

Dr. Wendy Widder, Daniel, Session 14, Daniel 9:20-27 – God’s Promise of Restoration, Part 2 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Widder, Daniel, Session 14, Daniel 9:20-27 – God’s Promise of Restoration, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on Daniel 9:20-27 explores the revelation of restoration given to Daniel in response to his prayer, specifically focusing on the prophecy of the "70 weeks." **This prophecy reinterprets Jeremiah's 70 years**, expanding it to 70 "weeks of years," or 490 years, which symbolizes a hidden meaning related to the end of transgression and the anointing of a most holy place. **The lecture then examines the various interpretations of these weeks**, discussing whether they should be taken literally or symbolically and exploring the implications for understanding historical events and figures, including potential connections to Cyrus, Zerubbabel, Joshua, and even Jesus. **Dr. Widder notes the complex issues in Daniel 9:24-27**, including how the weeks are divided, the identity of the "anointed one," and how the prophecy relates to themes in Leviticus. **Ultimately, the lecture argues that the 70 weeks prophecy** symbolizes God's control over history and hints at the ultimate fulfillment of his promises in Jesus.

**2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Widder, Daniel, Session 14 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Daniel).**



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3. Briefing Document: Widder, Daniel, Session 14, Daniel 9:20-27 – God’s Promise of Restoration, Part 2

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on Daniel 9:20-27:

Briefing Document: Daniel 9:20-27 - Revelation of Restoration

Overview:

This session focuses on Daniel 9:20-27, the section of Daniel's prayer where he receives a response from the angel Gabriel. This response, often called the "70 Weeks Prophecy," is a complex and much-debated passage, but Dr. Widder emphasizes understanding the big picture of restoration in the context of Daniel's prayer for Jerusalem and the fulfillment of God’s promises. The key themes include:

- **Answer to Prayer:** The prophecy is a direct response to Daniel's prayer of confession and supplication for the restoration of Jerusalem.
- **Reinterpretation:** Gabriel reinterprets Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy of exile into 70 "weeks" of years (490 years), revealing a deeper, more complex meaning.
- **Symbolic Numbers:** The lecture highlights the symbolic nature of numbers like 7 and 70, drawing connections to the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee in Leviticus, indicating completeness, totality, and restoration.
- **Multiple Anointed Ones:** The prophecy speaks of one or more "anointed ones" (depending on interpretation), leading to different views of fulfillment, some with more immediate historical referents and some looking forward to messianic fulfillment in Jesus.
- **Historical and Eschatological Fulfillment:** The prophecy seems to have an initial fulfillment during the second century BC, particularly during the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, but it also points towards a larger, eschatological fulfillment, often seen as ultimately fulfilled in Christ.
- **Ambiguity:** Dr. Widder suggests that some of the ambiguity in the text may be intentional, pointing to a divine superintendence of human authors.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. Context and Daniel's Prayer:

- Daniel's prayer focuses on his sin and the sin of the people, as well as his supplication for Jerusalem's "holy hill."
- Gabriel's arrival while Daniel is praying emphasizes that the prophecy is an answer to his prayer.
- The timing of Gabriel's appearance at the time of the evening sacrifice connects this revelation to the vision of Daniel 8.
- Gabriel's instruction to Daniel to "consider the word and understand the vision" connects back to Daniel's reflections on Jeremiah.

1. Gabriel's Message:

- Gabriel explains his purpose is to provide "insight and understanding," highlighting the importance of the message.
- Gabriel emphasizes Daniel's value, stating, "you are greatly loved."
- The phrase "70 weeks are decreed" shows God's sovereignty in history.

1. The 70 Weeks:

- The "70 weeks" are generally understood as 70 weeks of years, totaling 490 years.
- This interpretation is rooted in Old Testament Law, specifically in the instructions regarding the Sabbath and Jubilee years in Leviticus 25.
- This number is symbolic, representing fullness and totality, and may not be meant to be taken as a literal time period.
- The 7 and 70 are symbolic numbers.

1. The Six Purposes of the 70 Weeks:

- These purposes are stated *before* the specific events of the 70 weeks:
- "to finish transgression"
- "to put an end to sin"
- "to atone for iniquity"
- "to bring in everlasting righteousness"

- "to seal both vision and prophet"
- "to anoint a most holy place."
- The first three purposes relate to sin, and the last three are positive in nature.
- These purposes have a preliminary fulfillment in the return and rebuilding after the exile, but they also have eschatological implications.

