

# Will Israel Survive?

by Denis Lyle

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*The sermon explores the prophetic significance of Daniel's seventy weeks and affirms Israel's enduring identity and God's faithfulness to His promises.*

**Scripture:** Daniel 9:20

**Topics:** "Biblical Prophecy", "Divine Inspiration"

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## Description

Denis Lyle preaches on the prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel, highlighting the story of Rabbi Leopold Kahn who found Jesus as his Savior after seeking the Messiah in New York City. The sermon delves into the significance of Daniel 9:20-27 as a defense of the divine inspiration of the Bible, pinpointing the precise timing of the Messiah's arrival. It emphasizes the fulfillment of the prophecy's first sixty-nine weeks, instilling confidence in God's faithfulness for the final part. The sermon explores Daniel's prayer and the prophecy of the seventy weeks, focusing on the introduction and interpretation of this significant period in Israel's history.

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## Transcript

Reading: Daniel 9:20-27 WILL ISRAEL SURVIVE Leopold Kahn, a European Rabbi, studied the prophecy of the seventy weeks of Daniel, and on the basis of (9:25-26) came to the conclusion that the Messiah had already come. Puzzled by this, he approached an older Rabbi and asked "Where is the Messiah" The Rabbi didn't know the answer but told him he thought the Messiah was in New York City. So Kahn sold almost everything he owned and bought a ticket for the USA seeking the Messiah.

He arrived in New York and began to wander up and down the streets, looking for the Messiah. One night he walked past the door of a Mission Hall and heard people singing. He went in, sat down in the back of the hall and heard a preacher talk about Jesus Christ, the Messiah. That night Leopold Kahn received the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour! Soon after, he bought a stable, swept it out, set up some chairs, and began to hold his own gospel meetings. That was the first outreach of what was to become the American Board of Missions to the Jews.

It all started because a Rabbi read the ninth chapter of Daniel. Some scholars consider (Dan 9:20-27) the single greatest defence of the divine inspiration of the Bible, for it precisely states when the Messiah would come to earth. Sir Isaac Newton, who wrote a discourse on the topic, said we could stake the truth of Christianity on that prophecy alone, made five centuries before the Lord Jesus Christ. The interesting fact about the seventy weeks of Daniel, which is the prophecy, is that sixty-nine seventieths of it have already

been fulfilled.

We can go back into history and trace the literal, detailed fulfilment of the sixty-nine weeks. This gives us complete confidence to believe that what God has done in the first part of the prophecy He will surely do in the last part. Now just as (Ch's 2 & 7) outline the prophetic programme of the Gentile nations so (Ch 9) reveals God's prophetic programme for the Jews. In fact this passage answers the question, "Will Israel survive" A few years ago, a suburban area near one American city was being developed as a very exclusive residential community.

At first only a few Jewish people bought sites for homes, then more and more purchased lots. Other people in the community began to agitate to force the Jews out. One minister of a nearby church announced as his topic for the next Sunday, "How to get rid of the Jews". This caused a furore. Everybody in the area talked about it all week and some Jews even protested to the governor of the state. Sunday came and the church was jammed with people. A Jewish rabbi and two newspaper reporters appeared and walked to the front of the church.

The pastor read his text, which was (Jer 31:35-36) "Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar. The Lord of hosts is His name. If those ordinances (sun, moon, and stars) depart from before Me, saith the Lord then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever". With a smile on his face, the rabbi turned to the reporters and said, "Its all right boys".

Yes, Israel will survive, and Gods programme for her as a nation is revealed in (Dan Ch 9) Now this chapter revolves around two focal points. (1) Daniel believed an Old Prophecy. (2) Daniel received a New Prophecy. In between the aged prophet poured out his heart in prayer. So that from (9:1-19) you have got The PRAYER and then from (9:20-27) you have got the PROPHECY which has to do with Daniel's seventy weeks! I want us to concentrate on two parts of this prophecy this ...! (1) THE INTRODUCTION TO THE SEVENTY WEEKS In other words we need to care that we see this prophecy in its proper setting.

