

GODLY LIVING IN A GODLESS WORLD

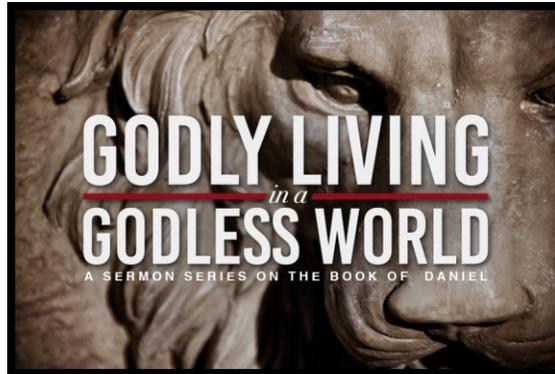
Expositional Study Of Daniel

Daniel 9:20-24

Written By

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Daniel had seen it all in his lifetime, like . . .

- Wonton, wicked corruption eating away at the core of his once great, God-fearing nation.
- Leaders who cared more about consolidating their power than empowering the people.
- The rise of a plethora of false religions which overshadowed the true religion given to Israel through Moses.
- The failure to listen to godly counsel and sound moral and biblical teaching, while opting to listen to anything and anyone else who would support your morally questionable lifestyle.
- The public hatred of anyone who dared to stand up for God, His Word, and His absolutist moral teachings.
- Dumb political moves with power-hungry surrounding nations based on the premise they could and would help their country secure lasting peace.
- The unchecked desire of the people to follow anyone and anything so long as it had nothing to do with the living God.
- The paying of bribes to saber-rattling, war-mongering neighbors in the hopes of keeping the façade of peace propped up.
- Unlimited communiques from that government that everything was going well, that God won't judge us, and that anyone who says otherwise should be silenced.

As a young man, Daniel sadly watched as his nation literally crumbled around him, resulting in him being hauled away in the first of three Babylonian invasions in 605 B.C. For the next 70 years, he rose to the top of the vile government of his captors, using his keen mind and vibrant faith in the living God to make a positive impact. Yes, instead of withdrawing, he actively served within the evil empire so he could be a light in the darkness. When placed in situations many people/politicians would be tempted to compromise their faith and principles, he stood strong and true. When a law passed behind closed political doors curtailing his penchant for praying, he prayed anyway. Even when his captors, the Babylonians, were overthrown by the blood-thirsty, power-hungry Medo-Persians under Cyrus in 538, Daniel came out of retirement, as it were, in his eighties and continued to make a spiritual impact in a less than optimal political environment. I would say there is much we should be learning from his life lived under the all-seeing eye of the living God. We, too, are called to Daniel to our decaying, dark culture. Are you?

Even though Daniel's time on this old earth drew close, he continued to read and study God's inspired Word. One day, he read from the prophet Jeremiah that the densely ordained Babylonian captivity would only last seventy years. Moved by God's profound promise, and energized by his love for his people and his country, despite their historical record of walking away from God and His Word to pursue immorality and false teaching, Daniel passionately prayed for God to give him wisdom regarding the timing of the impending release of God's people from captivity. His prayer is one for the books. His prayer is a model for any believer who desires power in their prayers. His prayer is a template of how saints should pray for themselves and their people when wickedness appears to have won the day. Yes, Daniel's lengthy prayer teaches us this one unforgettable principle:

Powerful Prayer Is Needed At Pivotal Times (Daniel 9:1-27)

Your life might be at the proverbial fork in the road. What should you do? What decisions should you make? Which way should you head? Which path will lead to blessing and life, and which will not? Your best answers can only come as you give yourself to a prayer along the lines of Daniel.

Our country is at the proverbial fork in the road, as Daniel's was. Would they remain in captivity? Did God care about their current condition? Had God forgotten them? Would they ever rise again as a great, glorious, God-fearing nation? Would God ever bless them again? We have our own concerns as we face the fork; however, as Daniel's example teaches us, we should, above all things, be spending an ample amount of time before God's throne, acknowledging His greatness and love for us, while also devoting a large chunk of our prayer time to confession for our sin and the sin we see about us. Only when we confess are we, then, in a position to seek God's help and assistance.

