

The Time for God to Judge All People



SABBATH—APRIL 29

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Daniel 8:14; Daniel 8:17, 19, 26; Daniel 9:23; Romans 5:6–9; Leviticus 16:16.

MEMORY VERSE: “There is another reason for doing what is right. You know what time it is. It is time for you to wake up from your sleep. The time when we will be taken up to be with Christ is not as far off as when we first put our trust in Him. Night is almost gone. Day is almost here” (Romans 13:11, 12, NLV).



The ranger saw three baby birds under the mother's wings.

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, *National Geographic* magazine told a story about a forest fire. The fire happened in Yellowstone National Park in the United States. After the fire ended, several park rangers went up a mountain to look at the damage from the fire. One park ranger found a bird burned to ashes next to the roots of a tree. The sight of the bird made the ranger feel sick and upset. The ranger knocked over the bird's ashes with a stick.

When the bird fell over, the ranger saw three baby birds under the mother's wings. The ranger was surprised at what the mother bird did to protect them from the fire. She carried her babies to the tree roots. Then she hid them under her wings. The mother could have flown away. But she refused to leave her babies. Jesus loves us this much, too.

At the cross, God judged Jesus as a sinner who must die. Jesus died so that we could be judged as holy citizens in God's kingdom in heaven. God judged Jesus as a criminal so that He can free us from everlasting fire. This fire will burn up all sin and everyone who refuses to accept God's mercy and forgiveness for their sins.

**THE TIME WHEN GOD CLEANS HIS TEMPLE FROM SIN
(Daniel 8:14)**

As we already saw, God must do His work as Judge before Jesus comes. The first angel announces, “ ‘The time has come for God to judge all people’ ” (Revelation 14:7, ERV). The book of Daniel tells us when this time starts.

Read Daniel 8:14. When does Daniel say God will make His temple in heaven clean?

In Bible times, the Jews knew that the temple on earth was made clean on the day when God judged His people. Daniel understood this teaching about God cleaning heaven’s temple from sin. Daniel understood the teaching about God’s work as Judge, too. But Daniel was confused about the 2,300 days that we read about in Daniel 8:14.

Read about Daniel’s experiences in Daniel 8:27 and Daniel 9:21, 22. What happened to Daniel after God showed him the dream about the 2,300 days? What did God do for Daniel?

At the end of Daniel 8, Daniel faints. Later, Daniel says, “I was filled with wonder because of the special dream, and did not understand it” (Daniel 8:27, NLV). The dream Daniel is talking about in this verse is about the 2,300 days. Daniel didn’t understand the time part of the dream. The angel already explained the rest of the dream to Daniel. In Daniel 9, the angel Gabriel comes to explain to Daniel about the 2,300 days. Gabriel says, “ ‘Daniel, I have come to give you wisdom and to help you understand’ ” (Daniel 9:22, ERV).

Gabriel explains the 2,300 days to Daniel. Gabriel shows Daniel the Bible truth about this time message. Gabriel explains when Jesus will come. Gabriel gives Daniel the exact dates when Jesus will start His work on earth and when He will die. These things are connected to the time when God will clean the temple in heaven, in Daniel 8. So, what does this information show us? It shows us that Jesus’ death and God’s work as Judge are connected.

In Daniel 9:24–27, we read about Jesus’ death. His death is connected with God’s work as Judge, in Daniel 8:14. What important Bible truth does the connection between these verses teach us?



In Daniel 9, the angel Gabriel comes to explain to Daniel about the 2,300 days

THE 2,300 DAYS AND THE END TIMES (Daniel 8:17, 19, 26)

Read Daniel 8:17, 19, 26. For how many real years do the 2,300 days continue? When do the 2,300 days start in history? When does this time end? Why is this answer so important?



The angel Gabriel said that the dream about the 2,300 days is about the end times.

Some people say that the 2,300 days are only real days. These people believe that the little horn in Daniel 8 is about the Greek army leader Antiochus Euphianes, who lived from 216 B.C. to 164 B.C. Antiochus attacked Jerusalem and the Jewish temple. But the 2,300 days do not show us Antiochus. Also, the angel Gabriel said that the dream about the 2,300 days is about the end times. So, the 2,300 days can't be about Antiochus at all, because Antiochus didn't live at the end times.

