

The Seventy Weeks

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Preacher: Rev. Murdo M Campbell

[0 : 00] Well if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling this evening, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read, the book of Daniel chapter 9, and if we read again at verse 20, we're going to consider this prophecy, but we'll read again at verse 20, while I was speaking, that's Daniel, while I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.

He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved.

Therefore consider the word and understand the vision. And so on. Now if you remember, last Thursday, it was our National Day of Prayer.

As we said, the Free Church, they've now adopted St Andrew's Day, the 30th of November. They've adopted it as the National Day of, our National Day of Prayer, in which, well, all our congregations throughout Scotland will gather together on that particular day to pray.

And without question, it's a great opportunity for us to come together as a denomination to pray for our nation. And so in order to prepare us for the National Day of Prayer, last Wednesday we considered Daniel's National Day of Prayer, in which the prophet Daniel, he prayed and he interceded on behalf of the nation of Israel.

[2 : 04] Daniel pleaded with the covenant God of Israel that he would answer his prayers. And as Daniel says in verse 19, he prayed, O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, hearken and do.

Daniel pleaded for his nation, and in pleading for his nation, the nation of Israel, the Lord answered his prayer. And the Lord sent, as we read there, the Lord sent the angel Gabriel to relay to Daniel the answer to his prayer.

And what Gabriel disclosed to Daniel, you could say it was one of the most beautiful and yet one of the most disputed prophecies in the Bible.

And it's known as the prophecy of the 70 weeks. And as I said last week, we didn't have time to look at this prophecy in any great detail. And when I came to it, I thought, well, I didn't want to just say a sentence about it and just leave it there, because, well, that would be doing an injustice to the passage.

And that would, I thought, would be withholding from you the privilege of understanding this beautiful prophecy. And, you know, the more I read up about this prophecy, and the more interesting I found it, and I wanted to try and go into it in a little bit of depth.

[3 : 20] But as you can expect, there are lots of views on this prophecy. And when you look at them, you'll see that some of them are very, very far-fetched. And they come up with all these weird and wonderful ideas as to when the world is coming to an end.

But I hope that whatever I'm going to say to you tonight, that, well, it will be Bible-based, and that we'll try and understand what Daniel received from the angel Gabriel when Gabriel spoke to him. And what Daniel received was the assurance that God was working out his purposes in the world in order to accomplish his will and to establish his kingdom.

That's what the angel Gabriel is speaking about. God's purposes in the world to accomplish his will and to establish his kingdom. The prophecy of the 70 weeks, it's a fascinating and beautiful prophecy.

And so I'd like us just to, well, consider it this evening under four simple headings. The prayer, the promise, the program, and the purpose.

[4 : 24] The prayer, the promise, the program, and the purpose. So we'll look first of all at the prayer. The prayer. Now in order to consider the prayer, we have to look at verses 1 and 2.

So we'll read again in verse 1. In the first year of Danias, the son of Ahasuerus, by descent Amid, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans. In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books of the number of years that according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, they must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely 70 years.

And so in order to understand the prophecy of the 70 weeks, we have to remind ourselves why Daniel was praying and what led Daniel to pray for his nation.

Because the timing of this national day of prayer, Daniel's national day of prayer, it wasn't a random event, but one that was perfectly and sovereignly timed by the Lord.

Because as Daniel says himself, he says, it was the first year of the reign of King Darius the Mede, and this king, he was king over the realm of the Chaldeans.

[5 : 34] Which means that the year in which Daniel engaged in his national day of prayer was the year 537 BC. So remember that date, 537 BC.

And that was the year that the Persian king Darius, he captured Babylon from the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar, and he then became king over the Babylonian empire.

But by 537 BC, Daniel is now 82 years old. As we said last week, he's been living in exile in Babylon since 605 BC.

Which means that Daniel, he came to Babylon from Israel along with many of the Jewish exiles at the age of only 14. And so by this point, by Daniel chapter 9, Daniel has been in Babylon for the past 68 years.

