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Prophecy doesn't need to be mysterious — the Bible itself calls you to understand end times as it provides information about future events. A complete understanding of Bible prophecy requires a study of Daniel, who the Jews are, and why they're distinct from the church.

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- Nebuchadnezzar's Vision in Chapter 2.
- The Writing on the Wall in Chapter 5.
- Daniel's Vision of 4 Beasts in Chapter 7.
- The Historical Accuracy of Daniel.
- Daniel and the Lion's den.

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DANIEL

FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LION

Darrin Yeager

\int_{α}^{Ω} **Daniel: From the Mouth of the Lion**

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SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9:24–27)

The Famous 70 weeks of Daniel. Even people knowing nothing else of the book have heard of this passage. It's vital to understand this section before you get to Revelation or you'll be completely lost; Matthew underscores the importance of the prophecy as it's specifically called out for understanding.

*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (**whoso readeth, let him understand**) (Matt 24:15)*

This passage provides the framework to understanding all unfulfilled prophecy. If you follow this, the remainder falls into place, while failure to understand this prophecy causes many problems relating the church and the Jews, the tribulation and the church, and so on.

First note the implicit technology — when you see. We immediately take that for granted, but prior to satellite TV, only a few could see the Holy Place at once, while these events will be broadcast world-wide. It's only recently (last 30 years or so) where

such technology existed for the whole world to watch events unfold live.

A few quick remarks to help avoid lots of bad information, and which should be obvious from even a casual reading (though surprisingly many miss):

1. It's about the Jews, *not* the church. It's Daniel's people (the Jews) and their Holy City (Jerusalem).
2. It hasn't happened yet. The end of sin, everlasting righteousness, and so on. Some attempt to claim a previous fulfillment, but then we must have missed the end of sin and the beginning of everlasting righteousness.
3. The 70 weeks are not continuous. A gap appears between the 69th week and the 70th week.
4. Revelation details the 70th week (mainly chapters 6–19).

Simply keeping a few obvious things in mind helps avoid pitfalls and puts you ahead of many scholars who don't really read the book.

You'll notice God deals with the church and Jews separately. Before Jesus, God dealt with the Jews (Gentiles were only included if they became a Jew). Since Jesus' death and resurrection, God dealt with the Gentiles. This leads some to believe God abandoned the Jews, and their promises are now bestowed on the church.

Nonsense — God's promises to Abraham in Genesis are unconditional and irrevocable; the Jewish people still have a destiny to be fulfilled. Don't make the mistake the Jews aren't important anymore, or God's promises to them have now fallen on the church. That's a tragic error, and the cause of much persecution of the Jewish people. More importantly, it's simply not true.

We'll break the prophecy down into a few sections:

- V24 — Overview.
- V25 — The 69 weeks (complete).
- V26a — The Messiah.
- V26b — The interval between week 69 and 70 (where we're currently at).
- V27 — The final week (still future, but detailed in Revelation).

10.1 THE OVERVIEW

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. (Daniel 9:24)

As noted, it's obvious this prophecy concerns the Jews and the city of Jerusalem, not the Church; the Church and the Jews are distinct and separate. Second, while history records the fulfillment of parts of the prophecy, parts are still yet future. Obviously, an end of sin hasn't occurred, nor everlasting righteousness.

What are the seventy weeks? The Hebrew says seventy sevens, and it's translated weeks. Similar to our use of decade (meaning 10 years), in this context the Hebrew clearly implies a week means 7 years. One thing you must note; Bible prophecy uses 360 day years. Why exactly isn't important, but if you're going to try to calculate this yourself you can't use the current 365 day calendar.

It does represent a literal period of time — it's not an allegory and must be understood to be literal. To jump ahead a bit, several allusions to the 70th week appear elsewhere in the bible, each describing the time involved a bit differently, yet equally.

- 42 months — Revelation 11:2,13:5
- 1,260 days — Revelation 11:3,12:6
- Half of one week (literally “sevens”) — Daniel 9:27
- Times, time and half a time (3 1/2 years) — Daniel 12:7

Notice that 1260 divided by 3.5 = 360 — a year in the Bible equals 360 days.