In Daniel 8, Gabriel starts his explanation about the 2,300-day time message. Gabriel says the male sheep is a word picture for the kingdom of Media-Persia. The male goat is a word picture for Greece (Daniel 8:20, 21). The next kingdom is the little horn. The little horn is a word picture for Rome (Daniel 8:9, 23, 24). Next, Gabriel says that Rome will become a government that also is religious. At this time, Rome, or the little horn, will cause people to “turn away from God,” which is the same as “throwing [Bible] truth down to the ground” (Daniel 8:12, ICB; also read Daniel 8:10, 11, 25). Rome also will interfere with the work Jesus does in heaven's temple for God's people (Daniel 8:10–12). Then in Daniel 8:14, we read about how God will clean heaven's temple from sin. God will punish the religious powers and governments on this earth that tried to steal control from Him. This special work also is part of God's answer to the sin problem.

Gabriel is ready to give to Daniel more information about the 2,300 days. At the end of Daniel 8, we see that Daniel didn't understand the part of the dream about the 2,300 days (Daniel 8:27). Gabriel already explained the earlier part of Daniel's dream about the male sheep, the goat, and the little horn (Daniel 8:20, 21). But Gabriel didn't explain about the time when God will clean His temple.

Gabriel tells Daniel: “ ‘You are highly respected. So as soon as you began to pray, the LORD gave you a message. I have come to tell you what it is. Here is how you must understand the vision [dream]’ ” (Daniel 9:23, NIV). What dream? As we will see tomorrow, this is the 2,300 days.

WHAT THE ANGEL TELLS DANIEL TO DO (Daniel 9:23)

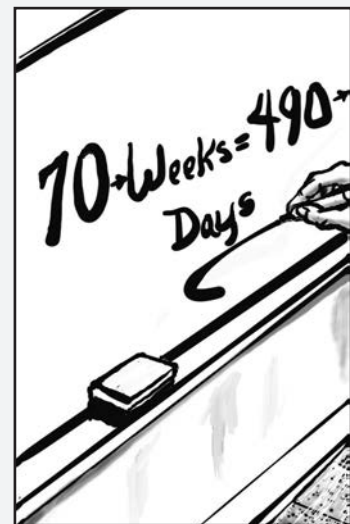
Read about the angel Gabriel's advice to Daniel, in Daniel 9:23. What does Gabriel tell Daniel to do? Why is this advice important? How does this advice help us to understand Daniel 8:14 and the time when God will clean heaven's temple from sin?

Gabriel tells Daniel to “ ‘think about the message and understand the vision [dream]’ ” (Daniel 9:23, ICB). What message? What dream? Daniel 9 doesn't talk about any dream. So, Gabriel must be talking about part of the dream in Daniel 8. That is the part about the 2,300 days that Daniel didn't understand (Daniel 8:27).

Read Daniel 9:24–27. In these verses, Gabriel continues to explain the 2,300-day time message. What important things does Gabriel say will happen in Jesus' life?

The first part of this time message talks about God's people, the Jews. Gabriel announces, “ ‘God has allowed 70 weeks for your people and your holy city, Daniel’ ” (Daniel 9:24, ERV). In time messages, one day is the same as one real year (Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34). This rule is named the day-for-a-year rule, or the day-year rule for short. When we use the day-year rule in Daniel's time message in Daniel 8:14, we can understand the dates and times perfectly. (Read tomorrow's study for more on this topic.) Another way of writing 70 weeks is 490 days (that is because there are 490 days in 70 weeks). When we use the day-year rule, the 490 days become 490 real years.

Gabriel tells Daniel that the “ ‘Seventy weeks [or 490 days, which are 490 real years] are given for your people’ ” (Daniel 9:24, NLV). Do you see the words written as “are given”? These words come from a Hebrew word that can mean “to cut off,” “to divide or separate,” or “to decide.” Cut off from what? What are the 70 weeks or 490 real years cut off from? They only can be cut off from the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14. That is the only other time message that Gabriel mentions. The 490 years connect back to the time message in Daniel 8:14, which is the only part of the dream that Gabriel didn't explain. Daniel 8:14 is the only time message in Daniel 8, too. So, we can see that Gabriel comes to help Daniel understand what he didn't understand in Daniel 8: the 2,300 days.



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THE SAVIOR WILL DIE (Romans 5:6–9)

The 490-year time message starts with the command to build Jerusalem again. This command is very important to the Jews. In Ezra 7, we see that this command happened in 457 B.C. At that time, the Jews left Babylon and went home to their own country. The Jews also became a religious community again (read Ezra 7:13, 27).