Daniel has been in Babylon ever since King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Israel and destroyed the city of Jerusalem. And he destroyed the temple, and then he took many of the Israelites captive into Babylon.

[6 : 39] But as we said last week, the reason the Israelites were in exile in Babylon was because of their sin. They had refused to listen to all the warnings of the prophets.

And the Israelites were in exile because they turned away from the Lord, and they turned to idols. And because of their disobedience and their waywardness and their idolatry, the Lord brought judgment upon them.

And the Lord exiled them into the foreign land of Babylon, which was, you could say, 500 miles east of Jerusalem. And it was there in Babylon that the Israelites, they would be chastised by the Lord for their disobedience.

Because they would be made to live in a foreign land far away from the temple. They would be under the rule of a foreign king, not the Lord. And they were made to worship foreign gods, not the Lord.

But even though the Israelites were disobedient and an unfaithful people, Daniel, as we said, he dared to stand alone. And because Daniel continued to be faithful to the Lord in the midst of an unfaithful people, the Lord blessed him.

[7 : 46] But when we come to this chapter, with Daniel, he's now 82 years old. Nebuchadnezzar is dead. And the Persian king, Darius, he is on the throne. And when we come to this chapter, we see that after all these years, Daniel is still standing on the Lord's side.

Daniel is still seeking the Lord. And he's still continuously praying for the Lord's cause. And as we said before, Daniel is a great example to us.

As those who live in a nation very similar to the worldliness that's found in Babylon. And Daniel, he's a great encouragement to us to keep persevering with the Lord, to keep standing on the Lord's side, despite what the world has to say.

But, you know, what's remarkable about Daniel is that even though he has been waiting for 68 years to be released from bondage in Babylon, Daniel's faith is still as fresh as ever.

It's still as strong as ever. Trial hasn't broken his faith. And promotion didn't topple him. And even the constant onslaught of the world, it didn't diminish his faith whatsoever.

[8 : 59] Daniel continued to seek the Lord's will by praying for the Lord's cause. And as we said last week, the reason Daniel's faith remains strong and the reason he remained faithful was because he didn't stop reading his Bible.

That's what we find Daniel doing here at the beginning of chapter 9. He's reading his Bible. He's opening the scrolls and he's reading. And in particular, we're told that he's reading from the book of

the prophet Jeremiah.

And the reason Daniel was led to pray for his nation is because of what he read in the book of the prophet Jeremiah. And that's what we were reading. We read there in verse 2.

Daniel perceived in the books the number of years that according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, that they must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely 70 years.

Jeremiah, as we know, he was the last prophet who pleaded with the Israelites to turn from their idolatry before the exile.

[10:04] But as we know, the Israelites, they didn't listen to Jeremiah. And in the end, the Lord brought judgment. He brought them into Babylon. But before the exile, Jeremiah prophesied that the Lord's judgment would only last 70 years.

And as we mentioned last week, just to read it again, where Daniel was actually reading was Jeremiah chapter 25. Where it says, Thus says the Lord of hosts, Because you have not obeyed my words, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the Lord, and for Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant.

And I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all these surrounding nations. This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste. And these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years.

And you know, when Daniel read that, he, well, he can see in his own situation, that's exactly what's happening here. Nebuchadnezzar, he destroyed Jerusalem. The Israelites, they've been in Babylon for the past 68 years.

But then Daniel continues to read in chapter 25, And it says, After 70 years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the Lord, making the land an everlasting waste.

[11:23] And with that statement, Daniel realises, not only that Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon was going to be destroyed, which it had been by that point, it's now under the rule of a Persian king, which Jeremiah prophesied.

But there's also that he's thinking, Well, we're 68 years here. There's only two years left. Two years of captivity are left before we are to return home.

And as Daniel is reading the book of Jeremiah, you know, if you were reading this, you'd be excited. You'd be elated. You'd have this anticipation coming, the thought of returning home.