This is what Daniel did as he stood at fork in the road of his nation's life, and, as we shall see in this study, God answered him a way the old prophet could have never imagined. Yes, God answers his prayer, but His answer is so far beyond anything Daniel envisioned it now stands as one of the greatest answers of prayer recorded in the Old Testament.

To the four principles of powerful prayer we have already considered, we add a fifth:

Consider The Facts Of Powerful Payer (Daniel 9:20-27)

Two facts readily emerge from this powerful prayer passage. First, from verses 20-23 we see that . . .

God Provided a Messenger (Daniel 9:20-23). What sort of messenger? Not one from this world, but one from God's world. Who showed up as Daniel poured out his heart to God in behalf of God's great name and God's people? Let's see.

The Person of the Messenger (Daniel 9:20-21). The next few verses should just take your breath away as God gives you a peek into His dimension and what occurs as your pray. Listen to what the aged saint wrote happened during this personal prayer session:

²⁰ Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 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.

In Hebrew, the coordinating conjunction “and” (ו) is wedded to an adverb, “while” (עוד) creating a highly emphatic waw disjunctive clause. It's as if Daniel writes, “You are not going to believe this. While I was deep in prayer, an angel suddenly showed up!” All of the participles (viz., speaking, praying, confessing, presenting) which follow this emphatic statement are temporal and serve to underscore that the angelic visitor appeared right at the tail end of his confession and request from God regarding himself and Israel. Amazing.

This is so interesting at so many levels. Daniel's prayer at this juncture sounds a lot like the one King Solomon prayed at the dedication of the Temple hundreds of years prior. Daniel even employs the same Hebrew terminology Solomon used: “*Yet have regard to the prayer of Thy servant and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Thy servant prays before Thee today*” (1 Kings 8:28). After this, Solomon stated that God would hear and deliver Israel if they were taken into captivity for their national/personal sins, but that deliverance would be tied intrinsically to their prayer life (1 Kings 8:46-53). I think Daniel's prayer was permeated with biblical texts like this. His prayer had power because it was wedded to the Word of God and the promises of God. What is your prayer wedded to?

Verse 21 opens with the same emphatic adverbial construction, “and while” (ועוד). Again, the prophet highlights, as you would, the fact that while he committed himself to confession and supplicational requests is when Gabriel materialized in the room. Who is Gabriel? Is he a man? No. He is an angel of God who first appears to Daniel in chapter 8, verse 15 in the resemblance of a man. Angels typically appear in Scripture as men (Genesis 18:2, 22; 19:1; Mark 16:5-6; Luke 24:4), but their ability to suddenly materialize in our dimensionality, coupled with their marvelous appearance and their knowledge, quickly sets them apart as no mere men.

Since God's angelic forces are structured like an army, we must ask, “What is the role of Gabriel?” C. Fred Dickason summaries his role succinctly:

“It seems clear, then, that wherever Gabriel appears in Scripture, he is the special messenger of God to communicate revelation and interpretation concerning God’s theocratic kingdom program, particularly concerning Israel and the Messiah. He sets an example before us, who stand before God in the grace of Christ (Rom. 5:1-2), as one who is swift to carry God’s message to His people.”¹

The Bible scholar draws this conclusion based on the four appearances of Gabriel in history.

In Daniel chapter 8 he appears to Daniel to teach him about the coming of the Anti-Christ and how he will deceive the world into following and worshipping him as he opposes Israel and the Messiah (Daniel 8:23-27). Some five hundred years later, the angel of Israel appears to Zechariah the priest to inform him that he and his wife will be the parents of the forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist (Luke 1:13ff). Not long thereafter, Gabriel appears to Mary to inform her that she, of all women, will be the mother of the long-awaited and prophesied Jewish Messiah (Luke 1:31-33). Hence, whenever Gabriel enters into our time and space domain, he has much to say about how God is working to fulfill His promises to Israel to bring the Messiah in and through them to, in turn, ultimately bless the world. In Daniel 9:24-27, Gabriel will, once again, prophetically showcase God’s messianic plan in relation to Israel and the world. What an angel. He always stands near God to do God’s bidding.

