

Good News, Bad News

Text: Daniel 9.20–27

Theme: God's answer to Daniel's prayer should amaze us, not confuse us.

Introduction – I have some good news & some bad news for you

- you've heard the stories & jokes like this
- have some good news, bad news of my own this morning
- good news: I feel just fine, despite how my voice may sound
- bad news: I've had a head cold & cold meds dry my voice out
- good news: I won't preach until noon today because of dry voice
- bad news: Daniel 9 and the 70 weeks are upon us now
- some have been waiting for me to get here
- good news: you're hoping that I would explain it all
- bad news: stack of books here seek to do so & none of them agree
- good news: God's Word still directs our hearts here
- and Holy Spirit will always use God's Word to shape us

Daniel 9 seems bit like this

- Daniel in upper 80s now, 1st year of Darius' reign
- yet Jerusalem & Temple still in ruins 600 miles away to west
- then Daniel prays – [Daniel 9.17–19](#)

Heaven answers—while he was still praying

- yet actually be another 93 years before true answer begins
- Gabriel, from ch. 8, appears again: vv. 23–24a
- delivers good news, bad news scenarios
- good news: Jerusalem & Temple to be restored
- bad news: all rebuilt in times of struggle & tribulation
- good news: Messiah will come to same city & temple
- bad news: the Anointed One will be killed there
- good news: great things come because Messiah dies
- best news of all: He won't stay dead
- bad news: many Jews will forget God's Word & reject all this
- so city & temple destroyed again

So, let's put into practice some good Bible study methods & ask questions

First question is this...

I. WHY? (IS THIS PRAYER HERE)

- spent some time here in 9.1–19 last Lord's Day
- glorious prayer, one of longest in Scripture
- also one of the best, in my opinion

- but why is it here, in ch. 9 of this book, in Darius' 1st year of reign?

1. Why not right off as part of ch. 1?

- Babylon begins taking captives and several years later, finishes it off
- Israel had been repeatedly warned this would come
- ignored the prophets and their northern cousins decimated earlier
- seems like time for confession would have been right away, ch. 1
- but no, nearly 70 years goes by

2. So why now?

- spurred by reading of the Word in Jeremiah, Daniel prays
- after visions of 7 & 8, after all experiences in 1–6, he prays this
- why? because of God's glorious holiness
- no doubt Daniel's been given to see what lies ahead
- not smooth sailing, wine & roses; turmoil, trouble, tribulation come
- and to make matters worse, seems people of God forget Bibles
- fall back into sin & idolatry, try to appease gov't of the day
- Daniel sees God's glory & man's propensity to sin
- and he can only cry out for mercy & forgiveness

Let's ask another question...

II. WHY, AGAIN? (IS THIS THE ANSWER TO THE PRAYER)

- Daniel gets an answer more quickly than he realized
- read [vv. 21–23](#)
- but when you see the answer, it may confuse you
- Daniel prayed for mercy, for forgiveness of Israel's many sins
- he cried out for God's name to be held up above all things
- and here's the answer to that prayer
- [vv. 24–27](#)
- why, O Lord, is this the answer?

1. It's not about your calendar

- God isn't giving us information so we can fill in timelines here
- it's not about charts, calendars, plans, schemes of the end
- [\(show many charts\)](#)
- often, we're so preoccupied with nailing down specifics, miss point
- we want to match every name, nemesis, event mentioned
- that's fine if, as in ch. 8, God gives us that peg to hang hat on
- He's not truly done that here

2. It's for your comfort & strengthening of your faith

- notice Gabriel's words in v. 23 to Daniel: you're greatly loved
- what strengthening power to faith in God who loves us
- then consider – hope inspired by truth coming: an end to sin

- and in spite of bad news scenarios laid out: v. 27 – the decree ends
- this is God’s decree, and His decree shall always be fulfilled
- so take courage & comfort that God is always in control

Now, let’s ask the question many are wanting answer to...

III. WHAT? (IS THIS ANSWER ALL ABOUT)

- before we consider Dan. 9.24–27, look to New Testament for help

1. Hebrews 9.26–28 & Jesus’ finishing the transgressions

“for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”

- Jesus, in His first advent, came to put an end to sin
- to put away sin thru sacrifice of His body on the cross
- at His second coming, Jesus will bring final salvation to believers
- looking back – and Hebrews only looks back about 30-35 years
- we see Jesus fulfilling two key purposes of God
- to finish the transgressions & to put an end to sin
- all done when Jesus came the first time

2. Still more: Hebrews 2.17 & Isaiah 51.1, 5, 6, 8

- *“Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.”*

(Hebrews 2:17 ESV)

- *“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the Lord: look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug.*

My righteousness draws near, my salvation has gone out, and my arms will judge the peoples; the coastlands hope for me, and for my arm they wait.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and they who dwell in it will die in like manner; but my salvation will be forever, and my righteousness will never be dismayed.