We must not study the seventy weeks in isolation but as part of the unit represented by (Ch 9) So look for a moment at: (a) THE INFORMATION THAT DANIEL DISCOVERED: Look at (9:2) You see, Daniel was a great student of the OT Scriptures and as he was reading passages like (Jer 25:25 29:10) he discovered something wonderful. He saw clearly that the captivity of the Jews in Babylon would have a duration of seventy years. Now if the beginning of the captivity is dated from the time of Daniel's deportation in 605 BC then 67 of the 70 years had elapsed, and Daniel realised that he was living on the very threshold of the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy.

Now it is very important that we notice something and it is this. Daniel believed in the literal interpretation of prophecy. To him, the 70 years meant 70 actual years and were not to be symbolised or spiritualised in any way. Daniel obviously expected the exile to end soon and within the number of years the prophet Jeremiah had predicted. (Jer 25:11-12 20:10) So there was the (a) and this led to: (b) THE INTERCESSION THAT DANIEL OFFERED: Do you recall (9:3) What was Daniel seeking Was he not seeking the face of the Lord with regard to the fulfilment of Gods promise to His people Was he not coming right into the presence of the Lord, claiming the promise of the Lord and saying, "Lord, do as Thou hast said".

Now this is a special figure of speech in the Hebrew Bible. Everywhere in the Old Testament where you get a whole string of "ands", its a special figure. Do you see how Daniel see's prayer Some of you pray inaudibly, but look at what Daniel says here. "Yea, whiles I was speaking... "(9:21) In the New Testament we are encouraged to "make our requests known unto God". (Phil 4:6) My, do you ever talk to the Lord in prayer Have you talked to Him today in prayer Look at what Daniel says in (9:20) Have we not left confession out of our prayers Oh, if ever there was one man who could separate himself from the sin of the nation it was Daniel.

How high was the standard of his living, and yet here he is confessing his sin. Its Personal: "my sin... "but its also National: "the sin of my people Israel". My, if some believers got to the spiritual plane where Daniel was you could not live with them, but not Daniel. The Searching of the Word, had moved him to Seek the Lord. Prophetic truth drove Daniel to his knees! A Christian leader said some time ago, "I do not believe that the Lord's Return is imminent. I think the current teaching that is it imminent is leading many believers to fold their hands and disobey what the Saviour taught when He said, "Work,... the night cometh when no man can work". (Jn 9:4) Now of course some believers respond improperly to prophetic teaching.

The truth however, is that many believers respond improperly to any kind of Biblical teaching. But the response of Christians does not invalidate what the Bible teaches about the future. For prophecy is used in the Scriptures for spiritual, moral, and practical exhortation. Warren Wiersbe says, "The doctrine of the Lord's Return is not a toy to play with, not a weapon to fight with, but rather it is a tool to build with". My, the whole tenor of Scripture is, "The Lord is Coming, Christian be ready".

So what does prophecy do for you Does it drive you to the throne of grace Does it motivate you to pray There was (a) (b) but notice: (c) THE INTERRUPTION THAT DANIEL EXPERIENCED; Look at (9:21-23) Now will you please notice: 1. HOW Daniel was Interrupted: While Daniel prayed Gabriel arrived... testimony to the speed of an angelic being. Daniel was on his knees when God said to Gabriel, "Look, I want you to go down there and give Daniel some information, and I want you to go right now".

There's no doubt Gabriel is an angel even though he is described as "even the man Gabriel". (9:21) That identifies him as the same Gabriel who appeared to Daniel in (Ch 8) The Hebrew word for "man", here can also be translated "servant." (ish) Gabriel was acting as God's servant. Sometimes God uses holy angels to effect answers to our prayers. (Heb 1:14) Do you recall when Cornelius the centurion prayed The Bible says, "He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him and saying unto him, Cornelius... thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God". (Acts 10:3-4) Do you remember what happened when the church prayed for Peter while he was in prison (Acts 12:5-10) My, the angelic beings who surround the throne of God are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." (Heb 1:14) Here is old Daniel agonising on earth and God from the throne sends an angel down.