What do we in this Age of Grace learn from this angelic encounter? First, does not Hebrews 1:14 tell us that angels are placed at our disposal by God? Indeed:

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?”

The answer to the rhetorical question is a resounding, “Yes!” Did not God allow Elisha’s shuddering servant to see the angels surrounding them as the Arameans surrounding the prophetic team with their vast army of chariots? Indeed:

¹⁴ He sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. ¹⁵ Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” ¹⁶ So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” ¹⁷ Then Elisha prayed and said, “O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” And the LORD opened the servant’s eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha (2 Kings 14).

I say all of this to remind you that when you pray you have no idea of what God is doing for you. You might need to read that again. This time. Let it sink in. When you think your prayers for this pivotal time in your personal life or in the time of your nation are falling on deaf ears in heaven, think again. One day you will know just what the angels did as you prayed. Makes you wonder, what doesn’t happen in God’s realm when I don’t pray? Angels probably aren’t as active. They are awaiting orders from God and those orders are typically tied to your prayer life. So, never forget that when you pray God not only hears IMMEDIATELY, He stands ready to

¹C. Fred Dickason, *Angels Elect and Evil* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 71.

dispatch an angel (or two, or three) to assist you as you serve as his soldier on their foreign field of battle.

Once Gabriel appeared, he wasted no time giving Daniel insight into what he had prayed concerning God's plan for Israel and their relation to the land of promise.

The Promise of the Messenger (Daniel 9:22-23). Gabriel's promise is comforting as well as powerful:

²² He gave *me* instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. ²³ "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell *you*, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

Imagine. Just when it looked like it was all over for Israel, when the promises of God would not be fulfilled regarding a coming kingdom of peace with the Messiah at the helm, and when godless nations and godless people seemed to do whatever they wanted, God commissioned Gabriel to give Daniel a prophetic word which would go qualitatively beyond anything he had prayed or hope for. Yes, while Daniel wanted to know about God's plan for Israel in the near future, God will show Him the answer not only to that question but will give him insight in His total kingdom/redemptive plan for the rest of human history!

Is this not just like God? You, in prayer, ask him for a small thing, and He responds by giving you a big thing, a story of stories. You pray at one level for yourself, for your nation, for your leaders, and God eventually answers in such a profound fashion you are left with your jaw on the proverbial floor, stunned by the insight He provides as the events unfold in the days, months, and years ahead of you. Yes, the Grand Weaver has a unique, exciting way of weaving the seemingly loose ends of your prayers into a wonderful, beautiful tapestry as He sovereignly works to show you He is here and He is not silent. So, do not be afraid to pray. Do not be afraid to pray to God to do something big, something off the charts to advance His cause even in a complex, carnal, hostile environment. He will answer you, in due time. And who knows. Maybe He'll employ an angel somehow and some way to make sure you head in the right direction to discover the insight and understanding you so desperately need.

This is what Daniel's powerful prayer secured. His heart was so humble, his spirit was so broken, his confessions were so transparent and authentic, and his requests from God so God honoring, God just couldn't help but send a messenger to encourage this embattled old saint. The same God waits to give you a message, too. Perhaps your messenger will come through the Word of God, or perhaps he will come through a series of unusual events, or it might even arrive through the words of a trusted, godly friend, but it will come and when it does you will know that the living God has spoken.

In addition to supply His saints with a messenger of sorts, God always makes sure your powerful prayer results in a marvelous, moving message.

