

**(Daniel 9:20-23)** - *Daniel 9:1-19* records Daniel's prayer of faith where he cried out to God for mercy and forgiveness according to God's Word and righteousness. He prayed for God to fulfill His promise to Abraham and for God to bring the people back to Jerusalem and reestablish them as a nation. Daniel acknowledged his and the people's sins, and he acknowledges God's justice in punishing them. There is no place in the Bible that mentions any specific sin of Daniel, but Daniel himself knew the truth of the sinfulness of all people by nature (*Rom. 3:10-20,23*). Daniel had in mind God's mercy and grace that comes to His people through the promised Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ (*9:16-19*). Like Isaiah and Jeremiah, Daniel knew that his only hope of salvation and righteousness was the sovereign grace of God in the righteousness of God's promised Messiah (*Isa. 45:20-25; Jer. 23:5-6*). It was in this context that God sent a messenger, "*the man Gabriel*." Gabriel, whose name means "God is great" was a messenger sent with an answer to Daniel's prayer. Gabriel was an angel who appeared in the form of a man. His message was a prophecy of God's whole purpose in forming and preserving the nation of Israel - to bring Messiah into the world to fulfill all righteousness on behalf of God's chosen people, true spiritual Israel. In this prophecy, God reaffirms to Daniel that all salvation, all mercy, all forgiveness is founded upon and found in the Lord Jesus Christ - the glory of His Person and the power of His finished work as the Surety, Substitute, Redeemer, Life-Giver, and Preserver of God's elect.

**(Daniel 9:24)** - Here begins Daniel's prophecy of the Messiah. "*Seventy weeks are determined upon Thy people and upon Thy holy city*" - Before the foundation of the world, the Lord God had appointed a specific time for Christ to come into the world and accomplish His work of saving His people from their sins (*Gal. 4:4-6*). The changes and events that take place in this world had no bearing upon that time. God has determined all times for His glory and the good of His people. "*Seventy weeks*" is literally "seventy weeks of years," which would equal seventy times seven (70 x 7), which is 490 years. Remember that the nation of Judah was to be held captive in Babylon for seventy years. From the time that God gave the commandment to build and restore Jerusalem to the time of the Messiah's arrival would be 490 years. All of this revolves around the number seven which represents God's complete work of judgment. This shows the justice of God against all sin as the punishment fits the crime. Under the Old Covenant law, Israel was to allow the land to rest every seventh year (yearly Sabbath). But they disobeyed God's commandment for 490 years. Therefore, they owed the land seventy years' worth of Sabbaths (*2 Chron. 36:21*).

"*Upon Thy people, and upon Thy holy city*" - This is descriptive of God's elect, His chosen people whom He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. They are made up of all people (Jew and Gentile) whom God brings to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and repentance of dead works and idolatry. They are Christ's sheep, His church, and He brings them into the heavenly and spiritual Jerusalem, which is the eternal kingdom of God.

Recall that it was Gabriel who announced to Joseph that Mary was with child by the Holy Spirit and that the child's name would be "*JESUS*" meaning He would save His people from their sins (*Matt. 1:21*). Here in this prophecy, Gabriel described the complete work of the Messiah to save us from our sins in all of sin's power:

"*TO FINISH THE TRANSGRESSION*" - "*Finish*" means "to restrain in prison, shut up, confine." "*Transgression*" means "rebellion, law-breaking." God's Word tell us that "*sin is the transgression of the law*," and that Christ "*was manifested to take away our sins*" (*1 John 3:4-5*). Having all of the transgressions of His people imputed to Him, Christ went to the cross and died to arrest, bind, and put our transgressions away completely. They are confined so

well that they cannot be charged to us - for “in HIM is no sin” (1 John 3:5; cf. Rom. 4:6-8; 8:33-34). Taken literally, this also means establishing an entirely new order in the new earth with an end to man’s rebellion against God.

“AND TO MAKE AN END OF SINS” - Christ came to “seal up” sins so that they cannot, as stated, be charged to us. God told Cain that without the blood of Christ to satisfy God’s justice and bring about reconciliation, sin would put an end to him (*Gen. 4:7*). Sin, when it is finished brings death (*James 1:15*). But, again, having the sins of His sheep imputed to Him, by His death on the cross, Christ put an end to their sins. Christ suffered the full punishment due unto all the sins of His sheep imputed to Him.

“AND TO MAKE RECONCILIATION FOR INIQUITY” - This means to “cover or make atonement for” our iniquity. In the Old Testament this points us to the blood of atonement in the death of sacrifices which were pictures of the blood of reconciliation accomplished for us by Christ (*Rom. 5:8-11; Heb. 2:17*). The truth taught in the Old Covenant sacrifices was not that sins and iniquity could be covered over or hidden from view, nor did it teach that we could act as if our sins and iniquities did not exist. The truth taught was that the iniquities of God’s elect must be reconciled to God’s justice and holiness. This work was clearly accomplished at the cross. God is both a just God and a Savior.

“AND TO BRING IN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS” - The merit of Christ’s work of redemption for His people is His “*everlasting righteousness*,” the righteousness of God revealed in the Gospel (*Rom. 1:16-17*), which is Christ’s righteousness imputed to His people and which they receive by God-given faith in Him (*Rom. 4:6-8; 2 Cor. 5:19-21*). This is the perfection of the law of God and the complete satisfaction to that law that can only be found in Christ (*Jer. 23:5-6; Rom. 5:18-21; 10:4; Php. 3:7-9*). This is Christ’s righteousness by which the saints in all ages from the beginning of the world are justified and which endures, and will endure, throughout all ages, to the justification of all that believe. It is described by the metaphor of “a robe of righteousness” that will never wear out and can never be contaminated. Its virtue to justify will ever continue, being perfect; it will answer for the justified ones in a time to come. It is the source and power of all spiritual and eternal life.

“AND TO SEAL UP THE VISION AND PROPHECY” - “*Seal up*” means “to fulfill, bring an end to.” Christ fulfilled all Old Testament types and prophecies (*Luke 9:30-31; 24:25-27, 44-49; John 5:39-47*). All prophecy is sealed up in Christ and by Him. He is the sum and substance of it. The visions and prophecies of the Old Testament relate to Him and have their accomplishment in Him. Some relate to His person and office; others to His coming into the world, the time, place, and manner of it; others to the great work of redemption and salvation He came to accomplish. Others pertain to His miracles, sufferings, and death, and the glory that should follow, but all were fulfilled in and by Him.

“AND TO ANOINT THE MOST HOLY” or “*the most holy place*,” which is Holy of Holies where only the high priest of Israel could enter on the day of atonement with the blood of a lamb. This way was barred to anyone else. Christ fulfilled this earthly type and literally made the way into the holiest of all, the very presence of God, open to all who believe in Him and plead His blood as their only right to enter into God’s holy presence (*Matt. 27:50-53; Heb. 10:19-22*).