All Things New: Hope Starts Here

DAY 6— ISRAEL AND PROPHECY

"And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder" (Matt. 21:44).

Seventy Weeks of Mercy for Israel

The prophecy of Daniel 9 announces a probationary period for the nation of Israel: "Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy" (Dan. 9:24). As we saw earlier, the next verse indicates when Jesus would begin this work as the Messiah—in AD 27. He would "make reconciliation for iniquity," "bring in everlasting righteousness," and "seal up vision and prophecy." He announced, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). The time He referred to is this prophecy of Daniel 9.

The prophecy goes on to indicate that the "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself" (Dan. 9:26). Interestingly, the Jews thought that having Jesus crucified would prove that He couldn't be the Messiah, because they expected the Messiah to deliver them from the Romans. But, in fact, the prophecy says very clearly that He would be "cut off," He would die, "not for Himself" but for others. This was to take place after the sixty-nine weeks, that is, sometime during the seventieth and last "week" of the prophecy. The next verse is more specific as to the time: "Then he shall confirm a covenant with many [i.e., with Israel] for one week; but in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering" (Dan. 9:27).

A Mission to the Ends of the Earth

Jesus sent out His twelve disciples on a mission to Israel, proclaiming, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 10:7). In the middle of the final "week" of years, three and a half years after Jesus began His ministry, in the spring of AD 31, He was crucified. "Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom" (Matt. 27:51), bringing "an end to sacrifice and offering" (Dan. 9:27), because Jesus, "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) had come and died for us. He was the reality to which all the sacrifices pointed. After His resurrection, Jesus again sent His followers out on a mission that would begin with Israel but eventually extend everywhere: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Unfortunately, Israel did not recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior of the world, which is why, surprisingly, as Daniel here predicts, "the city and the sanctuary" would not only be rebuilt but would be destroyed again, this time by Rome (Dan. 9:26; Luke 21:20). Pray that the gospel mission, which is also ours, will soon be finished. Let's pray together.

Prayer Time (30–45 Minutes)

Every prayer group has its own way of praying together. We invite you to spend the next 30–45 minutes in united prayer, following the leading of the Holy Spirit. We encourage short conversational prayers (1–3 sentences), allowing more people to participate and pray multiple times. Below are a few examples of praying through Scripture based on today's theme. You may also pray through other Bible passages and include additional prayer topics during your time together. For more prayer ideas, please refer to the Leader's Guide and the World Church Prayer Requests.

Praying God's Word — Acts 1:8

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you"

Lord, we cannot witness in our own strength. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us as You promised, and clothe us with power from on high. Make us wholly dependent on You for all that You call us to do.

"And you shall be witnesses to Me"

Jesus, make us Your witnesses—not merely arguing for a cause, but pointing people to You. Fill our mouths with Your words and our lives with Your love, that everyone we meet may see and hear about our Savior.

". . . to the end of the earth"

Lord, Your gospel is for every people and place. Through OneVoice27 this year, send us out with one voice to carry the good news to our neighbors and to the ends of the earth, that the mission—which is also ours—may soon be finished and Jesus may come.

More Prayer Suggestions

Thanks and Praise: Give thanks for specific blessings and praise God for His goodness.
Confession: Take a few minutes for private confession and thank God for His forgiveness.
Guidance: Ask God to grant wisdom for current challenges and decisions.
Our Church: Pray for regional and world church needs (see separate sheet with requests).
OneVoice27: Pray for the OneVoice27 evangelistic emphasis culminating this September—that today's prayers become bold proclamation and that many will hear of Jesus before He comes.
Local Requests: Pray for current needs of church members, family, and neighbors.
Listen and Respond: Take time to listen for God's voice and respond in praise or song.

Song Suggestions

SDA Hymnal: O Zion, Haste (#365); Far and Near the Fields Are Teeming (#358); Hark! the Voice of Jesus Calling (#359)
Other Songs: People Need the Lord; Here I Am, Lord; Go Ye Into All the World; Let Your Light Shine