

• LESSON 10 (March 11) •

Daniel 9: The God Who Sees, Hears, and Acts

BACKGROUND:

- The setting of Daniel 9 is “the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans” (9:1-2; 5:31). It is also the year (539-538 B.C.) in which Cyrus issued the proclamation that the Jews could return to their homeland (2 Chron 36:22-23; Ezra 1:1-2).
- The section of Jeremiah’s prophecy that Daniel was studying is Jeremiah 25 and 29.
- This chapter is notoriously difficult to interpret. Commentators almost universally agree that the last four verses are the most baffling part of the chapter (and arguably the entire book).
- But this does not mean the chapter is irrelevant or something to be avoided. We don’t have to understand every detail for the big picture to emerge. This chapter is about our greatest problem, sin, and how God planned to orchestrate our rescue. For all of its confusion, Daniel 9 is a wake-up call about our need to glory in Christ for what he did in destroying the power of sin and Satan at the cross.
- This chapter is not about future events from our perspective, but what God did in Christ to ransom and reconcile us back to him. Also, Daniel 9 relates events involving Israel and the Temple leading up to A.D. 70. Daniel wonders if either will ever be restored. He was arguably unprepared for God’s answer. As you read, note the eagerness and quickness with which God revealed to Daniel those things that would take place to atone for sin. Don’t miss the fact that God was more concerned with assuring Daniel that he would act for the salvation and deliverance of his people, rather than giving a precise chronological description of all that was to take place. As reflected in Daniel’s prayer and Gabriel’s message, God was most concerned with bringing himself glory. And only when God’s people are heartbroken over sin can they properly glorify the Lord.

QUESTIONS WORTH THINKING ABOUT:

1. Why would Daniel have been so concerned about the “desolations of Jerusalem” (9:2)?
2. Why is it critically important that we keep Daniel 9 in its context?
3. Daniel 9:3-19 is a rich section of Scripture. What can we learn from Daniel’s prayer?
4. What can we learn from Daniel 9:23?
5. Thinking “big picture,” what should we make of Daniel 9:24-27?

CLOSING THOUGHT: “[My word] shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isa 55:11).