

“God’s Prophetic Time Clock” (Daniel 9:20–27)

Have you ever watched a track meet on television or attended one personally? If so, you know that these events often look chaotic. You may see some athletes practicing their high jump, while others are stretching on the infield. At the same time, runners may be lining up on the track. Large numbers of people seem to be meandering around with no one clearly in charge. But the chaos is merely an appearance, because the officials and time keepers are firmly in control of every aspect of the meet. When it’s time for a race or a field event, that area is cleared and the competitors move to their places to get ready. In the midst of apparent chaos, the officials are in total control.

Our world often looks like a track meet. Life can seem chaotic, out of control. During times like these, we may wonder where God is. If your life has never felt chaotic, and if you’ve never wondered what in the world God was doing with you, you need to check your pulse! Yet, if you’re a Christ follower, you understand that God is large and in charge even when that doesn’t seem to be the case. And when God blows the whistle to signal the start of an event, everything comes together according to the purpose of His own will.¹

Nowhere is this truer than Daniel 9:20–27. This text is all about purpose, order, and timing. In these seven verses, we will see that *God is always right on time*. Today, it may seem that your life is spiraling out of control. Perhaps you have significant marital woes. You’ve been praying for your spouse for many months or years. Yet the more you pray, the more hopeless it seems. Maybe you lost your job several months ago and have been praying for God to provide another job, but it seems like everyone else is finding a job except you. Perhaps you’ve been praying for a spouse for a number of years, and God never seems to bring Mr. or Miss Right to you, yet you watch all of your friends getting married. In the midst of your disappointing life, God has a Word for you: *He is always right on time*. We can have confidence in God’s timing because of the accuracy of Scripture. I know this may seem odd, but it’s true. The uncanny exactness and perfect timing of the Bible in its elaborate details shows us that God cares about our individual lives as well as human history and the universe. *God is always right on time*.

Act 1: God sends Gabriel to Daniel’s rescue (9:20–23). This section begins with Daniel praying the house down (cf. 9:1–19). He writes, “**Now while I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel,² and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God in behalf of the holy mountain of my God [Mt. Moriah],³ while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel,⁴ whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering. He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, ‘O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. 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’**” (9:20–23). There are a number of observations worth making in these verses. *First, the answer to Daniel’s prayer comes before he’s even finished praying!* In 9:20–21, Daniel records the phrase “while I was still speaking in prayer.” The man didn’t even get to say “Amen!”⁵ This is another reminder that *God is always right on time*. Since God knows what we want and need before we ask, He is capable of answering our prayers even before we pray or immediately after we pray.⁶ In some cases, however, He delays the answer to our prayers because He’s orchestrating events in His world and in our lives. He’s doing a work of patience in our lives to refine us. Remember the Garth Brooks song which professed, “Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers”? In hindsight, it’s easy to acknowledge the blessings of certain unanswered prayers. However, at the time we’re tempted to question God’s delay or denial. When you feel slighted by God in your marriage, your relationships, your job, or your finances, it’s all too easy to blame God. “God, You didn’t come through for me! Why do You always bless everyone but me?!” The truth is God has a purpose and a plan for your life. We must trust Him, for *God is always right on time*.

Second, note at what point Daniel is interrupted—while he’s confessing his sin and Israel’s sin. He’s in the very midst of humbling himself before God (cf. 9:1–19). In Isa 66:2 the Lord declares, “But to this one I will look [*nabat*], to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”⁷ The NET translates the Hebrew term *nabat* “show special favor.” God looks upon or shows special favor to the one who is humble and contrite and who trembles at God’s Word. This explains why God always worked so powerfully in Daniel’s life.

Third, Gabriel came to Daniel in his “extreme weariness” (NASB, NET, HCSB, 9:21). Many English versions (e.g., ESV, NIV, NKJV) render the Hebrew phrase “in swift flight” (i.e., Gabriel “came to me in swift flight”).⁸ However, this translation seems less likely in view of the fact that Gabriel appeared in the form of a “man,” and men do not have wings as would be necessary for swift flight.⁹ Furthermore, Daniel suffered weariness in the surrounding context (7:28; 8:27; 10:8–9, 16–17). It appears that Daniel is praying with such passion and zeal that when Gabriel shows up he is exhausted. Can you imagine being physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually drained because of your prayer life? Have you ever prayed that hard? Perhaps if we prayed that hard, we would experience some of the visions and answers to prayers that Daniel did.

