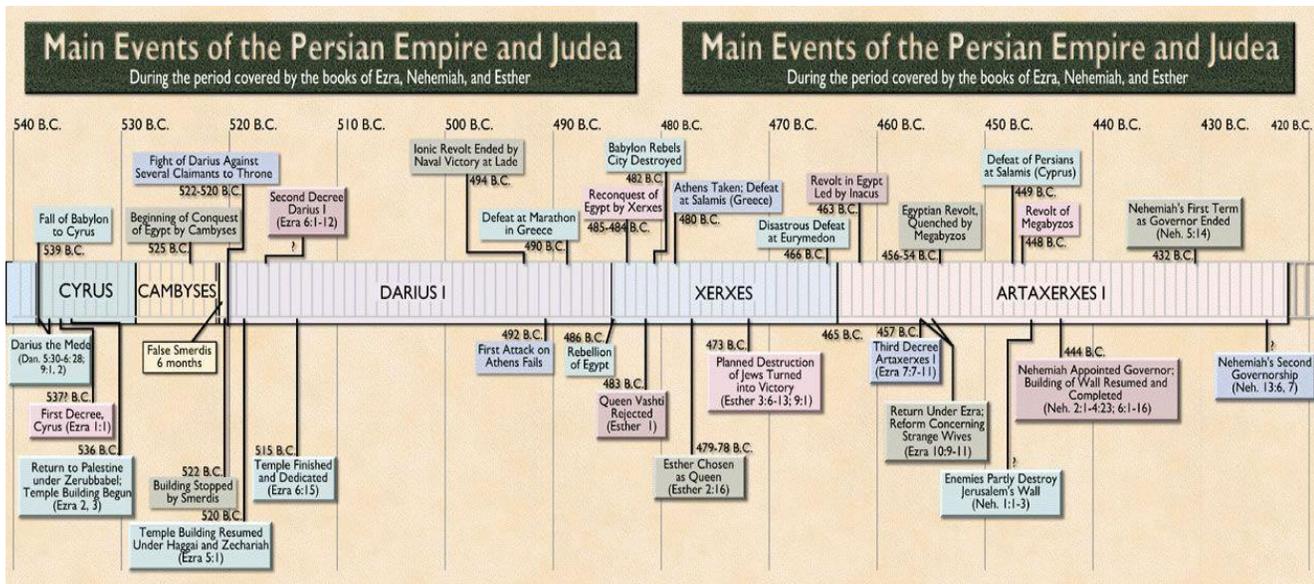


## Daniel 9

**Read Daniel 9:1:** Now we go to a two-year period when Darius the Mede was a co-regent with Cyrus of Persia. Darius the Mede reigned from 538-536 B.C. Cyrus the Great was king from 539 BC – 529 BC. Cyrus is the one who overthrew Babylon. The Jewish captivity lasted from 605 BC until 536 BC; until Cyrus broke Babylon and he allowed them to leave. Darius the Mede announced that the Jews could rebuild their temple in his second year, 536 B.C. It is easy to confuse this Darius the Mede with Darius the Great (he came later).

This book of prophecy jumps back and forth in time. Prophecy keeps the critical sequences; where they make the most sense. It is helpful to remember that when we read John and Revelation. Things in heaven do not happen at the same time as they happen visibly on earth. Daniel was seeing what would happen without a context to apply it. Eventually that context would come. To lay it out sequentially, as it occurred to Daniel, would be confusing. Daniel was seeing things that would become public conversation in 20 years, or even in hundreds of years. It is like Daniel is seeing everybody's hand at the poker table before the dealer throws the cards down. In 536 BC Darius authorized the Jews to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. This is not to be confused with the announcement to rebuild Jerusalem and its walls. In 458 B.C. by Artaxerxes.



**Read Daniel 9:2-20:** Daniel was studying Jeremiah; and he calculated that their captivity was almost over. He may have also seen in Isaiah that God called up a rescuing ruler, King Cyrus by name long before he was born.