1. **The Three Time Periods of the Prophecy:**

- **Seven Weeks:** From the "going out of a word to restore and build Jerusalem" to the coming of an "anointed one, a prince."
- There is significant debate about what this "word" is. Possibilities include a Jeremiah prophecy, a Persian decree, or Gabriel's word itself.
- This "anointed one" is often associated with someone involved in the return from exile, like Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua.
- **Sixty-Two Weeks:** Jerusalem will be rebuilt in a time of trouble. After these weeks, an "anointed one shall be cut off and have nothing," and the city and sanctuary will be destroyed.
- This "anointed one" who is cut off is typically understood to be the Jewish High Priest Onias III, who was assassinated in 171 BC.
- **One Final Week:** This week includes the desecration of the temple, the end of sacrifice, and a "desolating abomination," followed by the decreed end poured out on the desolator.
- The desecration of the temple is associated with Antiochus Epiphanes and his actions against the Jewish people.

1. **Major Issues in Interpretation**

- **What is a "week?"** Is it a literal week of years (7 years) or something symbolic? Most scholars take it to mean a week of years.
- **What is the "word" that went out?** Is it a prophecy from Jeremiah, a Persian decree, or Gabriel's word in verse 23? Dr. Widder leans toward a Jeremiah prophecy.

- **How do we read the numbers 7 and 62?** Are they to be added together for a total of 69 weeks or separate periods of time? Hebrew accents suggest separation, but Jewish scribes may have been influencing how we are to read it.
- **Who are the "anointed ones?"** Depending on how you read the numbers (69 weeks vs. 7 and 62 separately) the "anointed ones" can be interpreted as one person, (Jesus) or separate figures associated with the return from exile and a later high priest.

1. **Symbolism of Sabbath and Jubilee:**

- The 70 weeks are linked to the Jubilee year in Leviticus, highlighting themes of restoration, freedom, and the return of alienated land to its rightful owners.
- The exile is seen as a time when the land did not receive its Sabbath, reflecting the need for restoration.
- This symbolism is especially relevant to Daniel's context of exile and longing for return to the Promised Land.

1. **Multiple Levels of Fulfillment:**

- The prophecy appears to have had an initial fulfillment in the events surrounding the return from exile and the desecration of the Temple by Antiochus IV.
- However, the prophecy also points to a greater, eschatological fulfillment, ultimately in the work of Jesus.
- Dr. Widder suggests this ambiguity may be intentional, reflecting both the immediate historical context and the broader scope of God's plan.

1. **Jesus as Fulfillment:**

- Jesus inaugurates the coming of the Kingdom and the fulfillment of the Jubilee when He reads in the synagogue in Luke 4. He is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.
- The end of the Babylonian exile is just a shadow of a greater exile to come, which is an exile to sin, which ends with Jesus.
- Jesus is the ultimate Jubilee, fulfilling the promises of restoration and freedom.
- The initial historical referent of the "anointed one cut off" is Onias III, a priest performing sacrificial duties on behalf of the people; Jesus as the ultimate "anointed one cut off" takes care of that once and for all.

Quotes:

- *"While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight..."* (Daniel 9:20-21, context for Gabriel's appearance)
- *"At the beginning of your pleas for mercy, a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved."* (Daniel 9:23, emphasizing the link to Daniel's prayer and his worthiness.)
- *"Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place."* (Daniel 9:24, the six purposes of the 70 weeks.)
- *"From the going out of a word to restore and build Jerusalem, to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and a moat, but in a troubled time."* (Daniel 9:25, the start of the prophecy and the different time periods).
- *"And after the sixty-two weeks an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing."* (Daniel 9:26, the cutting off of the anointed one).

Conclusion:

The 70 Weeks prophecy in Daniel 9:20-27 is a complex and layered text that offers not only a historical overview of the restoration from exile and events of the second century BC but also a forward-looking promise of God's ultimate plan of redemption. Dr. Widder emphasizes the importance of recognizing the symbolic meaning of numbers, connecting the text to themes of Sabbath and Jubilee, and embracing the possibility of multiple levels of fulfillment, with Jesus as the ultimate realization of God's promise. She also draws attention to the way the scripture may intentionally include ambiguity.

This lecture provides a thorough grounding in the key interpretative issues, while consistently calling attention back to the big picture of God's restorative plan.