Chuck Missler notes all ancient calendars changed in about 700 BC from 360 days to the current 365 1/4 days, although each did it differently. Why the change occurred might be historically interesting, but not important here, and left as an exercise for the interested reader.

10.2 THE 69 WEEKS

Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the

Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. (Daniel 9:25)

For most of this discussion, we're going to use Sir Robert Anderson's work "The Coming Prince", cited by Chuck Missler, J Vernon McGee, and others (no we didn't do all this work ourselves).

First off, notice it's a prediction, and it has a starting event, mathematical number, and a terminating event. This should be easy to verify or disprove for critics. In fact, it's the exact nature of this prophecy (and others in Daniel) leading skeptics to late date the book by someone other than Daniel. The research is on shaky ground, but the presumption is God doesn't exist, therefore prophecy doesn't exist, thus it's impossible for Daniel to have known the future with such precision.

But notice Daniel's error is zero. Compare that to the prophets you'll find in the National Enquirer who receive great accolades if they get it *half* right. Compare to the Bible prophets who were correct 100% of the time, and would be stoned if something uttered failed to come true — the yardstick for prophets of God is 100% accuracy, all the time.

But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him. (Deuteronomy 18:20–22)

Let's break down the 69 weeks for further analysis:

- START: from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem.
- NUMBER: There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks.
- FINAL EVENT: Until Messiah the Prince.

So let's figure this out. First, when did this start? Perhaps your Bible mentions 3 possibilities for this starting event (actually 4).

- Cyrus in Ezra 1:1–4 (First year of Cyrus)

- Darius in Ezra 6:1–12 (First year of Darius)
- Artaxerxes in Ezra 7:11–26 (Seventh year Artaxerxes)
- Artaxerxes in Nehemiah 2:1–8 (Twentieth year Artaxerxes)

So which is it? Go back to the text to get one more clue “The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times”. Only Nehemiah mentions the wall, and that decree occurred in 445 BC in the month of Nisan. Notice how simple Bible prophecy becomes when you just take what it says as what it means? Imagine all the problems we’d have if we tried to allegorize it. Just take it as it says and you’ll be fine.

Mark Eastman in his book “The Search for Messiah” states it’s Hebrew tradition when the day of month isn’t mentioned specifically it means the first day*. According to Nehemiah, the starting point is the first of Nisan in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes.

So we have a starting point — the interval is easy as 69 weeks of 360 day years is 173,880 days. What’s the final event? Until the coming of the Jewish Messiah. And that’s the whole prophecy.

If you do the calendar work, moving forward from Nisan 445 BC 173,880 days you’ll arrive at the tenth of Nisan 32 AD[†], known as April 6, 32 AD. So What? The significance comes from Jesus himself, after the events of what we call Palm Sunday, as He weeps over the city.

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. (Luke 19:41–44)

As you read the Gospels, you’ll notice a few times the crowd tries to make him King, but he slips away, saying My time has not yet come. Yet this specific day, he not only allowed it, he arranged it. Why? It’s the exact day from the prophecy in Daniel.

Jesus held them accountable to know. The prophecy isn’t hard to understand, and if we can figure out the events thousands of

* http://blueletterbible.org/Comm/mark_eastman/messiah/sfm_06.html

† (McGee, 1982, page 588)

years later, the Jews certainly should have understood. It's not allegorical or theoretical; the creator of the universe holds people accountable to what He's said.

Something else is going on on why the Jews missed it.

The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. (Genesis 49:10)

To distill all that, it means the Jews would not have capital punishment taken away from them until the Messiah comes. As Rome takes over Israel, the Jewish leaders lament, for they think the scripture has been broken. Yet they did not know about a young boy growing up among them in a local town; the Jewish leaders believed God's word had been broken.

