

## **Israel's Years Are Numbered**

Daniel 9:20-27

(preached Pine Grove 3/26/17; Sunday PM)

### **Introduction**

You may have heard but on New Year's day, the border between North and Carolina changed a little bit...

When the original border was established in the 1700s, it was based on trees, boulders and other landmarks that had moved shifted or even disappeared...

For that reason, the states began surveying the border back in the 1990s...

That process was completed in 2013, and on New Year's Day 2017, two identical laws passed by both states moved the border to a more permanent location..

The new property line affects two dozen or so home, even causing one property owner to pay taxes on his house in South Carolina and taxes on his back yard in NC...

Yet, there has to be a clear border somewhere and since the lines had become blurred, it was time for a new dividing line between the states...

When we think of the worldwide church, there are a number of man made dividing lines that have existed all the way back to the early church when some people like Appollos' preaching and some like Paul.

Though God is not a God of division, fallen people are...

And though we are saved by the same Spirit and unified in the same gospel, there are still dividing lines that show up as Christian denominations.

And the number of denominations is in the hundreds if not thousands in the US alone...

Tonight in the last part of Daniel 9, we find a passage that serves as a dividing line among many denominations...

It is a passage that has been debated and studied and books written about..

It is a passage that affects your view of Israel...

Your view of the Antichrist...

Your view of the death of Christ.

Your view of the second coming..

It is a passage that stands as a dividing line of specifically a person's view of the end times..

You see, Baptists have generally held a different view of the end time than most other major denominations...

Most denominations, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, don't see a future for Israel...

They believe that Israel gave up their status as God's people when they called for the crucifixion of Christ...

And they believe that the church replaced Israel as God's people when Jesus ascended back to heaven and the disciples began to grow the church...

Most denominations don't believe in the rapture of the church.

They don't believe in a 7 year tribulation period upon the earth...

They see the book of Revelation as not something to be taken literal but is simply symbolic of the struggle between good and evil in the world...

They believe that the only event of end times is the second coming of Christ to the earth to wrap all this up and bring in the new heavens and earth..

And much of those differing views on the end times begin right here in the book of Daniel, and specifically in the last part of chapter 9...

And the reason a dividing line exists here is for one simple reason..

The denominations interpret this passage differently, and the main difference is whether or not this passage can be taken literally or symbolically.

Baptists and others who share our view of Israel and the end times have simply come to Daniel 9 and taken it literally just like we view much of the Bible..

Other denominations come to Daniel 9 and view it as symbolism not to be taken literally...

And when you take something as symbolic, there are 1000s of ways to see it..

That is why the literal interpretation is the right interpretation 99% of the time...

When the Lord wants us to take verses as symbolic, it is very clear from the context...

Tonight, I am going to give you a literal interpretation of Daniel 9:20-27...

And what you are going to see is this...

When you take Daniel 9:20-27 literally, it fits perfectly with other verses in the book of Daniel and Revelation and 1 Thessalonians and the rest of the Bible...

And you will that tonight in these very incredible and helpful verses...

I will warn you that Daniel 9:20-27 will challenge you, and may lead to questions in your mind...

Write them down and if I need to take next week to answer them, that is what we will do...

So, let's dig into these verses tonight with a simple outline to guide us...

## **I. 1 Angelic Visit to Israel's Prophet (20-23)**

We will begin in verses 20-23 with a 1 angelic visit to Daniel..

If you remember from last week, Daniel was a man of old age...

He has been taken away from his home in Israel as a young man, along with the rest of the nation of Israel as they fell to the Babylonians..

Daniel had lived away from his homeland for 6 decades, but one day as he was reading in the book of Jeremiah, he came across God's promise to rescue Israel from Babylon after 70 years.

And Daniel began to pray for God to do just...

Daniel loved the Lord and therefore, he loved his people the Jews because God loved them as well..

And Daniel was wanting the best for Israel..

He was wanting them back in the land that God had given them...