And so Daniel, as he reads Jeremiah, he says, Well, I'm going to read on. And he reads on, you could say, into chapter 29. And he reads there this great promise.

Thus says the Lord, When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfil my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.

[12:28] Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. And you know, when Daniel read that promise, Call upon me and come to me and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

That's when Daniel immediately turns to the Lord in prayer. He says in verse 3, Then I turn my face to the Lord my God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

And in Daniel's prayer, which we read, and we considered it last week, I'm not going to go into it. Daniel is pleading, pleading that his people who have turned away from the Lord and turned to idolatry, he's pleading that they would turn back to the Lord.

And the Lord heard his prayer. Because Daniel says in verse 20, While I was speaking, And while I was praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God, for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision of the first, he came to me in swift flight, at the time of the evening sacrifice. He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy, a word went out, and I've come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved.

[13:57] Therefore consider the word, and understand the vision. And you know what, the angel Gabriel says to Daniel, it's so beautiful. Because as soon as Daniel engaged in prayer, the Lord sent Gabriel with the answer.

And when Gabriel came with the message from heaven, he reminded Daniel that he was greatly loved. He reminded him that he was greatly loved, and that Daniel's prayers had been heard in heaven.

And you know, it should always be an assurance to us, that as the Lord's people, we are greatly loved. You're greatly loved. And that every time we pray, your prayers are heard in heaven. Your prayers are heard in heaven. You know, that's why it's so good for us, to spend time in prayer, privately, and publicly. It's good for us, to come together, to pray like this. Because, well, we're greatly loved. And we have to believe that. We are greatly loved. And we have the assurance, that our prayers, they are heard, in heaven.

[15:03] Just like Daniel's prayer. But you know, Daniel was not only given the assurance, that the Lord had heard his prayer. He was also given the assurance, that the Lord was going to act, according to his promise.

And that's what I'd like us to consider secondly. So we've seen the prayer. And secondly, the promise. The promise. Look at verse 24. It says, 70 weeks are decreed about your people, and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

And so when the angel Gabriel came to Daniel, he not only commanded Daniel, to consider his message, and understand the vision. And you know, well, what's interesting, is that Gabriel gave understanding, in order for him to understand, the prophecy of the 70 weeks.

That's what I always, I find interesting about it. Look at verse 22. He says there, he made me understand, speaking with me, and saying, O Daniel, I have now come out, to give you insight, and understanding.

The angel Gabriel came, not only with a message of God's promise, but also to explain, and to reveal, and to give understanding, to Daniel, regarding God's promise.

[16:26] And you know, the role which, Gabriel was given, it seems to be similar, to what the Holy Spirit does, in the life of a Christian. Now I'm not saying, the angel Gabriel, is the Holy Spirit. But he's, given the same, or a similar role, to what the Holy Spirit does.

Because, when God speaks to us, through his word, his message comes to us. But it's the Holy Spirit, who opens our eyes. And it's the Holy Spirit, who opens our ears to hear, and our hearts to understand, the message.

And without the Holy Spirit, working in our lives, and causing us to hear, and to see, and to understand, well, we would never see, the beauty of Jesus. We would never hear, the voice of Jesus. And we would never understand, what the Bible is saying to us.

And you know, when you think about it, well, that's sometimes the hardest thing, about waiting upon the Lord, for unconverted members, in your family. Because, we can't do anything, to make them hear, or see, or understand.

We can't do anything, or give them anything. It's all a work, of the Spirit. Just like it was with us. But for you, the fact that you can see Jesus, and you desire to see more of Jesus, and hear more about him, and understand more, about Jesus.

[17:43] That's the greatest evidence, and that's the greatest, assurance to you, that you're a Christian. If you ever have a doubt, am I really saved? That should be the greatest evidence, and the greatest assurance.

Your desire, to hear more, to see more of Jesus, and to understand more, about the Bible. And it should be the greatest assurance, that the Lord hasn't left you, or abandoned you, because he's still speaking to you, and he's still reminding you, that his love, has been poured into your heart, by the Holy Spirit.

