

# Daniel 9:1-19

## February 16, 2025



### CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

### MAIN POINT

Daniel was a student of Scripture and had hope for his people's future because he knew God's abundant compassion and past faithfulness. Daniel humbly turned to God in prayer, confessing the sins of his people and petitioning God for forgiveness.

### INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.*

**When you think of prayer in Scripture, what people and prayers come to mind?**

**In what situations do you most often turn to prayer? Why?**

In our study of Daniel so far, we have read of Daniel's life in exile and prophecy that was divinely revealed to Daniel through visions. Today, in a break in prophetic passages, we will get a glimpse into Daniel's prayer life and see what we can learn and apply personally.



## **UNDERSTANDING**

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

🌿 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 9:1-3.

**What takes place in these verses? What did Daniel discover? What was his response?**

In the first year of Darius's reign, Daniel recognized the Lord had revealed to Jeremiah that the exile Daniel lived in was to last seventy years (Jeremiah 25:11-13), and those seventy years were almost up. The truth and promises in God's Word are a comfort for believers who dedicate their time to learn them. We learn something about how Daniel lived in chapter 9: He read God's Word, and then acted based on what it said.

Daniel, who knew the Israelite people were in this predicament because of unfaithfulness to the Lord, humbly turned to God in prayer on behalf of his people. "Fasting, sackcloth, and ashes" (Daniel 9:3) were traditional responses to sorrowful circumstances for God's people. For example, this was Mordecai's response to the threat to the Israelites in Esther 4. Fasting was also a traditional accompaniment to petitioning the Lord in prayer (Ezra 8:21-23).

Recall Daniel's response in Daniel 6 when the edict was made forbidding prayer and petition to anyone but Darius for thirty days. He kept praying to God three times a day, just as he had done before (Daniel 6:10).

**How do you typically respond to God's revealed Word?**

**Why is it important that we regularly go to God in prayer?**

🌿 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 9:4-15.

**What sins did Daniel note God's people were guilty of committing? What did Daniel say the people earned for their sin?**

**What attributes of God did Daniel call out in his prayer?**

**Why is it important that we not only acknowledge our own neediness or desires in prayer but that we turn our focus toward God and His faithfulness in prayer?**

Daniel knew the sin of the Israelite people was great. Daniel stated that the people had: sinned, acted wickedly, done wrong, rebelled, ignored the prophets, were disloyal to the Lord, had not followed God's instructions, had broken God's law and refused to obey Him, and had turned away from God.



This passage reminds us that Daniel knew Scripture too. In Leviticus 26, God outlined two paths for His people: If they were obedient, He would bless them; if they weren't, they would reap the consequences of their unfaithfulness. In verse 11, Daniel referenced the fact that God kept His promise. The people were unfaithful, and God made good on his promise of consequences.

Daniel praised God for being great, awe-inspiring, a God who keeps His promises (covenants), righteous, compassionate, forgiving, and renowned.

Note Daniel's posture of humility. Daniel was faithful and righteous. We might think it easy or even justified for Daniel to feel wronged for what he had endured in exile due to the unfaithfulness of others, but Daniel didn't harbor resentment. He called God righteous in the consequences His people endured for their unfaithfulness. It can be easy to blame God when bad things happen, and God is a safe place for our authentic feelings—we don't need to clean these up before turning to Him. But Daniel gives us an example and reminder: God is always righteous and faithful.

Daniel's use of God's covenant name, Yahweh, emphasizes that God is faithful and keeps His promises. Daniel was praying for another promise that God made in Leviticus 26:40-45: If the people confessed and repented, God promised to remember His covenant promise to bless them.

 ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ DANIEL 9:16-19.

**Daniel's prayer takes a turn here. What do you notice about this shift?**

**What attributes of God did Daniel call out here?**

**What did Daniel ask God for?**

Having thoroughly confessed the sins of the people, Daniel shifted his prayer to a humble petition for mercy. He asked God to turn His anger away from them, hear his prayer, turn back to His people, forgive, and act quickly.

Even in his petition, Daniel remained humble, admitting they had not in any way earned forgiveness, but he prayed to receive it because of God's "abundant compassion" (v.18).

Daniel's praises and petition on behalf of his people wrap up his recorded prayer, and we know from context that when Daniel turned his "attention to the Lord God to seek him by prayer and petitions" (v.3), he did so repeatedly and faithfully. Daniel was not perfect, but he remains a shining example of what it means to be faithful to the Lord in all circumstances.



## **APPLICATION**

*Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.*

**What can we learn from Daniel's example in Daniel 9:2-3? How does this teach us how we should respond to Scripture? What does this teach us about how we should pray?**

**How can we as a group encourage one another toward faithful practice of prayer?**

**How does living as people steeped in God's Word and prayer prepare us for gospel conversations with others?**

## **PRAYER**

*Close your time together by sharing prayer requests, praying for each other, and the group.*

Thank God for His abundant compassion and for blessing us when we don't deserve it. Thank Him for His faithfulness and righteousness. Ask for help taking what we have learned today and applying it in our lives that we might grow closer to Him.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

*Encourage your group to look ahead to next week's scripture passage as we continue our study of Daniel.*

**February 23, 2025 --- Daniel 9:20-27**

## **COMMENTARY**

### **Daniel 9:1-19**

In 539–538 BC, immediately after the Persian conquest of Babylon, Daniel prayed to the Lord on behalf of exiled Israel. Daniel realized that the seventy-year period of Judah's desolation prophesied in Jeremiah 25:11–12 was soon approaching its end. (The prophecy is dated to 605 BC [see Jer. 25:1], the year when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem for the first time and carried away the first group of exiles to Babylon. If one assumes that the seventy-year period began in that year, then it would be over in 535 BC).

Addressing God as Israel's faithful covenant Lord, Daniel confessed the nation's sinful and rebellious condition and acknowledged that they had justly suffered the covenant curses threatened by Moses. He then asked the Lord to forgive the nation's sins and once again look with favor on desolate Jerusalem.

