

**Pastor Paul Bawden  
Grace Evangelical Church  
Palm Sunday, April 5, 2009  
"The Passion Week Foretold"  
Daniel 9**

Passion Week. I don't know if you are like me, but I thought we just had Passion Week on our calendar. But another year has quickly passed, like sand through the hour glass – and we find ourselves here on Palm Sunday with the most historic week in history before us.

And what's amazing is how involved the God of the Bible was in Passion Week. In fact, as we come to our text in Daniel 9 today, we will discover how intricately God projected His involvement, down to the very time of Christ's death on the cross. Let's approach the text this way today.

**I. Our inner convictions display what kind of individuals we really are (Daniel 9:1-19).**

**1. We all live at a certain time in history (9:1).**

All of us here today were born at a certain time in a certain place. We have birthdays each year which tell us that time is passing and each of us is getting a little more "mature", I call it, each day. We all have certain dates, experiences, and places that we can relate to in our individual lives and in our family lives.

The same was true of Daniel. Daniel was born and taken along with other captives from Jerusalem by king Nebuchadnezzar around 605 B.C. Possibly at that time, Daniel was in his late teens or early twenties. As our study of Daniel has revealed, God used Daniel in significant ways in the courts of various kings to interpret dreams, and to receive dreams regarding the future of nations from the time of Babylon all the way down past our day to the future of the return of Christ to set up His 1000 year kingdom on earth.

**In today's chapter (9:1) we find that Daniel penned that the time he was living was the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans.**

**Chronologically, this would mean that Belshazzar's feast (chapter 5) occurred between chapters 8 and 9.**

**This is the same Darius that is mentioned in Daniel 6, who possibly could be another name for Cyrus, or his son, Cambyses.**

**The time of the first year of Darius would be 538 B.C, some 67 or 68 years since Daniel was brought to Babylon from Jerusalem with the other captives. Of course by this time Daniel was probably in his late 70's or early 80's.**

What a significant ministry Daniel had during this time, as a young man coming to represent God in the government of Babylon as well as Persia.

He had his time in history as each of us has, to live for God where He puts us "To Dare To Be A Daniel."

**2. In time we have the privilege to make choices (9:2-19).**

Notice what Daniel was doing at this time in his life as he served in the Persian government.

**(1) We have the choice to know God personally, and have a hunger for God's Word, read it, and study it (9:2).**

The text tells us that Daniel was reading the prophet, Jeremiah. This is rather amazing, for we are not sure where he obtained a copy of the book of Jeremiah. Evidently, Daniel was reading Jeremiah 25:11-12 where it states the following:

**"This whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, declares the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the**

**Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation. declares the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.”**

Such length of time was the punishment upon Israel for not letting the land rest every seventh year, as the law directed (Leviticus 25-7; II Chronicles 36:14-21). Evidently over a period of 490 years the nation had failed to keep the law and let the land fallow every seventh year.

Since Daniel knew when he was taken captive to Babylon with the other exiles (605 B.C.), and he knew, as he indicated in verse 1 of this chapter 9 the date of the first year of Darius' reign (538 B.C.), Daniel began to conclude that the time was coming close for God to fulfill his word through Jeremiah and return His people to Jerusalem. In 536 B.C. (Ezra 1), God stirred up the spirit of Cyrus to make a proclamation that the Jewish people could return to Jerusalem.

**Note, then, that Daniel took Jeremiah's prophecy as truth from God, reliable and dependable. Daniel had no trouble believing that God used Jeremiah to pen His Word. Daniel made the choice to have faith in the LORD, in the Old Testament setting, plus making the choice to have a hunger after God's Word.**

**In fact when we keep reading in the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of Daniel, we discover that Daniel knew what the law of Moses said about obedience to God and disobedience to Him (Daniel 9:10-13). He knew as well the history of God's people of which he was a part (Daniel 9:15).**

Since Daniel was a man who made the choice to delight himself in the Word of God, he was in tune with God's character and God's workings in the affairs of men. As a result God's character had affected his life to be bold for the Lord before King Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, and Darius or Cyrus. He trusted God to deliver him from the lion's den.

Of course, the natural mind, outside of Christ, does not have a desire to know God's Word. Even a follower of Christ can have a ho-hum attitude toward the Word Of God. But the believer who makes that daily choice to be in the Word of God, will have develop in his life, the very character of Jesus Christ, and an understanding of God's workings in the affairs of men as revealed in the Word of God, the Bible.

