

Daniel 9:1-15 – Confession of Sins

The events of chapter 9 occurred during the first year of king Darius the Mede. The year was 539 or 538 B.C. The Babylonian empire had fallen. The Medo-Persian empire was the dominant power and ruled over Babylon. In chapter 1, Daniel and his friends were exiled to Babylon in about 605 B.C. More than 65 years had passed between chapter 1 and chapter 9. Since Babylon had fallen, was Daniel wondering if he would be able to return to Jerusalem? He did have Jerusalem on his mind.

Read Daniel 9:1-2.

In verse 1, who was Darius the son of Ahasuerus? Dale Ralph Davis believes that Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Great were two names for the same person. E.J. Young believed that we do not know who Darius the Mede was outside of the Biblical record. Older commentaries identified Darius the Medes with Cyaxares II, uncle of Cyrus the Great, based on ancient historian Xenophon's "Cyropaedia". What was the significance of a Mede ruling over the Chaldeans? The realm of the Chaldeans included Babylon. (9:1)

In verse 2, what were "the books"? NIV has "the Scriptures". Obviously the Old Testament was not complete by the time of chapter 9. In particular, what writing was Daniel looking at? See Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10. Why was Daniel interested in the seventy years spoken of by God through Jeremiah? The lives of Daniel and Jeremiah overlapped. Why do you think that Jeremiah's prophecies were accepted at that time as the word of God? Did Nebuchadnezzar know who Jeremiah was? See Jeremiah 39:11. Jeremiah 29 contains a letter that was sent to the Jewish exiles in Babylon. (9:2)

Read Daniel 9:3-10.

Was there anything in Jeremiah's writings that would have encouraged Daniel to pray? See Jeremiah 29:10-14. Based on verses 3 and 4, how did Daniel respond to what he read in "the books"? (9:3-4)

In verse 4, how did Daniel describe God? What "covenant" do you think Daniel had in mind? (9:4)

In verses 5-6, what did Daniel confess to God? Daniel didn't just confess his own sins. Who was guilty of sinning against God? (9:5-6)

In verses 7-10, what belonged to God? What belonged to the people of Judah and Israel? Why did God drive the people into foreign lands? (9:7-10)

Verse 8 says, “we have sinned against you”. In verses 9-10, how had the people sinned against God? (9:8-10)

Read Daniel 9:11-15.

In verse 11, what was all of Israel guilty of? What was the basis of their judgment and punishment? (9:11)

In verse 12, Daniel spoke of the calamity which God brought upon Judah. This was according to God’s word which he had spoken to them. We may wonder if he was referring to the prophecies of Jeremiah, but look at verse 13. What word of God promised them calamity for their sins? See Deuteronomy 28:36-37. (9:12-13)

God uses calamity to bring people to repentance. In verse 13, what did the people fail to do in response to God’s discipline? (9:13)

How do we know that Daniel thought that God’s judgments were just? (9:14)

In verse 15, what was the significance of Daniel recounting that God brought his people out of Egypt? (9:15)

When is it appropriate to confess the sins of others to God? If I say, “God, I confess that Jim stole money from me”, that is an accusation and not a confession. If we had ancestors who were early settlers in America, should we confess “our” sins for stealing land from the native Americans?

Summary of names used for God and what is true of God:

Yahweh, Yahweh my God, Yahweh our God, Lord, Lord God, Lord our God, God, the great and awesome God

- 4: keeps covenant and steadfast love
- 7: righteousness belongs to him
- 9: mercy and forgiveness belong to him
- 11: poured out the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses
- 12, (14 similar): confirmed his word by bringing upon Judah a great calamity
- 14: kept ready the calamity and brought it upon Judah
- 14: righteous in all the works he has done
- 15: brought his people out of Egypt with a mighty hand
- 15: made a name for himself

Summary of the various people named as sinners and what was true of them:

We, kings, princes, fathers, all the people of the land, men of Judah, Jerusalem, all Israel, near and far off

- 5, 8, 11, 15: have sinned (against God)
- 5: done wrong
- 5, 15: acted/done wickedly
- 5, 9: rebelled (against God)
- 5, 11: turned aside (from your commandments and rules)
- 6, (10 similar): have not listened to your servants the prophets
- 7, 8: open shame belongs to us
- 7: committed treachery against God
- 10, (11 similar), 14: have not obeyed the voice of God
- 10: have not walked in God's laws
- 11: transgressed God's law
- 11: refused to obey God's voice
- 13: have not entreated the favor of Yahweh our God
- 13: have not turned from iniquities
- 13: have not gained insight by God's truth