

3ABN BIBLE STUDY GUIDES
Searching Deeper

IT ALL ADDS UP



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Get ready to study an incredible Bible prophecy. In Lesson 19, we left Daniel with a lot on his mind. He was longing to understand the starting time of a prophecy that would end with the cleansing and restoration of God’s Sanctuary. In the first two verses of Daniel 9, we learn two things: the empire of Babylon had fallen to the Medes and Persians, confirming that history would unfold just as God had promised; and that Daniel had been studying the words of the prophet Jeremiah, which assured him that Israel’s captivity would end after 70 years. Rescue was coming soon, so he faithfully did his part to cooperate with God’s plan—he prayed. God’s amazing answer to that prayer pinpointed the exact timing of His plan and explained what Daniel hadn’t understood about the prophecy concerning God’s Sanctuary.

1 What did Daniel pray for when he knew God’s promised rescue from captivity was coming soon?

Daniel 9:17, 19 “... Hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord’s sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.”

Daniel asked for the forgiveness of Israel’s sins which were the cause of their captivity. He also pleaded with God to restore His Sanctuary that was in ruins in Jerusalem.

2 What answer did God give to Daniel’s prayer?

Daniel 9:24 “Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.”

God answers our prayers. He sent the angel Gabriel immediately with a vital message to share (Daniel 9:21)—and this angel’s name will be important to remember. The response Daniel received went beyond his plea for God’s people in captivity, and His city in ruins. God gave a specific time prophecy that we can verify today.

3 What did God promise would happen in this divinely chosen time period?

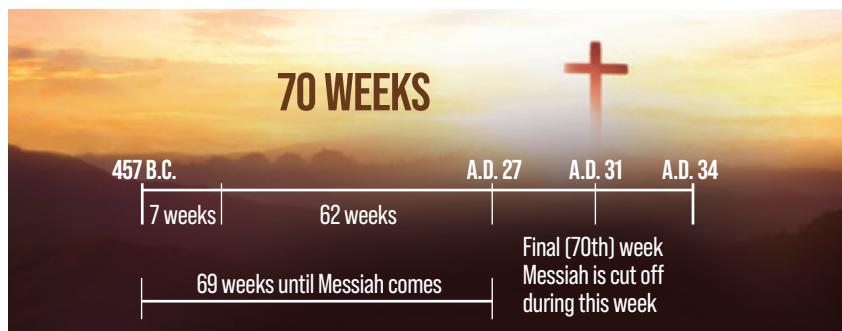
This brief answer to prayer is one of the most exciting prophecies in the Bible. It looks complicated, but let’s make it simple. God promised a specific timeline that related to two important events: the coming Messiah who would forgive our sins (**emphasized in bold**) and restoring the city of Jerusalem with its temple (emphasized by underlining).

Daniel 9:25–27 “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem **until Messiah the Prince**, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times.

And **after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself**; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined.

Then **he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate.**"

God broke the 70 weeks into three smaller time periods so we can easily understand them: 7 weeks, 69 weeks (made up of the 7 and 62 weeks), and the final (70th) week.



4 When did the 70-week countdown begin?

Daniel 9:25 “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem ...”

We can read about this command in Ezra 7:7–26. Two previous decrees had permitted exiled Jews to return to their homeland, heightening the anticipation among God's people for the prophesied decree. Finally, in 457 B.C., Persian King Artaxerxes issued the royal command to both restore and rebuild the city of Jerusalem. God used the decree of a foreign ruler so the event would be public and verifiable.

5 Did the Messiah appear on Earth within 70 literal weeks?

The command to rebuild Jerusalem occurred soon after Daniel's time, but the Messiah did not come 70 literal weeks (or about 16 months) later. The reason for this is that God's prophetic messages use symbolic time to describe events on Earth—just as they use symbolic animals to represent the human kingdoms on Earth. In Bible prophecy, one day represents a full year of human history. This is clearly explained in two texts where God revealed the future of His people:

Numbers 14:34 “According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear your guilt one year, namely forty years ...”