- **How is your hunger for the bread of life, Jesus Christ, as He is revealed in the Word of God? Does your character, does my character indicate that we are in the Word of God on a daily basis. Our intake of the Word of God will indicate what kind of a person I am to other individuals, to those in my family, at work, at school, and in the neighborhood.**
- **Reading the Word of God will also give the believer an understanding of God's workings in the affairs of men, and a spiritual stability and hope in one's life with the Lord!! That's why Daniel could keep trusting the Lord where He put him, for His confidence was in God's Word, which gives encouragement and hope. See Romans 15:3-4 for us today.**

**(2) We have the choice to be a person of prayer (9:3-19).**

**A person, like Daniel, who is in the Word of God on a daily basis will be a person of prayer. One just automatically follows the other.**

This is one of the phenomenal prayers recorded in the Bible. It's like a prayer of Nehemiah (9) and Ezra (9). It displays the very character of Daniel in his inner person. Note what this prayer revealed about Daniel's relationship with the true and living God.

**1. Daniel had a proper view of himself and God (9:3) – He was a man of genuine humility. After Daniel read God's Word he began to seek the Lord in prayer and supplications with fasting, in sackcloth and ashes – He humbled himself and was in an attitude of repentance before the Lord.**

**2. Daniel had the proper view of God – He acknowledge who God is (9:4)**

Note the words that Daniel used as he addressed God in prayer – calling Him, LORD – Jehovah, the self-existent God, the Redeemer Covenant God of Israel. He also calls God, Lord (small letters) meaning Daniel understands that God is the Master, He is the Ruler – the Sovereign. God is also great, above other gods, and awesome – He

can't be fully described. He is the faithful God, because He keeps His covenant (Abrahamic Covenant), while displaying His lovingkindness (His hesed) to those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Such words tell us that Daniel had a deep understanding of who God is and what He had done and was capable of doing for Israel.

Daniel, then, approaches God on the basis of God's love for him and the nation of Israel.

**3. Daniel has a sensitive heart toward understanding what sin is – He identifies with sins of his people and confesses his sin to God (9:5-6).**

This is one of the amazing ingredients of the prayers of some of the Old Testament saints. They identified with the sins of their people, even if they were not responsible individually for what went on, for they realized that the sins of the people were a national disobedience. In fact, Daniel did this some 32 times in this prayer. Daniel is quick to acknowledge that the nation did not listen to the prophets God sent.

This tells us immediately that Daniel has a sensitive heart to sin. This shows that Daniel understands the holiness of God and the justice of God. But Daniel also understands the grace of God. Note the next verses, 9:7-11.

**4. Daniel understands that God is God of forgiveness in the midst of rebellion against Him – He contrasts the forgiveness of God with the people's rebelliousness (9:7-11).**

Daniel recognizes the righteousness of God in disciplining Israel. The nation has brought shame on the Lord and His name because of sin, but God is a God of compassion and forgiveness. Yes, all Israel has sinned against the Lord so that God has brought His curse upon Israel as Moses said would happen (cf. Deuteronomy 28-30).

**5. Daniel understands that God's righteousness must judge sin – He knows God's word is true, if God's law is broken, without repentance, there are serious consequences – God's judgment (9:12-14).**

Again Daniel referred to the Law of Moses, he admitted openly that the nation had not sought God's favor, but had turned against the LORD, therefore calamity came upon God's people.

**6. Knowing God is a God of Grace, Daniel appealed to the Lord to forgive Israel, by turning His wrath, His judgment away from His city Jerusalem (9:15-16).**

Daniel is really interceding here for His people, like a priest, the one to beseech the God of grace to really return His people to their homeland to rebuild the temple.

**7. Daniel's personal relationship with the LORD caused him to urge God to hear his prayer on the basis of God's great compassion (9:17-18).**

Again, Daniel understands that although God is a God of justice, He is also a forgiving God when the heart repents of sin.

**8. Daniel fervently beseeched God to forgive and to intervene on behalf of Israel on the basis of His own reputation, His own Name (9:19).**

Talk about a fervent and energized prayer. Daniel threw himself into this prayer based upon the Word of God. He called on God to save His reputation and restore His people to His city, Jerusalem.