4. Study Guide: Widder, Daniel, Session 14, Daniel 9:20-27 – God's Promise of Restoration, Part 2

Daniel 9:20-27 Study Guide: Revelation of Restoration

Quiz

1. In Daniel 9:20-27, what prompts Gabriel's visit to Daniel, and what does Gabriel's arrival suggest about the nature of Daniel's prayer? Daniel's prayer of confession and supplication prompts Gabriel's visit. Gabriel's arrival while Daniel is still praying suggests that it is a direct answer to Daniel's heartfelt pleas.
2. According to Gabriel, what is the purpose of his visit to Daniel, and what does he emphasize about Daniel's standing before God? Gabriel states he has come to give Daniel insight and understanding regarding the vision. He also emphasizes that Daniel is greatly loved by God, highlighting his special position.
3. What are the six purposes that Gabriel says will be accomplished during the 70 weeks, and what do these purposes suggest about God's ultimate plan? The six purposes are to finish transgression, put an end to sin, atone for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and anoint the most holy place. These purposes indicate God's plan for complete redemption and restoration.
4. What does the concept of "weeks" refer to in the prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27, and how is it connected to Old Testament law? In this prophecy, "weeks" refers to weeks of years, with each week representing seven years, equating to 490 years. This is tied to Old Testament law by referencing the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee, as described in Leviticus 25.
5. What are the three main options for the "word" mentioned in Daniel 9:25, and which view does the lecturer favor and why? The three options are a prophetic word from Jeremiah, a decree by a Persian king, or the word Gabriel spoke in verse 23. The lecturer favors the prophetic word from Jeremiah, because the word *dabar* appears several times in the earlier verses of Daniel 9, always referencing a word from God.
6. How do the differing translations of Daniel 9:25 (ESV/NRSV vs. NIV/NASB) impact the interpretation of the time periods, specifically the 7 and 62 weeks? The ESV and NRSV read 7 and 62 weeks as two separate units with a period between,

while NIV/NASB read them as one unit, making it 69 weeks. This is determined by how the Hebrew accents are interpreted.

7. What is significant about the use of the term "anointed one" in the prophecy, and how does it relate to different interpretations of the time periods? The term is significant because it appears three times. Some translations capitalize this phrase, but the literal Hebrew is *an anointed one*, and is indefinite. If 7 and 62 are read together, there is one anointed one (often interpreted as Jesus); but if read separately, there are two, often interpreted as figures associated with the end of the exile and the High Priest, Onias III.
8. If the 7 and 62 weeks are interpreted as distinct periods, who are the common candidates for the two "anointed ones," and what roles do they play? The first anointed one is often associated with the return from exile, like Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua the high priest. The second, "anointed one who is cut off", is often understood to be Onias III, a Jewish high priest who was assassinated.
9. What is the symbolic significance of the 70th week, and what events are associated with it according to the prophecy? The 70th week is highly symbolic, associated with distress. Events in it include the destruction of the holy city, a covenant being made and violated, the end of temple rituals, a desolating abomination in the temple, and the destruction of the desolator.
10. How does the lecturer propose that the 70 weeks relate to Jesus, and what does she mean when she states that "Jesus is the Jubilee"? The lecturer proposes that the events described in the 70 weeks are symbolic, with an immediate reference in history, but also a longer eschatological one. The Jubilee idea and the shadow it casts has a greater fulfillment in Jesus' work, His death, resurrection, ascension and return. Thus, in some way, "Jesus is the Jubilee".

Answer Key

1. Daniel's prayer of confession and supplication prompts Gabriel's visit. Gabriel's arrival while Daniel is still praying suggests that it is a direct answer to Daniel's heartfelt pleas.
2. Gabriel states he has come to give Daniel insight and understanding regarding the vision. He also emphasizes that Daniel is greatly loved by God, highlighting his special position.
3. The six purposes are to finish transgression, put an end to sin, atone for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal up vision and prophecy, and anoint the

most holy place. These purposes indicate God's plan for complete redemption and restoration.