All by the Holy Spirit. And so as Gabriel gave understanding, and insight to Daniel, he spoke about, the 70 weeks. These 70 weeks, are decreed about your people, and your holy city.

Now before we consider, the meaning of the 70 weeks, we have to see, that this prophecy, has a six-fold promise. A six-fold promise, given to Daniel, in which he's told in verse 24, that God will finish transgression, put an end to sin, atone for wickedness, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and anoint the most holy.

And when we read those words, of prophecy, we immediately, know what Gabriel, is talking about, don't we? Because he's, he's not only talking about, a period in time, but he's also talking, about a person in time.

[19 : 18] And that person, is the Messiah. And that God, has promised the Messiah, the anointed one, the Christed one. He's promised, God has promised, that he will come, and he will, finish transgression, put an end to sin, atone for wickedness, bring in righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and anoint, the most holy.

And so this prophecy, in the book of Daniel, it's all about Jesus. It's all about Jesus Christ. Because as we know, Jesus is the Christ, he is the Messiah, he is the, the anointed one of God, and he came to his people, the Jews, and to the holy city, Jerusalem.

That's what Daniel says here. To your people, and to your holy city. That's where Jesus came. And when Jesus came, when he entered, Jerusalem, on that triumphal entry, riding, on a donkey, that was the Christ of God, the king of his people.

And that was him, entering Jerusalem, he was coming, 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.

And this is all, what he's speaking, what Gabriel is talking about here, was all accomplished at Calvary. And you know, what a comfort these words must have been to Daniel.

[20 : 44] After all these years in exile, wondering when it's going to end, under these, these years of God's judgment, end. Daniel, he receives this promise, that the exile, it's going to end, after 70 years.

Two years to go, and the Messiah will come, at God's appointed time. He's got these two great promises, to cling to. 70 years are coming, and then there's 70 weeks.

And we can see from Daniel's prayer, that transgression, and sin, and wickedness, they've been Daniel's greatest concern, and burden, you could say.

But the promise from God, is that the Christ, is going to finish transgression, put an end to sin, and atone for wickedness. But the promise of God, is not only about taking away sin, this is the wonder of it.

It's also about bringing in righteousness. And that's the beauty of the gospel. Because the gospel, it's a message of salvation, in Jesus Christ. And it's not only about being saved, from sin, but it's also about being made, righteous in God's sight.

[21 : 53] And that's what Paul stresses to us, when he writes in Corinthians. God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made, the righteousness of God in him.

And what Paul meant by this, is that, it's only half a gospel, to tell people, that God forgives their sin. It's only half a gospel. Because the good news, is that God not only forgives our sin, he also makes us, as righteous as his own son.

And that is good news. But you know, I love what Gabriel says next, that when the Christ comes, he will seal up, both vision and prophecy.

And that's what we see, when we read the gospel accounts, of Christ on the cross. The gospel writers, they're continuously describing, so vividly, everything that took place at Calvary.

The crown of thorns, the nails, the blood, the spear, the cries of dereliction. They're reminding us, of all that took place at Calvary, and then they say, so that the scriptures may be fulfilled.

[23 : 00] Everything took place, they're saying, so that the scriptures may be fulfilled. The Christ will come, as it's prophesied here, to seal up the vision, and the prophecy.

To seal it all up, to bring it to an end, and to anoint the most holy. The last statement, doesn't mean that the Christ, will anoint someone else. It means that the person, who comes to finish transgression, put an end to sin, atone for wickedness, bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up the vision of the prophecy, that person will be the Messiah, the anointed one.

He will be the Christ. But more than that, the Christ will be God himself. And you know, to even hear that, you're like, whoa.

For Daniel to hear this, Christ, the Christ will be the most holy God. And this is what's remarkable, about this promise, and the beauty of salvation.

That the Christ, who came, to finish transgression, put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in, everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision, and prophecy.