In the fall of 457 B.C., King Artaxerxes commanded the Jews to go home and build their city. Daniel announced 483 years would pass from the time the Jews started building their city to the time when the Savior started His work on earth. If we start at 457 B.C. and add 483 years, we arrive at A.D. 27.

In A.D. 27, Jesus Christ, the Savior, was baptized. (Read Matthew 3:13–17.) So, we can see that Daniel announced the exact year for Jesus' baptism several hundred years before Jesus got baptized. At that time, Jesus started His work on earth for three-and-a-half years.



Daniel announced the exact year for Jesus' baptism several hundred years before Jesus got baptized.

Read Romans 5:6–9 along with Daniel 9:26. What important Bible truths do we learn from these verses?

The angel Gabriel explains to Daniel, “ ‘And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah [the Chosen One; the Savior] shall be cut off [killed], but not for Himself’ ” (Daniel 9:26, NKJV). The Savior will be “cut off.” He will die on the cross. The verse adds, “but not for Himself.” What does that verse mean? It means that Jesus died to save us, and not Himself. That is why Paul writes, “But God showed His love to us. While we were still [continued to be] sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8, NLV).

In Daniel 9:27, we see that the Savior will “make an agreement with many people for 7 years. He will put a stop to offerings and sacrifices after 3½ years” (Daniel 9:27, ICB). What does this mean? This verse is talking about the final week of the 70-week time message. At this time, in A.D. 31, Jesus kept the promise that God made to His people. Jesus kept this promise with His blood, which He offered for our sins when He died on the cross. Jesus became the sin offering. So, the Jews no longer needed to bring animal offerings for their sins to the temple.

Read Mark 15:38 and Matthew 3:15, 16. How do these verses help us understand Daniel 9:24–27?

THE YEAR 1844 (Leviticus 16:16)

The first part of the 2,300-year message is the 70 weeks or 490 years. The 490 years show us what will happen in Jewish history **before** these things happen, from building Jerusalem again to the time Jesus dies on the cross. The last part of the 2,300 years is about God's people, both Jews and Christians. This last part also shows us that God will clean His temple and Jesus will come again.

The 490 years are about the First Coming of Jesus. The 490 years end in A.D. 34. When we subtract 490 years from 2,300 years, we are left with 1,810 years. The 1,810 years are about what will happen to God's people after Stephen is killed with stones. If we start at A.D. 34 and add 1,810 years, we come to A.D. 1844.

In Revelation 14:6, 7, God makes His final offer to save the Jewish people and everyone else. God's offer includes an announcement about His work as Judge in the end times. As part of His work, God will make the temple in heaven clean from sin. God wants everyone to accept His love and mercy. God also commands people who live in the end times to be holy and to obey His law.

Why did the holy tent on earth need to be cleaned? Read Leviticus 16:16 for the answer. What does this teach us about the Good News that Jesus saves us from sin?

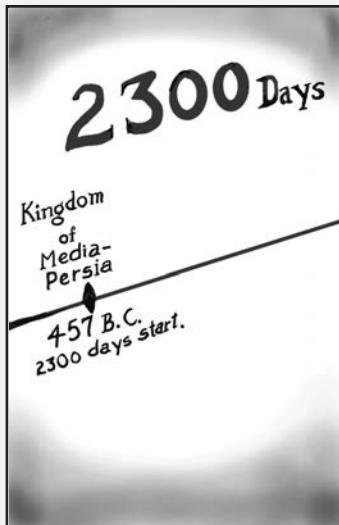
The holy tent on earth had to be cleaned because the people's sins made it dirty. Only blood can make the holy tent clean. The same thing is true for us. We need a Savior who will help us when God judges us. The Old Testament animal offerings were killed on the Day When God Makes Everything Clean. This Day is also named Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement. These animal offerings are a word picture for the life and death of Jesus.

In Old Testament times, what did God command His people to do on the Day When God Makes Everything Clean? Read Leviticus 23:26–29 for the answer. What does this answer show us that we must do today?

God's people needed to show God that they were sorry for their sins. They needed to empty their hearts of all pride. They needed to confess their sins, stop sinning, and ask God to make them clean. The people did these things while the top spiritual leader cleaned the holy tent on earth.



