

Plans to Prosper? A Detailed Look at Daniel 9:24-27

I. Intro

- a. When I was younger, I enjoyed reading books that weren't assigned to me. I wasn't so into reading that I always had a book with me, but there'd be times when I'd really get into a series of books or it'd be summer and so I'd read a book. I don't know if they still have them but there were these books I used to read that you could read the book out of order but you had to start with the first chapter. And depending on the order in which you read the book, you would have a different story with a different ending. For example, you read chapter 1 then chapter 7 then 9 but then back to 3 etc etc. Quite a novel idea, really interesting especially as a kid. Then, once you get done with the book, you could read it in a different order and while it was familiar cause you've read each chapter, reading them in the different order gave the story a different ending and you saw things differently as you read.
- b. The interesting thing is the Bible is very similar to these books. You can read it out of order and it seems to make sense, you can get truth from starting in John for example without having read what is written before it.
- c. The problem is it wasn't designed to be read this way. It was designed to be read so we get the foundation correct and by reading it in this manner by the time we get to the New Testament, by the time we get to parables in the Gospels or Paul's epistles or Revelation, it is not as much of a mystery.
- d. It's careless to read a passage here in the Old Testament and to read it with a lens only looking at how it applies to the church today.
- e. Sure, you may get some principles and truths, but you must first understand it through its context. What was going on when it was first written? What significance does it carry for the future of Israel? And then you can pull out the meaning for us today.

II. Recap last week

- a. So last week we set our foundation, we took a look at the context of this verse in Jeremiah. Let's go ahead and get that up on the screen. Jeremiah 29:11 *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*

- i. And it would be good to remind ourselves that this particular translation is not the common one. In fact, out of the main translations, only the NIV translates it this way using the word prosper, others use well-being, welfare or peace.
- ii. But last week we saw this verse was in the midst of a call for repentance. For reference sake, we won't read it but the beginning of Jeremiah 25 tells us that Jeremiah for 23 years had been proclaiming a message of repentance from their sin or else God would send Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem and to send His people into exile for 70 years.
- iii. And then a few chapters later he makes this declaration from the Lord in 29:11 about "prospering" them. God reminds His people that He isn't some kid with a magnifying glass sitting over an anthill burning the ants for His own pleasure.
- iv. No, He is reminding them that He has plans for His people. He wants their Shalom-well being, wholeness, unimpaired relationship with God and others.
- v. He is not telling them He wants them to be financially set for life, to have as many goats as they can dream of.
- vi. He is reminding them that they should be living in the land He promised to Abraham. But because of their sin, they are not worthy to live in the land of their inheritance.
- vii. They are close to forfeiting their inheritance altogether if they do not get their act together and return their whole hearts to God.

III. Keys to Understanding the Prophecy from last week that literally/historically took place.

- a. We see God, out of His love, use Nebuchadnezzar and the nation of Babylon to bring about His will.
- b. We see the king of Babylon and the nation of Babylon judged for their actions against Israel.
- c. We have the people of Israel, living in sin and unrepentant.
- d. We see the people of Israel living in a land that is not their own until the time has come for them to be brought back out of exile into their inheritance.
- e. We have numerous prophets distracting the people from what they should be focused on by proclaiming a message of health and wealth, not a message of repentance and accountability.

