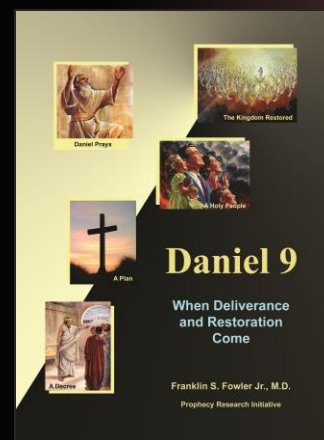


A special commentary that goes along with this Daniel 9 series is available and can be obtained by:

Calling: 760-248-1111

Writing: Prophecy Research Initiative
P.O. Box 829
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356 USA

E-mailing: prophecy-research@earthlink.net



We now continue our studies on:

The Story of Daniel 9



**Prophecy Research Initiative
presents**

The Story of Daniel 9


Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.

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These conclusions are always tentative since new light constantly unfolds.

Lesson Three – Daniel 9

What Happens to Start that 490-Year “Clock?”





**This is how the
narrative begins:**

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” (Dan. 9:25)



This is the “key” text that **begins** the mareh vision. Since there is no beginning or ending in the 2300 evenings and mornings of Daniel 8:14 – which was the first part of this mareh – what we discover here will apply there.

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem” (Dan. 9:25a)

This phrase announces what will herald the onset of the 490 and the 2300 years.

We must spend special time on this because it is an area of confusion and careless attention to the context and Hebrew words.

And – we will see that this prophecy also has a distinct message for us today!

When Gabriel came to Daniel, he presented a series of fascinating imperatives:

- *“Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.”* (vs 22)
- *“I am come to shew thee ... therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision”* (vs 23)
- Now: *“Know therefore and understand”* (vs 25)



Daniel had fainted because of misunderstanding Daniel 8:14. Certainly, Gabriel's mission was to make things clear. But – something else deeper is also happening!

The “timing puzzle” that Gabriel is now unfolding is important to God’s people of all ages. Therefore:

We are invited to understand and know what it means!

If the disciples had “known” – much of their competitive dissent would have been avoided!

Why? The *mareh* makes clear that time will go on from Daniel’s day for another two plus millennia!

“from the going forth of the commandment” (vs 25)



- “from” tells us that this will be the “beginning” – a specific point in time.
- “going forth” is *mowtsa* (ח), meaning issuing of.
- “commandment” is *dabar*, which means word or decree.

Together – *from the point in time that a decree is issued begins the period that is to follow!*

This may seem like a “self-evident” understanding. **But it isn't!**

Scholars apply this to the time the decree is used, when people traveled to make it happen, when people arrived in Jerusalem, and some even when the Jewish people began to worship in Jerusalem.

It has been a text with more opinions than true interpretative understanding!

The Bible says: When the decree is issued!!!

“to restore and to build Jerusalem ... the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” (vs 25)

In Nebuchadnezzar's third and final attack on Jerusalem, the city and temple were destroyed (586 B.C.).



Jeremiah noted that because of persistent rebellion by God's people, *“this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment ... seventy years.”* (Jer. 25:11)



Daniel knew that for this 70 years of captivity to end, the rest of Isaiah's prophecy regarding the “city” and the “temple” being rebuilt would somehow have to be accomplished. BUT:

Gabriel is talking to Daniel in 539 B.C. Cyrus won't become king until 536 B.C. He was specifically named long before in Isaiah as the king who would issue the “restoration” decrees to rebuild not only the temple but Jerusalem! (Ezra 1:2-4)



In fact, Cyrus did just that in 536 B.C., also ordering God's people to return to their homeland and start building. Isaiah had said he would also build the "city!"

BUT – was that what Gabriel meant here in Daniel 9?



From Ezra 1–7 and Haggai 1:4 and 14 we can see that the rebuilding of the city was moving forward at the same time the temple was being restored.

Thus, the Isaiah 44:28 and 45:13 prophecy regarding Cyrus was being fulfilled.

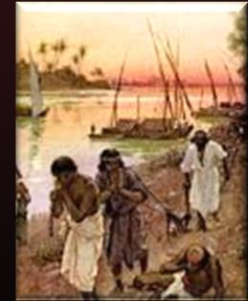
IF this had been the decree, then Messiah the Prince would have arrived decades before the actual time He did historically!

We will decipher which decree later.

But first, there is something important to think about.

If the “city” was to be built by Cyrus and the “decree” had to have been later to fulfill Messianic prophecy – Daniel 9:25 must have a meaning other than the physical assets!!!

