

The Rapture: Is it Biblical? Part 5 (Slide 1)
Does Daniel's Prophecy Align with the Tribulationist Doctrine of
End-Time Events?

Reading: Galatians 5:13-21

You might have wondered why I would choose Galatians 5 as our reading for today's lesson. It truly epitomizes the character of Daniel and I want to emphasize that in this lesson as we study this prophecy.

The simple answer to the lesson's title is; **No!** But we need to explain our view.

A quick review of Daniel's prayer in Daniel 9:1-19 can be found in four verses:

Daniel 9:1-2 (Slide 2)

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books (Prophecy of Jeremiah concerning fulfilled events surrounding Jerusalem) (Slide 3) **the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.**

Daniel 9:5 (Slide 4)

we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.

Daniel 9:13 (Slide 5)

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth.

Daniel prays on behalf of himself and the Israelites and their sin. I am utterly amazed that Daniel includes himself in the iniquity and their disregard for God

and His word. We certainly don't see outright rebellion, iniquity, and sin from what we know about Daniel. Daniel would rather lose his own life than offend God.

I want to emphasize that point and the character of Daniel as we continue in the lesson. Because in reality, this is all that really matters.

No matter what else happens: if our relationship to God is like Daniel's, if we put others above our own interests as did Daniel, and if we have such devotion and honor for God's Holy Word as He did, then this **"Rapture and tribulation"** can occur as some believe it will and it won't make any difference whatsoever to us!! Nevertheless, it is a fascinating subject.

In **Daniel 9:1-19**, Daniel prays for himself and his people. Before he could finish praying, his answer came.

Daniel 9:20-21 (Slide 6)

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, (Slide 7) 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.

While he was still praying, Gabriel, who he previously encountered starting in **Daniel 8:16** was sent to Daniel to give him understanding. In fact, Gabriel once again in chapter 9 verse 22 reiterates that he came to give him insight and understanding.

Why would God send Gabriel to do this for Daniel? Gabriel says at the very beginning of your prayer, I was commanded to come to you because (Slide 8) **"you are highly esteemed"** that is, by God Himself. Friends, out of what we are studying, that's what matters most!! To be highly esteemed by God Almighty!!

Understand also, that as in Daniel's time and our time, God will hear the prayers of His faithful Children, but will turn a deaf ear to the disobedient and the unbelieving!

Gabriel's answer to Daniel's prayer is a timeline:

Daniel 9:24 (Slide 9)

“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.

As we just read, there are 6 things that must be completed. Are these literal events or are they Symbolic? If they were to be literal events then that would mean from the moment of this decree, the time allotment for these things to be fulfilled will need to occur in seven weeks plus 62 weeks for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

After that allotment of time, specifically 69 weeks, the Messiah the Prince will come. That specific amount of time is based on verse 25:

Daniel 9:25 (Slide 10)

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

No matter how you look at it, factual history does not allow us to take what we've read to be literal despite the fact that many scholars believe what is written in Daniel 9 must be taken literally. If they are wrong, would that not in essence refute claims of the **Rapurist Pretribulationist** doctrine?

Before we continue and if you are confused, bear in mind what matters most. Daniel's relationship and standing with God Almighty. That's what matters most. Now let's continue.

Let's look at the chronological order from Gabriel's reply: (Slide 11)

1. Starting point: ***Decree to rebuild and restore Jerusalem*** - Seven weeks for this to be accomplished (vs 25)
2. **62 weeks** is the time seemingly after Jerusalem's completion to the Coming Messiah which accumulated together is **69 weeks** (vs 25) (Slide 12)

3. At the beginning of **week 70**, the **Messiah will be cut off and have nothing**, once again after this occurs the city and sanctuary will be destroyed by the prince who is to come. (vs 26)

So the question is: What does the Seventy Weeks mean?

There are basically three views of Daniel 9, **Non-millennial view, Premillennial view, and the Symbolic view**. I want to look briefly at the Non-millennial view and the Symbolic view. Next week, I hope to summarize Daniel 10 and 11 and point out the parallel between Chapter 12 and Matthew 24.

For the conclusion of this week's lesson, we will look at the Non-millennial view of Gabriel's answer in Daniel 9.