- i. Concerning this point, we talked about this in the Bible study but I wanted to actually show a verse where this is seen.
- ii. Jeremiah 28:2-4, 15-17 (Hananiah speaking) ²"Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon. ³'Within two years I am going to bring back to this place all the vessels of the LORD'S house, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took away from this place and carried to Babylon. ⁴'I am also going to bring back to this place Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the exiles of Judah who went to Babylon,' declares the LORD, 'for I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon.'" ...¹⁵Then Jeremiah the prophet said to Hananiah the prophet, "Listen now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie. ¹⁶"Therefore thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I am about to remove you from the face of the earth This year you are going to die, because you have counseled rebellion against the LORD.'" ¹⁷So Hananiah the prophet died in the same year in the seventh month.
- iii. You can see in this passage that as far as Hananiah is concerned and what he is teaching the people, there is no purpose for them being in exile, maybe a mishap by God. But God will correct this "fluke" and within two years they will be back in their land and Nebuchadnezzar will be punished.
- iv. There is no message of repentance in this prophecy.
- v. There is no mention of their sin or disobedience.
- vi. Consequentially the Lord puts him in his place because he has counseled rebellion to the Jews against the Lord.
- f. Finally, we see those taken into exile, a part of the whole, turn their whole hearts back to God while others were destroyed by the nation of Babylon as they chose to not repent.
 - i. As we examine the Scriptures, we see that this is how God has dealt with His people throughout history.
 - ii. He puts them through the fire so to speak in order that they may return to Him.
 - 1. In Numbers, we read the story of the Israelites murmuring to God and being disobedient so He sends fiery serpents that kill a good amount of people.

2. Then we read in Numbers 21:7 *So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us." And Moses interceded for the people.*
3. God then told Moses to make a bronze serpent and set it high so that all could see it and whenever a serpent bit them, if they looked up to the bronze serpent, he would be saved and live.
4. But we see here the people were murmuring, God sent serpents and they recognized their sin and came back to God and God provides a way for them to be saved.
5. We see this pattern elsewhere in Scripture.
6. Hosea 5:15 *I will go away and return to My place Until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.*
7. Psalm 50:15 *Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.*
8. Psalm 78:34 *When He killed them, then they sought Him, And returned and searched diligently for God*
9. Here in these verses we see the beauty yet the travesty of free will.
10. We see these people, God's children, choosing to be disobedient. And as any father who loves his child, what does he do? He disciplines them so they come to a point where they realize they love Him and need Him.
11. Proverbs 3:1-2, 11-12 *¹My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments; ²For length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.* (interesting to note that this is the same word peace as in our passage in Jeremiah and also interesting that peace will be added to our days if we do not forget the Word of God and if we are obedient, if we let our hearts keep the commandments of God. Then we will "prosper")...*¹¹My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe His reproof, ¹²For whom the LORD loves He reproves, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.*

12. Think this might give us a different perspective on suffering huh?
13. Not to put the focus on us quite yet, but maybe we shouldn't view it as a bad thing but rather see it as something God at times uses to draw us closer to Him, so that we will call out to Him and be saved.
14. Just some food for thought to get you amped for the next two weeks when we will bring this message into focus on what it means for the Church and us today.

IV. How the Exile relates to Israel

- a. (Draw telescope on board) And speaking of focus, let's go on ahead and take out our telescope and see how this passage we've been looking at in Jeremiah relates to the future of Israel.
- b. Thinking of Israel and prophecies concerning their future, there is one scripture that we have to go to.
- c. It is "thee" passage concerning Israel and end times, at least the jump-off point as it is a key passage concerning the timing of End Time events.
- d. I am talking about Daniel 9:24-27 where we read about the 70 weeks of Daniel.
- e. I know we've seen this some before but it can be confusing and it's always a good reminder as it helps us maintain a proper focus on the timeline that God has set forth.
- f. And we are really just going to camp out here today and take a look at what these verses are saying and by doing so we will see how what takes place during the 70th week correlates to what we have studied concerning the Babylonian Exile.

V. The 70 Weeks of Daniel

- a. Daniel 9:20-27 ²⁰*Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, (Notice what he is doing, Daniel is confessing his sin and the sin of Israel. He realizes why they are in exile and perhaps because of this attitude God uses him and reveals this vision to him) and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God, ²¹while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. ²²He 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. (So we see the angel Gabriel comes to Daniel in order to give him insight with understanding.)
²⁴"Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place. ²⁵"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress. ²⁶"Then after the sixty-two weeks 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 one week, but in the middle of the week 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."