[24 : 11] The Christ who came, was God himself. And this is the glory of the gospel, that the God, whose law we have transgressed, and sinned against an unrighteousness, and acted wickedly in his sight.

The God whom we have ignored, and angered, and turned away from. It's that same God he's saying, who's filled with love, and compassion, and mercy, and forgiveness.

He was the one, who was willing to come, and suffer, and die in our place. So that, he will finish, our transgression. He will put an end, to our sin.

He will atone, for our wickedness. He will bring in, everlasting righteousness, for us. And seal up vision, and prophecy, on our behalf. And you know my friend, it's no wonder, that the gospel is good news.

This is the best news, that anyone could hear. And this is why, as followers of Jesus, and as the church of Jesus Christ, we have been entrusted, with the responsibility, of telling people, this good news.

[25 : 15] God himself, has come, to finish transgression, put an end to our sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in, everlasting righteousness, and to seal up, vision and prophecy.

All, on our, behalf. All, on our behalf. But what I'd like us, to see thirdly, is that this promise, was also going to be, accomplished, and fulfilled, according to God's program.

God's program. We've considered the prayer, and the promise, but thirdly, the program. Look at the program. Look at verse 24. Seventy weeks are decreed, about your people, and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for iniquity, to bring in, everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision, and profit, and to anoint, a most holy place.

Know therefore, and understand, that from the going out, to the word, to restore, and build Jerusalem, to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks, it shall be built again, with squares and moat, but in a troubled time.

And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one, shall be cut off, and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince, who is to come, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end, there shall be war, where desolations, are decreed.

[26 : 39] And he shall make a strong covenant, with many for one week, and for half of the week, he shall put an end, to sacrifice, and offering. And on the wing of abominations, shall come one, who makes desolate, until the decreed end, is poured out, on the desolate earth.

As we said earlier, the prophecy of the seventy weeks, it's a beautiful promise, because it's the promise, of Jesus. It's the promise of the Messiah. But as we read here, the promise is going to be accomplished, and fulfilled, according to God's program.

And the angel Gabriel, makes clear, that God's program, is going to be a program, of seventy weeks. Well, it's not actually a program, of seventy weeks, because, it literally reads, in Hebrew, that, it will be a program, of seventy sevens, or, seventy heptads, that's what they're called.

The word, that's the word, that the Jews use, the word heptads, seventy heptads, or seventy sevens. And the word heptad, that's where we get the word, heptagon, a seven-sided shape.

Or, heptathlon, where the athletics, they, compete in seven different sports. And so for the Jews, a heptad, was a group of seven years.

[27 : 55] And so Gabriel's prophecy, of seventy weeks, is actually, seventy heptads, or seventy seven. Seventy seven. Seventy groups, of seven years.

Now I hope you're good at maths, because you need maths, to work all this out. It's a shame, that Stephen's not here tonight, to help us. But, even though Daniel, he's been reading, in the book of Jeremiah, about God's program, of promise, for the Israelites, they were going to return, after, as it says there, in verse two, seventy years.

Even though Daniel, has been thinking, about this promise, of being fulfilled. Gabriel gives Daniel, a program, for an even greater promise, the promise, of the Messiah.

And from verse 25, to the end of the chapter, the angel Gabriel, he clarifies, and he explains, God's program, of promise. Because Gabriel says, that there are, seventy heptads.

There are seventy groups, so seven years, which works out, at four hundred, and ninety years.

Gabriel says, that God's program, of promise, of seventy heptads, four hundred, and ninety years, it will begin, as he says, in verse 25, when the command, goes forth, to restore, and build, Jerusalem.

[29 : 15] And what's fascinating, is that the decree, or the command, to restore, and build Jerusalem, it came from, a king, the king after, King Darius, King Artaxerxes, in 457 BC.

And of course, some of the Israelites, they had returned, from exile in Babylon, at the end of the seventy years, they had returned, in the year, 535 BC. And many of the Israelites, including Daniel, they all returned, to Jerusalem.