They imposed presuppositions to the text, and possibly for that, missed their Messiah. Don't do that. Don't force your ideas on the Bible. God sometimes does things a little strange, at least the way we see it. But the prophecy is clear — "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

OK, you're a skeptic. Let's look at it another way, as Mark Eastman* notes the following. Luke chapter three states Jesus' baptism occurs in the fifteenth year of Tiberius. Tiberius's reign began on Aug 19 14 AD, so Jesus' first passover would have been spring AD 29. Most believe Jesus' ministry was 3 1/2 years, so the fourth would have been 32 AD. And in 32 AD, the Sunday before Passover that year was April 6, 32 AD, the same day given to Daniel (what a coincidence!).

So that's verse 25. So far it's been simple. But once you get there, what happens?

10.3 THE MESSIAH

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself (Daniel 9:26a)

After sixty-two weeks is same as after the 69 weeks (as it's 7 + 62). After that period of time the Messiah shall be cut off (which means executed). But not for Himself (substitution); of course Jesus Himself was innocent, He paid the price for *my* sin, not His

* http://blueletterbible.org/Comm/mark_eastman/messiah/sfm_06.html

(He was sinless), as Chuck Missler examines the gospel according to Barabbas:*

The substitution of Barabbas over Jesus before Pilate on that fateful day has profound implications for each of us. It is illuminating to examine the contrast between the two accused more closely:

1. *Barabbas stood under the righteous condemnation of the law.*
2. *Barabbas knew the One who was to take his cross and take his place was innocent.*
3. *Barabbas knew that Jesus Christ was for him a true substitute.*
4. *Barabbas knew that he had done nothing to merit going free while another took his place.*
5. *Barabbas knew Christ's death was for him perfectly efficacious.*

Barabbas and Jesus changed places! "The murderer's bonds, curse, disgrace, and mortal agony were transferred to the righteous Jesus; while the liberty, innocence, safety, and well-being of the immaculate Nazarene became the lot of the murderer.

10.4 THE INTERVAL

and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. (Daniel 9:26b)

How do we know an interval exists between 69th and 70th week? Carefully read the passage again, "the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary". The prince who is to come refers to Antichrist, and his people (the Romans) destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD as a historical event. So we know by history the interval was at least from 32 AD to 70 AD, and by real experience it's been about 2,000 years.

But the 70th week draws near.

Back to what we started with, as this passage concerns the Jews, not the church. What happens in the 70th week? You'll find out in Revelation chapters 6–19. But here's what Daniel says about that period.

* <http://www.khouse.org/articles/2000/217/>

10.5 THE 70TH WEEK

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9:27)

He is “the price who is to come”, the anti-christ. He shall enforce an agreement with Israel (whether he makes the agreement itself is debatable), but in the middle of the period he breaks the covenant, committing the abomination which causes desolation — it’s at that point the Jews realize their mistake. The book of Revelation expands on the 70th week if you’re interested.

CONCLUSION

History records the fulfillment of the first 69 weeks perfectly, do you have any doubt the 70th week will be? This passage poses no problems if you take it as it reads, and not try to allegorize it. The events are sure — but where is the United States in the end times? It’s not mentioned much in the Bible. Why not?

Society continues to degrade — Robert Bork wrote a book called “Slouching toward Gomorrah”; the provocative title prophetic as we head toward value relativism and moral relativism, losing the moral absolutes of God’s word in all corners of society. Schools fail to teach basic logic and analysis skills, turning out people ignorant of basic skills making them easy pickings for anyone desiring to subvert the truth. For example, consider a recent bizarre Texas court decision.

*Texas law allows the killing of a fetus to be prosecuted as murder, regardless of the stage of development, but the laws do not apply to abortions, the states’ highest criminal court has ruled . . . The Texas court said abortion precedent was based on the premise that a woman wants the procedure.**

First situational ethics, now situational murder. It’s based on the idea the woman *wants* to kill her baby. If she wants to kill her baby, it’s not murder (George Orwell would be proud as we’ve now called bad good, and good bad). If she doesn’t want to kill her baby, it’s murder. We’re rapidly slouching back toward the time

* <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/23/us/23texas.html>

of Judges, where “everyone did what was right in their own eyes”, and moral absolutes become lost in a sea of relativism.