For the moth will eat them up like a garment, and the worm will eat them like wool, but my righteousness will be forever, and my salvation to all generations.”

(Isaiah 51:1, 5–6, 8 ESV)

- righteousness we receive from Christ is everlasting righteousness
- it never fails, it never fades
- this is what Daniel is told in 9.24, is it not?

3. Two key purposes of Christ

- to atone for sin & bring in an everlasting righteousness
- I believe this is what Daniel is being told

4. What about restoring & rebuilding Jerusalem, v. 25?

- this is part of the good news Gabriel brings to Daniel
- you were praying that God would do something w/ Jerusalem?
- here it is: Jerusalem will be rebuilt
- decree from Artaxerxes (soon to come Persian king), 457 B.C.
- to Ezra: go rebuild your Temple
- from then until Anointed One, Messiah, comes: 7-7s = 62-7s, 69-7s
- 483 years: somewhere in AD 26, when Jesus baptized by John
- this begins His earthly ministry of perfect righteousness
- temple has been rebuilt, yes
- better news: real temple is here in Christ Himself

5. Anointed One cut off – bad news! v. 26

- sometime after the 483: Messiah cut off
- sometime after: this is what disciples missed
- they knew Daniel 9, even called Jesus the Christ–Anointed One
- but never thought He would die, be cut off
- Peter even denied it could happen & Jesus rebukes him

6. City & Sanctuary destroyed, v. 26b

- I believe this looks to AD 70 when Rome comes & destroy it all
- so much of Daniel 9 is fulfilled in history

But not done; still have v. 27 & one final question...

VI. WHEN? (WILL THE ANSWER REALLY COME)

- so many things we could spend several days upon here
- but want to point out one particular that helps tremendously
- there has been a great misinterpretation regarding v. 27
- it’s regarding “he shall make a strong covenant...”
- and it involves the pronoun “he”

1. Who makes this covenant?

- we need to always know who a pronoun alone points to
- grammatically, it is NOT the Antichrist; not even mentioned in ch 9
- no, “he” is the Anointed One, the Messiah, the “prince” of v. 25
- Christ, Messiah, Anointed One is the primary subject of verses
- He is One who will atone for sin, bring in eternal righteousness

2. So, what is the covenant?

- many have taken this to mean “to make or cut a covenant”
- if this is right, then correct to think Antichrist
- but that is not the Hebrew word used here
- different Hebrew phrase used=“confirm a covenant already there”
- this would be the Covenant of Grace already in existence
- Messiah doesn’t come to make a covenant
- He comes to confirm, ratify, authenticate one already there
- and He does this with His own blood

- and He will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords
- and this is more than Daniel or we could ask or imagine.

3. So, when does this happen?

- “for one half of the ‘seven’ he shall put an end to ...”
- Jesus’ public ministry was about 3 ½ years
- at the end of that 3 ½ yrs He was “cut off” – crucified
- His death put an end to sacrifice and offerings: no more blood
- so, sometime after the 69th week, He is cut off
- 3 ½ yrs after the 69th week is middle of the 70th week
- there is no gap between these: end of 69th right into the 70th
- other views start to insert things that aren’t here in order to fit their presuppositions into the text & timeline

4. Are we left hanging with the last half of 70th week?

- Daniel 9 leaves it here, but Revelation 12 picks it up
- when we get into Revelation, we’ll see this clearly
- but for this morning, challenge you to read that in light of Dan 9
- what you see there is the Church being kept by God during 3 ½ yrs
- much of this is recorded in Acts 1–7
- then church is scattered for Satan wishes to do her great harm
- but God cares for her and keeps her
- Satan cannot ultimately destroy her for she is Christ’s bride
- that’s you and me, even today, by the way

Conclusion – Comfort in the midst of turmoil

- I have skipped over too much, I fear; may God make it clear
- what is clear is this: we are the offspring of the woman: Church
- if we make the good confession & hold to the testimony of Christ
- we are engaged in a spiritual battle every day
- battle will climax, as we saw, in Daniel 7
- the Antichrist – Satan in human form – will try one last time
- but he will fail and Christ will triumph victoriously
- we are living in wake of Daniel 9 & 70 weeks in history
- that’s the good news
- the bad news is spiritual warfare rages daily around us
- yet best news is just around the corner
- Jesus Christ is coming to destroy our enemy