God Provided a Message (Daniel 9:24-27). Before we sink our interpretive spade into this rich, royal soil, permit me to offer a few salient observations. One, these verses contain one of the most amazing and exact prophecies recorded in the Old Testament concerning the arrival of the Messiah and the Anti-christ. Skeptics should take note of its prophetic specificity uttered some

five hundred years before a large part of its fulfillment. Two, although this prophecy covers only four short verses, it is one of the deeper prophecies to understand in all of the Old Testament. If you like spiritual steaks, then this is it. Three, there are a variety of ways to interpret these verses, and for the sake of time, I will not be able to present and interact with each one of them, showing you their strengths and weaknesses. Suffice it to say, I just have time to present what I believe from my years of studying this passage is the most tenuous interpretation. Four, I will be the first to say that no one has a complete corner on how to interpret these fathomless verses. We can arrive, I think, at a sound understanding of them; however, there is always an element of mystery and surprise when we attempt to figure out how God will fulfill what He has said will occur in the future. With the preparatory thoughts in mind, let's get to digging . . .

The Purpose of the Message (Daniel 9:24). The preposition “to” (לְ) wedded to the key words of this angelic disclosure can be classified in Hebrew as denoting purpose clauses.

שְׁבַעִים שָׁבָעִים שְׁבַעִים נְחָתָדָּ עַל-עֲמֻנָּהּ וְעַל-עִיר קְדֻשָּׁתָּהּ ^{WTT Daniel 9:24}
 לְכַלֵּא הַפָּשָׁע (וְלַחַתֵּם) [וְלַחַתֵּם] (חַטָּאוֹת) [חַטָּאוֹת] וְלַכַּפֵּר
 עֹן וְלַהֲבִיא צֶדֶק עֲלֵמִים וְלַחַתֵּם חֲזוֹן וְנָבִיא וְלַמְשִׁחַ קֹדֶשׁ
 קְדָשִׁים:

You can readily identify them in English by underscoring the word “to.”

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*.”

Before we look at the six-fold purpose of this prophecy, we need to first stop and look at the phrase “seventy weeks.” The Hebrew does not read “seventy weeks,” but “seventy sevens.” Since in the immediate context Daniel is talking about seventy years of captivity, with one year of captivity representing every seven year sabbatical rest cycle the Israelites did not observe, I think we are safe to conclude this new phrase is speaking about seventy seven of years, or 490 years. This is most poetic and balanced. For 490 years Israel has chosen not to follow Sabbath rest laws for the law, and they, then, served 70 years of captivity for their disobedience. However, now that time of captivity drew near and God informs Daniel there will be a final 490 years, denoted by seventy sevens, wherein God will finalize His kingdom/redemptive program in and through Israel.

One more observation is important for us to understand. Ancient Israel’s years were 360 days, not 365 days, because their calendar was based on the lunar, not the solar, cycle. Various texts in the Old Testament denote this (Genesis 7:11, 24; 8:3-4). This is also how prophetic time markers are denoted in the New Testament as well (Revelation 11:2; 12:6; 13:5). Ostensibly, then, seventy sevens, or 490 years, is also equivalent to 173,174,240 lunar days. More on this math in a moment.

Gabriel informs Daniel that God will carve 490 years out of the time of the last Gentile empires, which have been prophesied at various places thus far in the book (Daniel 2, 7, 8). Why will He, the author of all time and space, the great Providential One, do this? The divinely schooled angel reveals that God has six distinct purposes as the history of man draws to a close prior to the revelation of the Messiah and His kingdom based in and out of Israel. The first three are negative, while the last three are positive.