Does God answer prayer Indeed God does, although not always as quickly and dramatically as in this case. I mean Daniel was still praying when Gabriel reached his side with an answer! Now judging from the length of Daniel's recorded prayer and the fact that Gabriel arrived before he finished, that trip took less than three minutes. Says AC Gaebelin, "Heaven is not far away. There is no space and distance for God. What an encouragement to prayer this ought to be to God's people.

The moment we pray in the Spirit and in His name our voices are heard in the highest heaven". Gabriel came from heaven to earth, from God's throne to Daniel's side, to give the prophet insight and

understanding. (9:22) (1) 2. WHEN Daniel was Interrupted: " About the time of the evening oblation". (9:21) You see, the law of Moses provided for an unblemished yearling lamb to be offered morning and evening along with a meal offering and a drink offering. (Num 28:3-8) The time of the evening sacrifice was three in the afternoon, the ninth hour, the very hour that Christ died on the cross. (Matt 27:46 Mk 15:34) Now remember where Daniel is.

He is in Babylon. There were no Jewish sacrifices being offered there. Almost seventy years before the time of this prayer, the Temple at Jerusalem had been destroyed! But although there was no Temple or Altar Daniel had never forgotten the hour of the evening sacrifice! Away in exile, in pagan Babylon, a holy man of God met with the Lord at a stated hour. My, at the very hour when sacrifices were usually offered Daniel was on his knee's before God, "presenting himself as a living sacrifice". (Rom 12:1) You see, these words of Gabriel, were intended by their ritual timing to take Daniel to the cross.

My, do you ever take time to mediate on " The wondrous Cross", If there was more meditation on the cross, there would be more motivation from the cross. If we thought more about the sacrifice of Christ, we would think less about presenting ourselves as "living sacrifices". Daniel read the scrolls and was motivated to pray, but he realised that the only way he could approach a holy God was through a blood sacrifice. My, the only way that we can come into the holiest is "by the blood of Jesus". (Heb 10:19) 3.

WHY Daniel was Interrupted: Why did Gabriel come My, he came because of: \* Daniel's PRAYER: The moment Daniel began to pray, the herald angel was on his way. How little we understand the cosmic significance of our prayers. \* \* Daniel's PERPLEXITY: Look at (9:22) Two words that virtually mean the same thing. Now Daniel was not praying for understanding, nor did Daniel request something for himself or insight into the future. Daniel was concerned with God's plan for his people Israel, and Gabriel was sent to assure Daniel of God's unwavering purpose to fulfil his promises!

Did you notice what Gabriel said to Daniel, "understand the matter and consider the vision". In other words, "put your mind to work to grasp the significance of this revelation". So Gabriel came because of \* \* \* Daniel's PERSON: Look at (9:23) It is significant that the greatest source of prophetic information in the New Testament is the apostle John, and Daniel is the leading prophet in the New Testament. Both of them are described as "greatly beloved". (Jn 21:20) That phrase means "a man very precious, or most desired".

Think of it... Gabriel, the herald angel who stands in the presence of God (Lk 1:19) was commissioned to leave the heights of heaven in order to tell this man that he was precious to God. Oh, to the outward eye he was just an old man, dressed in sackcloth, his body anointed with ashes, worn out with the intensity of his prayer. But to God Daniel was precious. And because he was beloved, no trouble would be spared. Now this does not mean that God loves some more than others for His love is so unrestricted that He gave His only begotten Son for the entire world. (Jn 3:16) The Lord Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends". (Jn 15:13) But from a human perspective God's love is experienced to the utmost when one's character is what it ought to be.

You see, a godly man or woman will experience Gods love more fully than others and Daniel was a godly man. Do you recall the words of Jude, "Ye beloved building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God". (Jude 20-21) Now Jude did not write "Keep yourselves saved". Why Well, he had already assured them that they were "Preserved in Jesus Christ". Rather he wrote, "Keep yourselves in the love of God". He was simply saying that by obedience we maintain the enjoyment of Gods love and blessing! (Jn 15:10) Now although God didn't love Daniel, more

than others, Daniel's obedience to the will of God put him in a greater position than most to receive His blessing.

