

Day-Year Principle¹



SABBATH—AUGUST 19

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 12:5; Numbers 14:34; Deuteronomy 16:10; Ezekiel 4:5, 6; Daniel 8:17, 19, 26; Daniel 10:2, 3.

MEMORY VERSE: “Lie on your right side. Pretend that you are putting Judah’s sin on yourself. Lie there for 40 days. That is one day for each year of their sin” (Ezekiel 4:6, NIV).

COMPARING² DANIEL 2, DANIEL 7, AND DANIEL 8 SHOWS HOW THE JUDGMENT IN DANIEL 7 LEADS TO THE SECOND COMING. This judgment is the same event³ as the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary in Daniel 8:14. This judgment takes place sometime after the 1,260-day period of Roman Church control (late eighteenth to early nineteenth century). But it also takes place before the Second Coming.

The 2,300-day prophecy of Daniel 8 was the only part of the vision not explained to Daniel. The angel Gabriel came to Daniel in Daniel 9 with an explanation about the 70-week prophecy. This prophecy was “cut off” from the 2,300 days. Rooted in Jesus, the 70-week prophecy formed the basis for the 2,300-day prophecy. The 70-week prophecy also gave the starting date for the 2,300 days. This brought the 2,300-day prophecy to 1844. The year 1844 fits perfectly with what Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 teach us.

So, the important message of the 1844 prophecy is rooted in historical world empires and in the cross of Christ.

For the next few weeks, we will look more closely at some of the subjects we touched on about 1844. We will try to answer the questions that could arise as we study this prophecy that is so important to Seventh-day Adventists.

¹day-year principle—in Bible prophecy, a day equals one year.

²comparing—showing how things are the same.

³event—thing that happens.

SUNDAY—AUGUST 20**PROPHETIC TIME
(Daniel 7 and Daniel 8)**

Over the past few weeks, we looked at three time prophecies: (1) the “time, times, and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25, KJV), (2) the “two thousand and three hundred days” (Daniel 8:14, KJV), and (3) the “seventy weeks” (Daniel 9:24). These prophecies are not to be understood as real time but as prophetic time. In each of these prophecies, the days are to be interpreted as years. So, we are dealing with periods of hundreds and thousands of years.

What right do we have saying that these prophecies are about prophetic time? Why should we use the day-year principle while interpreting these prophecies?

In Daniel 8:17, 19, 26, Gabriel told Daniel that the prophetic vision was for the “end.” Gabriel told Daniel that the vision about “the evenings and the mornings” (the 2,300 days) would be “for many days” (Daniel 8:26, KJV). Why does this help prove that the time prophecy in Daniel 8 does not follow real time?

Read Daniel 7:24-27. The little-horn power arises from pagan Rome.⁴ The little-horn power will continue until the final judgment. What proof do we have that the time prophecy in Daniel 7:25

should not be taken as real time?

Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 are about great world empires. Some of these empires began early in the world’s history and are now gone. Some of these empires will come to an end when the world ends. So the time prophecies in Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 are not about real days (days that are 24 hours long). If Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 were about real days, then Daniel 7 would cover only three and a half years. Daniel 8 would cover only about 6 years and 3 months (2,300 24-hour days). These short amounts of time do not make sense when you think about the many years the world empires in Daniel 7 and Daniel 8 have been (or will be) around. With the day-year principle, the time prophecies fit in much better with world events that relate to the empires in Daniel 7 and Daniel 8.

What proof do you see that we are living in “the end” that Daniel talked about? How should this understanding influence how we live? What about your life shows that you truly believe you are living in the “end”?

MONDAY—AUGUST 21**DANIEL 9 AND PROPHETIC
TIME (Daniel 9:24-27)**

Review the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27. What other proof do we have that this prophecy cannot

⁴pagan Rome—the political Roman Empire from 27 B.C. to A.D. 395.

be taken as real 24-hour days?

In an earlier lesson, even without the dates used for the command to rebuild Jerusalem and for the ministry (work) of Jesus, there were clearly more than 70 weeks between them. If we use real time, the prophecy has no meaning. But, if the day-year principle is used, the prophecy works perfectly, bringing us right to Jesus. So, the ministry of Jesus in Daniel 9 proves that the day-year principle works well.



The day-year principle points to Jesus.

Some people argue that the word for “weeks” in Daniel 9:24 means “weeks of years.” So each of those weeks are seven years. Therefore, we have 70 “weeks of years,” which comes to 490 years.

