

LENT

THE WAY OF REPENTANCE

WEEK ONE: FOR FEBRUARY 22 SERMON

DANIEL 9

CONTEXT

Daniel discovers through reading Jeremiah's prophecy that Israel's exile would last 70 years. Rather than simply waiting, he responds with fervent prayer, confession, and intercession. His prayer reveals the heart of a man who understands both God's holiness and His mercy.

OPENING QUESTION

When facing difficult circumstances, what is your first instinct—to problem-solve, to wait passively, to pray, to panic, etc.? Why?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What prompted Daniel to pray at this specific time? (**v. 2**) What does this teach us about the relationship between God's Word and prayer? How does reading Scripture inform your prayer life?
2. Examine Daniel's prayer (verses 4-19). What are the main elements you notice? ***Praise and acknowledgment of God's character, confession of sin (personal and corporate), acknowledgment of God's righteousness, petition for mercy and action***
3. Daniel repeatedly uses "we" and "us" in his confession. Why is this significant when he personally was known for his righteousness? Why is it so difficult to pray "we have sinned" instead of "they have sinned"? ***Note that our culture encourages us to cancel others and distance ourselves from the mistakes of groups (church, family, nation, etc.)*** Is there a broken situation in your immediate relationships where you've been acting as a judge rather than a participant? How would your attitude change if you followed Daniel's lead and took some ownership of it in prayer?

4. Daniel says, “We have not listened to your servants the prophets” (v. 6). How might we be guilty of the same thing today? Are there areas where you know God’s truth but struggle to obey? What voices are we listening to instead of God’s?

5. In verses 18-19, Daniel bases his petition not on Israel’s righteousness but on God’s character. Why is this important? How does this change the way we approach God in prayer? What does it mean that we are “treasured by God” (v. 23)?

6. Gabriel appears with an answer while Daniel is still praying (v. 20-23). What does this reveal about: God’s attentiveness to prayer? The timing of God’s responses? The value God places on persistent, heartfelt prayer?

7. The prophecy in verses 24-27 points to God’s ultimate plan of redemption. What does this passage teach us about: God’s sovereignty over history? His commitment to keeping His promises? The cost of dealing with sin?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **God’s Word should drive us to prayer.** Daniel read Scripture, and it moved him to intercession. Bible reading and prayer are meant to work together.
- **Genuine prayer includes confession.** Daniel doesn’t make excuses or minimize sin. He acknowledges the reality of rebellion and its consequences.
- **We pray based on God’s character, not our worthiness.** Our confidence in prayer comes from who God is—compassionate, faithful, and merciful.
- **God hears and responds to sincere prayer.** Before Daniel even finished praying, God had sent the answer. God values our prayers and acts on behalf of those He loves.
- **God is faithful to His promises.** Even when circumstances seem hopeless, God is working out His redemptive plan according to His perfect timeline.