our earthly inheritance. Our enemy wants us to continually return to places God has called us to leave. *Look at Genesis 12:1 and Hebrews 11:8. What does God instruct Abram to do? Are there “places”—habits, thoughts, behaviors, attitudes—that God has called you to leave? What disconnects you from the promises in the first bullet-point above?*
- For Daniel, Babylon was a literal place. Though we live in Colorado, we are surrounded by a Babylon of our own. The Babylonian mentality is one of self-absorption and over-indulgence.

From my personal journal: “My God is a jealous God—He is jealous for me, and therefore nothing that hinders my relationship with Him can stay (see Isaiah 47:8, 10). His love for me is pure and holy. He will “melt” anything that vies for attention, pulling me away from Him. He is angry towards those things because they are my downfall, and He loves me too much to let me continue in them. Though painful, the dross must be removed so that His glory may shine in me. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me and the One who loves me will NEVER leave me nor forsake me!” —Paula Valenta

Look at Zechariah 13:9, Malachi 3:3-4, and 1 Corinthians 3:13-7. What are some similar words/ideas that show up in all the passages? What is the promise given in Malachi 3:7b?

RESOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

- *Hinds’ Feet on High Places* by Hannah Hurnard
- *Study of Daniel: Lives of Integrity, Words of Prophecy* by Beth Moore