The Jewish people were in Babylon because of idolatry and the breaking of the Sabbatical year, called the *Shemita*. (II Chr. 36:20-21)



The 70 years of “desolation” and “captivity” related to spiritual apostasy. They mocked God and His messengers.

The “city” and the “temple” – the physical assets – were already taken care of by God’s directive through Cyrus (and later with supplemental decrees of Darius I and Artaxerxes I).

The “decree” to:

Restore and rebuild Jerusalem
must refer to a
“spiritual restoration!”

Shortly, we will see exactly that.

First, let’s study who the king
might be to bring this all about.

Looking at the kings in prophecy helps us to know which one to focus our attention on!

Daniel is being given this vision in 539 B.C., during the first regnal year of Darius the Mede.



The prophecy is forward-looking to a restoration decree. Since Cyrus is the anticipated monarch to rebuild the physical assets, one must assume that it is possible that another Medo-Persian ruler will fulfill this decree. And – that is true.

God is so good. He has given us “affirming” clues to keep us thinking in the right direction. These come in Daniel 11:2. First this thought:

Though the first verse suggests that this message came to Daniel in the first year of Darius the Mede, most scholars agree that this appears to be a note from Gabriel regarding the special attention he has been giving Daniel since the time of Darius.

The Dead Sea Scrolls put it this way: “*And as for me [Gabriel], in the first year of Darius the Mede, I [Gabriel] took my stand to confirm and strengthen him [Daniel].*” (Dan. 11:1)

Evidence suggests that Daniel 11 is given in the 1st year of Cyrus – continuing the divine missives started in Daniel 10.

This is now what Gabriel says in 11:2:

“And now will I show thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.”

Cyrus is king (first year). Daniel is told there will be “three kings,” then a “fourth.”



That fourth will stir hatred against Greece (not an empire yet but a centralized powerful Athenian people, where military might existed).

Historically, there were 13 Persian kings until Alexander the Great of Greece, when it rose to power. Clearly, God is drawing our attention to only four of those kings.

The question: Which four? Because Cyrus is playing such a pivotal role and the Hebrew context suggests that his era is where this prophecy should begin – he is that first.

Though that assumption is right, God is careful that we affirm what He really means.

We begin by looking in the book of Ezra to find other clues. There, God lists the four Medo-Persian kings He wants us to concentrate on!

They are “restoration kings” that we are to prophetically understand. (Ezra 4:5-7)

Cyrus (560-530 B.C.)

Darius I (522-486 B.C.)

Xerxes (486-465 B.C.)

Artaxerxes I (465-424 B.C.)



As with Cyrus, who is reigning at the time of this vision/audition, Artaxerxes I stands out in this list for several reasons:

- He was active in helping God's people over key "settlement" years in Canaan.
- He was the one who brought the restoration of the theocracy truly back into Israel and permitted Ezra to institute a great revival among God's people.
- He brought an end to over 50 years of Greek (Athenian)–Persian wars by bribing Greek enemies within that government.

“from the going forth of the commandment” (vs 25)

This *decree* was actually spiritual:



It has been a puzzlement to many scholars as to why that very *decree*, noted word for word in Ezra 7, is spiritual and has nothing to do with the restoration of physical Jerusalem.

Why should it? That is exactly what God directed!
– Artaxerxes I made the only decree, among these four kings, on behalf of the exiled Jewish people, that ordered them to get back to Jerusalem and begin worshiping their true God!

"I make a decree that ...

"Whatsoever is commanded by the God of heaven, let it be diligently done for the house of the God of heaven: for why should there be wrath against the realm of the king and his sons?

"And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that is in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not."

(Ezra 7:13, 23, 25)

Sincerely, Artaxerxes I
King of Medo-Persia



Again and again, we must ask, “What does the Bible say?” Not, “What does tradition claim or the majority assume?”

If, then, this is spiritual, the prophecy of Gabriel in Daniel 9 must be symbolic! That is exactly what it is!

Everything is based on the covenant restoration of God’s people. The objectives are clear. Everlasting righteousness is to come in, all satanic influences are to cease, and the sanctuary is to be cleansed!

How then are we to understand those symbols?

“**Jerusalem**” – in prophecy represents God’s people. It can be when in apostasy (Isa. 1:21; Matt. 23:37) or when fully restored as Christ’s bride. (Rev. 19:7, 9; 21:9-10)

“**Restore**” (*shub*) is paired with the word “**build**” (*bana*). Though most commonly used in actual construction, Jeremiah introduced a spiritual meaning: “*Again I will build your land you shall be built.*” (Jer. 31:4; cf 24:6, 33:7) Also symbolized in Amos 9:11 and Psalms 127:1.

