



## Day 1

### Icebreaker

1. What does your dream day look like? What would you do? Who would be with you?

### Get It

**Read Daniel 9:20–27.**

Generally speaking, we aren't huge fans of mystery. Sure, we enjoy our mystery novels or movies that keep us on the edge of our seats as more information is revealed and the puzzle pieces begin coming together. But what about those mysteries that just always seem out of reach? Those kinds of mysteries tend to bother us. We don't like things that we can't wrap our heads around and make sense of. There's no closure. There's no sense of "completion." They seem to throw logic out the window, leaving us floating in the abyss of "I just don't know." And our typical response to these kinds of mysteries is, "If we can't know, it must not be important because everything important we can know for certain."

These verses in Daniel 9 are some of the most mysterious verses in the Bible. The smartest people who study them can't seem to all agree on what they mean. They've been debated. They've been picked apart with great precision. Yet, at the end of the day, we still have some difficulty understanding the specifics. But just because we find difficulty in nailing down the specifics doesn't mean we can't or don't know what the bigger picture is—the message that is "clear and plain for all to see."

God has a specific plan, a plan that will result in the coming Messiah who will deal with sin once and for all. He will suffer, as will the nation of Israel. But God has set the end from the beginning, and He has set an end to the suffering and He has determined when and how that end will come. So whatever we find ourselves experiencing, we can trust Him.

God is in control.

His plan will come to pass just like He planned it.

2. What was Daniel doing in verse 20?
3. Who visits Daniel to help him with understanding?
4. What does verse 24 say is going to happen in these “seventy weeks”?
5. What happens in the first 7 weeks according to verse 25?
6. What happens in the next 62 weeks according to verse 25?
7. What do verses 26–27 say will happen in the last week?

## Day 2 — Today’s Theme: Good News/Bad News

### Read Daniel 9:24.

Sometimes we don’t know how different parts of the Bible fit together. For example, many of the Psalms were written by King David in tandem with different events in his life and leadership that are talked about in other places of the Bible. Another example has to do with Daniel. Many of us don’t know that the prophet Jeremiah’s ministry overlaps with Daniel’s life in Babylon.

For example, many of you are probably familiar with Jeremiah 29:11. Even now, you might be reciting it in your mind before I put it on paper: *“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

While you might be familiar with that verse, do you know what Jeremiah 29:10 says? ... crickets?

It’s ok, most of us don’t!

Jeremiah 29:10 says, *“For thus says the LORD: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.”*

Jeremiah 29:11 is a promise for God’s people that God has a greater purpose in mind for them, one that’s good and hopeful. But the part we often ignore, is that part of those purposes being fulfilled involved a period of suffering for God’s people in exile and captivity.

By the time Daniel prayed this prayer in chapter 9, he recognized that Israel had been living in “Jeremiah 29:10” (exile in Babylon) for about 48 years, meaning there were still around 22 years left before God would fulfill His promise to them in Jeremiah 29:11. He was looking forward to that promise being fulfilled, and rightfully so! He looked at the calendar and realized, “Hey! Those 70 years are about up! It’s getting pretty close to God fulfilling that promise to us and taking us back home out of exile!”

Well, here in Daniel 9, Gabriel shows up with Daniel. It’s almost as if Gabriel says that age-old saying we all know too well: “I’ve got good news and I’ve got bad news.”

**Good news:** God has heard your prayers. God loves you greatly. God *is* going to fulfill His promise. He’s going to **finish** the transgression, **put an end** to sin, and **atone** for iniquity. He *is* going to bring everlasting righteousness, seal both vision and prophet, and anoint a most holy place. That’s good news!

**Bad News:** It’s gonna be a lot longer than 70 years for God to do this, it’s gonna be “seventy sevens.”

“It would not take a mere seventy years to accomplish a transformation in the hearts and lives of God’s people but seventy times seven to accomplish a complete and ultimate victory over sin and evil.”<sup>1</sup>

**8. How do you think you would have responded if you were in Daniel’s shoes?**

**9. What do you think this teaches us about God’s timetable?**

**10. Are there any promises of God we are waiting on today where we might struggle to be patient on God’s timing?**

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel / Iain M. Duguid — (Reformed expository commentary)

## Day 3 — Today's Theme: The Details are Difficult

There are certain passages in the Bible that are difficult to understand and as a result, people land in different places in their interpretation of them. At the end of the day, there's one correct interpretation, but from our perspective here and now, it's hard to decide which one that is. That doesn't mean that people who land at different places on passages like this don't all agree that the Bible is true. It doesn't mean that they just want to make the Bible say what they want it to say instead of what it actually does. It simply means that sometimes there is difficulty in the details.

So when we come to these passages, like this one here in Daniel 9:20–27, it's ok to examine them carefully and come to an opinion on their interpretation. The important thing is how we hold those opinions. Rather than holding them tightly like they're the only right interpretation, we should hold them loosely, recognizing that it's just as likely we may be as wrong in our interpretation as others are in theirs.