Some say the situation is hopeless, yet Nineveh was 40 days from destruction and turned it around. Since the United States isn't in prophecy we don't know the end; it's possible to change course. The problem does not lie with the congress or president, it's us; the politicians are *our* employees, *we* put them in office, and by our votes we can remove them (more on that in chapter nine).

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

We will be held accountable as stewards for the republic; we hired the guys leading the country. If they be Godly, moral men, it's because we demanded it to be so. Some Christians don't like to be involved in politics, yet as a steward of this country you *must* be. It's not about advocating for a political party, but principles. Find out what the candidates believe, and support those holding biblical principles.

And of the children of Issachar, who were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; (1 Chronicles 12:32)

CHAPTER NINE

As the Daytona 500 race nears each February, it provides a reminder NASCAR remains one sport prayer still occurs before the event, even if those prayers are general and politically correct. A similar prayer frequently occurs before legislatures convene. But what if someone didn't get the memo regarding politically correct content? You'd get Pastor Joe Wright*.

Heavenly Father, we come before you to ask your forgiveness. We seek your direction and your guidance. We know your word says, "Woe to those who call evil good." But that's what we've done.

We've lost our spiritual equilibrium. We have inverted our values. We have ridiculed the absolute truth of your word in the name of moral pluralism. We have worshiped other gods and called it multiculturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle. We've exploited the poor and called it a lottery. We've neglected the needy and called it self-preservation. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. In the name of choice, we have killed our unborn. In the name of right to life, we have killed abortionists.

We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem. We have abused power and called it political savvy. We have coveted our neighbor's possessions and called it taxes. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment.

Search us, oh, God, and know our hearts today. Try us. Show us any wickedness within us. Cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of the State of Kansas, and that they have been ordained by you to govern this great state.

Grant them your wisdom to rule. May their decisions direct us to the center of your will. And, as we continue our prayer and as we come in out of the fog, give us clear minds to accomplish our goals as we begin this Legislature. For we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Whoops. More than the legislature bargained for, to be sure. But compare Pastor Wright's prayer with Daniel's prayer in chapter nine

* January 1996 in Kansas. Different wordings of the actual text exist, although the basic concept remains the same.

as they both deal with sins of the people, they both name specific sins they're guilty of, and both use "we" and include themselves in the problem.

So we've evolved, right? Perhaps not so much — the prayers display similar characteristics as our society continues to deviate from God's law, and the government moves more and more to censor God — Daniel 9 sounds like anything we could pray about our country (there's a lesson in there somewhere).

Society continues to degrade. Robert Bork wrote a book entitled "Slouching toward Gomorrah" — we're heading toward value relativism and moral relativism, as atheism becomes the official state religion (in opposition to the freedom of religion the country was founded on, but that's another topic. It's freedom *to*, not freedom *from*). Everybody does what is right in their own eyes, and tolerance doesn't mean allowing everyone freedom to worship what and how they want, tolerance means *no absolutes exist*, and anyone claiming so displays intolerance and should be silenced (Doublespeak at its best; Orwell would be proud).

Of course, the ultimate irony comes from the only remaining absolute — *there are no absolutes*, which makes as much sense as the Cretan saying "all Cretians are liars"*. No absolute moral authority exists; each person acts according to whatever works for their perception of morality. But value and moral relativism results in bizarre applications (again displaying how bankrupt the concept is), as a recent Texas court ruling makes obvious.

Texas law allows the killing of a fetus to be prosecuted as murder, regardless of the stage of development, but the laws do not apply to abortions, the states' highest criminal court has ruled ... The Texas court said abortion precedent was based on the premise that a woman wants the procedure.[†]

First situational ethics, now situational murder. The murder bases itself on the idea the woman *wants* to kill her baby. If she *wants* to kill her baby, it's not murder (does that make sense?). If she doesn't want to kill her baby, it's murder. So if an automobile accident occurs on the way to the abortion clinic, it's murder. But 10 minutes later when the "doctor" dismembers the baby and poisons it with saltwater, that isn't murder *because the woman wants to kill her baby*. Huh? Value relativism at it's best (or worst).