**We can't miss here what kind of man Daniel was. He was a man who believed God's Word, and let that Word direct His prayer life. Yes, as a result, Daniel was a man who believed in fervent prayer before God. His inner convictions about His relationship with God give evidence that His inner person showed us the kind of a person Daniel really was – a man who let God influence his life in all that He did.**

**From the time Daniel arrived in Babylon as a young man, until now, Daniel's inner conviction of His faith in God and His Word directed his outward actions that displayed godly action that glorified his Lord.**

**We could say that Daniel let his life feed on and be directed by the Bread of Life, who we know in the full revelation, as Jesus Christ. who claimed to be the Bread of Life (John 6:35).**

And as we come to the Lord's Table, this morning, we are reminded that in the bread, Jesus is the BREAD OF LIFE, who nourishes us through the written Word, the Word of God. How grateful, we should be to the Lord for leaving us this wafer as a symbol of His LIFE and the written Word of God, which we can't live without. As we come to the Lord's Table, we should take time to check up in our lives, if our conviction regarding God's Word being our spiritual bread is also displayed in our daily lives.

## **II. Our understanding of prophetic truth should give us an eternal perspective in our daily lives (Daniel 9: 20-27).**

This is one of the most important sections of Scripture in the Word of God – it is amazing, to say the least.

### **1. God answers prayer (9:20-23).**

As in Daniel 8:16, God sent the angel, Gabriel. Here to bring the answer to Daniel's prayer on behalf of His people, Israel, and His city Jerusalem.

### **2. God gave a specific answer (9:24-27).**

**(1) Seventy weeks are determined to make an atonement for sin, so everlasting righteousness will be available to all who believe (9:24).**

**(2) The seventy weeks are explained (9:25-27).**

We need to discover what the "70 weeks" mean. Actually it is 70 sevens or the expression "weeks" means "sevens" of years. So Gabriel was referring to 70 periods of 7 or a period of 7 years times 70 = 490 years.

When will the 70 weeks or 490 years begin? The seventy weeks will begin with the decree to rebuild and restore Jerusalem (9:25a).

Question. When is that?

It is felt this referred to Nehemiah 2:5, when Arataxerxes Longimanus in 444 B.C. made the command to rebuild and restore Jerusalem (Note it is the city of Jerusalem. Cyrus in 536 B.C. gave the direction to rebuild the temple - Ezra 1:1-4).

**Then the text reads that from that time there will be seven weeks and 62 weeks until Messiah, the Prince (really Christ), it (Jerusalem) will be rebuilt again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress (9:23b). This meant that Jerusalem would be rebuilt during that seven week period, or 49 years from time of 444 B.C. This happened.**

**After the 62 weeks (plus the 7 weeks or total of 69 weeks = 483 years), the Messiah (Jesus Christ) will cut off and have nothing (9:26a) - certainly referring to Christ's crucifixion.**

**The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined (9:26b) – certainly referring to the Roman, Titus, who came and destroyed Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This, of course, occurred after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (His bodily resurrection and ascension), and before the last week (7 years) talked about in the next verse, 9:27).**

**And he (the prince, evidently of Daniel 9:26), will make a firm covenant with the many for one week (7 years), but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; 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 (9:27). Such has not happened as yet. In fact Jesus said that it was still future from his day (Matthew 24:15).**

**This is not the easiest to understand by just reading it. Let me put something on the board that will help us have a little better understanding of what is being said in this classic prophetic passage.**