That said, let's look at some of the different ways Christians have interpreted this passage in Daniel 9:

- The seventy sevens are actual years from 605 or 586 BC to the reign of Antiochus in 167–164 BC.
- The seventy sevens are symbolic periods leading up to the first century AD.
- The seventy sevens symbolize periods ending with the second coming of Christ, representing church history from Cyrus' decree in 538 BC to Christ's return.
- The seventy sevens are actual years concluding with Christ's second coming. It introduces a prophetic gap between the sixty-ninth and seventieth weeks, with the climactic seventieth week still in the future.<sup>2</sup> This interpretation seems to make the most sense and is the teaching position of our church. See the chart below<sup>3</sup>:

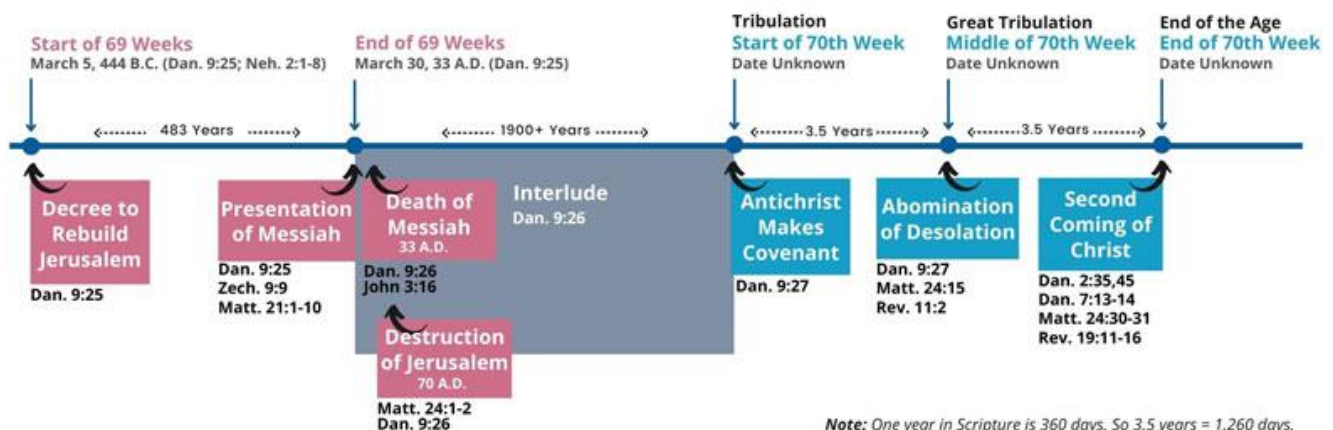


## SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL

By David Sheldon

### Messiah's Salvation, Deliverance, & Eternal Kingdom

Daniel 9:24–27



<sup>2</sup> Daniel (New American Commentary), by Stephen Miller

<sup>3</sup> Timeline created by 4 Truth Ministry found @ <https://www.4truthministry.org/what-are-the-seventy-weeks-of-daniel/>

**11. How should we approach passages in the Bible that are difficult to understand? What should we do when we study them?**

**12. According to the timeline above, if the fourth position is correct, we find ourselves today in a “gap” which means that difficult days are coming. Read Mark 13:3–13. What “signs” does Jesus point to that will indicate that we are getting closer to “the end of the age”?**

**What should our response be when we see some of these signs unfolding in the world in our lifetime?**

**13. How does it make you feel that difficult days are coming in the world? How should this impact how you live out your faith?**

## Day 4 — Today's Theme: The End Result

### Read Daniel 9:24.

Despite the difficulty in nailing down the details of this passage, there is one clear message: The Messiah's mission is to deal with sin.

"By the end of the "seventy weeks," three things would be ended. The ending of these three things is described in the language of termination: "finish," "put an end to," and "atone." The things that were to be ended were "transgression," "sin," and "iniquity." These three words describe the same thing—what we generally call "sin"—though in slightly different ways. "Transgression" implies that there is a line that has been overstepped. "Sin" means to miss the mark, which implies that there is a target that has not been hit. "Iniquity" speaks of open and blatant rebellion or wickedness."<sup>4</sup>

- 14. The paragraph above breaks down what we typically call "sin" into three categories—transgression, sin, and iniquity—and gives a brief explanation of how they're different from each other. Give an example of each area of each.**

**Transgression:**

**Sin:**

**Iniquity:**

In Jesus' death and resurrection, He has conquered sin and death once and for all. This means that for those who believe in Jesus, sin doesn't have the final say. It doesn't mean Christians are perfect, but it does mean that Jesus' victory gives them the power to resist temptation, receive forgiveness, and grow closer to God.

By relying on God's grace and the Holy Spirit, if you are a Christian, you can experience freedom from sin's power and presence in your life.

- 15. Daniel 9:24 shows us that God is all about bringing an end to sin. Are you? How are you dealing with areas of sin in your own life that you're struggling with?**

**One area of "transgression" I'm battling in my life right now is:**

**I'm addressing this by:**

**One area of "sin" I'm battling in my life right now is:**

**I'm addressing this by:**

**One area of "iniquity" I'm battling in my life right now is:**

**I'm addressing this by:**

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<sup>4</sup> Sermon by Stuart Chase found @ <https://brackenhurstbaptist.co.za/the-good-news/>

This study was written by Pastor Jeremy Anderson. [www.villagebible.church/students](http://www.villagebible.church/students).