1. “to finish the transgression” speaks not of “a transgression,” but “the transgression,” with the article having emphatic, par excellence import. The Hebrew verb for transgression, *pasha* (עָשָׂה) means “to rebel or revolt.” Think of anarchist in the street throwing Molotov cocktails and you have the idea of this Hebrew word. Since this transgression is related to Israel, and the captivity served to discipline them for their idolatrous ways during the period of the kings, and since this prophecy looks forward, the transgression must be forward. What is THE transgression of Israel? It is national the rejection of the Messiah, Jesus. It is clear from Isaiah 53:1-9 and Zechariah 12:10-13:1 that God will save the nation at the arrival of the Messiah at the end of time, and Paul, the great rabbi, echoes this in his writings (Romans 11:26). Many Jews have turned to Jesus since His death and resurrection after they weighed the evidence concerning His person and work; however, the angel promises there will be a day when THE transgression is finally finished.
2. “to make and end of sin” is the Hebrew word *hata* (חָטָא), which means “to miss the mark or way” (Judges 20:16; Proverbs 19:2; 13:6). Applied to man, it refers to his proclivity to spurn God’s goals and standards for him, choosing rather to abide by his own laws and rules which are relative (Judges 21:25). Think of Achan taking the divinely forbidden booty from Jericho, and you have an idea of *hata* (Joshua 7:10ff). *Hata* is a willful, knowing departure from what God says is the way to walk in order to be holy and righteous. Our relativistic culture does not believe in moral, spiritual absolutes, opting instead for fluid, ever-changing morals based on the feeling of the majority. Their position allows them to sin while calling it moral behavior. God’s position is unchanging. There are moral, spiritual absolutes which never change, regardless of what culture thinks, and to break them is sin, no matter what your argumentation or excuses is/are. Since man’s fall in Eden to the present, his innate, inherited, imputed (Romans 5:12-21) problem is SIN. The prophetic imagery here speaks of locking up sin in a prison, as it were, so it is not a problem anymore. Again, since this is in direct relation to Israel, it probably speaks of how the Messiah will one day redeem the nation which has historically rejected His Word, His Torah. Isaiah chapters 24-27 contains a small version of John’s Apocalypse. At the close of chapter 27, right before Israel is brought to the land to be where the Messiah is, we read: “⁹ Therefore through this Jacob’s iniquity will be forgiven; And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones; When Asherim and incense altars will not stand” (Isaiah 27). Daniel, with Isaiah passages as a background, is comforted with the fact that within the next 490 year cycle there will be the divine dealing and forgiveness of Israel penchant for disobeying Him. To put this in New Testament terms, Jesus, the Messiah, is now the solution for man’s sin problem. As Paul teaches

us so clearly: “Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst” (1 Timothy 1:15). The only one suited to deal with sin against a perfect God is a perfect God who becomes sin’s substitute. This is Jesus. He saves now, but in the future, as the 490 years winds down, or culminates, He will save Israel.

3. “to make atonement for iniquity.” Atonement comes from the Hebrew root *kaper* (כָּפַר) which means to cover over, pacify, or make propitiation (remove anger).² For God,