- b. Now, I know we are all familiar with the term the "70th week of Daniel" and we have heard that it is yet future, at the end of this current age. But I want to look at the second part of this passage in depth and see what else we notice concerning this 70th week of Daniel.
- c. And before we look at verse 24 in depth, I want to make some observations of verse 25 as it provides details concerning the timing of this and then we will get into what is actually taking place.
- d. Daniel 9:25 *"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks*
 - i. It should first be noted here that when dealing with prophecy and time, it gets very confusing.
 1. There are numerous variables such as the different calendars. The Lunar year has 354 days; the Calendar year has 360 days; the Julian calendar, our calendar, has 365 and a quarter days and you must add one day every four years.
 2. So which do you use?
 3. Well, turn to Scripture. Numbers 14:34 reads, *"According to the number of days which you spied*

out the land, forty days, for every day you shall bear your guilt a year, even forty years, and you will know My opposition."

4. And in Ezekiel 4:6 *"When you have completed these, you shall lie down a second time, but on your right side and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah; I have assigned it to you for forty days, a day for each year."*
5. So, it seems as if God's year so to speak, is one day stands for a year.
6. So here we see He punishes them one year for every day so they were in the land for 40 days, they bear their guilt for 40 years as they wander in the wilderness.
7. Now, what I am going to brush on has been calculated by men who have crossed all the calendars in the Bible, examined the dates and months of the Jewish calendar and converted them. I can in no way say these dates are set in stone but regardless, I do believe it gets us to the time periods that this verse describes.
8. So what are the time periods?
9. Well, it reads that the 70 weeks will begin with the issue of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. Now, there are four such decrees in Scripture but none seem to fulfill the conditions of the prophecy.
10. But in Nehemiah 2:1-6 we read, *"¹And it came about in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine was before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. ²So the king said to me, "Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart." Then I was very much afraid. ³I said to the king, "Let the king live forever Why should my face not be sad when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?" ⁴Then the king said to me, "What would you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it." ⁶Then the king said to me, the queen*

sitting beside him, "How long will your journey be, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.

11. Nehemiah asks if he may go and rebuild the city and Artaxerxes made the decree to send him so this is seen as the beginning of the 70 weeks.
 12. We are then told that there are seven sevens and sixty-two sevens until Messiah the Prince. As we know Christ is a priest in the order of Melchizedek. He is the anointed priest as well as the coming prince.
 13. So, the time from Artaxerxes to Christ is 475 years when calculated using our calendar, the Julian calendar.
 14. But when taking into account all the factors, when using God's calendar of a day stands for a year, we will find that there are 483 years or "69 sevens" between the decree of Artaxerxes in 445 BC and the spring of 30 AD which would be around the time of the Passover which is when Christ was crucified, when Christ entered the city greeted as a prince and anointed Messiah.
 15. But I am not here to argue the exact timing of events. The point is, we have seven and sixty-two sevens accounted for from the time of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah the Prince and the possible triumphal entry.
 16. The question is, "Where is this one more week?"
 17. Where is this final "seven?"
 18. We will pick up this question here shortly as it picks back up in verse 26 and 27.
- e. Daniel 9:24 *"Seventy weeks (sevens) have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.*
- i. Daniel is living toward the end of the exile. He is in the midst of it, he is witnessing the rule of the Babylonians over Israel, and he sees their lack of repentance up close.
 - ii. But we see Daniel is confessing sin and studying Scripture, studying the prophesy of Jeremiah undoubtedly, praying for the end of the exile to come.