Ezekiel 4:6 “And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year.”

So 70 weeks x 7 days = 490 days. Using the Bible's day-for-a-year principle in prophecy, the total time God determined was 490 years.

6 What happened during the first 7 weeks (or 49 years)?

Nehemiah 4:7–8 “Now it happened, when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored and the gaps were beginning to be closed, that they became very angry, and all of them conspired together to come and attack Jerusalem and create confusion.”

The fulfillment of God's promise began with the Jews working amid intense opposition to restore the city of Jerusalem, the location of God's Sanctuary on Earth. The hope of the prophecy was not that a rebuilt Sanctuary on Earth would solve the problem of sin, because Daniel 9:26–27 predicted that the newly rebuilt Sanctuary would later be destroyed. This event actually happened when the Roman army swept through Israel like a flood in A.D. 70. God was already turning attention away from the physical Sanctuary on Earth to focus on His True Sanctuary in Heaven, which will never be destroyed.

7 In what year did the 69 weeks come to an end, marking the time when the Messiah would appear?

The 69 weeks of Daniel 9:25 equals 483 days (69 weeks x 7 days), with each prophetic day representing a year. From the starting point of the prophecy in 457 B.C., we count forward 483 years and find the exact time when God promised the Messiah would appear. Calculating this passage of time takes us to A.D. 27.



“In Bible prophecy, one day represents a full year of human history.”



**“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman ...”
Galatians 4:4**

8 How was God already fulfilling the promise of the Messiah as the prophesied time was drawing near?

Galatians 4:4 “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman ...”

As the 483 years were nearing completion, the same angel who revealed God’s plan to Daniel was sent again to finish his mission by making two important announcements. First, Gabriel announced the miraculous birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:19) who would point people to Jesus, the Messiah (John 1:35–41). A short while later, Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to a Son, though she was a virgin (Luke 1:26–38). His name was to be Jesus, “for He will save His people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21). The gospel writer, Luke, identified the time of Jesus’ birth at just the right time to fit the prophecy—during the reign of the Roman Caesar Augustus (Luke 2:1–5), who ruled from 27 B.C. to A.D. 14.

9 What important event occurred in A.D. 27, at the end of the 483 years?

Luke 3:1–3 “Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John ... preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

Luke 3:21–22 “When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him ...”

Luke established the precise time when Jesus was baptized. He recorded the names of civil and religious leaders to confirm the timing of this

prophesied event—even giving the specific year of Tiberius, the Roman Caesar who followed Augustus. Historians confirm the fifteenth year of Tiberius to be A.D. 27. In that year, Jesus began His public ministry as our Messiah, which “began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” (Acts 10:37–38, emphasis supplied). The Hebrew word “Messiah” means “anointed one.” Jesus was anointed to begin His work as our Messiah when He was baptized, exactly on time—483 years from when the decree went out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem!

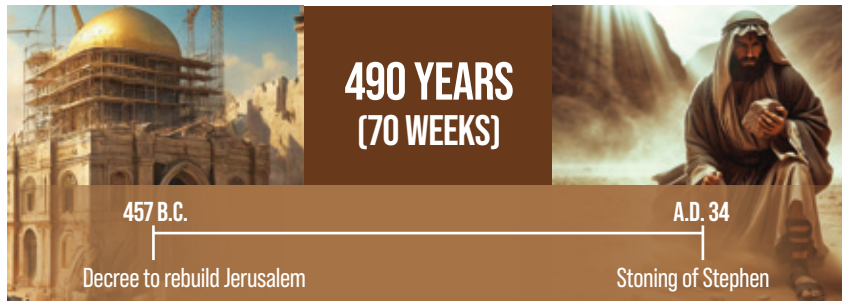
10 What happened during the 70th week – or the seven years following Jesus’ baptism?

