

## *Second Baptist Church of Doylestown*

### *Bible Study Notes: Book of Daniel*

*10/19/16*

#### *Daniel Chapter 9*

##### **Daniel's Prayer - Verses 1-10**

<sup>1</sup> In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom— <sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. <sup>3</sup> So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. <sup>4</sup> I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: "Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, <sup>5</sup> we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. <sup>6</sup> We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup> "Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. <sup>8</sup> We and our kings, our princes and our ancestors are covered with shame, LORD, because we have sinned against you. <sup>9</sup> The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him;<sup>10</sup> we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets.

**9:1** The vision in chapter 9 was given to Daniel during the same time period of chapter 6. This Darius is the person mentioned in chapter 6. The Xerxes (also known as Ahasuerus) mentioned here is not Esther's husband. The events described in the book of Esther happened about 50 years later.

**9:2-3** Daniel pleaded with God to bring about the promised return of his people to their land. The prophet Jeremiah had written that God would not allow the captives to return to their land for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10). Daniel knew of this prophecy and realized that this 70-year period was coming to an end.

**9:3-27** In Daniel's prayer for the nation he confessed his own sin, using the pronoun "we" throughout. In times of adversity, it's easy to blame others and excuse our own actions. If any Israelite was righteous, it was Daniel; and yet he confessed his sinfulness and need for God's forgiveness. Instead of looking for others to blame, first examine yourself and confess your own sins to God.

**9:3-19** Daniel knew how to pray. As he prayed, he fasted, confessed his sins, and pleaded that God would reveal his will. He prayed with complete surrender to God and with complete openness to what God was saying to him. When you pray, do you speak openly to God? Examine

your attitude. Talk to God with openness, vulnerability, and honesty, and be ready for God's reply.

**9:4-6** The captives from Judah had rebelled against God. Their sins had led to their captivity. But God is merciful even to rebels, if they confess their sins and return to him. Don't let your past disobedience keep you from returning to God. He is waiting for you and wants you to return to him.

**9:6** God had sent many prophets to speak to his people through the years, but their messages had been ignored. The truth had been too painful to hear. God still speaks clearly and accurately through the Bible, and he also speaks through preachers, teachers, and concerned friends. Sometimes the truth hurts, and we would rather hear words that soothe, even if they are false. If you are unwilling to accept God's message, maybe you are trying to avoid making a painful change. Don't settle for a soothing lie that will bring harsh judgment. Accepting the truth even if it is painful can only help you.

### **Daniel's Prayer - Verses 11-19**

**<sup>11</sup> All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you. <sup>12</sup> Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. <sup>13</sup> You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. <sup>15</sup> The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him. <sup>16</sup> Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. <sup>17</sup> Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us. <sup>18</sup> Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. <sup>19</sup> Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. <sup>20</sup> Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name."**

**9:11-13** Daniel mentioned the curses outlined in Deuteronomy 28. God had given the people of Israel a choice: Obey me and receive blessings, or disobey me and face curses. The affliction was meant to turn the people to God. When we face difficult circumstances, we should ask ourselves if God has reason to send judgment. If we think so, we must urgently seek his forgiveness. Then we can ask him to help us through our troubles.

**9:14** Daniel spoke about how God continually tried to bring Israel back to himself. Yet even after disaster struck them, they refused to obey him. God still uses circumstances, other people, and, most importantly, his Word to bring his people back to him. What would it take for God to get your attention?

**9:17-19** It would be a mistake to read the Bible as dry history and miss the deep personal feelings. In this section, Daniel was crying out to the Lord. He had a deep concern for his nation and his people. So often our prayers are without passion and true compassion for others. Are you willing to pray by pouring out your deep feelings to God?

**9:18** Daniel begged for mercy, not for help, because he knew that his people deserved God's wrath and punishment. God sends his help, not because we deserve it, but because he wants to show great mercy. If God would refuse to help us because of our sin, how could we complain? But when he sends mercy when we deserve punishment, how can we withhold our praise and thanksgiving?

### **The Seventy "Sevens" - Verses 20-27**

<sup>20</sup> While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill— <sup>21</sup> while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. <sup>22</sup> He instructed me and said to me, "Daniel, I have now come to give you insight and understanding. <sup>23</sup> As soon as you began to pray, a word went out, which I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed. Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision: <sup>24</sup> "Seventy 'sevens' are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place. <sup>25</sup> "Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One, the ruler, comes, there will be seven 'sevens,' and sixty-two 'sevens.' It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. <sup>26</sup> After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. <sup>27</sup> He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him."

**9:23** Just as God answered Daniel's prayer, so we can have confidence that God hears and answers our prayers.

**9:24-25** Each day of these 70 weeks ("seventy 'sevens'") may represent one year. The Bible often uses round numbers to make a point, not to give an exact count. For example, Jesus said we are to forgive others "seventy-seven" times (Matthew 18:22). He did not mean a literal 77 times, but that we should be abundantly forgiving. Similarly, some scholars see this figure of 70 weeks as a figurative time period. Others, however, interpret this time period as a literal

70 weeks or 490 years, observing that Christ's death came at the end of the 69 weeks (i.e., 483 years later). One interpretation places the 70th week as the seven years of the great tribulation, still in the future. Consequently the number would symbolize both the first and second comings of Christ.

**9:26** The Messiah, the Anointed One, will be rejected and killed by his own people. His perfect eternal kingdom will come later.

**9:26-27** There has been much discussion on the numbers, times, and events in these verses, and there are three basic views: (1) The prophecy was fulfilled in the past at the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV Epiphanes in 168-167 B.C. (see 11:31); (2) it was fulfilled in the past at the destruction of the temple by the Roman general Titus in A.D. 70 when one million Jews were killed; or (3) it is still to be fulfilled in the future under the Antichrist (see Matthew 24:15).