Fourth, Gabriel came to him about the time of evening offering (9:21). Daniel doesn’t draw attention to this statement. He says it in passing because he’s a humble man. Yet, this ought to move us. Even though it has been decades since Daniel has been in Jerusalem at the time of the evening offering, his heart is still being set by the worship of God, morning and evening, in the sacrifices at the temple. Daniel’s thinking is still regulated by the life and the worship of Jerusalem.¹⁰

*Fifth, God sends Gabriel to Daniel because he finds him “highly esteemed.”*¹¹ The Hebrew word rendered “highly esteemed” (*chamudah*) describes something or someone desired or counted precious. The plural form of this word is used to speak of the value of gold (Ezra 8:27) and costly garments (Gen 27:15). Daniel was considered a very precious treasure. I don’t think this is a generic compliment God gives to every believer.¹² Daniel’s heart for God and zealous prayer life made him special to God.¹³

Finally, God sends Gabriel to bring Daniel insight with understanding. Dan 9:24–27 is one of the most difficult texts in the entire Bible. Godly people, who know their Bible, vigorously debate these words. So it’s no wonder that Gabriel has to be sent for even Daniel to understand. This is encouraging to me. If Daniel had a hard time with 9:24–27, I’m comforted because I have a hard time as well. But I don’t give up and give in. Instead, I ask God to bring me His understanding. Please pray with me.

Act 2: God interprets Israel’s future for Daniel (9:24–27).¹⁴ Dan 9:24–27 records God’s response to Daniel’s prayer. Pound for pound these four verses pack the greatest prophetic punch in all of Scripture. Since Gabriel’s words are so deep and disputed, we will need to study them carefully. The easiest way to understand these verses is to see that 9:24 is a summary of the entire prophecy. Daniel records Gabriel’s words: “**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.**” The text informs us that a specific time period has been marked out by God—namely, “seventy weeks.” The Hebrew word translated “weeks” (*shabua*) literally means “sevens” and refers to a unit of seven (“seventy ‘sevens,’” NIV).¹⁵ This term can mean seven minutes, seven days, or seven decades. It’s like our English word “dozen.” If I told you to bring me a “dozen,” you’d say, “A dozen what?” You wouldn’t know if I meant twelve baseballs, twelve Bibles, or twelve burritos. But if I’m standing in front of a counter at Twister Doughnuts, and I say, “I’d like a dozen,” you would know what I intended. Similarly, Daniel has been thinking about the seventy years of Jeremiah’s captivity (9:1–2) so he would have understood Gabriel’s words as a reference to years (cf. 4:16, 23, 25).¹⁶ Hence, the phrase “seventy sevens” or “seventy weeks” refers to years: $70 \times 7 = 490$ years following the seventy-year captivity.

This “seventy ‘sevens’” prophecy is directly related to the Jews and Jerusalem. In 9:24a Gabriel tells Daniel, “Seventy weeks have been decreed for *your people and your holy city*” (my emphasis). This means that these prophecies are designed for the people of Israel and the land of Israel. The purpose of the “seventy ‘sevens’” (490 years) is to accomplish six goals. Since these goals look to the coming kingdom age, then the 490 years must take us all the way to the Millennium. According to 9:24, God wants:

- *To finish the transgression.* The word “transgression” (*pasha*) refers to deliberate rebellion against God. The definite article points to *the* rebellion of the nation. This is likely a reference to Israel’s rejection of Jesus as their Messiah. This is the rebellious act of Israel that will come to an end within the seventy weeks.¹⁷ The phrase “to finish the transgression” also includes a national acceptance of Jesus as Messiah.
- *To make an end¹⁸ of sin.* The Hebrew word for “sin” (*chattath*) means “to miss the mark.” The word is also plural (“sins”) and refers to sins of daily life, rather than referring to any specific sin.¹⁹ During God’s kingdom rule, Jesus will realign Israel’s priorities, goals, and behavior and administer judgment quickly and justly.
- *To make atonement for iniquity.* The verb in this phrase (*kaphar*) denotes “the covering of sin by making a sacrifice.” This refers to the once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus. When Jesus died on the cross, He put an end to the Old Testament sacrificial system. This is what the books of Galatians and Hebrews are all about. The goal of this atonement is to bring Israel to the realization that Jesus is the Messiah. This will occur during the Tribulation (cf. Rom 11:24–28).
- *To bring in everlasting righteousness.* The word translated “everlasting” (*olam*) is better rendered “age.”²⁰ This age refers to God’s one thousand year kingdom we refer to as the Millennium. A new world order will occur after Israel grieves over its sins against God (see Zech 12:9–10; Ezek 36:26–27).²¹
- *To seal up vision and prophecy.* Once the Lord Jesus begins His reign in Jerusalem during the Millennium, there is no longer any need for vision and prophecy. Jesus will be sufficient. Those who are living during this time will recognize that all has been fulfilled.
- *To anoint the most holy place.*²² The word “place” has been added to most English versions; however, it is not in the Hebrew. Since “most holy” is never used of a person, it does not refer to the Messiah or the church.²³ It most likely refers to the temple (cf. Dan 8:13–14). This goal, like the previous ones displays God’s heart for His people, Israel.

We have just seen the panoramic view of the entire period of Daniel’s seventy weeks, now we must hunker down into the details to see how everything unfolds. In 9:25, Gabriel gives us information about the first sixty–nine weeks (483 years) of Daniel’s seventy weeks. **“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.”** Notice that the first sixty–nine weeks are distinguished. Gabriel refers to a period of “seven weeks,” or a total of forty–nine years. This prophecy refers to the restoring and refortifying of Jerusalem before being destroyed by the Babylonians, which is described in Nehemiah 2 (444 BC). Following this, Gabriel refers to another period of sixty–two weeks (434 years). The date that Gabriel (and Nehemiah) provides takes us to 33 AD. When Gabriel states, “until Messiah the Prince,” he is referring to Jesus Christ’s last year on earth. If you’re an engineer or an accountant, you’re no doubt questioning my figures, and rightly so. However, it’s important to recognize that there’s a difference between solar years (365 days) and prophetic years (360 days).²⁴ The biblical authors tend to use the latter in the prophetic literature of Scripture. For example, the Apostle John, in the Book of Revelation, apparently used 360–day years in the calculations.²⁵ He is no doubt walking in step with Daniel.²⁶ This makes sense because Daniel is the greatest commentary (i.e. explanation) ever written on Revelation. So with a 360–day year, the end of the sixty–ninth week, after which the Messiah will be cut off, is the year 33 AD.²⁷ Once again, we see that *God is always right on time*. In fact, He has perfect timing!

In 9:26 Gabriel unveils the unspecified time between the sixty–ninth and seventieth week.²⁸ Daniel writes: **“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.”** It is important to note the phrase “Then after . . .” The implication of this phrase is that there is a gap between the sixty–ninth and seventieth week. Indeed, God’s prophetic clock for Israel stopped at the end of the sixty–ninth set of sevens. We’re presently living in this period of unspecified duration between the sixty–ninth and seventieth sets of seven, called “the church age.” The church age will end when Christ comes to rapture His bride to heaven. God’s prophetic clock for Israel will begin to run again after the rapture when the Antichrist comes. It’s important to recognize that the “end times” or “last days” includes the entire time frame from Christ’s death to His second coming. Therefore, 9:26–27 is all part of the end times.

Now, let’s break down 9:26. The “cutting off” of the Messiah refers to Christ’s crucifixion. The Hebrew verb translated “cut off” (*karath*) refers to the execution of wrongdoers.²⁹ This concept depicts the fact that “He [God] made Him [Christ] who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf” (2 Cor 5:21a). Although Jesus had never sinned, He died as a wrongdoer to pay the price for our sin. Even the method of His death (crucifixion) was that of a criminal.³⁰ The phrase, “and have nothing,” refers to the fact that Jesus died without apparent followers or possessions.³¹ It seemed to onlookers that He was a dismal failure.

