

DANIEL 9
DANIEL'S PRAYER

1. Icebreaker

Example: Have you ever felt incredibly bad about doing something you know you shouldn't have done?

2. Opening Prayer

Ask if someone wants to volunteer before leading the prayer

3. Tell the Story

Non-obligatory outline to help prepare for the "storying" of the scripture reviewed during LG

While chapters 1-6 were organized in a chronological manner, chapter 7 begins a series of visions that Daniel receives. Daniel chapter 9 takes place during the first year of Darius the Mede.

Daniel cries out to God, confesses his and his people's sins, and rec word from Gabriel.

Daniel's prayer for his people. Daniel begins by looking at the words of the prophet Jeremiah, and he "perceived in the books" (v. 2) that Israel's captivity would be coming to a close. He responds to this by praying for his people, confessing their sin before God and pleading before God for mercy. Before Daniel begins to pray, we see that his heart is in a position of contrite brokenness before God. He turns his face toward Him and seeks Him with "pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes" (v. 3). He does not take his sins or the sins of his people lightly, and they hurt him because he sees how much they hurt God. Once he starts praying, he repeatedly confesses wrongdoing. He notes that "we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly" (v. 5), "we have not listened" (v. 6), and "all Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice" (v. 11). His confession is genuine, and even though he has been an example of integrity throughout the book, he still includes himself amongst those who have sinned against God. This demonstrates a position of humility, realizing that before God, he has no righteousness apart from God. Daniel is self-aware of his sin and aware of God's grace and mercy. Daniel gets the gospel. When Daniel appeals to God's mercy, he recognizes that Israel has done nothing to earn it. In verse 18, he cries out, "we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness but because of your great mercy." If God were to turn His anger away from the Israelites, it wouldn't be because they deserve it. It would only be because God is merciful and is faithful to the covenant He had made with Israel.

Gabriel brings an answer. As Daniel is praying, Gabriel appears to him to give him “insight and understanding” (v. 22). Gabriel tells him that a word went out at the beginning of Daniel’s pleas for mercy, and that he is greatly loved.

The seventy weeks. Gabriel promises rescue for God’s people. The timing of the rescue is not certain, but it provides hope to Israel. Their captivity and suffering has an expiration date, and they can be confident that it is God who will bring them out of it. While there will be “desolations”, Gabriel proclaims that “the decreed end is poured out on the desolator” (v. 27). Ultimately, evil will not win. God will win.

4. Read the Story (Daniel 9)

Read out loud as a group, 4-5 verses per person, let everyone know they can opt out if they want to

5. Breaking it Down

Questions to be used (as appropriate based upon meeting dynamics) to facilitate discussion and understanding

5.1 What are the main points of this chapter?

- Daniel’s prayer for his people – **Dan 9:1-19**
- The vision of seventy weeks – **Dan 9:20-27**

5.2 What prompted Daniel to pray with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes? (2-3)

- Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning the 70 years of captivity which had been fulfilled

5.3 What are some of the sins mentioned by Daniel that Israel had committed (4-10)

- Rebellion, failure to heed the prophets, unfaithfulness, failure to walk in God’s laws

5.4 What had come upon Israel for their sin? (11-14)

- The curse and oath written in the Law, involving great disaster (cf. Lev 26:27-45)

5.5 For what does Daniel pray God regarding Jerusalem and the sanctuary? (16-19)

- To turn away his anger, cause His face to shine; to hear, forgive, and not delay

5.6 Who was caused to fly swiftly to Daniel because of his prayer? (22-23)

- Gabriel, whom he had seen earlier (Dan 8:16)

5.7 What six things were to happen within the period of seventy “weeks” (24)

- To finish the transgression
- To bring in everlasting righteousness
- To make an end of sins
- To seal up vision and prophecy
- To make reconciliation for iniquity
- To anoint the Most Holy

5.8 What events would occur in the course of this prophecy’s fulfillment? (25-27)

- A command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, followed by 69 weeks
- The coming of the Messiah who would in turn be cut off, but not for Himself
- The destruction of the city and the sanctuary with war and desolations
- The confirmation of a covenant with many for one week
- The end to sacrifice and offering in the middle of the week
- The coming of one who with abomination brings desolation upon the desolate

6. Application

Sample questions (as appropriate) to tie to life application

- 1) What does this passage teach us about God?
- 2) What does this passage teach us about mankind?
- 3) What is a command to obey in this passage? What has God revealed in your life that needs changing? What truth can be applied to your life about the gospel?

Personal Reflection/Application:

1. Daniel has been a man of integrity, yet he confesses many sins before God. What does this say about what it means to be a person of integrity?
2. What does Daniel teach us about how we ought to plead with God?
3. Daniel calls for the Lord to turn his anger and wrath away from his people and to show them mercy. How does this point to the Gospel?
4. Gabriel responds to Daniel after he prays earnestly. What does this say about the role of prayer?

7. Prayer Requests

Have a designated person to capture and share (as appropriate) within the LifeGroup. What happens in LifeGroup, Stays in LifeGroup

8. Closing & Prayer

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DANIEL'S PRAYER

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2. Opening Prayer

Consider volunteering for prayer.

3. Tell the Story

Consider volunteering to Read the Story at your next meeting.

4. Read the Story (Daniel 9)

Read out loud as a group, 4-5 verses per person, let everyone know they can opt out if they want to

5. Breaking it Down

Review the scripture through question, discussion.

5.1 What are the main points of this chapter?

5.2 What prompted Daniel to pray with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes? (2---3)

5.3 What are some of the sins mentioned by Daniel that Israel had committed (4---10)

5.4 What had come upon Israel for their sin? (11---14)

5.5 For what does Daniel pray God regarding Jerusalem and the sanctuary? (16---19)

5.6 Who was caused to fly swiftly to Daniel because of his prayer? (22---23)

5.7 What six things were to happen within the period of seventy "weeks" (24)

5.8 What events would occur in the course of this prophecy's fulfillment? (25---27)

6. Application

1) What does this passage teach us about God?

2) What does this passage teach us about mankind?

3) What is a command to obey in this passage? What has God revealed in your life that needs changing? What truth can be applied to your life about the gospel?

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Have a designated person to capture and share (as appropriate) within the LifeGroup.

What happens in LifeGroup, Stays in LifeGroup

8. Closing & Prayer

Don't forget – when are you meeting next? Who is facilitating? Who is Telling the Story?