And they returned, before this decree, was given. And when the Israelites, returned then, when they came back, as you would expect, they only saw devastation. The walls of Jerusalem, were destroyed, the temple was in ruins, the city was a great mess.

The destruction, the Nebuchadnezzar, had brought, 70 years earlier, it was, still as relevant, and still evident. And as you would expect, such a massive, restoration project, it not only, disheartened the Israelites, but it also caused, disruption and division, among them.

And Jerusalem, was in such a mess, that there was no order, and it all led to chaos. But under the direction, of Ezra and Nehemiah, whom we read of, in the Bible, and the financial help, of King Artaxerxes, under, through their guidance, and help, the wall was rebuilt, and the city of Jerusalem, was restored.

[30 : 40] And you know, it was remarkable, that the Lord, used a Persian king, to bring his promise, to fruition. Artaxerxes, he worshipped foreign gods, he lived in a foreign land, and yet the Lord, used him for his glory.

Because in the year, 547 BC, which you have in your little sheet, the decree went out, from King Artaxerxes, to rebuild, and restore Jerusalem. And Artaxerxes, promised to finance, the project. Because we're told, in the book of Ezra, in chapter 7, that King Artaxerxes, he sent a letter to Ezra. And the letter said, I make a decree, that any one of the people of Israel, or their priests, or Levites in my kingdom, who freely offers to go to Jerusalem, may go with you.

For you are sent by the king, and his seven counsellors, to make inquiries about Judah, and Jerusalem, according to the law of your God, which is in your hand, and also to carry the silver, and gold that the king, and his counsellors, have freely offered, to the God of Israel, whose dwelling, is in Jerusalem.

And so in the year 457 BC, Artaxerxes decreed, that Jerusalem, was to be restored. And according to this prophecy, the restoration of Jerusalem, would take seven weeks, or seven heptads, seven sevens, 49 years.

[32 : 03] And so if we're to move, 49 years along, along the timeline of history, we'd come to the year 408 BC. And by that time, the wall of Jerusalem, had been rebuilt, under the direction of Nehemiah, along with the streets of the city, and the moat around the city.

The city was restored, in seven heptads, just as it had been promised, by the Lord. But after the restoration, of Jerusalem, Gabriel says, that after 62 weeks, the anointed one, shall be cut off. Look at verse 26. It says, and after the 62 weeks, an anointed one, shall be cut off, and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince, who is to come, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end, there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. And 62 weeks, and 62 heptads, or 62 sevens, the anointed one, shall be cut off.

And so in 62 sevens, which is 434 years, 434 years from 408 BC, would bring us to the year, AD 26.

[33 : 17] But we need to add one more year, because of the zero year, when it changed from BC to AD. That brings us to the year, 27 AD. And according to historians, 27 AD was the year, in which Jesus began, his public ministry.

And as you know, Jesus, when he began his public ministry, at the age of 30, his ministry lasted, three years. Which means that, Jesus was born, probably around, 3 BC.

What's fascinating, about the Lord's program, is that Jesus' ministry, began, in the 70th week. And for the 70th week, we're told, that the anointed one, it says in verse 27, the anointed one, shall make a strong covenant, with many, for one week.

And for half of the week, he shall put an end, to sacrifice, and offering. And so for one week, for one heptad, which is seven years, in seven years, the anointed one, shall make a strong covenant, with many.

Because we're told, that in the first half of the week, in the first, three and a half years, the Messiah, will bring an end, to sacrifice, and offering. And that's exactly, what happened. Jesus made a new covenant, in his blood, in 31 AD.

[34 : 38] Because when Jesus died, upon the cross at Calvary, he was made sin for us, and he died in our place. And as the writer, to the Hebrews says, he entered once, for all, into the most holy place.

Not with the blood, of bulls or of goats, but by his own blood, in order to secure, an eternal redemption. As God promised, here in Daniel 9, the death of the Messiah, would bring an end, to

sacrifice, and offering.