Gabriel also speaks about another prince in 9:25: “. . . the prince who is to come” (lit. “a prince, the one coming”). This prince is likely referring to the Roman general Titus who brings about the fall of Jerusalem.³² One generation after Christ’s death, in 66 AD, Jewish zealots rebelled against Rome. In response, the Romans overran the country, destroying the Temple in 70 AD. It has never been rebuilt. Gabriel then makes it clear that the fall of Jerusalem “will come like a flood.” The implication is that from the fall of Jerusalem on, God’s people will be ravaged by war *until* the Prince of Peace comes. This is confirmed in Matt 24:6 where Jesus said, “You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars.” Wars will continue up to the very end, but the climax to history will come like a dam breaking loose.³³ It is critical to recognize that there seems to be a double fulfillment in 9:25. Most likely, this prince is also a reference to the Antichrist—the “little horn” of 7:8, 24–26. If so, the sacking of Jerusalem is a type of what will take place during the Tribulation period.

Daniel concludes in 9:27 by describing the horrors of the final seven year period. **“And he [the Antichrist] will make a firm covenant with the many [unbelieving Israel] 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.”** The Antichrist will apparently masquerade as a friend of Israel, giving the Jewish people a sense of security and allowing them to worship in their newly rebuilt temple. However, this peace will be short lived. The one who poses as Israel’s protector will become Israel’s persecutor.³⁴ The Antichrist will restrict and prohibit worship. The cessation of worship will happen at the midpoint of the Tribulation. Week seventy will come when Jesus returns to rule and reign in Jerusalem. In the New Testament (Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:3–4; Rev 13), we discover that the Antichrist apparently places an image of himself in the temple and orders the world to worship him. This event, which Jesus calls the “abomination of desolation,” begins the “great tribulation” (Matt 24:15–216).

At the end of the seven year period of tribulation, God will slay the Antichrist (“the one who makes desolate”).³⁵ Dan 11:40–45 discusses this event further and concludes with: “he will come to his end, and no one will help him” (11:45b). Rev 19:19–21 and 20:10 describe Satan and his henchmen being thrown into the lake of fire. This will mark the end of the seventy sets of seven and the beginning of the Millennium, when the six goals of Dan 9:24 will be fulfilled. This serves as another reminder that *God is always right on time.*

Perhaps after reading this sermon you’re feeling “extreme weariness,” much like Daniel (9:21). I can

appreciate these sentiments. You've just survived one of the most difficult texts in the entire Bible.³⁶ Yet, Dan 9 is also one of the greatest prophetic passages in Scripture. It has been called "the backbone of biblical prophecy."³⁷ It's also one of the strongest biblical proofs that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.³⁸ This passage is the key that unlocks many other biblical prophecies.³⁹ If you understand Dan 9, you'll be able to grasp Revelation and other prophetic literature. This may not seem very important to you at the moment, but this study is especially relevant since 27% of the Bible is prophetic. If we're to know God's Word, we can't skip prophetic literature. Studying prophetic literature ought to give us great confidence in God. About 50% of the Bible's prophecies have already been literally fulfilled. Hence, you can "stake your life" on the fact that God will fulfill the other 50% without exception. Dan 9 is incredibly significant, for it teaches us about God's character and His plan, purpose, and program. It reminds us that God is large and in charge over the universe and human history. God can more than handle your marriage, family, work, and church. *God is always right on time.* Indeed, His timing is perfect, and He's in complete control.

There's an amazing Scripture buried in the neglected book of 1 Chronicles. It's a verse that Bible students down throughout time have picked up on. The Chronicler makes reference to the men of Issacar who followed King David. He says of these men that they "understood the times and knew what Israel should do" (1 Chron 12:32 NET). Of course, the principle that stems from this brief remark is that you and I should seek to be like the men of Issacar. In other words, we ought to understand the times and know what we should do. This, of course, entails having a grasp on God's prophetic Word. As we understand the times and know what we should do, our marriages, families, workplaces, churches, and even our county and country will never be the same. May God use you and me to change our world.