He was wanting Israel to have a future because Israel's future assured the continuation of God's name in the world...

So, Daniel prayed for the release of Israel from Babylon and we looked at that last week..

And that brings us to verse 20 of Daniel 9...

***20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and [n]presenting my supplication before the Lord my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision [o]previously, [p]came to me [q]in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.***

As Daniel prays, the Lord sends Gabriel to visit Daniel..

We have met Gabriel before...

He came to Daniel to help him understand the vision of the beasts that Daniel saw coming up out of the sea in chapter 8...

Gabriel helped Daniel understand that those beast were the world empires that would rule over Israel until the end of time...

And world history from the time of Daniel has proven that Gabriel's interpretation of the vision of those beasts was accurate...

Now, Gabriel has come to Daniel and he is going to give him more understanding into what Daniel is praying...

Look at verse 22...

***22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 23 At the beginning of your supplications the [r]command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are [s]highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.***

Now, please note what Gabriel is about to do...

He is going to give Daniel an answer to his prayer...

Daniel was asking God about Israel's future..

He was asking if God could bring Israel out of Babylon as God had promised and bring them back to their land..

Daniel's concern was that Israel might waste away in Babylon and that their future was not that bright...

Well as he was praying, God is going to answer Daniel's prayer in a grand way..

Have you ever asked a question and got more than you wanted in an answer?

You walk up to somebody on Sunday at church and ask the ever popular, “Hi, how are you doing?”

And instead of the normal, “Been doing pretty good,” you get a summary of the past week of that person’s life...

Well, Daniel is asking God for information on the immediate future of Israel...

But God is going to give Daniel an answer that goes way beyond what Daniel wanted to know...

God is going to lay out the plan for the nation of Israel until the very end of time....

Daniel has learned about all the nations that will dominate Israel until the end of time...

But now he is about to learn what becomes of Israel until the very end of time...

And so fasten your seatbelt and we are about to see the future of Israel until the very end of time...

Gabriel begins in verse 24 with..

## **II. 490 Years for Israel (24)**

***24 “Seventy [t]weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to [u]finish the transgression, to [v]make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and [w]prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.***

The key to taking a literal approach to this passage begins in verse 24...

If you don't get verse 24 right, you won't get anything else right about this prophecy given to Daniel by Gabriel from God...

And our attention must first turn to the phrase seventy weeks...

The original Hebrew simply reads “seventy sevens.”

Most Bible versions translate this as 70 weeks, but the idea is that 70 sets of 7 have been decreed for Israel as a nation...

In other words, 70 7s make up their entire time as a nation on the earth...

So the question that people disagree upon is what the length of time for these sets of 7...

The first option is that the 7s represent days...

If you take that view, then Daniel was told that Israel has 70 times 7 days or 490 more days as a nation...

Well, we know that wasn't the case...

That would only mean that they would last a little over a year as a nation...

Then the option is that these 7s represent a week of time...

If that is the case, then Gabriel told Daniel that Israel had 490 weeks left as a nation...

Which would mean that Israel had a little over 9 more years to exist as a nation..

Well, that isnt the case either...

We know that God allowed Israel to go back to their land in the years after this prayer was offered to God...

They existed as a nation beyond 9 years after this prayer...

The third option is the to see the 7s as reprinting years...

This would mean that Daniel was told that Israel would have a future consisting of 490 years...

This is the view that I see as making the most sense...

Now, here comes the challenge for us to understand...

The 490 years that were given to Israel as a nation would have a huge split in them...

In fact 483 years would pass, and then there would be a long break until the final 7 years would pass and Israel would once again be right with the Lord...

And what does it mean to be made right with God?

Well, you see that in the latter part of verse 24..

Israel you are getting 490 years, and at the end of that 490 years, you will finish the transgression or their rebellion against God..

They will make an end to their sin...

They will make atonement for their iniquity...

How do all these things happen?

Well, you know the answer to that..

Through salvation in Jesus Christ are our sins forgiven, our rebellion against God ended and our sins atoned for...