God also commands people who live in the end times to be holy and to obey His law.



Daniel 9 tells us when the 2,300 days start.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: Here's a fast and easy way to understand the 70-week time message in Daniel 9:24–27. This time message has three important parts:

1. 70 weeks or 490 years total (Daniel 9:24).
2. The 7 weeks and 62 weeks, or 69 weeks (Daniel 9:25), which are part of the 70 weeks.
3. The final week, or 70th week (Daniel 9:27).

The final week is divided in half, or “in the middle of the ‘week’ ” (Daniel 9:27, NIV). That means the week is divided into two parts: each part is 3 1/2 years.

That's it. So, we have 70 weeks, which are made of 69 weeks and one week. That one week is divided in half. Start the 70 weeks at the date 457 B.C. Then do the math. Also, when we add 2,300 years to 457 B.C., we come to A.D. 1844.

Remember, Daniel doesn't tell us when the 2,300 days start. The Bible only says, “ It will take [the things in Daniel's dream will happen after] 2,300 evenings and mornings [days]. Then the temple will be made holy again' ” (Daniel 8:14, NIV). So, when do the 2,300 days start? Why not start the 2,300 days from the time when Daniel saw the dream? Daniel saw this dream “during the third year that Belshazzar was king” (Daniel 8:1, ICB).

But the date that Daniel saw the dream can't be the date when the 2,300 days start. Why? Because the dream in Daniel 8 doesn't include Babylon. The dream starts with the things that happen after Babylon ends. Daniel 8 starts with the kingdom of Media-Persia, goes to the kingdom of Greece and then Rome, then to the end times. The day that God cleans the temple is part of Daniel's dream in Daniel 8. But the kingdom of Babylon is not part of the dream in Daniel 8. So, why say that the time until the day that God cleans His temple starts from the time of the kingdom of Babylon? The start date for the day God cleans His temple should come from the dream itself. The dream starts with the kingdom of Media-Persia and continues to the end times. That's a lot of years! Daniel 9, and not Daniel 8, tells us when the 2,300 days start.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① What is the connection between the Good News about Jesus and God's work as our Judge?
- ② Think more about Daniel 9:26. Why was Jesus “cut off” (NKJV)? What does that word picture mean?

MIRACLE IN THE UKRAINE

Anas was 10 years old. He lived in the city of Odessa in Ukraine. The kids at Anas's school made fun of him because he had dark skin. Anas lived with his grandmother after his mother left him at Grandmother's house. Anas's mother used to be a Seventh-day Adventist. Anas's father wasn't a Christian and lived far away in Iran.

Grandmother didn't like the way the kids at school made fun of Anas. Grandmother was upset by the bullies at the school. So, Grandmother sent her grandson to the local Seventh-day Adventist school.

At first, Anas was shy in his new school. He didn't say very much to anyone. Anas loved Bible classes so much. He tried to remember the teacher's words by whispering to himself in class what she said. Days and weeks passed, and Anas started to feel better about school. He liked his classmates a lot, too. Soon, Anas started to make jokes in class. The other kids thought that Anas was very funny. Anas was very happy when his teacher gave him his own Bible.

Anas's mother got very mad when she learned that Anas went to the Adventist school. So, Mother took Anas away from Grandmother and made him live with her. Mother started teaching Anas at home. Mother refused to talk to Grandmother.

Grandmother prayed for God to help her family. Grandmother prayed every day for a year. After some time, Mother started to talk to Grandmother. They became friends again.

Not long after, Grandmother asked Mother to meet with an Adventist pastor. Anas heard Mother and Grandmother talking with the pastor. Anas was surprised when he learned that three of his friends from the Adventist school were getting baptized. Anas said, "I also want to be baptized!"

Mother was surprised. The pastor was surprised, too. They asked Anas some questions about his decision. They learned that Anas had studied the Bible by himself during the year that he lived with Mother. More than anything, Anas wanted to be baptized. He wanted to give his life to Jesus. This wish touched Mother's heart. So, she said yes. Two weeks later, Mother and Grandmother watched as the 11-year-old boy was baptized with his three friends from the Adventist school.

"God made this miracle happen," Ivan Riapolov (see picture) said. Ivan is the leader for education for parts of Europe and Asia for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

"God brought the family back together," Ivan said. "God also brought this family back to Himself."

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INSIDE
Story
by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



Anas was very happy when his teacher gave him his own Bible.

