

Daniel 9 Study Guide: A Prayer of Confession Main Scripture: Daniel 9:1-19 (NIV)

- **Context**

- Daniel (now ~80 years old) reads Jeremiah 25:11-12 and understands the 70-year desolation of Jerusalem is nearly complete.
- Instead of coasting or celebrating prematurely, Daniel turns to deliberate, humble prayer and confession.
- Key verse: **Daniel 9:2-3** – “I Daniel understood from the Scriptures... So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.”

Core Themes

- **People of the Word + People of Prayer**

- Daniel’s life was marked by consistent prayer (see Daniel 6) and daily engagement with Scripture.
- Scripture acts as “a lamp to my feet and a light on my path” (Psalm 119:105).
- Assumption: Daily time in God’s Word is essential — weekly exposure is insufficient to grasp God’s nature, our purpose, and how we connect with Him.

- **Approaching God with Reverence**

- “I set my face to the Lord God” (Daniel 9:3) — deliberate, intentional, humble posture.
- Addresses God as “the great and awesome God” who keeps covenant (Daniel 9:4; see also Isaiah 6:1-5).
- God’s majesty does not create a barrier to intimacy; casualness should not replace awe and respect.

- **Prayer of Confession (Majority of Daniel 9:4-15)**

- Specific and collective: “We have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and rebelled. We have turned away...” (Daniel 9:5, 8, 11, 15).
- Daniel includes himself (“we”) despite his personal faithfulness.
- Acknowledges consequences: Curses and judgments from the Law of Moses poured out (Daniel 9:11-12; Deuteronomy 28).
- Recognizes God’s righteousness in judgment and His mercy in forgiveness.

- **Grounded in God’s Character & Past Faithfulness**

- God who brought Israel out of Egypt (Daniel 9:15).
- Requests based on God’s great mercy, not our righteousness (Daniel 9:18).
- Plea: “Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake...” (Daniel 9:19).

Application for Today

- We live as exiles in a broken world (suffering, broken relationships, etc.).
- God is sovereign — He sends into exile and brings out (Daniel 1; Jeremiah 25).
- True response to God’s promises and nearness of deliverance: Deeper prayer and confession, not complacency.

- The church is distinguished by honest confession of sin (John Wesley reference). Confession drives us to the Gospel — “no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).
- Goal: Be people who see our wickedness clearly, confess it honestly, and trust God’s mercy for His glory and kingdom.

Further Thought / Discussion Questions

1. **Scripture & Prayer:** Like Daniel, how does regular time in God’s Word shape your prayers? Share a time when reading Scripture prompted confession or a specific plea to God (Jeremiah 25:11-12; Daniel 9:2-3).
2. **Confession:** Daniel confessed collectively and specifically (“we have sinned... we have been wicked”). Why is honest, specific confession important rather than vague or casual acknowledgment? How does remembering God’s majesty and mercy help us confess without shame (Daniel 9:4-5, 18; Romans 8:1)?
3. **Response to God’s Promises:** When you sense God’s deliverance or answered prayer is near, what is your typical response? How can we follow Daniel’s example of turning toward deeper prayer instead of coasting (Daniel 9:3, 19)?

Challenge: This week, “set your face” toward God daily. Read Daniel 9 and spend time in confession and petition, resting in His mercy. For more, join Bible study on the prophecy in the second half of Daniel 9.

“The word of God for the people of God.” Amen.