Old Daniel was in the centre of Gods will, and therefore able to receive the showers of blessing God desires to rain on all. "Thou art greatly beloved". I wonder how many of us are in that category this... My, if you want to get into that inner circle, you will have to imitate the life of Daniel, for Daniel was "greatly beloved". Why Because of : The PURPOSE of his Heart: When he was a teenager in a foreign land, a 1000 miles away from home "he purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the Kings meat, nor with the wine which he drank". (1:8) The POWER from his Words: Like the Saviour he spoke with authority. (Matt 7:29) My, when he stood in Belshazzars palace and thundered out the judgement of God, there was power there.

The PURITY in His Life: " But they could find none occasion or fault: forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him". (6:10) His public life was faultless, his private life was spotless, his prayer life was changeless. The PRAYERS on his Lips: For this man of God touched the throne he was not playacting. My, do you catch something of his agony of spirit as he cries, "O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do". (9:19) We are to be a prayerful people and the key to prayer can be summed up in two words, "DO IT".

Make time for prayer and then pray and God will reward your faithfulness just as he rewarded Daniel! Do you see why he was "greatly beloved." The PRECEPTS upon his Soul: For this man not only gave himself to prayer but to the ministry of the Word. (Acts 6:4) "I Daniel understood by books the number of the years". (9:1) No wonder the angel Gabriel says, "Daniel, here's what heaven thinks of you, thou art greatly beloved". Now thats (1) (2) THE INTERPRETATION OF THE SEVENTY WEEKS Look at (9:24) Do you recall where Daniel is He is in Babylon and he now knows that the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity are almost at an end.

In this remarkable prophecy however, Gabriel gave Daniel and us an outline of the entire history of Israel from the conclusion of the captivity until the completion of the times of the Gentiles and the coming of our Lord Jesus in power and glory. Now will you notice that this prophecy has to do with: 1. A SPECIAL PERIOD: Do you see that word "determined". (9:24) or it may be rendered "decreed", or "apportioned out". The Hebrew word literally means "to cut off". God has cut off a segment of time and assigned it for the deliverance of His people Israel and the city of Jerusalem.

Daniel had prayed for both the "people", and the "city", in (9:19) and God's answer encompassed all Daniel had asked for. Here, then is a period of time, divided off from all other years, from the period of the "times of the Gentiles", the time when world power is in Gentile hands. So there is 1. 2. A SPECIAL PEOPLE: Who does this prophecy relate to Well, the answer is in (9:24) So this prophecy deals with the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem. Now can you imagine how old Daniel must have felt Here he is a captive for almost 70 years, sitting in Babylonian culture, which has now being taken over by the Persians, and wondering, " Has God forsaken us" In answer to his prayer, God said He had forgot His promises.

Someone has said that the King of Egypt could not diminish the Jew, the waters of the Red Sea could not drown him, Balaam couldn't curse him, the fiery furnace couldn't devour him, the gallows of Haman couldn't hang him, nations could not assimilate him, and dictators could not annihilate him. My, no matter where we go today we see the various cultures and races of the world assimilated into one another. But that is not true of the Jews. There are Russian Jews, German Jews, Polish Jews, American Jews.

God has preserved their racial identity because one day His plan for His chosen people will be fulfilled. So this prophecy has nothing to do with the "church", but has everything to do with Daniel's people "the Jews", and "the holy city," Jerusalem. So there is 1. 2. 3. A SPECIAL PURPOSE: Did you notice the six things that God will accomplish for Israel and Jerusalem in (9:24) Now lets recap for a moment. Here is a special period of time, seventy weeks for a special people, the Jew, in which God will fulfil a special purpose!