- iii. And then Gabriel shows up and not only reveals to him more concerning the end of the Babylonian Exile, but more concerning the end when Israel would finally return to God.
- iv. Now, the first thing that tends to stick out to us is why they are counting in sevens. However, in the Old Testament and in Jewish culture, it was not uncommon or foreign.
 - 1. *Leviticus 25:2-5* ²"*Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I shall give you, then the land shall have a sabbath to the LORD. ³Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, ⁴but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. ⁵Your harvest's aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year.*
 - a. Here in Leviticus we see the concept of Sabbatical years where they were to plant crops on their land but on the seventh year they were to give the land rest to let it recover and then resume sowing in the land the following six years.
 - b. The people were used to counting in sevens of years, just as common as days and weeks are for us, well years and sevens of years were equally common.
- v. Next, we notice the angel is talking about a certain group of people saying "your people and your holy city."
 - 1. The end of the Babylonian Exile would not bring about the national repentance of Israel rather it would begin a period of time, seventy weeks had been decreed, that must first take place before Daniel's people, Israel, and the Holy City, Jerusalem, would be reunited so to speak.
 - 2. They would be saved out of Babylon after 70 years just as Jeremiah prophesied.
 - 3. However, the nation of Israel as a whole would not repent and turn their whole hearts to God, only some would.

- vi. So, this verse is telling us that God will take 490 years (Seventy Sevens and one day for a year in God's calendar) to deal with His people and these 490 years would do just as the verse says, *"finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place."* So at the end of these 490 years we will see the following 6 outcomes:
1. To finish the transgression. We understand this as Israel would no longer violate the law of God.
 2. To make an end of sin. The work of Christ would seal up sin. It kinda carries the connotation that a seal from a signet ring is placed over sin so that it is no more. The sin of Israel is the result of their disobedience but as they are no longer violating the law of God, their sin is sealed up and made an end of.
 3. To make atonement for iniquity. This is to cover their sin by a sacrifice. Now, we are dealing with Israel and during the time period of these seventy sevens.
 - a. The current dispensation cannot be taken into account. If a Jew accepts the blood of Christ during this age, He becomes "neither Jew nor Greek" right? He is a Christian.
 - b. But for those Jews who find themselves in the future tribulation, the 70th week of Daniel, we are told in Zechariah 13:1 *"In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for impurity."*
 - c. And in Zechariah 12:10 *I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.*
 - d. By the end of the 70th week we see Israel will weep and mourn the one they have pierced and God will give them the Spirit of grace.

4. To bring in everlasting righteousness.
Transgressions have been finished and there has been made an end of sin. According to Jeremiah 31:33 there is a new covenant God makes with the house of Israel.
 - a. It reads, *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*
 - b. The law of God will now be written on their hearts, not stone tablets as in the days of Moses.
5. To seal up vision and prophecy. Up to this point there is sin in the world and as a result, there is prophecy as God is communicating with His people giving them hope in the midst of their sin.
 - a. But as we've seen, transgressions are finished and sin is sealed up so the same is done with vision and prophecy.
6. Finally, to anoint the most holy place which is the Holy of Holies. Jeremiah 3:16-17 ¹⁶*"It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss it, nor will it be made again. ¹⁷"At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart."*
 - a. This is to show that God's dealings with the Jews are completed.
 - b. Sin will be sealed up, they will be given the Spirit of grace and a new covenant will be written on their heart so there will be no more rebukes for wrong-doing and the temple will exist in its glory.
 - c. Haggai 2:9 *'The latter glory of this house will be greater than the former,' says the LORD of*

hosts, 'and in this place I will give peace,' declares the LORD of hosts."