And you know, even Peter talks about this, on the day of Pentecost. He said that the death of the Messiah, was according to God's program. This Jesus, he says, whom you crucified, he was delivered up, by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God.

The 70 weeks, was according, to God's program. According, to God's, determined counsel, and foreknowledge. And when the end, of the 70th week came, it came in the year, 34 AD.

That was the year, that Stephen was stoned, for preaching the gospel. And that's recorded for us, in Acts chapter 7. But you know, the prophecy is so beautiful, and I hope you don't lose me with it, but it's so beautiful, because it sets out, God's program for salvation.

[36 : 02] Because when Stephen, was stoned, in 34 AD, at the end of the 70th week, we're told that the Jews, cast Stephen out, of the city.

They stoned him, and then the witnesses, laid down their garments, at the feet, of a young man, named, Saul. At the end of the 70th week, we meet, Saul.

And, two chapters later, in chapter 9, we read of Saul, the hater, and persecutor, of the church of Christ, being miraculously converted. Saul becomes, the apostle Paul, and he's the chosen vessel, of the Lord, for the extension, of Christ's kingdom.

And it was through, the apostle Paul, that the gospel, would go, to the Gentiles. And as the Lord promised, according to his, program, it was at the end, of the 70th week, that the gospel, would go from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, to the uttermost parts, of the earth.

The uttermost parts, of the earth. It's a wonderful, prophecy. And it's amazing, everything was set in place, because during those, if you look at the thing, during those 62 weeks, that's the period, between, the 434 years, that's the period, between the Old Testament, and the New Testament.

[37 : 23] Period of silence. And yet, during that, 434 years, the Lord was still working. Alexander the Great, he brought in, the Greek language, to the people of Israel, where everybody spoke, Greek.

And then the Romans, took over. The Romans began, building roads. They were building roads, into Europe. And so by the time, you come to 34 AD, everyone speaks, the same language, and there are roads, into Europe.

Paul is converted, the gospel spreads, into Europe. God's program, perfectly timed. Perfectly timed. All decreed, according to his, determined, counsel.

Why do we doubt him, when he's in control? Why do we doubt him? And time is going, but, there's one thing, I want to share with you, and, I was, wasn't going to mention it, but I will.

It's a small group, so, you're in no hurry, to go anywhere. In Stuart Oliott's, commentary, on the book of Daniel, Stuart Oliott, he shares this theory, theory about the birth, of Jesus.

[38 : 31] And I thought, it was relevant, because, well, we're in the run-up, to Christmas. And Stuart Oliott's, theory about, this prophecy, is that, in the year 3 BC, that's the year, Jesus was to be born.

His theory was, that there was research, scholars researching, and looking into, this prophecy, in Daniel 9. And he says, that in their research, and by doing the math, they came to the understanding, that if the Messiah, was going to be born, it will be very soon.

And at the same time, these scholars, they were men, who examined the night sky, they were astrologers. And, he says, that they must have seen, a star, that completely baffled them.

But it must have given them, the indication, by the star, and by the prophecy, that this Messiah, of, that the prophecy speaks of, that he must have been born. And according to this prophecy, the scholars would have seen, that the Messiah, would have been born, in Jerusalem.

And this is what I think, is amazing, because, we're told in Matthew chapter 2, that wise men, came from the east, from Babylon. They came from Babylon, and they came to Jerusalem, saying, where is he, who has been born, king of the Jews?

[39 : 45] We saw his star, when it rose, and we have come, to worship him. And after they received erection, we're told, that when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly, with great joy.

And going into the house, this is where Jesus was, in the stable, they saw the child, with Mary his mother, and they fell down, and worshipped him. Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold, frankincense, and mow.

Isn't that amazing? The prophecy, all fits together. Everything holds together, in the Bible.

Everything, was working, according to God's, program.

I find this prophecy, and the promise, of salvation, it was all working, according to God's, program. And so having considered, the prophecy of 70 weeks, we've seen the prayer, the promise, and the program, but just in a word, there is the purpose.