Daniel 9:26 says that during the 70th week “Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself.” This figure of speech represents Jesus’ death for sins He did not commit. “... For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken” (Isaiah 53:8).

Daniel 9:27 is even more precise, saying that “in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering” (emphasis supplied). Halfway through the final seven years, Jesus would die on the Cross. From John’s gospel we know that Jesus ministered for three-and-a-half years and laid down His life in the center of the 70th prophetic week, in the spring of A.D. 31. When Jesus died, the massive Temple curtain was miraculously torn apart (Matthew 27:51). By this, God showed that Jesus was the True Sacrifice for our sins. The animal sacrifices in the Temple that pointed forward to Him would never be needed again.

11 What event occurred that marked the end of the 70 weeks (490 years), in A.D. 34?

When the 490 years concluded in A.D. 34, the Jewish leaders were persecuting the new Christian community. In Acts 6 and 7 we read about Stephen, “a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit” (Acts 6:5) who recounted to the leaders of the Jewish nation a full history of Israel’s rejection of God’s messages. When he spoke of how they had condemned Jesus to die, the Jews stoned him to death (Acts 7:58). This decisive rejection closed the time allotted to Israel: “Seventy weeks [490 years] are determined for your people” (Daniel 9:24). The good news of Jesus went first to the Jewish nation (Luke 24:47), to be shared with the world. Even though the Jews did not accept Jesus as Messiah, God still carried out His plan to offer salvation to all people. Because of violent persecution, “those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).



12 Did Jesus understand these prophecies concerning Himself as the Messiah?

Mark 1:14–15 “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Jesus understood and spoke about the prophecies of Daniel (Matthew 24:15). He declared His ministry had begun when the time was fulfilled—referring to the 483 years. He also knew from Scripture that the time appointed for Him to die was exactly three-and-a-half years later. This is why He said, “My time has not yet fully come” (John 7:8) to those who wanted Him to return to Jerusalem where His enemies sought to kill Him. But when the prophesied time had come to fulfill His mission, Jesus declared boldly, “My time is at hand” (Matthew 26:18); and when He died, He cried out, “It is finished” (John 19:30).

13 Could another person have fulfilled the prophecy of Daniel 9?

Acts 4:12 “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Only Jesus could fulfill this prophecy completely because He did more than come at the right time; He accomplished what no sinful person could do: “to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy” (Daniel 9:24). Jesus alone paid the ultimate penalty for transgression, sin, and iniquity so its power could be stopped. Jesus alone gives us His righteousness, fully satisfies Bible prophecy, and accomplishes the work of the Most Holy Place in God’s True Sanctuary in Heaven. Daniel was praying about rescue from physical captivity at the end of 70 years and for forgiveness for his countrymen. But God’s answer was much bigger. He

promised rescue from spiritual captivity after 70 weeks of years (70 x 7), and Jesus, the Messiah, who offers forgiveness for *all* people!

14 How is the 70-week prophecy important to all Christians?

John 14:29 “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.”

We can trust that Jesus is the Messiah God promised to die in our place, because He was born, began His ministry, and was put to death “in due time” (1 Timothy 2:6). Even the events of His life that are outside of a person’s control fulfilled what God promised over 400 years in advance.

2 Peter 1:19 “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place ...”

The precise fulfillment of Daniel 9 confirms three things:

- We can put full confidence in every prophecy written in the Word of God.
- We can verify the day-for-a-year principle in Bible prophecy.
- We can trust the time prophecy that Daniel was eager to understand in the previous chapter—the 2,300 days.

15 How does the amazing time prophecy of Jesus explain the prophecy of the 2,300 days in Daniel 8:14?

God’s Sanctuary was under attack—not the physical Temple in Jerusalem, but God’s True Sanctuary, representing salvation through Jesus. Daniel was told that the Sanctuary would be cleansed in 2,300 days (Daniel 8:14). Since a day in Bible prophecy represents one year, the time that would pass before God would restore His Heavenly Sanctuary was to be 2,300 years.