What do we do with this phrase?

“Jerusalem ... the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” (vs 25)

We’ve already dealt with the word “built.”
Let’s look at the others:

“**Street**” (*rehob*) means an “open place,” like a “city square.” At the time of Daniel, these were the places the Jewish people placed idols. (Eze. 16:24, 31)



“**Walls**” (*harus*) means a moat or something carved out. It is *an idiomatic expression* that “It cannot be changed!”
(Joel 3:14)

This is alluding to a time when God’s people will be holy and is a continuum of Daniel 8:14 – when that prophecy specifically was made!

We know, in retrospect, that that would never be fulfilled with the Jewish people. Daniel did not understand that, either, for a while.

But finally – he did (Dan. 10:1) –
and it is awesome!



Daniel 9 is really saying, *“From the decree to restore God’s people and their decision to go all the way with Him ...”*

Do you see what this really means? God is giving a “timing message,” but its fulfillment is predicated on the response of His people.

“Look, this won’t work unless you people become holy!”



Well, the *mareh* prophecy clearly notes that at the time of the end, there will be a holy people. Revelation calls them the 144,000!

Wording this verse in the elevated spiritual meaning, it says:

“From the signing of the decree to restore God’s people to their theocracy, with the objective of irrevocably removing sin and idolatry from the center of their lives, to Messiah the Prince, shall be 69 weeks.”

Now that we know that this amazing prophecy is spiritual AND can't be completed unless the people respond, we need to address the other issue as to when that decree was given!

It IS the “timing point” when everything begins!



“from the issuing of a decree” (NAS, NIV)

“from the issuing of the command” (NET)

“from the time the command is given” (NLT)

“from the time the word went out” (NRS)

Though the Hebrew and many translations show that the onset of this 483-year period starts with a “command,” many expositors loosely apply its beginnings to a year without identifying a season or specific event.

NOTE: The prophecy does NOT say:

1. It began when Ezra started his journey.
2. It began when he arrived in Jerusalem.
3. It began when he started to worship in the land of Canaan.

Daniel 9 is a prophetic record of details.

Ezra 7:7 specifically says that Artaxerxes I's *dabar* or decree was in the seventh year of his reign. That is when the prophecy begins!

He was King of Persia from 465–425 B.C., at the end of which he died.

Intriguingly: “There are no archeological remains of the reign of Artaxerxes I, with the exception of a single inscription on a building in Susa and an alabaster vase in Paris.”

(www.Jewishencyclopedia.com)





Artaxerxes I's father was Xerxes or Ahasuerus of Queen Esther's time.



He was murdered by an aide (Artabanus) on December 17, 465 B.C. That is when Artaxerxes I began to rule the Medo-Persian Empire.

Ezra and Nehemiah used the regnal (reigning) years by the “accession year” system. At that time, the regnal years began in the fall at Tishri (the onset of the secular year for many kingdoms).

From December 17, 465 B.C. to Tishri 1, 464 B.C. was the “accession year” period.

Thus his first regnal year would be: Tishri 1, 464 B.C. through Elul 29, 463 B.C.

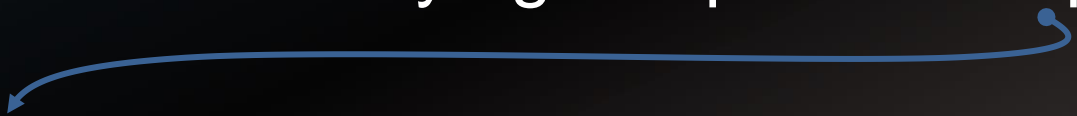


The seventh year of his reign, would be 458–457 B.C. (That would be Tishri 1 in the fall of 458 to the end of the summer of 457 B.C. at Elul 29.)

Ezra said that he left in the spring, on the “first day of the first month” (which then would be Nissan 1, 457 B.C.), with a copy of the decree in his hand. (Ezra 7:11)

Decree → Notifying People → Preparation

Preparation — of individuals, government and temple



The challenging issues:



1. There is a decree (which begins Daniel 9's time period).
2. Ezra had to get people to want to go back to Palestine (most stayed).
3. They couldn't travel during the wet winter months with families and children.
4. Then, there was extensive preparation for the trip plus provisions to take back utensils for the temple that Artaxerxes I was releasing.

Thus – from the decree, Ezra required many months of planning and preparation.