But, the only problem is that the word translated “weeks” in Daniel 9:24 never appears anywhere else in the Bible other than as “weeks.” It never means “weeks of years.”

Read Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 12:5; Deuteronomy 16:10; and Daniel 10:2, 3. These are a few places in the Bible where the basic word translated “weeks” appears. What proof within these verses shows that a week, or weeks, meant real time, not “weeks of years”?

In Daniel 10:2, 3, the same word appears as in Daniel 9:24. It clearly does not mean “weeks of years” (Daniel could not have fasted 3 weeks of years, or 21 years!). Suppose one accepted the error that the word in Daniel 9:24 means “weeks of years.” A week of years is still seven years, the same number of years if you used the day-year principle.

Notice the long time periods we are dealing with: 490 years, 1,260 years, 2,300 years. How should these long time periods help us understand what *patience* means?

TUESDAY—AUGUST 22

SEVENTY WEEKS AND 2,300 DAYS (Daniel 9:24-27)

The 70-week prophecy makes no sense if we interpret it as real time. Once the day-year principle is used, the 70-week prophecy brings us right to Jesus. So, the prophecy itself demands (requires) the day-year principle.

Daniel 9:24-27 demands the day-year principle. This prophecy was

“cut off” from the 2,300-day prophecy. What does that tell us about the day-year principle and the 2,300 days?

The 70-week prophecy comes to 490 years. The 2,300 days, if real time is used, comes to a little more than six years. Could 490 years be “cut off” from a little more than 6 years? Of course not. Could 490 years be “cut off” from 2,300 years? Of course. So here is more proof that the day-year principle must also be used for the 2,300-days prophecy. It makes no sense to use the day-year principle for the 70 weeks (a part of the 2,300 days) and not the principle for the 2,300 days.

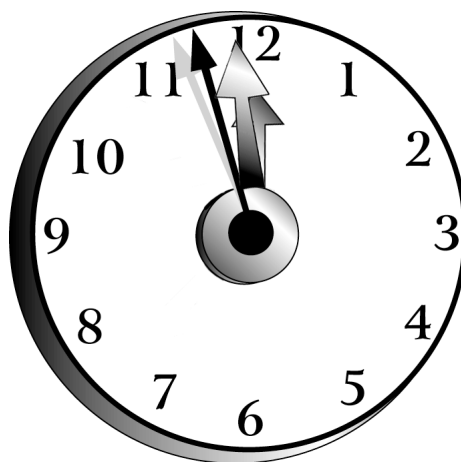
It is no surprise that Adventists have not been the only ones to use the day-year principle for the 2,300 days. One of the greatest Jewish thinkers, Rashi (A.D. 1040–1105), translated Daniel 8:14 as, “And he said unto me, Unto 2300 years . . .” This idea is not an Adventist invention. It has been used by other thinkers on these same prophecies long before us.

What proof do Numbers 14:34 and Ezra 4:5, 6 give the day-year principle?

What connection do the following verses show between days and years in the Bible? Genesis 5:14; Genesis 5:23; Genesis 9:29.

The time prophecies are great

prophetic periods that have all come and gone. What should that tell us about how we should use what little time we have left? What changes might you need to make in your own use of time?



What will you do with the time that is left?

WEDNESDAY—AUGUST 23

MORE PROOF (Daniel 8:13)

Read the question in Daniel 8:13 again. The word *concerning* does not appear in the Hebrew. And Hebrew grammar does not permit it. So, the question is not just about the activity (work) of the little horn. The question is about everything shown in Daniel 8. This includes the vision about the ram and the goat (Media-Persia and Greece) and the activity of the little horn (papal Rome⁵). A more correct translation would read, “How long the vision, the daily, and the transgression (sin) of desolation⁶ to give the

⁵papal Rome—Rome during the Middle Ages (A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500); when Rome was ruled by the church of the Middle Ages; having to do with the pope, who is the head of the Catholic Church.

⁶desolation—the act of destroying something.

sanctuary and the host a trampling?” This question lists everything that happened in the vision. The word for “vision” in Daniel 8:13 is *hazon*. This vision (*hazon*) deals with the ram (Media-Persia), the goat (Greece), and the little horn (Rome).

The question, then, could read, *“How long will all these things (the rise of Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome’s attack on Christ’s heavenly ministry [work]) be allowed to go on?”*

Read again the more correct translation above of Daniel 8:13. Why does this translation show that the 2,300 days cannot be taken as real time? If the 2,300 days were real time, how could the 2,300 days cover all the events⁷ in the question?