“Jesus alone paid the ultimate penalty for transgression, sin, and iniquity so its power could be stopped.”

However, Daniel had not yet been told when the countdown would begin (Daniel 8:27).

16 When would the 2,300 years begin and end?

Gabriel, the same angel who spoke with Daniel about the 2,300 years, came again to help him “understand the vision” he had not fully understood (Daniel 8:16, 9:23).

Daniel 9:24–25 (emphasis supplied) “Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city Know therefore and understand”

The Hebrew word for “determined” has an additional meaning: “to be cut off.” This tells us that the shorter time period we just read about (490 years) would be “cut off” from the longer period of 2,300 years. Both prophecies are connected because they concern the Sanctuary and salvation. They began together—in 457 B.C. Counting 2,300 years forward from that starting date concludes at a time that has already passed—the year 1844. At that time, Jesus’ heavenly ministry moved from the Holy Place to the Most Holy Place to begin the final phase of God’s plan to remove sin.

17 What happened on Earth as the 2,300-year prophecy neared its end?

Daniel 12:4 “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

When God has a plan this far in the making, its fulfillment will not go unnoticed, even if it is by only a few. As the time approached, God kept His promise to explain the prophecies of Daniel that had not yet been understood. In His timing, the wonderful knowledge of prophecy was to be studied and shared. God even predicted the time when the sealed book of Daniel would be opened to our understanding in Revelation 10.

Revelation 10:1–2, 9 “I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire. He had a little book open in his hand. ... And he said to me, ‘Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth.’”

John, who wrote Revelation, was shown that the unsealing and opening of the little book of Daniel would happen in the early 1800s. First, one sincere Bible student, then others along with him, understood that the time prophecy of Daniel 8:14 was soon to end. They expected the cleansing of the Sanctuary to be the Second Coming of Jesus, and that He would then cleanse this sinful Earth with fire. The excitement of expecting Jesus’ soon return swelled their numbers into large, eager crowds. But just as God predicted to John in Revelation 10, that sweet anticipation

was replaced by a bitter disappointment when the time passed and Jesus did not return. But that’s not the end of the story. A small group further fulfilled God’s promise that the prophecies of Scripture would be understood and shared. God led them to discover the long-hidden truth of His true Sanctuary in Heaven, where Jesus is removing the record of forgiven sins and purifying the lives of His true followers. To learn about the good news of God’s Judgment that cleanses His Sanctuary before Jesus returns, study lesson #8 (“When All Is Said and Done”).

18 What does the 2,300-year prophecy teach us about when Jesus will return?

Revelation 10:5–6 “The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer.”

The prophecy in Daniel 8:14 is both the longest and the last prophetic time period of the Bible. After 1844, there is no more delay in God’s plan (the Greek phrase literally means “no more time”). All the time prophecies of the Bible have been completed. The events leading up to Jesus’ Second Coming are being fulfilled day by day, and His return will be soon.

19 Since we know Jesus’ return is very near, what should we do?

Revelation 10:11 “And he said to me, ‘You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.’”

It’s time to keep on sharing the wonderful truths we have learned in the Bible so that all people can hear the full story of God’s love before Jesus returns.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY LIFE TODAY?



1. Our prayers are often too small when we pray only for physical needs. God wants us to pray for big things, for spiritual things. What spiritual needs around you would God direct you to remember when you pray?

2. The life of Jesus was the answer to Daniel's prayer. Jesus is the answer to your prayers, too. How often do your thoughts turn to Jesus throughout your day? How can you have Him at the center of your mind?

3. The time prophecies of the Bible are not dry math lectures. They're an exciting confirmation that God is intimately involved in what happens in the world. How have you seen God influence the course of your life, so you will trust Jesus as your Friend?

