

# DANIEL DECODED

## 3. AFTER EXILE

10/4/20, Daniel 9

Have you ever worked on a jigsaw puzzle only to discover that you have missing pieces?! What does it feel like when you can't figure out a puzzle?

What prediction did people make about you when you were growing up? How close was the prediction to what actually happened?

What is your response to Rod Dreher's assertion that *a profoundly anti-Christian militancy — is steadily overtaking society ...?*

Were you taught a particular view of the end times? What was it? How comfortable are you with people who hold different views on this subject than you do?

How have your views on the end times shifted – if at all - since the beginning of this series?

**Daniel 9:1 (NIV)**

***In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom—***

What do you remember about the day President Obama was inaugurated? President Trump?

**Daniel 9:2 (NIV)**

***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.***

Describe what you would imagine Daniel's feelings to be at this point.

**Daniel 9:3 (NIV)**

***So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.***

What are some *other* ways Daniel could have responded instead of this? Why is this the best way?

**Daniel 9:4 (NIV)**

***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,***

How much time do you usually devote to simply praising God in your prayers? What holds you back?

How might the Lord's Prayer help us improve in this area?

In what way do you think remembering God's greatness could transform your prayers?

What helps you to praise God?

**Daniel 9:5-7,10 (NIV)**

***we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. 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... we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets.***

What role does confession play in your prayers?

Why do you think it is important?

How would you go about confessing corporate sins like Daniel did? Give some examples.

In what way do you think your prayers could be transformed by a more regular practice of confessing sins?

**Jeremiah 25:12 (NIV)**

***“But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,” declares the LORD, “and will make it desolate forever.***

**Deuteronomy 30:1–3 (NIV)**

***When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart wherever the LORD your God disperses you among the nations, and when you and your children return to the LORD your God and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today, then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.***

How long had Daniel been waiting to see God fulfill his promise to restore Israel?

What are you waiting on God to do in our time?

Does the idea that God has already determined ultimate outcomes hinder your praying? Support it? What alternate way is there to think about it?

**Daniel 9:16-18 (NIV)**

***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. “Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. 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.***

On what basis did Daniel make his appeal to God? Why?

How might this approach help your own prayers?

**Daniel 9:20,23 (NIV)**

***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...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:***

How do Gabriel's words encourage your praying?

What are you praying for that, if you knew help was on the way, you would keep praying?

If God loves *everyone*, in what sense do you think Daniel was "highly esteemed"?

**Daniel 9:24 (NIV)**

***"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.***

What was going to happen after 70 sevens? What do you think they mean?

Most scholars think the numbers are referring to years. How do you think Daniel felt when he heard that the fulfilling of these promises was 490 years away?

Do you agree that there is more to these numbers than numerical measurement of time?

**Daniel 9:26 (NIV)**

***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.***

What happens to Messiah ("Anointed One") when he arrives?

How can he arrive to do all that is promised in verse 24 if he dies? What are we able to see now that Daniel could not?

Without bogging down too much in the specific details of this verse, how would you summarize the gist of it?

**Daniel 9:27 (NIV)**

***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.***

People have *very* different understandings of what this means. Frank taught the view that says the "confirming of the covenant" is something that Jesus did at the Last Supper. Does that make sense?

In what way did Christ *put an end to sacrifice and offering*? What do you think would have made this difficult to Daniel to comprehend?

**Jeremiah 31:31 (NIV)**

***"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah."***

How does Jeremiah's prophecy support this view?

Why would this prophecy have been a Big Deal to the Israelites who heard it? What would have excited them? Troubled them?

Are you more or less confused than when this study started?!

What are the basic outlines/takeaways of these prophecies that you have heard?

What encourages you about these visions so far?