² S. R. Driver and Charles A Briggs, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew-Aramaic Lexicon*, ed. Francis Brown (Lafayette, Indiana: Associated Publishers and Authors, INC, 1981), 497-498. כָּפַר vb. **Pi** etc. **denom.** cover over (fig.), pacify, make propitiation;—**Pi Pf.** כָּפַר Ex 30:10 + 31 times; 2 ms. sf. כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Ez 43:20; 3 mpl. כָּפַרוּ Ez 43:26; 2 mpl. כָּפַרְתֶּם Ez 45:20; **Impf.** כָּפַר Ex 30:10 + 10 times; כָּפַרְךָ Lv 7:7 Nu 5:8; sf. כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Pr 16:14; 1 s. אָכַפַּר 2 S 21:3; אָכַפַּרְתָּהוּ Gn 32:21 Ex 32:30, etc.; **Imv.** כָּפַר Dt 21:8 + 4 times; **Inf.** כָּפַר Ex 30:15 + 28 times; sfs. כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Ez 16:63; כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Ex 29:36; כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Is 47:11;— **1.** cover over, pacify, propitiate; אָכַפַּרְתָּהוּ Gn 32:21 let me cover over his face by the present (so that he does not see the offence, i.e. pacify him; E; RS: 2^d ed.,³⁸¹ ‘wipe clean the face,’ blackened by displeasure, as the Arabs says ‘whiten the face’); וְתִפְּלַעַלְיָהוּ הַזֶּה לֹא תִכְלִי כָפַרְתָּהוּ Is 47:11 and disaster will fall upon thee, thou wilt not be able to propitiate it (by payment of a כָּפַר, see Is 43:3); pacify the wrath of a king Pr 16:14 (e.g. by a gift). **2.** cover over, atone for sin, without sacrifice: **a.** man as subj., כָּפַרְתָּהוּ 2 S 21:3, with what shall I cover over (viz. the bloodguiltiness of the house of Saul, says David. The answer is by a death penalty of seven sons of the guilty house); כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Ex 32:30 on behalf of your sins (JE; Moses, by intercession); c. עַל of persons Nu 17:11, 12 (P; by incense), 25:13 (P when Phinehas slays the ringleaders). **b.** with God as subj., c. acc. pers., cover, i.e. treat as covered, view propitiously, Yahweh’s land Dt 32:43 (song); לְפָנָיו Dt 21:8 (bloodguiltiness flows away in the stream), Ez 16:63; כָּפַרְתָּהוּ of person 2 Ch 30:18; c. acc. of the sin ψ 65:4; 78:38, prob. also Dn 9:24 (|| חַטָּאת הַזֶּה עַל of sin, ψ 79:9 Je 18:23 (|| מחזה). It is conceived that God in his sovereignty may himself provide an atonement or covering for men and their sins which could not be provided by men. **3.** cover over, atone for sin and persons by legal rites, in the codes of H, P, and Ez: abs. וְכִי הִכָּהוּ and the priest shall make atonement Lv 16:32; **a.** c. acc. of sacred places (by the great sin-offering of the day of atonement), Lv 16:20, 33⁰; also Ez 43:20, 26; 45:20 (by the blood of the sin-offering || חָטָא, טָהַר). **b.** usually c. עַל (1) of things, e.g. of the altar to which the blood of the sin-offering was applied Ex 29:36, 37; 30:10; Lv 8:15 (|| קָדַשׁ), 16:18; and specifically the horns of the altar Ex 30:10 the holy place of the tabernacle Lv 16:16 (by the great sin-offering, because of (מִן) the uncleannesses of the children of Israel and because of their transgressions); for the leprous house by ceremony of purification Lv 14:53 (|| טָהַר); for the goat לעזאזל Lv 16:10 (which was presented before Yahweh to consecrate him for the bearing away of the sins of the people). (2) of persons, עֲלֵינִפְשֵׁיכֶם, for your persons, yourselves, e.g. by the payment of atonement-money כָּסֶפְ הַכִּפָּרִים Ex 30:15, 16; by the blood of the spoils Nu 31:50; by the blood upon the altar Lv 17:11; in the ritual עֲלֵיהֶם by ministry of priest through the blood of the sin-offering Lv 4:20, 31; 8:34; 10:17; 12:7, 8; 14:19, 31; 16:30, 33; 23:28; Nu 8:12, 21; 15:25, 28⁰; 28:22, 30; 29:5; 2 Ch 29:24 Ne 10:34; of the trespass-offering Lv 5:16, 18, 26; 7:7; 14:21; 19:22; Nu 5:8; the whole burnt-offering Lv 1:4; 14:20; 16:24; by the oil used in purifying a leper Lv 14:18, 29; by the תְּרוּמָה Ez 45:15; by the priestly ministry in general 1 Ch 6:34; by the substitution of the Levites for the firstborn Nu 8:19. Underlying all these offerings there is the conception that the persons offering are covered by that which is regarded as sufficient and satisfactory by Yahweh. (The purpose of the covering is stated Lv 16:30 וְכִי תִטְהַרְתָּהוּ לִפְנֵי יְיָ מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֶיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְיָ = shall atonement be made for you to cleanse you, from all your sins shall ye be clean before Yahweh, and Nu 8:21 וְכִי יַכְפִּיר עֲלֵיהֶם לְטָהָרָם (and Aaron) made atonement for them to cleanse them.) **c.** the need of the atonement is expressed by מִן: others understand מִן as = away from; cf. Di Lv 4:26, Ri^{Sühne} 50 f. מִחַטָּאתוֹ because of his sin Lv 4:26; 5:6, 10; 16:34; מטמאתו Lv 14:19; 16:16; מזוֹב Lv 15:15, 30; מֵאֲשֶׁר חָטָא Nu 6:11; also עַל עֲלֵי-חַטָּאתוֹ on account of his sin Lv 4:35; 5:13; 19:22; עַל-שִׁגְגָתוֹ Lv 5:18. **d.** c. בְּ instr. בְּאֵילַי Lv 5:16; 19:22; Nu 5:8; with a trespass-offering Lv 7:7; כִּי-יִהְיֶה כָּפַרְתָּהוּ Lv 17:11 for it is the blood with the living being that covers over (H, see נפש 3 (a); RV by reason of the life after De Di Kn Bähr Kau and most moderns; AV follows טָהַר טָהַר, so Ges Ew^{282 a.} Ann. 1: ‘for the soul’); c. בְּ loc. בְּקִדְשׁ Lv 6:23; 16:17, 27 **e.** c. בְּעֵד pers., on behalf of Lv 9:7⁰; 16:6, 11, 17, 24 (by Aaron), Ez 45:17 (by the prince). **Pu Pf.** כָּפַר Ex 29:33 Is 28:18 (but read תִּכְפַּר, —√ I. פָּרַר, —so 𐤏 Hu We Che SS al. v. Br²⁰⁹); **Impf.** כָּפַרְתָּהוּ