4. In this prophecy, "weeks" refers to weeks of years, with each week representing seven years, equating to 490 years. This is tied to Old Testament law by referencing the Sabbath year and the year of Jubilee, as described in Leviticus 25.
5. The three options are a prophetic word from Jeremiah, a decree by a Persian king, or the word Gabriel spoke in verse 23. The lecturer favors the prophetic word from Jeremiah, because the word *dabar* appears several times in the earlier verses of Daniel 9, always referencing a word from God.
6. The ESV and NRSV read 7 and 62 weeks as two separate units with a period between, while NIV/NASB read them as one unit, making it 69 weeks. This is determined by how the Hebrew accents are interpreted.
7. The term is significant because it appears three times. Some translations capitalize this phrase, but the literal Hebrew is *an anointed one*, and is indefinite. If 7 and 62 are read together, there is one anointed one (often interpreted as Jesus); but if read separately, there are two, often interpreted as figures associated with the end of the exile and the High Priest, Onias III.
8. The first anointed one is often associated with the return from exile, like Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua the high priest. The second, "anointed one who is cut off", is often understood to be Onias III, a Jewish high priest who was assassinated.
9. The 70th week is highly symbolic, associated with distress. Events in it include the destruction of the holy city, a covenant being made and violated, the end of temple rituals, a desolating abomination in the temple, and the destruction of the desolator.
10. The lecturer proposes that the events described in the 70 weeks are symbolic, with an immediate reference in history, but also a longer eschatological one. The Jubilee idea and the shadow it casts has a greater fulfillment in Jesus' work, His death, resurrection, ascension and return. Thus, in some way, "Jesus is the Jubilee".

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the symbolic significance of the numbers 7 and 70 in Daniel 9:24-27. How do these numbers relate to the themes of Sabbath and Jubilee, and what do these connections suggest about God's plan of restoration and redemption?
2. Analyze the different interpretations of the "word" that goes out in Daniel 9:25. How does each interpretation influence the overall understanding of the 70-week prophecy, and why might this ambiguity be intentional?
3. Compare and contrast the various ways of reading the division between the 7 and the 62 weeks. How does the choice to read them together or separately impact the understanding of the "anointed ones," and what are the historical and theological implications of each view?
4. Examine the historical context of the 70th week as described in Daniel 9:27. How do the events of this week relate to the reign of Antiochus IV, and what does this interpretation reveal about the immediate and long-term fulfillment of the prophecy?
5. Evaluate the lecturer's argument that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Jubilee year symbolized in the 70 weeks of Daniel 9. How does the lecturer connect the historical events of the prophecy with the eschatological expectations associated with the coming of the Messiah, and what does this interpretation reveal about the nature of God's promises?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Apocalyptic Literature:** A genre of prophetic writing that uses symbolic language and visions to reveal God's plans for the future, often in times of crisis.
- **Dabar:** The Hebrew word for "word," often referring to a prophetic word or message from God.
- **Decree:** A formal order or command, often from a ruler.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times, or the final destiny of humanity and the world.
- **Exile:** The state of being banished from one's native country, particularly the Babylonian exile of the Israelites.
- **Jubilee:** A special year of release and restoration, every 50th year, in which debts were canceled, and land returned to its original owners.
- **Mashach:** The Hebrew word for "to anoint," often used to describe the setting apart of a person for a special office.
- **Mashiach:** The Hebrew word for "anointed one."
- **Onias III:** A Jewish high priest who was assassinated in 171 BC, during a turbulent period before the Maccabean revolt.
- **Sabbath Year:** In the Mosaic Law, every seventh year was to be a year of rest for the land.
- **Seleucids:** A dynasty that ruled a significant portion of the Middle East from 312-63 BC, known for their wars and the persecutions of the Jews.
- **Supplication:** The act of humbly asking or begging for something in prayer.
- **Symbolic Interpretation:** An approach to interpreting texts that looks for deeper meanings rather than solely literal or historical interpretations.
- **Temple:** The holy sanctuary in Jerusalem, a central place of worship for the Israelites.
- **Weeks of Years:** A concept in the Book of Daniel where each week represents seven years, rather than literal weeks.
- **Zerubbabel:** A leader of the Jewish exiles who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon.

5. FAQs on Widder, Daniel, Session 14, Daniel 9:20-27 – God's Promise of Restoration, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Daniel 9:20-27 and the 70 Weeks Prophecy