Many historical accounts place the year at 457 B.C., but this is being revisited by many historians.

The weight of evidence is growing that the actual decree was made in the fall of 458 B.C.

Since the imagery for the whole *mareh* vision is restoration of “holiness” and “righteousness,” can we show that the time might be in the fall at the Day of Atonement?

Historical data is lacking for the exact date in the fall of 458, when it was signed. But God already gave Daniel an amazing clue!

We will look at that in one moment relative to Daniel 8:14.

The 2300 Atonement years **must** begin on a Day of Atonement to have its spiritual completeness!

Stay tuned!



Tishri 1 through Elul 29 = Solar/Civil Year Calendar Gregorian, Regnal Years for Artaxerxes I

465*– 464 (Elul 29) Artaxerxes I's accession year
(6½ months)



464 – 463	1	Tishri 1 – Elul 29
463 – 462	2	Tishri 1 – Elul 29
462 – 461	3	Tishri 1 – Elul 29
461 – 460	4	Tishri 1 – Elul 29
460 – 459	5	Tishri 1 – Elul 29
459 – 458	6	Tishri 1 – Elul 29
458 – 457	7	Tishri 1 – Elul 29

Nissan 1 – spring, 457 B.C. – Ezra left Babylon
with the decree in his hand

Av 1, 457 – Ezra arrived in Jerusalem

*(December 17 – Xerxes murdered)

Many of our viewers may be uncomfortable because of what they have previously learned.

Also – many of you might be questioning what this might do to the timing of Christ's anointing and death.



Let's recapitulate the issues more deeply:

1. Most 457 B.C. adherents vacillate as to what event fulfills the prophecy (onset of Ezra's journey; time of Ezra's arrival in Canaan; when Ezra first offered sacrifices in Jerusalem) – all ignoring the Biblical prophecy that it was when the decree was signed!!! —→

2. There is another matter ignored by most A.D. 31 Cross scholars. There was NO Friday Passover, Abib 14, in A.D. 31! It was on a Wednesday that year!

That's a **BIG** problem that can't go unresolved! If 458 B.C. is used, the Messianic anointing occurs in A.D. 26 and the crucifixion occurs in A.D. 30, which had a Friday Passover.

Therefore – this gives strong credence to the 458 B.C. date for Artaxerxes I's decree.

There's more to this issue than we have just covered. This is going to get deep. Please listen very carefully.

3. Daniel 8:14 is part of this *mareh* vision. Therefore, the king's decree tells us also when the 2300 years began, just like the 490 years.

NOTE: That 8:14 prophecy has two timing codes that influence our understanding.

For those of you who have studied Daniel 8 and 12 with us, you will find that what we are about to say will be much easier to understand.

This verse is mistranslated in the KJV! The NIV is much closer to the Hebrew. We compare the two with the Hebrew to help you understand the *mareh* timing messages:

- *“And he said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”* (KJV)
- *“He said to me, ‘It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated.’”* (NIV)
- *“He said to me: Until evening morning 2300 holiness vindicated [adjudicated].”* (Hebrew)

“Until evening morning 2300 holiness vindicated [adjudicated].” (Hebrew)

- The word “days” is not there
- The word “sanctuary” is not there
- The word “cleansed” is not intimated!
- But so much is there!

“Until” – “at or after”

“2300” – a number that now needs to be defined

“evening morning” – very specific Day of
Atonement language

“holiness” – from *qodesh* without an article

“vindicated” – legal setting, case against
righteousness completed and closed!

First – We know it refers to 2300 years because the Day of Atonement alluded to was an annual event!

Second – We now know that it begins in 458 B.C., which leads up to the 1843–1844 era.

Third – Since it is given in Atonement cycles, it must begin either ON a Day of Atonement or the day after (which would start a new cycle).

Fourth – It is a prophecy that God's character will be vindicated when holiness is adjudicated!

Fifth – The word for “vindicated” OR “adjudicated” is *nisdaq* – a passive verb whose consequence comes from something “outside” that makes it occur (only place in O.T. *nisdaq* is used).

That is THE outcome of God’s people giving up sin! When there is a “holy group” of people, it neutralizes Satan’s accusations that God’s law cannot be kept. The “case is closed” against God.

This all means that we have a wonderful clue as to how all these prophecies begin!

Since the 2300 years begin at the time of the Atonement and since both this period and the 490 years have the same beginning, being *mareh* visions, the Decree of Artaxerxes I must have been signed on that day or the day after, in the fall season!

If they begin at Atonement, then these periods must end at an Atonement.

