

- I. Introduction
 - A. Open your Bibles to Daniel 9:20. Using New American Standard Bible today. It will be up on the screens.
 - B. Have you ever asked for something and received WAY more than you ever expected? Our heavenly Father is the kind of giver that never stops at good enough.
 - C. Last week: The hope and help we have in Jesus
 - D. Two weeks ago:
 1. Tim Keller: "The gospel is this: We are more sinful and flawed in ourselves than we ever dared believe, *yet at the very same time we are more loved and accepted in Jesus Christ than we ever dared hope.*"
 2. Daniel's prayer: My sin is mine, my sin is great, God's mercy is greater.
 - E. This week, we pick up after Daniel has prayed and God is going to give an answer.
 1. Daniel prayed for a forgiveness that would end Israel's exile in Babylon and restore them to their holy city, Jerusalem.
 2. And in His typical fashion, God's answer is FAR more grand and generous than Daniel's request: "Daniel, I do forgive. But this request is WAY too small."

LET'S PRAY FOR OUR FATHER TO SPEAK TO US

Daniel 9:20-23

20 Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, 21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, [angel! The same angel that 500+ years later will announce to Mary that she will have a son named Jesus!] whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.

** Daniel emphasizes that God's answers to his pleas for mercy was with urgency. When people humble themselves and repent, the Father's rushes to the scene

22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding.

23 "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

** Gabriel: I've come quickly and with urgency, because you are "highly esteemed."

Hebrew: "You are a loved treasure." This message comes from Father's heart. He also commands Daniel to pay close attention and use his intellect to understand. Understanding this passage is both a heart and mind endeavor

Daniel 9:24

24 "Seventy weeks [we'll get to what that means in a minute] have been decreed for your people and your holy city, [1] to finish the transgression, [2] to make an end of sin, [3] to make atonement for iniquity, [4] to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5)to seal up vision and prophecy and (6)to anoint the most holy place.

II. Daniel's Prayer, the Father's Answer

A. Here's the Father's answer to Daniel's prayer for forgiveness:

1. Daniel's request: Israelites inhabit Jerusalem again.
2. The Father says, yes AND so much more.
3. Then He lists six things He's going to accomplish,
4. These six accomplishments are listed in a way (Hebrew chiasmic structure) that highlights the two that land in the very middle as the apex of the accomplishment.
5. The Father's big picture promise? I'm going to:
 - a. Atone (pay the penalty for!) sin
 - b. Bring everlasting righteousness

B. Daniel's response must have been

1. "But God, I thought WE'RE supposed to pay for sin by sacrificing animals!"
God: I have a better sacrifice!
2. "But God, I thought those sacrifices only made us righteous until the next time we sinned!"
God: The sacrifice I have planned is going to make you righteous and able to be with Me FOREVER!

C. What about the 70 weeks? What does that mean?

1. In Hebrew, the words literally mean 70 "sevens."
2. This means that in a period of 70 blocks of seven years (or 490 years), God is prophesying that He is going to do something momentous.
3. We'll read the following verses, but for the sake of clarity, I've done the math for us and have switched the language of "weeks" into years. That ok?

Daniel 9:25-27

25 "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be [49 years] and [434 years]; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.

26 "Then after the [434 years] the Messiah will be cut off and have nothing, and the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood; even to the end there will be war; desolations are determined.

27 "And He will make a firm covenant with the many for [seven years], but in the middle of [that seven years] he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of

abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate.”

III. The 70 "Weeks" Prophecy:

A. There will be a decree issued to rebuild Jerusalem. Check! This actually happened in 458 BC when Artaxerxes gave the prophet Ezra permission to re-inhabit and rebuild Jerusalem.

B. 49 years after this decree, the rebuilding will be completed. Check! Historically, Jerusalem was finished being rebuilt in around 409 BC

C. Then, 434 years after that, MESSIAH (“anointed one”) will come. Check! It was in 25 AD (Jesus being about 30 at this time because He was actually born around 4 or 5 B.C.) that Jesus announced in the synagogue that He was the Messiah, was baptized and commissioned by God to His earthly ministry.

* (The specific detail of this prophecy is so historically accurate that it’s caused modern skeptics to say, “Then Daniel must have been written or added to by Christians after the time of Jesus!”)

* But this prophecy doesn’t stop at the coming of the Messiah

D. The Messiah will be “cut off”

1. This is a Hebrew idiom, which means that He will be killed/murdered.

2. So if we rewind, God’s message to Daniel is that He’s going to answer his prayer for forgiveness with something greater than Daniel asked.

a. I’m going to ATONE for SIN.

b. I’m going to bring EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS.

3. And here's how I'm going to accomplish this:

a. I'm going to rebuild Jerusalem.

b. So that the Messiah (My Son, Jesus!) can be sacrificed there for the sins of the world.

E. And so in around 30 AD, Jesus Christ, God's Son was crucified on a hill right outside the walls of Jerusalem.

1. My imagination ran a little wild with this as I studied:

a. Imagined the emotion that must have raced through Daniel's heart if he got to watch the crucifixion from Heaven. Maybe standing next to Gabriel.

b. "Daniel, this is what I was talking about!"

2. But salvation isn't all that our Father offers. Some of you are good at math and noticed: "You've only talked about 69 weeks of the prophecy! What about week 70?" I'm glad you asked.

F. The 70th "Week"

1. A powerful enemy will force a treaty on Israel.

2. He will outlaw worship.

3. He will destroy and defile God's temple.

4. Some believe this happened when Titus Vespasian besieged and retook Jerusalem in 70 AD.

5. Some believe this 70th week is yet to come near the time of Jesus' return to Earth at the end of history.

6. Maybe it's both! Possibly a recurring tactic of our enemy, the devil, throughout history to dishearten the people of God.
7. But let's not forget the very last words of this prophecy.

Daniel 9:27b

"... a complete destruction, one that is decreed, is poured out on the one who makes desolate."

- our enemy DOES NOT WIN!!

- 8. HE WILL BE DESTROYED.** Our Father saves us, He protects us and He will defeat every enemy.

IV. Conclusion

- A. So many of us live our lives hoping that our good will outweigh our bad.
 1. We pray that what we've done will be good enough.
 2. And if you're honest, *you're just so sick and tired of being sick and tired.*
- B. And our Father is saying, "Your hope is too small! Child, you can't pay for your own sin. You can't earn everlasting righteousness for yourself."
 1. You're hoping for "good enough" and you'll never reach it.
 2. I want to give you so much MORE.
- C. I want to eradicate your sin debt! I want to GIVE you right standing before me!
 1. I rebuilt Jerusalem and sacrificed my Son there so that I could do this FOR YOU.
 2. JESUS IS YOUR CURE!
- D. All you have to do is surrender to Jesus, trusting that His sacrifice on the cross is more than enough to forgive and save you from your sin-guilt.
- E. We're going to sing a song of redemption and hope in Jesus.
 1. If God spoke to your heart this morning and you've realized that you need Jesus, take this time to just talk to Him, surrender to Him. There are no magic words, just pour out your heart to Him.
 2. And then after this song, when we dismiss, if you've surrendered to Jesus today to save you ...
 - a. Grab that "I've surrendered to Jesus" card in front of you.
 - b. Come forward. We'd love to celebrate with you, pray for you, and give you some next steps.

PRAY