For Israel, they will never have salvation until they come to see Jesus as their Messiah and put their trust in Him..

And they wont do that until the very end of this 490 year period...

Israel received this prophecy from Daniel in 500s BC...

We will see in a minute that the clock on this 490 year period started ticking in 445 BC, but guess what?

For 483 years of this 490 year period, Israel has not accomplished any of this...

They are still rebelling against God...

They are still living with unforgiven sin...

They have not brought in everlasting righteousness...

All prophecy has not been fulfilled...

And since nothing of verse 25 has been fully accomplished, we still wait for the final 7 years of the 490 year total to start..

So we know that God is giving Israel 490 years as a nation to get right with him...

But when did this 490 year period begin?

Ok, verse 25...

III. **483 Years Until the Death of Israel's Messiah**  
**(25-26a)**

*25 So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a [x]decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until [y]Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with [z]plaza and moat, even in times of distress.*

Now, remember Daniel is writing this down while living as a captive of the Medo-Persian kingdom...

He is not in Jerusalem, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC...

So, Jerusalem is in ruins while he writes this, and God tells him that the clock on these 490 years given to Israel will begin to tick when the order is given to rebuild the city...

And to save you the trouble of searching through your Bible to find that order, we know it came down in the book of Nehemiah and it was given by Artaxerxes..

He was the Persian king who gave the order to rebuild the city of Jerusalem in 444 BC...

And with his command given to rebuild Jerusalem, the clock on the 490 years given to the nation of Israel began to tick down...

Now, the 490 years tick down in 3 stages...

Stage 1 is 7 weeks, which equals 49 years...

So, from the order to rebuild Jerusalem to completing the building of the city, it took 49 years or 7 weeks...

Which meant that Jerusalem was rebuilt by 395 BC...

Stage 2 is 62 weeks or 434 years which lasted from the 396 BC until 33 AD...

Now, what happened in 33 AD?

The first thing that happened is that Jesus came to Israel...

He came into Israel riding on a donkey...

He came to present himself to Israel as their king...

After 483 years, Israel's Messiah was sent to them...

He came to be their king...

To end their transgression, to make an end to their sin, to provide atonement for Israel's sin...

To fulfill prophecy and bring in an everlasting righteous kingdom...

But what happen when Jesus comes to Israel after 483 of these 490 years had passed?

Well, they reject Him...

They call for his death..

They find him filled with sin, though he was sinless..

And they rejected him as their king...

Which is exactly what we see in the first half of verse 26...

***26 Then after the sixty-two weeks the [aa]Messiah will be cut off and have [ab]nothing...***

When Jesus was rejected as Israel's king and sent to the cross, the pause button was pressed on the 490 years given to Israel...

The book of Romans says that their rejection of Christ led to their partial hardening as a people...

For almost 2000 years, Israel has been disciplined for their rejection of Jesus Christ in 33 AD...

The first appearance of Christ did not bring an end to Israel's transgression, did not end their sin, did not make atonement for their sin and did not seal up prophecy...

Instead, those promises were put on hold for Israel and hundreds of generations of Jews have lived and died and faced the judgment of God because of their rejection of Christ...

Now, their rejection has made it possible for the church age..

We Gentiles have benefitted from their rejection.

We have benefitted from their partial hardening as God has allowed a time for many to come to salvation in the Messiah that was sent to Israel...

To the Messiah that Israel cut off...

Now, how long is this time period of reaction going to last?

Well, we don't know...

So, let's go to section 4, which I have called...

#### **IV.    ?? Years for Israel's Hardening (26b)**

Now, the end of verse 26 is the result of the first part of verse 26...

***“...and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And [ac]its end will come with a flood; even to the end [ad]there will be war; desolations are determined.***

When Israel rejected their Messiah and had him cut off, God began his discipline of Israel and the first aspect of that discipline was to destroy Jerusalem...

That happened in 70 AD with the destruction of the Jewish temple and the ransacking of the city by the Roman government..