1. **What is the context of Daniel 9:20-27 and why is it significant?** This passage is a direct response to Daniel's prayer of confession and supplication for his people and Jerusalem. It's significant because it introduces the complex prophecy of the 70 weeks, which is framed as a revelation of restoration. It reinterprets Jeremiah's prophecy of 70 years of exile into 70 "weeks" of years (490 years), thus expanding the scope and timeline of God's plan for Israel and Jerusalem. While Daniel is praying for immediate restoration of the holy hill of Jerusalem, the passage reveals a more extensive plan involving a longer period of restoration, dealing with sin, and ultimately bringing in lasting righteousness.
2. **What are the "70 weeks" in Daniel 9:24 and how should we understand them?** The "70 weeks" are interpreted as 70 "weeks of years," which equals 490 years. This interpretation is based on the concept of the Sabbath year and Jubilee year described in Leviticus, where every 7 years the land had to rest, and every 49 years (7 x 7) a Jubilee was to be celebrated, this being the 50th year. The question remains as to whether these 490 years should be understood literally or symbolically. Many scholars view them as symbolic, structured around the idea of Jubilee and signifying a period of time leading to the ultimate fulfillment of God's purposes. This symbolic view stems from the use of numbers like 7 and 70 for totality and organization in apocalyptic literature, like we see in texts such as First Enoch.
3. **What are the six purposes given in Daniel 9:24 for the 70 weeks?** The 70 weeks are decreed to achieve six purposes: to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place. The first three purposes deal with ending sin and its consequences. The latter three deal with the establishment of lasting righteousness. These purposes are placed at the beginning of the prophecy to emphasize the intended result of the 70 weeks and are interpreted as having partial fulfillment during the Maccabean period and full eschatological significance at the culmination of history.

4. **What is the significance of the three time periods mentioned in the prophecy? (7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 final week)** The prophecy is divided into three time periods, each associated with the concept of "an anointed one" or an "anointed place":
 - **7 Weeks (49 years):** This period is understood as the time from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the appearance of "an anointed one" associated with the return from exile (such as Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua the High Priest).
 - **62 Weeks (434 years):** This is seen as a period of rebuilding and distress. Though the land is restored, there is an absence of true sovereignty and the Jewish people live under the rule of various gentile empires.
 - **1 Final Week (7 years):** This period is marked by conflict and desecration, culminating in an "anointed one" being cut off. The middle of this week is marked by desolation and the cessation of temple offerings. The end of this week ties back to the six purposes, especially the anointing of the most holy place.
1. **What is meant by the "word" that goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem in verse 25?** The "word" refers to the beginning of the 70 weeks, and its exact nature is debated. Some interpret it as a prophetic word from Jeremiah, others as a decree from a Persian king like Cyrus or Artaxerxes, and some take it to be Gabriel's word (the word in Daniel 9:23). It is important to understand that if you understand this word as an Old Testament prophetic word, you most likely also understand the 70 weeks to also be a prophetic fulfillment (symbolic) that doesn't necessarily need to track historically. All interpretations have different implications for how to date the 70 weeks.
2. **How do interpreters differ on whether to read the 7 and 62 weeks as separate or as one unit?** Some interpretations of the passage combine the 7 and 62 weeks (69 weeks), and others read them as separate units. Translations like the NIV and NASB combine them, while the ESV and NRSV read them separately. This decision is influenced by the Hebrew accentual system, which indicates a break between the two periods. Combining them suggests one "anointed one", whereas reading them separately allows for two "anointed ones".

3. **Who are the "anointed ones" mentioned in verses 25 and 26 and what is the significance of the one being "cut off?"** The identity of the "anointed ones" depends on whether the 7 and 62 weeks are viewed separately or together. If combined into a single 69-week period, most understand the "anointed one" as Jesus. If separated, the first "anointed one" is usually associated with figures like Cyrus, Zerubbabel, or Joshua who were involved with the return from exile. The "anointed one cut off" is often interpreted as Onias III, a Jewish high priest assassinated in 171 BC. The use of the word 'anointed' or Messiah (Hebrew: mashach) should not be automatically assumed to be a reference to Jesus, as there are many "anointed" figures in the Old Testament. However, the fact that it is mentioned three times in this passage is significant and may be intended to draw the reader to think about the concept of a special anointed one who will bring about ultimate and lasting restoration. When this final anointed one is cut off, that once and for all sacrifices for the sins of people are realized (a reference to Jesus).
4. **What is the overarching message of Daniel 9:20-27 for both its original audience and later readers?** Despite the complexities of the 70 weeks, the passage emphasizes that God is in control of history and will ultimately fulfill his promises. While there is an initial fulfillment of this prophecy associated with the return from exile and the Maccabean period, it also points towards an ultimate, eschatological fulfillment through the work of Jesus as the true "anointed one." The passage reminds readers of the symbolism of the Sabbath and Jubilee, connecting the end of exile and the restoration of land with the broader themes of liberation from sin and the establishment of God's kingdom. The ambiguous nature of the text may be intentional, allowing for both an immediate historical application and a deeper, prophetic meaning that includes and goes beyond Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate Jubilee.