The purpose of the prophecy, of the 70 weeks, which was given to Daniel, was to give Daniel, and to give us, the assurance, that God, is still working out, his purposes, in the world, in order to establish, his will, and to accomplish, his kingdom.

[40 : 56] And as we've seen, Daniel's prayer, in which he pleaded, according to God's, covenant promise, it resulted in God's, promise, and God's, program of salvation, being revealed, to his people.

And the promise, and the purpose, of salvation, was that the Messiah, would die, on behalf of sinners, and that the gospel, would spread, to the ends of the earth. And you know, that, was the promise, and the purpose, which was given, same promise, same purpose, given to Abraham, back in Genesis chapter 12.

Through Abraham's seed, all the nations of the earth, all the families, they will be blessed. And tonight, in Barvis, far away from Israel, as possible, we are evidence, to that promise, to God's plan, to God's purpose.

We're evidence. And so, in a word, let us dare to be a Daniel, and dare to stand alone, if need be, by pleading the promises of God, and by seeing, God's program of salvation, being worked out, according to his purpose, and his grace.

Isn't it wonderful, how the Bible fits together? May the Lord bless, these thoughts to us. Let us pray. Oh Lord, our gracious God, we, give thanks to thee, this evening, for thy word.

[42 : 19] That thy word, is truth. And Lord, that we may echo, the prayer of our great high priest, that thou wouldst sanctify us, through the truth. For thy word is truth.

Guide us, Lord, in it. Help us to pray, like Daniel. Help us, to lean upon the promises, that are found in thy word. Help us, to live according, to the program, which thou hast set.

And help us, Lord, we pray, to see that, thou art the God, who has a purpose, in everything. Who is, as thou hast said in thy word, working all things together for good, to those who are the called, according to thine own purpose.

Bless us, Lord, we pray. Bless thy word to us. Help us to meditate upon it. Help us, Lord, that it may be of benefit, to our eternal soul.

Remember, Lord, also our homes and our families. Keep them, we pray, especially those who are, still strangers to thee. O Lord, we ask, that thou wouldst hear, that thou wouldst forgive, that thou wouldst hearken and do, defer not, for thine own name's sake.

[43 : 28] Hear our prayers, we plead, that thou, Lord, wouldst be gracious to us. Remember, also those who are not with us this evening, maybe due to the weather, or due to other commitments, or even due to things that they have to do.

Lord, bless them wherever they are. Bless thy people, for they are thine, they are blood-bought. Lord, loved with an everlasting love, and loved, Lord, even into eternity itself.

O bless us, we pray, go before us, keep us on the way, and do us good, for Jesus' sake. Amen. We shall conclude by singing in Psalm 48.

Psalm 48, in the Scottish Psalter, page 273. Psalm 48, we're singing from verse 10, down to the end of the psalm.

O Lord, according to thy name, through all the earth's thy praise, and thy right hand, O Lord, is full of righteousness always. Because thy judgments are made known, let Zion mount rejoice.

[44 : 39] Of Judah let the daughter Joel send forth, a cheerful voice. And that's, those words, they're addressed to the church. And what we're being told here is, walk about Zion, and go round.

The high towers thereof tell, consider ye your palaces, and mark her bulwarks well. Consider what God is saying. That's what he's saying. Consider what his word is saying. Why?

That you may tell posterity. Tell the next generation. For this God doth abide. Our God forevermore, he will, in unto death, us guide. So Psalm 48, from verse 10, down to the end of the psalm.

To God's praise. Amen. O Lord, according to thy name, through all the earth's thy grace, and thy light hand, O Lord, is full of righteousness always.

Because thy judgments are made low, let thy own man rejoice.

[45 : 59] of to the land the daughter's rose and forth a cheerful voice.

Walk about Zion and go round the night europe, Warden, who x grand and his world he
once he met continue steven to for this God of the might our God forevermore he will reign unto
death the sky the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the
Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore
Amen