Now, please take note of what we see here...

The people of the prince who is to come...

Well, we know that it was the was the Roman government who sent its military into Jerusalem in 70 AD to burn and destroy the temple and the city...

Here is a picture of that destruction...

But listen to how Gabriel describes this destruction...

He says the people of the prince to come...

Who is this prince?

Well, this can't be Jesus here...

The people of Jesus would not destroy the temple or Jerusalem...

So, who is this coming prince?

This is the coming Antichrist...

He didn't come in AD 70 to destroy the temple...

His people did...

So what clue do we see here?

The Antichrist will be of Roman descent...

He will not be Jewish, but a Gentile...

God simply gave a preview of his hatred of the Jews when His people went into Jerusalem in 70 AD and destroyed the city..

This was a result of God's punishment of the Jews for cutting off their Messiah...

And the city of Jerusalem and the land of Israel was never the same once they cut off their Messiah..

There has been nothing but trouble for Jews since that day..

And that is what we should expect...

Look at the end of verse 26...

Desolations are determined...

In other words, the Jews are going to be persecuted for a long time after their rejection of Christ..

And if you look at history since 30 AD, that has been the case...

They were scattered out of their land and though they made it back, history is filled with attacks on Jews...

It is true to this very day as land is still be taken from them in 2017...

And all these years of persecution stem from the day that they rejected their King who came to them riding on a donkey...

So how long will this chastening last?

How long will Israel's partial hardening carry on?

Well, we know it has lasted from 33AD until 2017...

And we also know that only the Father knows how long it will go on...

Israel has been given 490 years as a nation, and 483 have been completed before the push button was hit at the death of Christ...

But when will God push play again and those final 7 years come?

Well, what do we know if we have been in the book of Revelation?

Anything last 7 years in that book?

Well, the time of tribulation is a 7 year period...

It is time of Israel coming back to the Lord...

What have we seen happens in these final 7 years of the end?

Well, all Israel is saved...

God completes the final 7 years of their 490 years in the tribulation period...

This is an additional reason why I firmly hold to a pre-tribulational rapture of the church...

The final 7 years of the world are not designed for the church...

We are the gap in between year 483 and 484...

We are what happens while God had pushed pause on Israel's time to send consequences their way for cutting off their Messiah...

But once their days of being partially hardened are over and he prepares to hit play on the final 7 years, he raptures the church to heaven and focuses his attention on Israel again...

The church age is ended before Israel is given their final 7 years..

The church wasn't there for the first 483 years and we wont be there for the last 7 years..

So, the question becomes, when will the pause on the 490 years end, and the start of the final 7 years begin?

Great question...

Let's answer it in the final verse of chapter 9...

## V. 7 Years for Israel's Salvation (27)

***27 And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of [ae]labominations will come one who [af]makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who [ag]makes desolate.”***

In the opening part of verse 27, we see how the final week or 7 years of Israel's final days will begin...

They will sign a covenant with the Antichrist...

Verse 27 says that he will make a firm covenant with the many for one week...

The he is a reference to the prince who is to come in verse 26...

So, the kick off to the final 7 years of Israel's 490 years as a nation begins when the Antichrist sits down to sign a peace treaty with Israel...

If you remember from Revelation, what is the first seal judgment of the end of time....

A rider on a white horse who conquers but carries a bow but no arrows...

And how does some conquer without weapons...

He conquers through negotiation...

The Antichrist will be a charmer when he first appears on the scene...

And his first order of business will be to make friends with Israel...

It seems that the rapture may throw the world into a chaos of sorts...

There may be increased hostility to Israel and their God...

There may be increased tensions all over the world but especially in the Middle East...

And the Antichrist will burst on the scene to bring peace out of chaos...

And he will sit down with Israel at table for peace talks and he will sign a covenant with them...

And I believe the great bargaining chip he will offer is giving Israel the right to rebuild their temple on the temple mount...

