

The background is a golden, hazy scene. On the left, a large, golden statue of a figure with a crown and crossed arms stands prominently. In the center and right, a cityscape with various buildings and structures is visible, all rendered in a golden, ethereal light. The overall atmosphere is one of ancient grandeur and divine light.

THE BOOK OF

DANIEL

CHAPTER 9

REAL REPENTANCE

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2 in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

3 Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.

6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets,
who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes,
and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7
To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us
open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to
the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those
who are near and those who are far away, in all the
lands to which you have driven them, because of the
treachery that they have committed against you.

8 To us, O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings,
to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have
sinned against you. 9 To the Lord our God belong
mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against
him 10 and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord
our God by walking in his laws, which he set before
us by his servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has
transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to
obey your voice.

And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. 12 He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem.

13 As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. 14 Therefore the Lord has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. 15 And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

16 “O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. 17 Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate.

18 O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. 19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.”

Context: Why is Daniel praying this now?

“10 “For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. 11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

13 You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. 14 I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.”

Jeremiah 29:10-14

What does Real Repentance
look like?

“But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.”

Deuteronomy 28:15

“Real repentance says: ‘This is what I did. It was evil. It was sin. It hurt other people. It dishonoured the Lord. I knew it. I did it. It was wrong. Lord have mercy!’ If you aren’t talking like that, then you aren’t really repenting.”

-Paul Carter

How can you bring confession and repentance
into your regular prayer life?

We repent for the sins of our
people.

20 While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God, 21 while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first, came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. 22 He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, “O Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding.

23 At the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you, for you are greatly loved. Therefore consider the word and understand the vision.

24 “Seventy weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy place.

25 Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks. Then for sixty-two weeks it shall be built again with squares and moat, but in a troubled time. 26 And after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed.

27 And he shall make a strong covenant with many for one week, and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.”

“It will be helpful for us to remember that apocalyptic literature often has multiple horizons of fulfillment; and so it may well be that Daniel 9:24-27 also has multiple horizons of fulfillment. These could include the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, as well as the final consummation that arrives with the second coming of Christ. Keeping this transhistorical nature of apocalyptic literature in mind will help us stay humble as we work toward understanding.” -David Helm

A “week” = 7 years

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- ◇ The anointed one, or prince, could be Cyrus the Great, Zerubbabel, or Joshua the high priest.

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- ◆ 458 BC: Ezra 7 says King Artaxerxes decreed that Ezra could establish judges and magistrates in Jerusalem.
- ◆ 33 AD (490 years later): Likely year of Jesus’s crucifixion (end to sin, atonement for iniquity)

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This is in our Bible to assure us of God's final victory and sovereign timing.



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