- i. This prophecy is saying the glory of the new temple will be greater than that of Solomon's temple, which was a picture of the future temple.
 - ii. And it should be noted that the word peace is yes, the same word in our Jeremiah 29:11 passage.
 - iii. After these 490 years and all of this we just read comes to be, the people of God will "prosper." Israel will be at peace with God, they will have an unimpaired relationship with their Father.
 - iv. The question that seems to come to mind then is what is standing between that point in time and now?
 - v. And I am glad you asked cause that leads us right to verse 26
 - vi. But before we get there, it should be noted that in verse 25 there was no break between the seven sevens and sixty-two sevens. There is however a distinction between the first 69 weeks and the final week. Let's look at verse 26 and 27
- f. Daniel 9:26-27 *"Then after the sixty-two weeks 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 one week, but in the middle of the week 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."*
- i. So, between the first seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks there is no delay of time.
 - ii. But here we see that after the sixty-two weeks ends, the Messiah will be cut off and he will have nothing.
 - iii. This is the rejection and crucifixion of Christ. After He was welcomed as a king, He is put on the cross as a thief.

- iv. He did not take His seat on the throne and begin His reign, although He deserved it. No, there was nothing for Him yet.
- v. The interesting thing to note is that as far as God is concerned, the time just keeps flowing right into the last seven years.
- vi. But there is an obvious break in time as far as we are concerned.
- vii. We find ourselves at the crucifixion of Christ and then at the end of this age.
- viii. As we know God placed his dealings with Israel on hold and He began to deal with the Gentile Nations.
- ix. But as far as this prophecy is concerned, as it only deals with God and His relationship with Israel, it is a continuous seventy sevens.
- x. As far as we are concerned, this final seven will be at the end of our dispensation, when God is done dealing with the Gentile Nations.
- xi. Then we will see the destruction of the city. The destruction in this verse was not the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD as that took place during the time of the Gentiles when God was working with them, not Israel.
- xii. He mentions a flood that will bring about the destruction of the city and the Prince of the people.
- xiii. This flood will also destroy the bad figs from the vision of Jeremiah we saw last week.
 - 1. Remember, he saw two baskets, one with good figs and one with bad figs. Well, it was the good figs that had first-ripe fruit that would return out of exile while the basket of bad figs that were in the context of the Babylonian Exile, killed in the city and did not survive because they were unrepentant.
- xiv. Well the same is true in the end of times, the good figs will survive this period of exile while the bad figs will be destroyed in this flood.
- xv. Isaiah 10:20-21 ²⁰Now in that day the remnant of Israel, and those of the house of Jacob who have escaped, will never again rely on the one who struck them, but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. ²¹A remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God. For though your people, O Israel, may be like the sand of the sea, Only a

remnant within them will return; A destruction is determined, overflowing with righteousness.

1. A flood of righteousness will destroy a large majority of Israel so that only a remnant, the basket of good figs, will survive and return to the new city.
 2. Interesting to note that the remnant that escapes will truly rely on the Lord, as opposed to the way they had been living relying upon themselves.
 3. Just as the good figs had good fruit, the remnant will bear fruit worthy of the land they are to inherit.
- xvi. Concerning verse 27 and the covenant made for one week, well this is the Antichrist who at the beginning of the 70th week makes a covenant in which he appears to be an ally of Israel.
1. There will be a large group of Jews living in Israel but they will be oppressed and in need of help.
 2. Well, the Antichrist comes and promises “peace” for 7 years (interesting that once again peace is at the center of all this, don’t you think?)
 3. Isaiah 28:15-18 *¹⁵Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, And with Sheol we have made a pact The overwhelming scourge will not reach us when it passes by, For we have made falsehood our refuge and we have concealed ourselves with deception." ¹⁶Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a tested stone, A costly cornerstone for the foundation, firmly placed. He who believes in it will not be disturbed. ¹⁷"I will make justice the measuring line And righteousness the level; Then hail will sweep away the refuge of lies And the waters will overflow the secret place. ¹⁸"Your covenant with death will be canceled, And your pact with Sheol will not stand; When the overwhelming scourge passes through, Then you become its trampling place.*
 - a. Here we see those in Israel who make a pact with the Antichrist and who do not believe in the firm cornerstone will be destroyed by this flood, this overwhelming scourge.
 - b. The crazy thing is despite aligning themselves with the Antichrist, the majority

of the Jews will believe that they are still making sacrifices to God.

