

1. Last week we studied an introduction of Daniel chapter nine and then I exegeted Dan 9:1. When time expired I was about to begin an analysis of verse two.

2. Before we begin let me give you an expanded translation of verse one.

Dan 9:1 It was now the first year of the reign of King Darius, about 538 B.C. Darius was the son of Ahasuerus the Mede; he became King of Babylon at the promulgation of Cyrus.

3. Now let's see what principles we can glean from verse two.

KJV

Dan 9:2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

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Dan 9:2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

1. In the first year of Darius would be 538 B.C.; this would be some 68 years after Daniel's capture in 606 B.C.

2. The time would also be about 59 years from the beginning of King Jehoiachin's captivity in 597 B.C. and about 48 years from the final destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

2Ch 36:9 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. He did evil in the eyes of the LORD.

2Ch 36:10 In the spring, King Nebuchadnezzar sent for him and brought him to Babylon, together with articles of value from the temple of the LORD, and he made Jehoiachin's uncle, Zedekiah, king over Judah and Jerusalem.

3. The fact that 68 years of the predicted 70 year captivity had expired would explain Daniel's interest in the 606 B.C. desolation of Jerusalem (Dan 9:2).

Dan 9:2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

4. Daniel does not confuse Darius with Cyrus. Darius was made king not over the Medo Persian Empire but only over Babylonia.

5. The number of the years in verse two is a reference to that found in Jer 25:11 and 12, which we earlier noted says, "when seventy years are accomplished ... I will punish the king of Babylon."

Jer 25:11 This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

Jer 25:12 "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever.

6. The king, Nabonidus, was in the process of being punished; so Daniel knew it was time for the desolations of Jerusalem also to end. He obviously could also compute that seventy years from B.C. 606 or 597 and/or 586 would make for an imminent return.

6.1 Daniel accordingly was encouraged to pray for the restoration of Jerusalem and the regathering of the people of Israel.

6.2 Daniel, although too old and perhaps too infirm to return to Jerusalem himself, lived long enough to see the first expedition of pilgrims return. Daniel at this point may have been as old as 87.

6.3 This occurred in "the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, (Ezra 1:1), and Daniel lived at least until "the third year of Cyrus king of Persia" (Dan 10:1) and probably some years longer.

7. The exact time of the imminent return Daniel could not know; we have 20/20 hindsight and yet there is still reasonable disagreement as to when the 70 years began and thus when it ended. I will explain:

7.1 In studying Daniel 9:2, with its reference to "the desolations of Jerusalem, Sir Robert Anderson distinguishes the duration of the captivity from the duration of the desolations of Jerusalem.

Anderson states, "The failure to distinguish between the several judgments of the Servitude the Captivity and the Desolations, is a fruitful source of error in the study of Daniel and the historical books of Scripture."

7.2 Anderson goes on to explain that Israel's servitude and captivity began much earlier than the destruction of the temple.

7.2.1 Although Anderson's dates are not according to current archeological findings (606 B.C. instead of 605 for the captivity, 589 B.C. instead of 586 for the desolation of the temple, and his date for the decree of Cyrus 536 B.C. instead of 538), in general, his approach to the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy is worthy of consideration.

7.3 As previously asserted I believe the captivity began in the fall of 606 B.C. at which time a few such as Daniel and his companions and other of the royal children, were carried off to Babylon as hostages.

7.4 According to Donald J. Wiseman, "the exact date of the first major deportation was March 16, 597 B.C., after the fall of Jerusalem following a brief revolt against Babylonian rule. The major deportation not taking place until about seven years later."

7.5 He goes on to say "About 60,000 were carried away at the time Jerusalem itself was finally destroyed in 586 B.C. and this, according to Anderson, began the desolations of Jerusalem, the specific prophecy of Jer 25:11, is also mentioned in 2Ch 36:21 and in Dan 9:2.

2Ch 36:21 The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah.

8. As you can see there have been many problematic assertions as to the beginning and ending of the seventy years.

9. To repeat I believe there is sufficient historical/archaeological and scriptural data to support the return as occurring in B.C. 536 - a period of seventy years from the first deportation taking in 606.

Before we begin our study of Daniel's prayer, I want to give you an expanded translation of Dan 9:2:

Expanded Translation

Dan 9:2 In the first year of Darius' reign (which would be 538 B.C.) I, was pleased to read from the Scroll of Jeremiah where it clearly taught that our exile into Babylonia would last for only seventy years and with the desolation of Jerusalem occurring in stages beginning in 606 B.C., the time of our return was drawing near. It was equally clear to me that the King of Babylon had just been punished and since Jeremiah had said our return would not occur until after that punishment, I felt it appropriate to beseech the Lord to do what He promised and not to delay.

Now let's look at Daniel's preamble: Dan 9:3-6:

KJV

Dan 9:3 So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.

Dan 9:4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands,

Dan 9:5 we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws.

Dan 9:6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

NIV

Dan 9:3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

Dan 9:4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

Dan 9:5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

Dan 9:6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

Principles:

How better to introduce our of Daniel than reviewing our Doctrine of Prayer:

1. Prayer is direct one-way communication with God.

1Pe 1:8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy,

2. An unbeliever can pray only one prayer.

Luk 18:13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

3. The concept of the believer's intercessory prayer can best be understood in the sense of artillery being fired to soften up the enemy for a coming advance.

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