

the work of Christ; the time allotted Israel as a nation for repentance, the time when type would meet antitype in all sacrificial offerings; the period when probation would end for the Hebrew race, and everlasting righteousness would be preached to the world at large. In this interview with Gabriel only that part of the two thousand three hundred days which applied to the Hebrew nation was given. To Daniel had already been revealed the history of the nations of the world; the two thousand three hundred days has to do more especially with God's people, independent of national governments. (SDP 122.2).

The period of seventy weeks [70x7=490], or four hundred and ninety days of prophetic time, covers a period of four hundred and ninety years, during which Jewish history as such would continue. This four hundred and ninety years did not begin at once, for the angel said they should begin to reckon from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem. The period of seventy weeks of Jewish history is thus divided by the angel: Seven weeks for building the walls and streets of Jerusalem; threescore and two (62) weeks till the work of Messiah; and one week, which would cover the period of his ministry, and the time following, until the gospel should go forth to the Gentiles. This last week is devoted to the confirmation of the covenant. (SDP 123.1).

For an understanding of the first division, the seven weeks or forty-nine years, we have the history as recorded in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, and Zechariah. God raised up Cyrus and placed him on the throne, that he might restore the Jews to their native city. Long before the Babylonish captivity began, the prophet Isaiah (44: 28) wrote of Cyrus, "He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid." (SDP 124.1).

In the first chapter of the book of Ezra is recorded the decree of Cyrus. The fulfillment by Cyrus of the prophecy of Isaiah is striking: "In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia . . . the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, the king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The Lord God of heaven . . . hath charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem." (Ezrah 1:1-2).

Then it was that every Jew in Babylon was at liberty to return to Palestine. If necessary, the expense of going would be borne by the government of Cyrus. There was ample provision for all the poor and the sick. Such a decree had never before been issued. Israel should have arisen en masse, taking with them all those of other nationalities,

who, having heard the gospel, were willing to cast their lot with the people of God. The land should have rung with shouts of praise and with the songs of the ransomed. The exodus from Babylon should have been a mighty witness to the nations of the earth of the power of the God of the Jews. The exodus from Egypt, and the wonders attending the crossing of the Red Sea and the Jordan, and the feeding of the thousands in the wilderness, would have dwindled into insignificance had Israel taken advantage of the way which God had prepared. (SDP 124.3).

What was the result of the decree? Daniel watched with anxiety the preparations which were made to depart, and at the end of the first year scarcely fifty thousand had journeyed from Babylon to Jerusalem. Cyrus was discouraged and disgusted because of the feeble response, and relapsed into indifference. Later the angel of God with Michael's help pleaded with him for three weeks in order to touch his heart again. (SDP 125.2).

The vessels taken from the temple to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar were returned to the leaders of the Jews, who carried them back to Jerusalem. In the second year of their coming into Palestine, the work of restoring the temple was begun. The site of Solomon's temple, which had been burned by Nebuchadnezzar, was hidden by rubbish, the accumulation of nearly seventy years. The work of restoration was soon stopped by Samaritans living in the country, and further progress was impossible until the issuing of a second decree by Darius, king of Persia, in 520 B. C. Work on the house of God stopped for fifteen years. Then the prophets Haggai and Zechariah rebuked the people for their inactivity. (SDP 125.3).

#### References

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# Daniel's Prayer Answered

Daniel 9: 1-27

Part 1

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A few months only expired between the vision of chapter eight and the events which the first part of chapter nine records. The parting words of Gabriel had been that the things seen concerning the two thousand and three hundred days were true. Daniel was unable to hear the explanation of this time, and while he went about the king's business he thought often upon the vision.

The fate of the nation had been read, and the words had scarcely died away before the slaughter of the Babylonians began. That same night Belshazzar was slain, and the king of the Medes was proclaimed monarch of the world. By Darius, Daniel had been made chief president, and occupied a position in Babylon next to Cyrus, the associate of Darius. (SDP 118.1).

During the turmoil and bustle of all the change in affairs, while Daniel's hands were filled with court duties and business cares pressed him, he yet had time for prayer and study. (SDP 118.2).

Prophecy had foretold that Cyrus would restore to the Jews their freedom; the time of their deliverance drew near, and Daniel searched carefully for an understanding of the time. The prophecies of Jeremiah were the only ones which told plainly the length of the captivity. Doubtless the mind of Daniel was perplexed over the two thousand three hundred days, of which Gabriel had spoken, for to the Hebrews the temple in Jerusalem was God's sanctuary, and the cleansing, to them meant the removal of unholy hands from Mount Zion. (SDP 118.3).