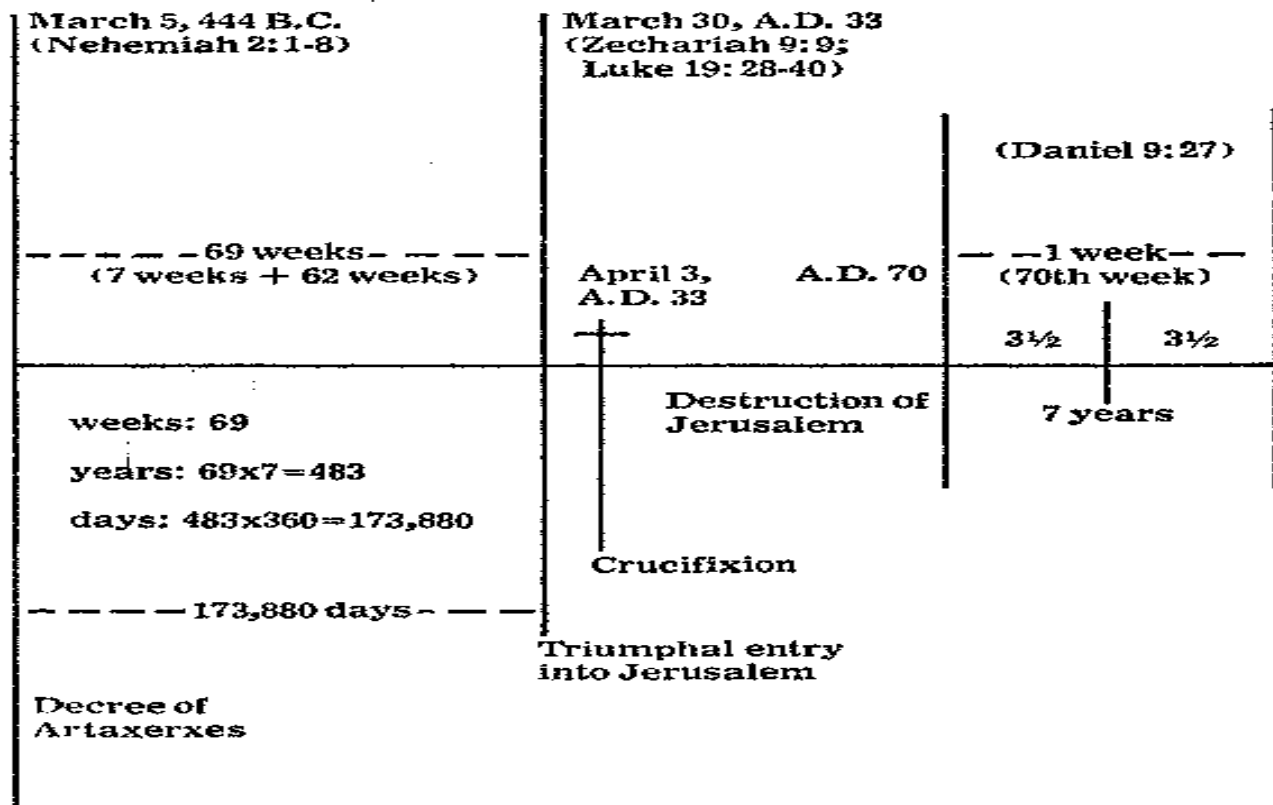
**Taken From "Evidence That Demands A Verdict" By Josh McDowell**

If Daniel is correct , the time from the edict to restore and rebuild Jerusalem (Nisan 1, 444 B.C – March 5 – 444 B.C. ) to the coming of the Messiah to Jerusalem is 483 years (69x 7), each year equaling a prophetic year of 360 days (173,880 days).

Josh McDowell quoting H. Hoehner, who has thoroughly researched this prophecy in Daniel and corresponding dates, calculates the date of this event:

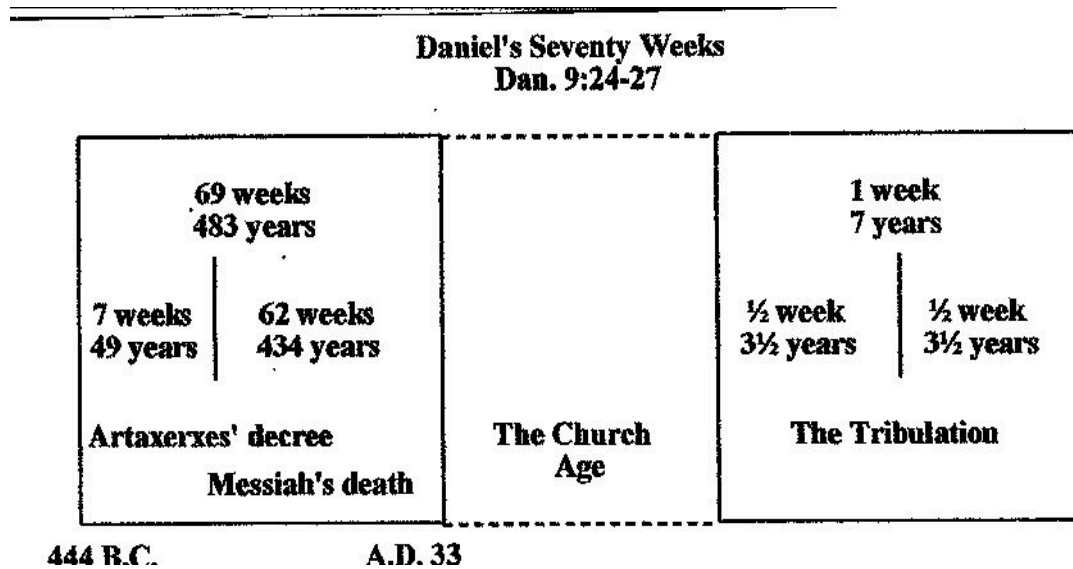
"Multiplying the sixty-nine weeks by seven years for each week by 360 days gives a total of 173,880 days. The difference between 444 B.C. and A.D.33 then is 476 solar years. By multiplying 476 by 365.24219879 or by 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 45,975 seconds (there are 365 ¼ days in a year), one comes to 173, 855 days, 6 hours, 52 minutes, 44 seconds, or 173, 855 days. This leaves only 25 days to be accounted for between 444 B.C. and A.D. 33. By adding the 25 days to march 5 (of 444 B.C.) one comes to March 30 (or A.D. 33) which was Nisan 10 in A.D. 33. This is the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. "