*For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you and cause you to return to this place. (Jeremiah 29:10)*

*Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid." ' (Isaiah 44:28)*

It appears that Daniel read Jeremiah 29 about 69 years after captivity started. His people were almost already free to go home. God used Daniels faith combined with known prophecy together. The temple rebuilding project started, but it would have stoppages...and was still half-built. The command to rebuild the walls and the city happened in 458 BC under King Artaxerxes, which was still 70 years in the future. Daniel wants to see it come together. He does not focus on any unfairness of his captors. He focuses on how deserving his people were to be dealt with severely. He sees God's mercy amidst the circumstances. As maturing believers, we have to see the big picture to have our joy restored. The issue is not our unfair boss or relationship problems so much. These things are forces that are allowed to push us a certain direction. Daniel's people needed special treatment to get fixed. They were in lust with the idols and the Babylonian strength. Those false hopes had to get smashed. The Jews had run away from the creator of peace and love. That is why idolatry is often compared to adultery.

Moses had predicted this captivity 2,000 years before they even re-entered the land of Canaan. Daniel was praying to clean his people and restore Israel; knowing full well that this mess had been seen by God a long time ago.

*Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. "When you beget children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land, and act corruptly and make a carved image in the form of anything, and do evil in the sight of the LORD your God to provoke Him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that you will soon utterly perish from the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess; you will not prolong your days in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. And there you will serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. (Deuteronomy 4:23-29)*

**Read Daniel 9: 21-26:** Now Daniel was going to get the big picture of the earth clock. He is given a hard time frame; with a flexible time coupler towards the later part of it. In other words, a mysterious extension of time was put into his calendar to account for the church age. That period of the Gentiles/Church age would not impact the first part or the last part of the vision. That is why the church has been a mystery to the Jews. Nobody in the Old Testament saw it. They only saw the millennium, after it. He is done talking about the return of Babylonian captivity. Now he is given the vision that will last until Jesus returns.

70 *weeks* is the prophetic timeframe for this prophecy. The *weeks* are not really 7-day weeks; they are just *units of 7*. In other words, 490 years are captured in this prophecy. At the end of these 490 years six things will happen:

- Finish the transgressions, Man's era of living in sin will come to a conclusion
- End of sins. We will return to something better than the Garden of Eden.
- Atonement for iniquity (payment was made on the cross for all of our sins)
- Bring in everlasting righteousness (Jesus will be the righteous king when he returns)
- Seal vision and prophecy (all prophecy will be completed)
- Anoint the most holy place (the temple will be rebuilt and cleansed)

69 weeks of years (483 years) will be the time in between the command to rebuild Jerusalem and the death of Jesus on the cross. This is 173,880 days (adjusted for calendar issues). This command by Artaxerxes began Nissan 1, 444 BC. The 69<sup>th</sup> septad of years ended as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. The date for Jesus' death to occur is Friday A.D. 33. The point is that we were told 555 years in advance, which day Jesus would arrive in Jerusalem for public inspection (Passover lamb inspected) as the perfect sacrifice.

Then we are told that Jesus (the lamb slain before the foundation of the world) would be killed, and the temple (his body) would be destroyed. It says that the people of the prince would destroy the physical structural temple. That is a reference to Rome tearing down the temple in 70 AD. It is interesting that there is a reference to a Prince of Rome here. This alludes to the future antichrist.

**Read Daniel 9:27:** Now we hit the *pause button* between the 69 weeks and the 70<sup>th</sup> week. This chapter is not about 490 continuous years. It is about 483 continuous years, and then, later on, a final 7 year period. There is a gap between the 69<sup>th</sup> week, and the 79<sup>th</sup> week. It is the gap of Jesus leaving earth for a while. We call it the mysterious and unspecified *church age...or age of the Gentiles*. The Old Testament prophets could see the messianic millennium; but they never saw the time from Pentecost until the rapture. This is our time...a pause in God's clock to grab as many souls to join him as possible. The Bible starts with Jesus, as the creator; and it ends with Jesus as our King and Great High Priest.

The bible tells us about a coming 7 year tribulation, or *Time of Jacob's Trouble*. It will be a time when the nations will fight, and nature will shake men's confidence. God will send earthquakes, tidal waves, meteorites and utter destruction. The good news is that we are going to be spared much of this; as we are called back to heaven. During this time the antichrist will help the Jews rebuild their temple. He will make a 7-year peace treaty with Israel. They will give him way too much glory. At the midpoint of the tribulation, the antichrist actually steps into the Holy of Holies, and declares himself to be God. This second half of the tribulation is known as *The Great Tribulation*; when the mountains fall and the earth shakes enough to make it hard to walk.

The issue to focus on is not how bad things will be. Rather, how far God will go to pursue us and save us. The tribulation will be the biggest harvest of souls ever.