Scripture References

Daniel 9:20–27

Deuteronomy 6:6–7

Joshua 1:8

Jeremiah 15:16

Colossians 3:16

2 Timothy 3:16–17

James 1:22

Study Questions

1. Am I aware of my own sin (Dan 9:20)? How have I underestimated the importance of personal and corporate confession in my prayers? How can I humble myself before God this week? What sin(s) is He compelling me to confess? How can I encourage others to have a deeper sensitivity to God's holiness? Read Psalm 139:23–24 and James 4:6–10.
2. When has God answered one of my prayers (Dan 9:20–23)? How can I be sure it was a direct answer from God? What was my response? What kind of confidence did this build in me? Did I share God's answer to my prayers with others? Have I continued to pray in faith and expectation? If so, what has transpired?
3. Can I summarize the contents of the seventy weeks prophecy (Dan 9:24–27)? How would I summarize this prophecy to a new believer in Christ? What difference should this text make in his or her life? How does this prophecy motivate me to live for Christ?
4. Why is God so into details and timing? How does God's precise nature make me feel? Does it weary me or does it increase my confidence in His overarching plan? How can I share God's precision and impeccable timing with others? How can I foresee this impacting their lives? In what ways should I be impacted?
5. Do I have an interest in prophetic Scripture? Why or why not? Have I attempted to study Scripture for myself? If not, what is holding me back? Note: I recommend the following website as a resource to learn how to study books of the Bible: <http://grace-bible.org/downloads/BibleStudies.aspx>.

Notes

¹ Revised and adapted from Tony Evans, *The Best is Yet to Come* (Chicago: Moody, 2000), 89.

² See Lev 16:6 where on the Day of Atonement, Aaron the high priest, interceded first for himself and his household and then for the children of Israel. The same word for “sin” (*chattath*) appears in both passages.

³ “The holy mountain of my God” refers to Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem (Jerusalem was built on seven hills) on which Solomon’s temple was built (cf. 2 Chron 3:1). This was the same mountain on which Abraham offered Isaac (cf. Gen 22:2) and this same mountain was later a place where David offered a sacrifice to stop the judgment of God (cf. 2 Sam 24:18–25; 1 Chron 21:18–27).

⁴ Gabriel also gave Daniel an understanding of the second vision (Dan 8:16). Gabriel appears to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, in Luke 1:19, and to Mary, the mother of our Lord (Luke 1:26–27). His name means “man of God” (BDB s.v. *Gabriel*, cf. 8:16). Gabriel and Michael are the only two angels whose names are mentioned in the Bible.

⁵ Jesus said, “Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him” (Matt 6:8).

⁶ See Isa 65:24: “It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear.”

⁷ Another great OT text on confession is Prov 28:13–14: “He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion. How blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”

⁸ Stefanovic is likely correct when he writes, “With the present evidence, all that can be said is that both translations are equally possible.” Zdravko Stefanovic, *Daniel: Wisdom to the Wise: Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press, 2007), 350.

⁹ Daniel did suffer weariness (7:28; 8:27; 10:8–9, 16–17).

¹⁰ Since temple offerings could no longer be offered due to Babylonian captivity, prayers took their place. See Ps 141:1–2: “O LORD, I call upon You; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to You! May my prayer be counted as incense before You; the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.”

¹¹ This is rendered variously as “great value” (NET); “greatly loved” (ESV); “greatly beloved” (NRSV, NKJV/KJV); “treasured by God” (HCSB); “specially chosen” (NLT). The implied agent is God. This phrase is also used of Daniel in 10:11, 19. The Hebrew term (BDB s.v. *chamudah*: “precious treasure” (cf. 11:38, 43).

¹² The KJV says, “thou art greatly beloved.” It is significant that the greatest source of prophetic information in the NT is the apostle John, and Daniel is the leading prophet in the OT. Both of them are described as “greatly beloved.” The secret of God giving Daniel and John the special privilege of being the bearers of prophetic revelation is in their unusual obedience to God. David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall: Secrets from the Prophecies of Daniel* (Dallas: Word, 1992), 187.