The 2,300 days must cover all the events shown in Daniel 8: These events are Media-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the sanctuary cleansed. A real 2,300 days does not even begin to cover one of those events. But, with the day-year principle, the problem is solved. Twenty-three hundred years cover all the events.

Read again the question in Daniel 8:13. The question deals with long periods of history that involve Roman Church control, backsliding, and suffering (Daniel 8:23-25). But what happens in the end? We are told both what happens in these prophecies and when they will happen. Why should these verses give

us hope that no matter what happens today, God will end it all and bring all things to His glory? How should this give you strength and courage to remain faithful no matter what happens to you?

THURSDAY—AUGUST 24

DAY-YEAR PRINCIPLE (Daniel 7; Daniel 8)

Read the vision and the interpretation in Daniel 7. Why do all the symbols in Daniel 7 help us understand why the time part of the vision should also be a symbol?

Daniel 7 is filled with many symbols that should not be taken as real. So we should not think that the prophetic time in Daniel 7 is real time.



Daniel 7 is full of symbols. The prophecy in Daniel 7 is also a symbol.

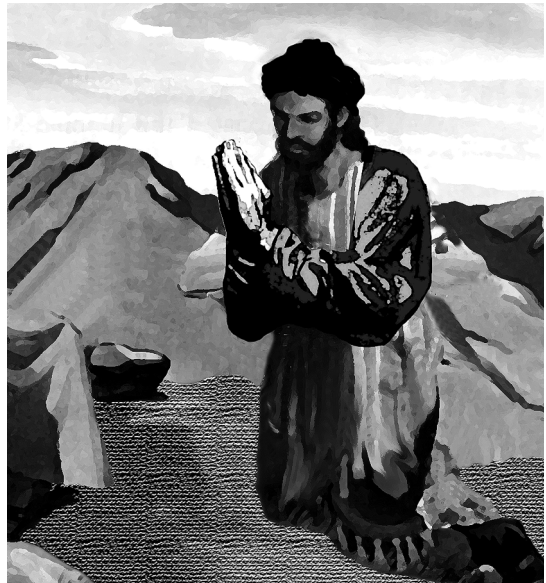
⁷events—things that happen.

Read Daniel 8. What proof do we have that the time period in Daniel 8 should be symbolic?

The flying goats in Daniel 8:5 are not real. The beast with iron teeth in Daniel 7:1 is not real. The goats and beasts are symbols. In the same way, the time periods also are symbols.

We have been looking at three time periods: (1) the “time and times and the dividing of time” (Daniel 7:25); (2) the “two thousand and three hundred days” (Daniel 8:14), and (3) the “seventy weeks” (Daniel 9:24). None of these time periods is written in the common way that time is written about. For example, instead of saying 2,300 days, why did Gabriel not say that the sanctuary would be cleansed in “six years, three months, and twenty days”? Second Samuel 5:5 says that the king “reigned [ruled] over Judah seven years and six months,” not 2,700 days.

Compare⁸ Luke 4:25 and James 5:17 with Daniel 7:25. Which of these verses deal with real time? How is the real time written about? How is the prophetic time written about?



The three and half years Elijah prayed for no rain were real years.

Why is the day-year principle so important to Adventists? What would happen to our whole prophetic foundation (basis) if we did not use this principle?

FRIDAY—AUGUST 25

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Experts also have shown proof for the connection between days and years in Hebrew poetry. In Hebrew poetry, days are used to mean years. Read the examples on the next page.

⁸compare—show how things are the same.

“Are [your] **days** as the days of man?

Are thy **years** as man’s days”
(Job 10:5, KJV).

“**Days** should speak,
and multitude [many] of **years**
should teach wisdom”
(Job 32:7, KJV).

“I have considered [thought] the
days of old,
the **years** of ancient times”
(Psalm 77:5, KJV).

Days and years mean the same thing in each of these examples. They are different words used to explain the same idea. These examples do not prove the day-year principle. But they do show that in the Hebrew mind, days and years are connected.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. As a class, go over this week’s lesson until everyone understands the day-year principle.
2. Why does the Bible use so many symbols?
3. What other proof can a person find in the Bible for the day-year principle?
4. We have been on earth almost two thousand years since Christ’s death. With the day-year principle in mind, how do the time prophecies help us understand that we are really living near the end of time? How do these prophecies help us know that we should not expect another two thousand years to pass before Christ returns?