McDowell adds, "The "cutting off" of the Messiah in Daniel 9:26, would have occurred on A.D. April 3, the Friday following His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Look at the time line below to see how it all comes together.



Another perspective of the 70 weeks of Daniel is given below showing that there is a time period between the 69<sup>th</sup> week and the 70<sup>th</sup> week. For there is still one more week (7 years) to be fulfilled in Daniel 9. It is taken from Dr. Tom Constable's Notes on Daniel. This is really the tribulation yet to come on the earth described by Christ in Matthew 24 and in Revelation 6-19. I believe that the church will not be part of that as the church will be raptured before

that time of judgment yet to come upon the earth (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Corinthians 15:51-58).



Obviously, as mentioned, this is an amazing prophecy concerning the exact time of Christ's coming on Passion Week – The Passion Week Foretold.

Daniel was given an answer to his intercessory prayer on behalf of Israel's restoration to her city which occurred after his time in 444 B.C. But Daniel received much more in the answer that God gave him than he could even imagine or comprehend. To think that this godly man who loved God's word and was a passionate prayer warrior was given the exact time of Christ's crucifixion, and even beyond, is phenomenal.

Note again what the Lord would do – Daniel 9:24.

**"To finish the transgression, to make an end to sin, to make an atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness."**

Amazing, God is using Daniel to tell that Christ would come and provide eternal redemption, through His blood, for atonement was made through the animal sacrifice in the OLD TESTAMENT, but Christ has come, died on the cross for us in our place, His blood was shed, the eternal payment for our sin against God, has been paid in full. The old worship system in the Old Testament has been fulfilled and terminated. Through faith in Christ, we have eternal redemption.

In addition, as Daniel gained in his day God's eternal perspective on what He was going to do in time, we today, have the full revelation in Christ, and because of our faith and trust in Him, we know our sins are forgiven, He could return for us at any time, and this hope should give us God's eternal perspective on what's happening in our day.

**Knowing the future should cause us to:**

- **Worship the Lord in our hearts, in our families and in this assembly.**

After Paul was used by God to write about the future of Israel - prophecy – He could only praise the Lord. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For who has known the mind of the LORD, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him again? For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:33-36).

- **Have an impetus for holy living while one keeps looking for the anytime return of the LORD.**

He that has this hope seeks to live a pure life in the power of the Holy Spirit - as the Lord is pure- Christ's any moment return in a purifying hope as John tells us **(I John 3:1-3)**

- **Keep on keeping on, knowing God keeps the books and will one day make everything in accord with His will.**

Paul in II Corinthians 5:7-10 penned that all believers will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of how we have lived for Christ in our life-time. The Lord, of course will be looking for faithfulness in each of us.

**This cup represents our Lord's blood, the payment for sin, that God used Daniel to tell us about almost 600 years before Christ came died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. But God's prediction came true – it was accurate right on schedule.**

**May that cause us to thank the Lord even more today for the forgiveness we have in Christ and the opportunity we have to have God's eternal perspective on the world –knowing all is working our for our good and His glory.**

**Let's praise our Lord that He is the Bread of Life and paid the eternal payment for our sin through giving His very life-blood for us.**