Now keeping all that in mind lets try and define the terms in (9:24) The Hebrew word translated "weeks", (shabuwa) literally means " sevens". So literally reads "Seventy sevens... "But seventy sevens of what For the word "weeks", does not by itself indicate whether it is speaking of days, weeks, months, or years so it must be interpreted in its context. I believe it refers to weeks of years, as do many evangelical Bible scholars. So Gabriel is saying to Daniel that seventy weeks of years or a period of 490 years is required to complete Israels prophetic programme.

Now I believe that the seventy sevens are years for three reasons. (a) THE CONTEXT DEMANDS IT: Daniel was already thinking in sevens of years. (9:2) By reading Jeremiahs prophecy he may have thought that all Gods purposes would be accomplished in seventy years. But in a possible play on words, God is telling him in (9:24) that His purposes would not be accomplished in seventy years, but in seven times seventy years. Sure, restoration to the land would occur at the end of Jeremiahs seventy years, but there was more to come in God's plans for Israel. (a) (b) THE CONCEPT DEMANDS IT: You see, the concept of weeks of years was familiar to the Jewish people.

The land was to have a rest from farming every seven years, and the poor were allowed to take whatever it produced. (Lev 25:3-4) Then after seven weeks of seven years (a total of forty nine years) came a time known as the year of Jubilee. (Lev 25:8) So this concept of weeks of years was familiar to the Jewish people. (a) (b) (c) THE CAPTIVITY DEMANDS IT: Why did God allow His people to be carried into Babylon For this very reason. He instructed them to give a land a rest every seventh year, but their greed and materialism caused them to plow, and to plant the seventh year.

So for 490 years the land had no rest. God says you cannot disobey and get away with it. My, how long will it take us to learn that we cannot disobey God's Word and get away with it God is not playing games with us in the Bible. When God tells us to do something we must do it or pay the price. Think of it... 490 years and no sabbatic years, that is 70 sabbatic years ignored. So what did God do He sent them into captivity for 70 years. (2 Chron 36:21 Jer 25:11) So for every Sabbatic year that was violated God demanded one year of captivity.

Now Daniel knew this. He recognised that the 70 years of captivity represented seventy sevens of years. Now Gabriel tells him that another period similar in length (490 years) was coming in the experience of his people during which God would fulfil all his purposes in relation to Israel! (Gen 29:15-28) So this prophecy of seventy weeks has to do with 490 years. Now if the weeks are years, how long is a year Most of us would answer, "A year is 365 days of course." Well is it Look for a moment at: 1.

The FIRST Book in the Bible: Now according to (Gen 7:11) the flood began on the 17th day of the second month, according to (Gen 8:4) the flood ended on the 17th day of the seventh month. A difference of five months! If you look at (Gen 7:24) the flood lasted 150 days. This indicates that the Jewish people were using months of 30 days, of which twelve made a year of 360 days. 2. The LAST Book in the Bible: Look at (Rev 13:5) where it says the beast will ravage for 42 months. Now (12:6) says that the same period will

last 1260 days.

Now if you divide 1260 days by 42 you will get a 30 day month. So there is a difference between the calendar year and the prophetic year! So what is God saying to Daniel He's saying, "Daniel I have not forsaken your people, they will return to Jerusalem after 70 years, but Daniel there are 490 more years I want to tell you about that are yet out there in the future". So this is a special prophecy for a special period (490 years) relating to a special people (Israel) and all to fulfil a special purpose.

God's purpose for the Jew Is God through with the Jew Well, thats the question for next week! But as you leave this passage this... don't forget this: \* GOD ANSWERS PRAYER: I cannot understand how an infinite, eternal, sovereign God responds to His people, but I believe it! \* GOD HONOURS FAITHFULNESS: Daniel "thou art greatly beloved". (9:23) My, it will not matter who in the church likes or dislikes you, if the smile of heaven is upon you! "Men heed thee... " \* GOD CONTROLS HISTORY: " Seventy weeks are determined". (9:24) That tells me that God is in control of history and has predetermined its events.

Indeed History, is simply His Story! My, are you not glad this... that there is "a God in heaven" God is in control internationally, nationally, personally, and He will perfect that which concerneth you. Trust Him!

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