the only way iniquity can be covered is by a divinely ordered and acceptable blood sacrifice. For instance, once the worshipper confessed his/her sin on the head of the burnt offering lamb, and the blood of the innocent animal was spilt, atonement or coverage for sin was achieved (Leviticus 1:4). Blood sacrifice, based on God's prescription, is the only means whereby sinners can secure coverage for their sin before the eyes of a God who sees all things. Jesus' death is the only death God will accept in securing this coverage for your sin. As Paul says, ⁴⁹ *namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation* (2 Corinthians 5). To this John adds at the close of the New Testament, ⁵¹ *My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; ² and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world* (1 John 2). Amazing. Daniel asks for insight into God's immediate dealings with Israel, and God tells him how they will be around in the future when He provides THE means for dealing with their sin, once and for all. And the wonderful thing is, we, as Gentiles, are now allowed to enjoy the atonement promised some five hundred years ago.

4. "to bring in everlasting righteousness." Every Israelite knew what this meant. All throughout the Old Testament their prophets prophesied a time was coming when God would bring true righteousness to the world through the Messiah, and Israel would be His favored nation to dispense the time of utter holiness and peace (Isaiah 1:26; 11:2-5; 32:17; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 33:15-18). As you can tell from the corruption permeating not only our country, but all the countries of the world, not to mention the constant barrage of old and new versions of sin and evil, the world is crying out for a kingdom of righteousness. They will never vote it in, totalitarian dictators will never force it in, but it will come, as God promises, as He providentially works out this final 490 years of prophetic history. Is this not comforting? Indeed. Even though it appears that the nations of the world are unhinged at this moment are coming morally apart, this is the not the end of mankind. Far from it. History will culminate with the arrival, as we shall see, of the King of Kings, Jesus, the Messiah. And with Him will come everlasting righteousness. Will you be part of His kingdom is the question.
5. "to seal up the vision and prophecy." What does this cryptic phrase mean? I believe it highlights the fact that when this 490 years of prophetic history is complete, all Old Testament prophecies will be fulfilled to the letter. There will no longer be the need

Nu 35:33; + 3 times; 3 fs. תִּכַּפֵּר Is 6:7 *be covered over, atoned for*. 1. apart from the ritual, חטאתך תכפר Is 6:7 *thy sin shall be covered over* (|| וְסָר עֲוֹנֶיךָ ||) by the touch of the live coal from the altar); אִם-יִכַפֵּר הָעוֹן הַזֶּה לָּךְ Is 22:14 *surely this iniquity shall not be covered over for you*; c. כּ instr. בּוֹאֵת יִכַּפֵּר עוֹן Is 27:9 *by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be covered over* (|| הִסַר חַטֹּאתָו ||) namely by the destruction of idolatrous objects); עוֹן בְּחַסֵּד וּבְאֵמֶת יִכַּפֵּר עוֹן Pr 16:6 *by mercy and fidelity iniquity is covered over*. 2. c. לְ *for whom*, לֹא יִכַּפֵּר לָדָם Nu 35:33 *for the land atonement cannot be made, in view of the blood shed in it, except by the blood of the shedder of blood*; in the ritual of P, c. כּ instr. אִשֶּׁר כִּפֶּר בָּהֶם Ex 29:33 *wherewith atonement was made* (ram of consecration).