- c. They will not realize they are in sin just as Hananiah deceived the Jews in the time of Jeremiah in the Babylonian Exile.
4. Now, we see in the middle of this week the Antichrist breaks his covenant with the Jews and orders them to stop sacrificing to God but to worship him and to give him glory.
5. It is at this point that the persecution of the Jews will intensify. They will be blinded by their sin and will not recognize their need to repent.
6. God will allow the persecution to take place because as we saw in the beginning, it is when his children are persecuted, when they are in trouble and when they are killed, that they will seek God whole-heartedly and that they will be rescued by their Father.
7. Unfortunately, there will only be a remnant of Israel left that will return to God with their whole hearts, the rest just as in our type will be destroyed as they are unrepentant.
8. While this prophecy does not include the salvation of the remnant and their return to God, we are told in verse 24 that the most holy place of the temple will be anointed at the end of the seventy weeks and we took a good look as to what that means and the significance that bears.
9. It would be an understatement to say that it will not be a pretty sight during the 70th week of Daniel-but the result will be worth the discipline for those who repent.

VI. Conclusion

- a. To conclude, I want to take a brief look at the keys to understanding this passage that we started with and see how we've seen how they relate to Israel in the future.
 - i. We see God, out of His love, use Nebuchadnezzar and the nation of Babylon to bring about His will.
 1. God will out of His love allow the Antichrist to take his place in this world and to persecute Israel in order that His will would come about.

- ii. We see the king of Babylon and the nation of Babylon judged for their actions against Israel.
 - 1. The Antichrist and the Gentile nations will be judged. Zechariah 12:9 *“And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”*
- iii. We have the people of Israel, living in sin and unrepentant.
 - 1. This is the same in the exile as well as during the entire 70 weeks of Daniel.
- iv. We see the people of Israel living in a land that is not their own until the time has come for them to be brought back out of exile into their inheritance.
 - 1. Until God sets up His temple and Israel is restored, they will not be properly living in the land of their forefathers.
- v. We have numerous prophets distracting the people from what they should be focused on by proclaiming a message of health and wealth, not a message of repentance and accountability.
 - 1. The Jews will be blinded by the message of the Antichrist and his promise of peace that they will not recognize their sin; they will not recognize that their sacrifices are not being done with a pure heart.
- vi. Finally, we see those taken into exile, a part of the whole, turn their whole hearts back to God while others were destroyed by the nation of Babylon as they chose to not repent.
 - 1. Those who persevere and endure the suffering and turn their eyes to God during the 70th week of Daniel, during the tribulation, they will be those good figs, they will return to the land of their forefathers and will have “peace” with God. It is this group of Israel that will prosper. This is God’s hope for His people. God wants his people to be at peace and have an unimpaired relationship with Him and He knows the only way for that to happen is for them to endure a flood of persecution so that they will seek Him with their whole heart.
 - 2. Let’s Pray

VII. Communion.

- a. You know, today we took a look at Israel and how because of their sin and their unrepentant hearts, God will send such a severe persecution that a large majority of His people will die while only a remnant will remain and turn their hearts back to God.
- b. As we will see next week, that which happens to Israel happens as an example for us that we may not make the same mistakes.
- c. It is my prayer that today we realize the sin in our lives and let's repent.
- d. Let's decide to make the necessary changes so we don't put ourselves in situations we are tempted.
- e. Let's decide to not be a stiff-necked people who are blinded by our sin.
- f. Let's thank God for his mercies, that they are new every morning and for His abundance of grace.
- g. As 1 Corinthians 11:28 reminds us, *"But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup."*
- h. Let's take time to confess our sin so that when we share in communion, when we eat of the bread which is a picture of the body of Christ, which was broken for us and when we drink of the grape juice, reminding us of the blood shed for our sins, we will declare to God that we are choosing to repent of our sin and we are choosing to follow Him whole-heartedly.