Since the 490 years represent 70 Sabbatical cycles and 10 Jubilee cycles, they must end just before a 10th Jubilee!

Extensive research has been done by scholars relative to Hebrew idioms and ancient expressions.



The special work of the late Huberto Cassuto has contributed much to this, especially in his never-completed book, *From Adam to Noah: A Commentary of Genesis I-VI*.

He noted that when the words *morning and evening* were used in that order, they refer to the morning and evening sacrifices.

BUT →

When the sequence is “*evening and morning*,” it refers to a sacred time or a very special set-aside time.

Two premier examples are in the O.T.:

1. The days of creation (earth’s beginning) are expressed this way.

2. The Day of Atonement is on Tishri 10. But in Leviticus 16 and 23, where the details of keeping that feast are given, it begins the evening before. Thus, it is a “sacred evening morning, set-aside time.”



What has happened to the investigative judgment and the cleansing of the sanctuary doctrines?

Those two concepts/doctrines have been part of the meaning of Daniel 8:14 by many Christians for over a century. But – we want to be precise in our use of the Bible:

1. They are not in Daniel 8:14 – **but** – they are found elsewhere in Daniel.
2. The sanctuary cleansing message has already been studied in 9:24.

Now we can move forward in our study of Daniel 9:

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment ... unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks.” (Dan. 9:25)

We now know when this begins.
Knowing that this represents “weeks of years” – this 69-week period would be 7 years x 69 weeks, equaling 483 years.

Jesus' baptism or anointing would then occur:

458 B.C. minus 483 years
(accounting for 0 BC/AD) =
26 A.D. in the fall of the year.



Once again, many of our viewers have been used to the 27 A.D. year. Because of this new understanding, it resolves the issue of when the Passover crucifixion occurred.

The last phrase in Daniel 9:25 adds additional clues to help us orient when these things were to apply.

“the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.” (vs 25)

Though appearing very negative, this is actually a promise. During a time of trouble, the restoration of God’s people will occur!

Did Nehemiah have such experiences?



“His arrival in Jerusalem, however, with a military escort, showing that he had come on some important mission, excited the jealousy of the heathen tribes living near the city, who had so often indulged their enmity against the Jews by heaping upon them injury and insult. Foremost in this evil work were certain chiefs of these tribes.... From the first these leaders watched with critical eyes the movements of Nehemiah and endeavored by every means in their power to thwart his plans and hinder his work.” (PK 635)

“As the enemies of Israel saw how unavailing were their efforts, they were filled with rage. Hitherto they had not dared employ violent measures.... But now in their anger they themselves became guilty of the crime of which they had accused Nehemiah. Assembling for counsel, they ‘conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem.’” (PK 643)

“At last they devised a plan by which they hoped to draw Nehemiah from his station, and while they had him in their power, to kill or imprison him.” (PK 653) Their plan didn’t work. The restoration did move forward during these troublous times.



One of the great questions that we will pose more and more in this Daniel 9 series: “Is this prophecy a *metaphor* for what will transpire with God’s people – right at the end of time?”

It will become more apparent that this 490-year period is not totally completed. The Jewish people rebelled, making its great purpose delayed.

Thus, the elements of “how” it will be fulfilled in “troublous times” will be replicated in the “little time of trouble” in our time!



“As the time of the end draws near, Satan's temptations will be brought to bear with greater power upon God's workers. He will employ human agents to mock and revile those who ‘build the wall.’ But should the builders come down to meet the attacks of their foes, this would but retard the work. They should endeavor to defeat the purposes of their adversaries, but they should not allow anything to call them from their work. Truth is stronger than error, and right will prevail over wrong.” (PK 659)

“In Nehemiah’s firm devotion to the work of God, and his equally firm reliance on God, lay the reason of the failure of his enemies to draw him into their power. [Incredible lesson for us!]

“God has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. He provides opportunities and opens channels of working. If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and are ready to co-operate with Him, they will see mighty results.” (PK 660)

Soon God will have a people who represent His holiness.

That will emerge at a time of great trouble.

The very core of man's loyalty to God will be threatened and questioned.

The Bible says that there will be a people called the 144,000, who respond fully to that call.



“Will you be in that group?”

“Will you help to fulfill the
Daniel 9 commission?”

The End

Next Lesson:

**When Jesus Becomes
Messiah the Prince!**



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Franklin S. Fowler Jr., M.D.
Director

P.O. Box 829
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356 USA
1-760-248-1111
www.endtimeissues.com
prophecy-research@earthlink.net
(8–5 M–Th, 8–12 Fri)