Hithp. Impf. יִכַּפֵּר 1 S 3:14; c. כּ instr. בְּיַד-עֲלִי בָּזְבַח וּבְמִנְחָה the iniquity of the house of Eli shall not be covered by peace-offering or minchah (in other words there was no atonement for it; cf. **Pu** Is. 22:14).

Nithp. (Ges^{55,9} Pf. וְנִכַּפֵּר לָהֶם הַדָּם Dt 21:8 *and the blood shall be covered for them*.)²

- to validate God's voice through prophecy because its full realization will stand as an eternal signpost pointing to God's presence and activity in the affairs of mankind. There will be no need to look forward to what God is going to do, because it will be done! His redemptive/kingdom plan will be completely and actually realized. Today, we look down the halls of time with our Bible in hand to anticipate what is coming, but in that day we can put the Bible down and simply relish in the completion of God's great work to save sinners and create a kingdom of eternal peace for His people. Again, I ask, will you be there? Faith in Jesus as your Savior is the way to secure your place (John 3:16; 5:24-25).
6. "to anoint the most holy place." The word "place" is not in the original Hebrew text. This is called ellipsis and it is a rhetorical device employed to draw attention to the import the verbiage. Here the emphasis rests upon the word "holy." The Hebrew of this phrase is repetitive to create stress and importance: קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים, *kodesh kadashim*. This is a code word for the Temple in the Old Testament, as we see in Ezekiel 43:12. But which Temple is in view? It can't be the first temple of Solomon (950 B.C.), nor the second built by Zerubbabel (518 B.C.), and, no doubt, the third renovated by King Herod starting in 20 B.C. is out of the question because it is gone (70 A.D.), and the tribulation temple is not an option (Matthew 24:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:1; Revelation 11:1-2) because the Anti-christ will pollute it. I would say that since Ezekiel spends chapters 40 through 48 describing the future temple of the Messiah, whose dimensions and structure has never been seen before on the planet, and since two times he calls this place the same name: קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים, *kodesh kadashim* (Ezekiel 43:12; 48:12), we can safely conclude that when the Messiah comes to finish out this 490 years of Gentile history, it will culminate with the temple to end all temples whereby the redeemed of all time can come and worship the living God in the rebuilt and rejuvenated city of Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:1ff; Zechariah 8:23).

Just when you thought this old world was falling apart. Just when you thought the bad times have replaced the good times. Just when you thought your country was imploding, along with much of the civilized world. Just when you were disillusioned with politics and politicians. Just when you couldn't believe the next new sin you read about on the internet actually existed. Just when you, with Stephen Tyler of *Aerosmith*, started singing . . .

There's somethin' wrong with the world today
 I don't know what it is
 Something's wrong with our eyes
 We're seein' things in a different way
 And God knows it ain't his
 It shore ain't no surprise
 Livin' on the edge
 Livin' on the edge
 Livin' on the edge
 Livin' on the edge

There's somethin' wrong with the world today
The light bulb's gettin dim
There's meltdown in the sky

Yes, just when you started growing comfortable with the fact that chaos not calm was the order of the day, Gabriel informs you that we are smack dab in the fulfillment period of God's wonderful Messianic program to bring peace on earth. God's hand is on the wheel of our history and it will go to His desired end for Israel and for His people who compose the Church.

So be encouraged!

So be challenged! When the King comes will you be with Him because your faith in his sacrificial death covered your sin, making you a whole new person in His holy sight? The next move is yours and it's got nothing to do with voting, and everything to do with bowing.