4. Romans 13:11-14 is God's promise to help us live like children of God when Jesus' return is close: "And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts." How would God direct you to live this out today?

5. Who do you know that needs to hear what you have learned? "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things ..." (Matthew 12:35).

Additional Notes:

WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS FOR ME IN THIS PROPHECY ABOUT JESUS?



1. Salvation through Jesus is the central theme of the Bible. “For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3, NASB).

2. God does not leave our salvation up to events of chance or coincidence. He does exactly what we need, at just the right time. “For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6, NASB). “But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled” (Acts 3:18).

3. God helps common people understand and share the truths of Bible prophecy. The man who began to understand the prophecy of the 2,300 years was a plain farmer in New York named William Miller. After years of questioning, he began to see evidence that God loves each of us individually. So to learn more, he began to study the Bible verse by verse. He let the Bible explain itself by using his concordance to compare one Scripture text with all the others. By this method—which anyone can use—his study took him to Daniel 8:14.

The year was 1818, and God helped him understand that the prophecy would reach its fulfillment in a few short years. He expected the prophecy would end in Jesus’ Second Coming to cleanse sin from the world, and he knew people needed to be warned. As God opened opportunities for him to share what he had learned, many others reached that same conclusion, and the clear, compelling message of Jesus’ return spread around the world.

That day in October when Jesus was expected to return left people heartbroken and confused. It is referred to as the Great Disappointment. But far from being a failure, that disappointment was transformed into a blessing. A few small companies of believers returned to the Bible to verify what they had wholeheartedly believed.

Studying deeper, they confirmed that their calculations of the time were correct, and they also discovered something that had been there all along: God’s True Sanctuary is in Heaven. A beautiful harmony of Bible truths became even clearer by studying God’s Sanctuary, and as others joined them, this group, that was committed to the Bible, accepted the name of Seventh-day Adventists, reflecting their love for *all* of

God’s Commandments, as well as their faith in Jesus and His return.

God’s Word confirmed to them that Jesus is coming back very soon, and that His message must go quickly to the whole world. “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14).

LESSON SUMMARY

1. When Daniel knew (from the prophecy of Jeremiah) that deliverance was coming soon, he began to pray earnestly.

2. God’s answer was bigger than Daniel’s prayer, and pointed to the exact time the Messiah would come.

3. When Jesus was baptized, He was anointed to begin His work as our Messiah—exactly on time, in A.D. 27.

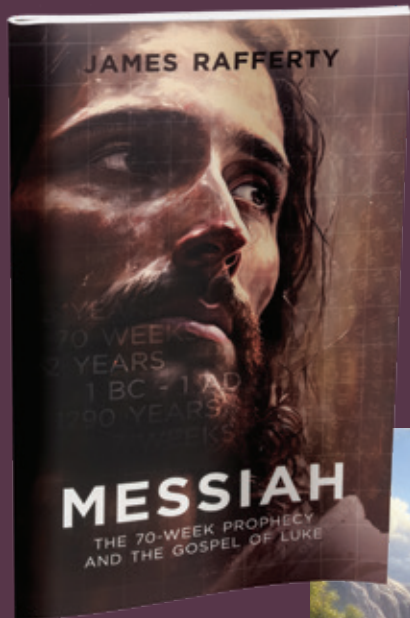
4. Jesus also precisely fulfilled God’s prophecy of when the Messiah would die—in the spring of A.D. 31.

5. The exact fulfillment of Daniel 9 in the life of Jesus confirms that we can trust all of God’s Word.

6. The fulfillment of Daniel 9 also confirms the Bible’s prophecy of the 2,300 years found in Daniel 8:14.

7. After the 2,300 years ended in 1844, there is no time prophecy remaining to be fulfilled. Jesus is coming soon.

Additional Notes:



JESUS' LIFE AND PROPHECY

New Testament writers believed Jesus was the Messiah, but Luke offers powerful confirmation through the longest time prophecy in the Bible.



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