¹³ Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Daniel, 2009 ed. <http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/daniel.pdf>, 103.

¹⁴ Kaiser writes, “. . . we must receive the prophecy today in the mood of prayer, as Daniel did, and not in a cold or merely intellectual way.” Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 169.

¹⁵ The usual feminine form of “week” that is used elsewhere in the OT is not used here. See Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 202.

¹⁶ HALOT s.v. *shabua* 3: ‘week of years, a period of seven years.’ *Shabua* is used this way in Gen 29:27 when Moses speaks of Jacob working a “week” (seven years) for Rachel.

¹⁷ Paul Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come* (Clifton, TX: Scofield Ministries, 2007), 194.

¹⁸ The Hebrew verb *tamam* translated “to make an end” literally means “to seal up.” The margin of the Hebrew text uses the word that means “put an end to” or “finish,” so most English versions have adopted this alternate reading.

¹⁹ Leon J. Wood, *A Commentary on Daniel* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 249.

²⁰ Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Messianic Christology* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1998), 96; Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come*, 197.

²¹ Isa 1:26 predicts the time when Jerusalem’s name will again be “the city of righteousness, a faithful city.”

²² Kaiser Jr., *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament*, 169.

²³ It can be argued that 1 Chron 23:13 refers to Aaron, the high priest, but this is far from certain.

²⁴ See Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 134–38.

²⁵ Cf. Rev 11:2–3; 12:6, 14; 13:5.

²⁶ Benware, *Daniel’s Prophecy of Things to Come*, 201.

²⁷ When each week is considered equivalent to seven years, the 69 weeks equate to 483 years. Using a 360-day calendar, you could also calculate that to be 173,880 days. Beginning with March 4, 444 BC, the 173,880-day period

takes us to March 29, AD 33. No, that wasn't the birth of Jesus, but it is thought to be the date when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Go ahead and check it out if you want. From 444 BC to AD 33 is 476 years. And 476 years times 365.24219 days per year equals 173,855 days. When you add to that number 25 more days for the difference between March 4 and March 29, you arrive at—you guessed it—173,880 days. The prophecies are startling in their absolute precision.

²⁸ The OT records other prophetic gaps: Isa 9:6a/6b–7; Isa 61:1–2; Zech 9:9–10.

²⁹ Lev 7:20; Ps 37:9; Prov 2:22.

³⁰ Herb Vander Lugt, *The Daniel Papers: Daniel's Prophecy of 70 Weeks* (Grand Rapids: Radio Bible Class, 1994), 20.

³¹ Cf. Isa 53:3; John 1:11.

³² Hodges sees only one fulfillment in Dan 9:26 (Titus, the Roman general). He also takes the Hebrew word translated "he" in 9:27 and renders it "they" in reference to the people of the prince to come (9:26). He argues that this term can have a collective or plural sense and refers back to "people" in 9:26. He then sees the sole reference to the Antichrist occurring in 9:27b. See Zane C. Hodges, *Power to Make War: The Career of the Assyrian Who Will Rule the World* (Dallas: Redención Viva, 1995), 30–31.

³³ Kaiser Jr., *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament*, 171.

³⁴ Benware, *Daniel's Prophecy of Things to Come*, 209.

³⁵ See also 2 Thess 2:8 and Rev 19:20.

³⁶ Have we exhausted it? No! But I hope we understand it better than we did. Even though this is an apocalyptic text, we are not to think that it is mysterious and not understandable. Even our Lord Jesus said that all who read this text were to understand (Matt 24:15). We must not be intimidated by the difficult portions of Scripture. We must relish the opportunity to study it. We must count it as one of our greatest privileges.

³⁷ Charles R. Swindoll, *Daniel: God's Pattern for the Future* (Fullerton, CA: Insight for Living, 1986), 90.

³⁸ Renald E. Showers, *The Most High God: A Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Bellmawr, NJ: The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 1982), 117.

³⁹ Matt 24:15; 2 Thess 2:1–4; and Rev 6–19 are simply an expansion of Dan 9:27.