Non-millennial

This view relies heavily on Ezra 7. Ezra is allowed to leave Babylon to go up into Jerusalem with the blessing of King **Artaxerxes**. He granted Ezra anything that he needed to go and to worship the Lord God in Jerusalem. Ezra was a scribe who is skilled in the Law of Moses.

Verse 10 describes Ezra's loyalty to God and his intention in serving the Lord.

Ezra 7:10 (Slide 13)

For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Many of this view indicate that the "decree to rebuild Jerusalem as recorded in Gabriel's answer to Daniel's prayer In Chapter 9, started with Ezra going to Jerusalem. Historically, this is in 458 B.C. This view implies that each week is 7 years, that is, 69 weeks x 7 which equals 483 years before the coming Messiah the Prince. After multiplying each week by 7 and adding the start date of 458 B.C. the time would fall around 24 to 25 A.D. which is thought to be around the time that John baptized Jesus.

Following the events regarding Jesus in Luke 3 and 4: (Slide 14)

1. **Luke 3:21-23** *Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came (Slide 15) out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." 23 When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age* (Genealogy of Jesus recorded in the rest of the Chapter).
2. (Slide 16) **Luke 4:1** *Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness 2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil.*
3. (Slide 17) **Luke 4:14** *And Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. 15 And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.*
4. Baptized by John, tempted by Satan, Began His public ministry at age 30.

Gabriel says in Daniel 9 that 70 weeks total will be completed for the 6 things he outlines in the answer to Daniel's prayer. Seven weeks and 62 weeks and the coming of the Messiah the Prince. Think of these weeks according to the Non-millennial view as years.

After 62 weeks-(Slide 18) **Daniel 9:26** *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.*

Taken literally or according to this view verse 26 would be the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman Empire which Historically was in AD 70.

Here are the problems with this view:

John's record of the Gospel records three Passover events, which is an annual feast, as recorded during Jesus ministry. This would mean that what we read in Luke is that Jesus began His ministry at age 30 and His ministry would have ended because of His arrest and subsequent crucifixion 3 to 3 ½ years later. Note: **Some scholars believe His ministry was as short as 2 years but that is refuted by John's record.**

The length of Jesus ministry and the concept of each week in Daniel 9 as equaling 7 years do not align. According to Gabriel's answer, in week 70:

Daniel 26b-27 (Slide 19)

And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined. 27 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; (Slide 20) 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."

According to this doctrine, that last week equals 7 years. That would be 7 years after His baptism at age 30. His ministry lasted 3 to 3 ½ years. Which would mean 3 ½ to 4 years unaccounted. It would also put Jesus on the cross at age 37. It just does not add up.

Interesting note is that some Denominational Bible colleges teach that the 70th week is yet to happen in Daniel 9.

There are other instances we could cite in reference to time and the 70 weeks. For example, the rebuilding of the walls of the city in Nehemiah. That time frame indicates the completion of the city in 444 B.C. This would really throw a wrench in this theory.

Therefore, we can conclude that what we read in Daniel is symbolic. History aligns with the prophecy of Daniel. The events spoken of by Gabriel have taken place. They are not future events. Symbolically speaking, some events will have greater duration according to time. Thus, 7 weeks and 62 weeks.

However, the bottom line is factual events will occur in sequence: namely the restoration of Jerusalem before Jesus came the first time and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. These are the facts that refute all theories.

It is important that we don't get so intent on understanding this prophetic language that we miss the most important message of the book of Daniel.

1. His humility and his putting the concern for the welfare of others above his own.

Philippians 2:3-4 (Slide 21)

3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

2. Daniel's relationship with God Almighty.

Daniel 9:23b (Slide 22)

for you are highly esteemed;

Friends and brethren, these two categories of eternal assurance mean more than anything else that could possibly happen in the past, present or future.

Romans 8:31 (Slide 23)

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Invitation

But God will be against us on the day of judgment if we haven't become one of His children through putting on Christ Jesus in Baptism. Why stand before Him, Lost?!! Arise and be baptized calling on the name of the Lord.

If you are in Christ, don't risk standing in front of His judgment seat in waywardness. Let us help you by praying for you and with you to restore your walk with Him.

Please let us know how we can help you.

Galatians 5:13-26

13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." 15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are:

immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

Please visit our website for the full audio of this study:
Shelbyvillechurch.com

Shelbyville Church of Christ