

YOU CAN TRUST YOUR BIBLE: THE INSPIRATION & AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

2 Timothy 3:16–17 • Brian Brodersen

Introduction: Daniel 1–6 are stories of Daniel’s faithful witness and subsequent influence for Yahweh, the God of Israel, in the Babylonian and Persian courts. Chapters 7–12 record the prophetic dreams and visions of Daniel that reveal the future of the world powers as they relate to Israel and the future of Israel in relation to the Messiah and His coming kingdom.

As the Book of Daniel brings us back around to the Prophets, I want to take a bit of a dive into predictive prophecy, which is a significant aspect of the ministry of the prophets and one we haven’t touched on much.

When we think of prophecy in our Calvary Chapel context, we usually think of prophecy exclusively in terms of predictive. Yet, we should understand the primary definition of prophecy is not foretelling (predicting the future) but forth-telling (speaking on behalf of God to people). This is seen in the Prophets by their use of the phrase: “Thus says the LORD ...”

Predictive prophecy is, more often than not, Messianic. Even when a coming judgment is predicted, as is often the case, it projects beyond the judgment to the mercy and deliverance that will come through Messiah.

A clear example of this is found in Zechariah 14:1–11:

“A day of the LORD is coming, Jerusalem, when your possessions will be plundered and divided up within your walls. I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses will be ransacked, and the women will be ravished.”

Judgment

“Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as he fights in the day of battle ... The LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him ... The LORD (Yahweh) will be King over the whole earth ... Jerusalem will be permanently secure.”

Messianic Kingdom

With that background, and keeping the text we read from Daniel 7 in mind, let’s look at a few other passages in Daniel, beginning with Daniel 9:1–4, and then onto verses 20–27 where God, through the angel Gabriel, responds to Daniel’s prayer with a new word regarding the future of Israel and the world.

I. Seventy Years to Seventy Sevens

- A. Seventy Sevens—One of the most remarkable prophecies in all of the Bible. The prophecy declares that at the end of seventy sevens, all of God’s purposes for Israel and the nations will have been fulfilled and everlasting righteousness will have been established by Messiah.

“Seventy Sevens are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up (confirm or authenticate) vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy.” 9:24

- B. Seventy Sevens or weeks? Are they days? Months? Years? Seventy seven-year-periods makes the most sense in light of what is to happen at the completion of this period of time. Separated into two periods of 69 sevens or 483 years, and one final seven-year period to complete the seventy.
- C. When does the period begin? Scholars are mixed: Don’t know and shouldn’t bother to try and figure it out; it’s irrelevant; began with decree of Cyrus recorded by Ezra to rebuild the Temple in

538; Artaxerxes decree to Nehemiah to rebuild the city of Jerusalem given in 444 or 445 BC and recorded in Nehemiah 2.

- D. The decree from Artaxerxes makes the most sense because starting from there, 444 or 445 BC, 483 years or 173,880 days later brings you to the early 30s of the first century.

The angel said there would be 69 sevens, or 483 years or 173,880 days, until the Anointed One (Messiah) comes.

Sir Robert Anderson, in his book *The Coming Prince*, calculated that the decree from Artaxerxes to Nehemiah was given in 445 BC, rather than 444, on March 14 to be exact.

Calculating from that starting point, he arrived on April 6, 32 AD, as the day of Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and thus the coming of Messiah, the Prince.

Many scholars today would be critical of Anderson's conclusions and his attempts at being so exact.

And perhaps his efforts to pinpoint the very day of the decree and the very day of its fulfillment were somewhat misguided, but he wasn't far off the general timeframe. Most scholars today believe that Jesus was crucified in AD 30 or 33.

"Cambridge scientist Sir Colin Humphreys, along with astrophysicist Graeme Waddington of Oxford, recently calculated that Jesus died on the 3rd of April, 33 AD."

John Lennox

The angel (Gabriel) said three things would happen at the end of 69 sevens:

"After the sixty-two sevens, Messiah will be put to death and have nothing. And the people of the ruler (prince) who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. Wars and desolations will continue to the end."

As we've seen, Jesus was crucified sometime around 30 to 33 AD. Less than forty years later, the Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. Wars and desolation followed until Jerusalem was wiped off the map.

After Titus destroyed the Temple in 70 AD, the remnant of the Jews in the land continued to rebel against Rome. The most egregious rebellion came in around 135 under a man called Bar Kokhba (Son of the Star) who was being hailed by the Jews as Messiah. The emperor, Hadrian, came and crushed the revolt, leveling Jerusalem and building a new city he called Aleia Capitolina, Palestina. Jerusalem was non-existent until Constantine restored it in 325 AD. Since Pompey conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC, it had been under foreign (non-Jewish) control until 1967. Since 70 AD, the Temple has not existed. Today, Jerusalem is a burden to all nations.

II. The 70th Seven

- A. The future ruler, or prince, has some connection to Rome, which would be the fourth kingdom of Daniel 7.
- B. Confirms a covenant and breaks it at the middle of the 70th seven-year period.
- C. Ends sacrifices, sets up abomination of desolation in the Temple.
- D. Nothing in history to match what is written here. This is future.

Jesus warned, "When you see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, flee."

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians about:

“... The man of lawlessness who is doomed to destruction being revealed, who will oppose and exalt himself above everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God ... Whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his lips and destroy by the splendor of his coming.”

2 Thessalonians 2

III. The Final Vision of Daniel, the Climax of the 70th Seven

“He (the ruler) will succeed until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.”

Daniel 11:40–12

God is faithful to his word. We can trust that history is not just a random series of events with no particular aim. History is truly “His Story,” and it is moving in the direction of God’s kingdom being fully revealed as the Son of Man comes with the clouds of heaven and is given authority, glory, and sovereign power; all nations and people of every language worshiping him.

Close: Remember, to a certain degree, that kingdom has already come. We live in the already, but not yet, of the kingdom. Until the kingdom fully comes, let us do all we can to see present manifestations of the kingdom spread as far and wide as possible. Beginning in our own hearts, homes, church, community, and world.

Communion reorients us in the life of the kingdom as we worship our King.