* Titus 1:12

† <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/23/us/23texas.html>

Society de-evolves back to Judges as “everyone does what was right in their own eyes”. Sound familiar? We don’t want to restrict anybody from anything anymore. It’s not a baby, it’s a choice. Value relativism, situational ethics, and 1984-esqe redefinitions of words (George Orwell would be proud, if just a few years late on his predictions) — without God, anything is possible*.

Many believe the hopelessness of the situation, yet Nineveh was 40 days from destruction — it’s possible to turn it around as God does perform miracles (I believe Billy Graham said if God doesn’t judge America for her sins, he’ll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah). As value relativism continues to seep across the country like a toxic waste spill, the country loses its moral compass, and the sense of right and wrong. If it feels good, do it.

Christians focus on the wrong issue — the problem lies not with congress or the president, it’s us — the politicians work for us. We hired them, we can fire them; the solution will not come from protesting and waving signs.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

We will be held accountable as stewards; we hired the guys leading the county. If they be Godly men and men of integrity, it’s because the people demand it. If they be men without morals and choose to promote sin, it’s because the people allow it. The politicians aren’t the problem, they’re a symptom of the real problem — the attempt to exterminate God from all corners of society.

After the elimination of God, no absolutes remain and it’s a moral free for all (and free-fall); it’s back to the times of the Judges once again (read the book for yourself, and see what happens when a society becomes a moral free-for-all without the absolute standard of God’s Word).

A lot of Christians don’t want to be involved in political matters, yet it’s required of stewards to be faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2). Are you afraid to get involved in your child’s life (we hope not)? Then why be afraid of politics? Compare Daniel’s prayer to today as Daniel involved himself in politics, but not by carrying a sign or protesting (the solution isn’t to be found in PAC’s). What did he do? He took a stand, and supported biblical principles in government.

* Bill Ritchie

Everything passed through the filter of God's Word. If it passes the test, it's acceptable, if not, it isn't.

We're not talking about waving signs and protesting or shouting vote for this guy or passing out voter education guides, but a simple idea: Find out what the candidates believe and support those holding biblical principles. We can all agree on that. It's not supporting one political party over another, but supporting people who hold true to Biblical principles.

We *will* be held accountable for the stewardship of this country. If the government be Godly, it's because the people demand it. If it slouches toward Gomorrah, it's because the people tolerate it. You're a steward of your vote; do homework and exercise your stewardship wisely. Be like the sons of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do.* It takes work and dedication, but your stewardship demands no less.

So now, from today's situation back to Daniel (although it sounds the same).

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. (Daniel 9:1-2)

Why are they in captivity in the first place? They ignored God's law; nations ignore God's law at their own peril. God may *allow* transgression for a period of time, but that does not mean He *approves* of it. At some point, judgment comes. For Israel, they ignored the Sabbath for the land and eventually God judged them for it.

Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the nations; and polluted the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up early, and sending, because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy. . . . To fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths;

* 1 Chronicles 12:32

for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years. (2 Chronicles 36:14–16, 21)

Just as the Sabbath week existed for man, a Sabbath year for the land existed as well. The land worked six years, and allowed to rest on the seventh. But Israel ignored it so long the Lord says the land must rest for its Sabbaths, and thus the captivity of which Daniel is a part begins.

They had warning — God sent messengers which they ignored. Sound familiar? Today people mock and despise men of God as nobody wants to hear the warnings. But judgment will come. Nevertheless, as the longsuffering and patience of God allows time for repentance, at some point enough is enough and judgment comes.

Daniel understands the fulfillment of Jeremiah in 25:11–12 & 29:10 draws near; about 67 years of the 70 years passed as Daniel begins his prayer. Daniel took Jeremiah's prophecy literally with no attempt to allegorize it. That's an important concept when you get to Revelation — take it as it says. When it says one-third of the grass burns up it means just that. Revelation isn't hard because we don't understand it, but because we do and don't like what it says.

And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes (Daniel 9:3)

Daniel prays for what he knows will happen. It's a short and not long-winded prayer, but covers several important points. First, he starts with the right attitude and humility. You can't go to the God of the universe with arrogance and pride, but neither can you go with timidity and fear. As always, you need balance.

Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

Surely God doesn't want to be bothered? What does Paul say?

Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (Philippians 4:6)

Yeah, but what does everything mean? It means the big stuff right? Au contraire.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1–3)

All things were made by him and nothing was made without him; the same Greek appears in John as Paul used in Philippians. All means all — even the little stuff. God wants to hear from you. You're not bugging God, all things means all things. Understand who you're talking to, but don't be afraid — he *wants* to hear from you in all things — and all means all, that's all all means.

And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and awesome God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; (Daniel 9:4)

Note why he's praying — he knows the captivity draws to a conclusion, but he doesn't mention it yet as he's going to confess sin first. A misnomer exists about confessing sin — it's not a catholic idea about going to a priest for absolution, it's agreeing with God the sin exists.

He begins with a statement of who God is. Two errors must be avoided in your approach to God — too casual and too formal. He's not the "man upstairs", but neither should you be afraid of Him. It's neither "yo God" nor "Thou O Lord", and King James English doesn't make your prayer heard faster. Consider examples of both errors with Moses.

- Exodus 3 — Moses and the burning bush as God says take off your shoes, you're standing on holy ground. Approaching God with the proper attitude of respect and reverence.
- Exodus 20 — God gives Moses the ten commandments. The people (verse 18) are fearful and only want Moses to speak to them. That's improper fear and timidity.

Again, maintain balance as satan wants to get you off to either side. He doesn't believe anything except to get you away from the truth. Neither casual nor fear is correct; approach God for everything with the proper respect, but don't fail to include Him in *all* things.

We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thine ordinances: (Daniel 9:5)

Daniel states the facts; he doesn't try to rationalize away the sin. Chuck Missler says never underestimate a human's ability to rationalize, and once you understand that you'll be amazed at how often you see it. Sin is sin. Period.

Daniel includes himself — “*we have sinned*”. He gives specific examples (wickedness, rebellion, ignoring God's law). All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). The Greek in John 1:3, Philippians 4:6 and Romans 3:23 contains the same word. All means all, that's all all means. Your situation isn't different — sin is still sin. Don't try and rationalize it.

Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spoke in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries to which thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. (Daniel 9:6–7)

Not only did they fall away from the law, they ignored the people sent by God to warn them. Gee, does this begin to sound familiar? Wickedness, rebellion against God, ignoring His law, and refusing to heed the warning from men God sent. Has man evolved since Daniel's time? It doesn't appear so. The only thing man learns from history is man learns nothing from history — the same mistakes repeat again and again.

People don't like to hear the truth, so they ignore it or rationalize it, or they find people who tell them what they want to hear. It's normal to rationalize your situation — after all, it's different (NOT!). Sin is sin, and we're all guilty before God. But people turn away from the truth toward others who speak not the truth, but what they want to hear.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (2 Timothy 4:3–4)

God's rules apply to everyone, all the time, in every situation. You must speak the truth in love — not sandwich-board evangelism. If people reject it, fine; it's not your job to be the Holy Spirit, only to give information. The responsibility for that knowledge falls on the individual person.

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; (Daniel 9:8–9)

It's our fault, not the Twinkies*. It's popular today to blame everyone else *but* the person responsible. It's not your fault, you have a disease. Where is personal responsibility? To paraphrase for modern times, to *us* belongs shame, our President, our congress and our fathers have sinned against you.

Remember “the buck stops here”? Today it's pass the buck as nobody claims responsibility for anything (Chutzpah is murdering your parents and throwing yourself on the mercy of the court because you're an orphan†). What does Daniel say — we have sinned against you. It's *our* fault. We're responsible. He's been in captivity for decades, he could easily pass the buck (it's not my fault we're here, I was just a kid) — but doesn't.

Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. (Daniel 9:10–11)

God made His law clear. Some things are just bad — don't do them or promote them. Today it's popular to say the Bible needs to change with society and doesn't apply to modern life or certain situations. But *if* God exists, can't He design a message for all generations and situations? I think so. The Bible doesn't change. God's law is God's law. You don't have to follow it if you don't want, but you can't change what God says.