And he will offer that and protection for Israel to do that, and they will sit down at a table together and they will put pen to paper to sign this peace treaty...

And as the ink on the paper is drying, the clock that has been stopped at 483 years will begin to tick again on the 7 remaining years...

Now, that peace will last for a while...

WE all know that and have talked about that in the book of Revelation, but in the middle of those 7 years, the Antichrist will go from friend of Israel to foe of Israel...

Look back at verse 27...

He will put a stop to temple sacrifices...

And then the verse reads that on the wings of abomination will come come who makes desolate...

What is that?

Well, Jesus talked about the abomination of desolation...

We could walk through that if we had more time, but let me shorten the story for you...

The Antichrist will break his peace treaty with Israel....

He will stop them from using their newly built temple, and he will go into the temple and declare himself to be God...

He will demand the Jews and the whole world to worship him...

That will be the abomination of desolation...

It will be the most blasphemous attack ever...

To stand in God's temple and claim to be God, yet to be Satan in disguise...

Yet, God will have the final say..

Though the Antichrist will have followers and be able to gather the world's armies to his side to fight against God...

God will ultimately pour out destruction on the Antichrist at the end of those 7 years by sending Jesus to the earth in the second coming...

And that Second coming will bring about the end of the 490 years that God has given to Israel as a nation from the time of Daniel...

That is the meaning of this passage...

That is what Daniel was told by the angel Gabriel in 500 BC, and those are the how those 490 years play out...

### **Conclusion**

Now what does this mean for us?

*First, God's promises are never withdrawn...*

I heavier that I am eternally secure because the Bible teaches that in many places...

Salvation can't be lost or given back..

When God truly saves, he saves completely and forever...

And though I believe because many verses teach that..

I also believe that by looking at the nation of Israel..

God has kept His people around in the world because one day he is going to fulfill his promises to Jews who are alive in those final 7 years....

Have you ever thought about this?

God could have caused Jews to go out of existence if he wanted to...

He has done it with other OT people groups...

Ever met a Philistine in 2017 or a Amorite or a Jebusite?

No.

Ever met an Israelite?

Yes...

And you know why?

God's promises are irrevocable...

He promised to save all of Israel, and one day He will...

And his great faithfulness to an unfaithful people proves this...

When God promises, you can take it to the bank..

He delivers..

God promised Israel 490 years, and though he fulfilled 483 years of it before they rejected His Son, God didn't eject the movie...

He pushed pause after those 483 years, and one day in the near future, he will push play and those final 7 years will finish out...

God is faithful to what he said...

And if has promised to save me, He will...

His salvation isn't mine to lose...

Israel tried to lose God's blessing, but God will not allow that to happen...

## ***#2 - God loves the church, and God loves Israel.***

The great truth of these 490 years and our part in them is this...

God used Israel's cutting off of their Messiah as a way to open salvation to the rest of the world...

So many people make the mistake of confusing the church and Israel...

So many people say that Israel has been swallowed up by the church or replaced by the church...

But nothing could be farther from the truth...

God loves his people Israel and God loves the church..

He is going to rescue us from the wrath to come in the tribulation, but he is going to use that wrath to cause Israel to turn to Him...

There have so many Christians in history who have a hatred of Israel...

Look, if a Jew doesn't see Christ as the Messiah, he is an enemy of God and the gospel...

But so is anyone else who rejects Christ...

I assure you...

There will be Jews in heaven and plenty of them...

God is God of the church but He is also the God of Israel...

And as he has saved us by faith in His Son, He will save them when they put their faith in His son in the final 7 years of the world...

So, pray for Jews today as you would anyone who is an unbeliever...

Pray that they would turn to Christ now and be raptured with the church...

Rather than face 7 years of hell on earth before coming to their senses and believing in Christ then....

The time of salvation is now...

Let us pray for Israelites to see their Messiah because on only the Lord knows how long the pause button will be pushed...

And if you die without Christ, your unbelief will send you to hell whether you are a Jew or Gentile...

Let us pray..