Twice in the book of Jeremiah the length of the captivity is stated. "These nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished that I will punish the king of Babylon." (Jeremiah 25:11).

Again the prophet had said, "After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good work toward you, in causing you to return to this place." (Jeremiah 29:10).

Babylon had fallen, and Jerusalem had been desolate nearly seventy years. A crisis was near for God's people, and Daniel sought by prayer and fasting to understand the matter. This is one of the instances in the Scriptures when a prayer is recorded. This one is given as an example of the fervent, effectual prayer of a righteous man which availeth much. Daniel realized that sin had darkened the vision of many of God's professed people. Some who were in Babylon were careless and indifferent concerning the truth of

God. Many had gotten them homes, and rested secure in the assurance that, when the captivity began, they were told to buy land and build homes. Some were content with present surroundings, and dreaded the difficulties which must attend the journey to Jerusalem, which was in the hands of hostile tribes, and where there were no pleasant homes. Jerusalem should be built, they argued, but others should do it, not they.

A love of Babylon was strong in the hearts of many, for seventy years after the decree of Cyrus, when all were at liberty to return to Palestine, there were still hundreds of Jews in Babylon. In fact, but a small per cent of the Jews ever returned. The young, who had been educated in the city, had, many of them, like the daughters of Lot in Sodom, partaken so largely of the customs that they lingered among the heathen, though angels bade them hurry out. The spirit of prophecy was passed by with a few remarks, or fell upon ears entirely deaf; although in bondage, present conditions were preferable to freedom with the effort necessary to obtain it. Daniel knew of this condition, and he confessed the sins of the people before God. He identified himself with his people. His is one of the most wonderful prayers on record. (SDP 119.2).

This man, whom heaven called "greatly beloved," in whom no fault could be found, even by his bitterest enemies, placed himself beneath the load of sin which was oppressing Israel. Bowed before God, he met the Father with the words, "We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled;" (Dan. 9:5). Read verses 5-19.

### FAITH PRAYER INTERTWINED

Daniel was a representative of Christ, and he had lived so close to God, and knew him so intimately, that the spirit which distinguished Christ from all others was manifest in Daniel also. He was a true shepherd in Israel, and his prayer is a rebuke to all self-righteousness; a cutting rebuke to those who say by word or act, "I am more holy than thou." (SDP 121.1).

Such was the entreaty of a burdened heart. Such were the words with which Daniel approached his God. He was acquainted with the Father, and knew that his words reached the throne of heaven. Faith and prayer are the two arms which mortal man may entwine around the neck of Infinite Love. Christ stooped to listen, and bade Gabriel speed earthward. We let go of the arm of the Lord too soon in our prayers. We should press our petitions higher and still higher. God sometimes tests the strength of our desires by de-

laying an immediate answer. (SDP 121.2).

### DANIEL'S PRAYER ANSWERED

"Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." (Dan. 9:21). Also read Daniel 9: 20-23.

The very thing for which Daniel had asked, was first mentioned as Gabriel laid his hands upon the prophet. "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the word (margin) came forth, and I am come to show thee." (Dan 9: 22-23).

### THE NEED TO EMPTY OF SELF

Heaven was more interested than man could be in the very thing for which Daniel prayed, and as soon as the channel was open, the Spirit flowed in. In the spiritual as in the natural world a vacuum is abhorred. As the air rushes into a vessel when a liquid is poured out, so the Holy Spirit fills the heart when it is emptied of self. If there were but more room made for Christ in hearts, the pentecostal experience would often be repeated. (SDP 121.3).

God has many favorites among the sons of men. Indeed, every man is a special favorite, and highly honored by the King of heaven, but there are very few to whom angels have spoken the word, "Thou are greatly beloved." The marginal reading of the twenty-third verse gives the Hebrew rendering as "a man of desires." That man whose desire is heavenward, who longs for spiritual food as the heart panteth after the water brook, is greatly beloved of God, for God is in search of such to fulfill his will on earth. To such Gabriel can speak. (SDP 122.1).

### THE FUTURE HISTORY OF THE JEWS

Beginning with the twenty-fourth verse the angel explains the period of time, the two thousand three hundred days of chapter 8: 14. There are no preliminaries. Gabriel knows the thoughts of the prophet, and hence he says, "Seventy weeks are determined upon [or allotted to] thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." The entire future history of the Jews as a nation is contained in this one verse. No other history ever crowded so much into so few words. Here is given the exact date for the beginning of