As a nation, have we abandoned God's law? Let the reader decide for themselves if the words of Daniel's prayer apply equally today.

Behold, I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command

* The 1979 trial of Dan White, who murdered the San Francisco mayor and a supervisor. At trial, it was argued he was depressed and became more depressed due to high sugar intake of Twinkies and soda. The conviction of manslaughter instead of first-degree murder could be credited to the Twinkie defense. And a legend was born.

† It's likely a Chuck Missler quote, but any specific reference to the actual author is difficult to find.

you this day; And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known. (Deuteronomy 11:26–28)

God doesn't force you into anything — it's your choice, it's the choice facing the country. Some may say, we haven't served other gods, have we? Perhaps not the idol, but the old pagan gods remain, waiting to ensnare you.

- Ashtoreth — Pleasure and sexuality. It's good for me, and it doesn't matter who gets hurt as long as my needs are met. Value relativism.
- Baal — Power. Look at any recent political race proves the popularity of Baal remains; people who still bow down to Baal fill the political arena.
- Mammon — Money. Wall Street overflows with people worshipping Mammon as greed runs rampant in society. Nothing ever satisfies.
- Molech — Practicality. Molech's statue had arms outstretched and they built a fire in his belly until he glowed red-hot; if you sacrificed your first child Molech honors your sacrifice and blessed you. It was *practical* to sacrifice one to be blessed. We don't perform such hideous acts today — today we use salt water instead of fire and call it planned parenthood.
- Nebo — God of knowledge and wisdom. Take a walk on any college campus and you'll still see this god bowed down to daily, even if the idol itself doesn't exist.

The old pagan gods still exist today, perhaps not as statues, but they're worshiped nonetheless. Just as Israel at times fell into idolatry, Christians must be careful as many still worship these ancient gods — just because an idol doesn't exist doesn't mean these gods aren't still around. Society wraps the old pagan worship in new terminology (like “dilute and extract”).

Through all this, Daniel still hasn't got to his petition yet!

And he hath confirmed his words, which he spoke against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil; for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is

come upon us; yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. (Daniel 9:12–13)

God warned them, the nation ignored, and judgment came. Even after judgment they ignored God, an example of stiff-necked and refusing to yield no matter what. The same attitude exists in Revelation as the people refuse to repent as well.

For our country, we've been warned, how long will God's mercy last when we openly flaunt rebellion against God? When we turn our backs on Him? When the promotion of sin becomes top priority? How long? Nobody knows, but the relevance of Daniel's prayer remains today.

Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth; for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. (Daniel 9:14–15)

Daniel admits they got what they deserved; the wages of sin is death; since all sin, all deserve death. No attempt to rationalize appears anywhere in Daniel's prayer as Daniel speaks the truth, straight out.

Now, finally, the request. He's acknowledged God and confessed his sin, so now he can petition God.

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. (Daniel 9:16–17)

Daniel doesn't ask because Israel is good, but because the Lord is. Daniel knows they deserve punishment for their sin, but wants mercy. Don't pray for justice, but mercy.

O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but

for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. (Daniel 9:18–19)

The deliverance does not come because of what they did, but because of God's promises; the basis for the request isn't on what he's done, but on God's character as mercy is not getting what you deserve. In the case of sin, death. As a nation, destruction.

And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. (Daniel 9:20–21)

During the prayer an angel interrupts him about the time of the evening offering. Daniel has been in captivity for decades, yet measures time by temple sacrifices, showing where his heart is. Character matters.

And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved; therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. (Daniel 9:22–23)

Of course the famous seventy weeks of Daniel, which we've dealt with in a section by itself.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself; and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the

consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. (Daniel 9:24-27)

Daniel's prayer for his country was a modern one. Does the idea in Judges "everyone did what was right in their own eyes" sound familiar? We don't want to restrict anybody from anything anymore. Value relativism, situational ethics, do whatever feels right for you — without God, anything is possible.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

That's a description of Daniel 9. We will be held accountable as stewards, we hired the guys leading the county. If the country be Godly, it's because the people demand it. If the actions be ungodly, it's because the people allow it.