

Dr. Wendy Widder, Daniel, Session 13, Daniel 9 -- Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration, Part 1 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Widder, Daniel, Session 13, Daniel 9 -- Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture focuses on Daniel 9, specifically exploring repentance and God's promise of restoration. The lecture divides the chapter into three parts: the context, Daniel's prayer, and the revelation given by Gabriel. **Widder emphasizes that Daniel's prayer, a confession of Israel's sins and a plea for God's mercy, is central to the chapter.** She highlights the theme of "listening," noting Daniel's acknowledgment of Israel's failure to listen to God and his subsequent plea for God to listen to their supplication. **The lecture analyzes the structure and language of Daniel's prayer, drawing parallels to other penitential prayers in the Old Testament.** Ultimately, Daniel appeals to God's character and past acts of redemption as the basis for restoration.

2. 23 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Widder, Daniel, Session 13 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Daniel).



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3. Briefing Document: Widder, Daniel, Session 13, Daniel 9 -- Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration, Part 1

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Wendy Widder's lecture on Daniel 9:

Briefing Document: Daniel 9 - Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration

Overview:

This lecture by Dr. Wendy Widder focuses on Daniel chapter 9, specifically examining Daniel's prayer of repentance and the context surrounding it. The chapter is divided into three parts: the context (verses 1-3), Daniel's prayer of repentance (verses 4-19), and the revelation from the angel Gabriel (verses 20-27), which will be discussed in the following lecture. This session concentrates on the first two sections, emphasizing the importance of the repentance portion often overshadowed by the controversial "70 weeks" prophecy found in the final verses. Dr. Widder emphasizes that Daniel 9 shifts away from symbolic visions and focuses on a verbal revelation, or epiphany, received by Daniel. She also notes that this chapter is part of a narrative that narrows in focus from the cosmos in chapter 7, to Jerusalem in chapter 8, and now specifically on the destruction of the Temple in chapter 9.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. Contextual Setting (Verses 1-3):

- **Time:** The setting is the first year of Darius, a Median, and possibly Persian, king who may be Cyrus, around 539 BC. This is significant as it marks the end of the 70-year exile prophesied by Jeremiah and the beginning of the possibility of restoration for the Jews. "In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, by descent Amid, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, 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 70 years."
- **Place:** Daniel is in Babylon, reading the scrolls of Jeremiah, specifically focusing on the prophecy of 70 years of desolation for Jerusalem. He recognizes that the 70 years are nearly complete but the promised restoration has not yet occurred.

- **Significance of Darius:** The detailed description of Darius (son of Ahasuerus/Xerxes, Median descent, made king over Chaldeans) is unusual. It highlights the fulfillment of prophecies regarding the fall of Babylon to a Medo-Persian king and underscores God's hand in history through the rise and fall of kingdoms. Dr. Widder also highlights that the repeated phrase, "in the first year of his reign," emphasizes the importance of this time in the narrative.

1. **Daniel's Prayer of Repentance (Verses 4-19):**

- **Structure:** The prayer is structured as a confession (verses 4-14), a bridge reviewing the past and previewing the future (verses 15-16), and a supplication/plea (verses 17-19).
- **Core Confession (Verses 4-14):** Daniel's confession focuses on the consistent failure of the Israelites to listen to God, to obey God's commandments and the words of His prophets. The Hebrew word "Shema" (to hear, listen, obey) is central, emphasizing the link between listening and obedience. Dr. Widder notes that there is a repetitive use of this word throughout Daniel's prayer, which highlights the theme of the people not listening. He uses many ways of expressing their sin to cover all possibilities "We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly, we have rebelled."
- **Contrast with God's Righteousness:** The confession emphasizes the contrast between God's righteousness, covenant faithfulness, mercy and compassion, and the open shame, and depravity of the Israelites. The contrast is highlighted by Daniel describing their sins of commission and omission. "To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us, open shame."
- **Fulfillment of the Curse:** Daniel acknowledges that the curses outlined in the Law of Moses have come to pass as a direct result of Israel's disobedience, and that this judgment is deserved. He states that the destruction of Jerusalem was unique, even surpassing the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah in its severity, which he also states was deserved.
- **Penitential Prayer:** Dr. Widder notes that this is a penitential prayer, sharing similar characteristics with the prayers in Nehemiah 9 and Ezra 9. These prayers all draw language from Deuteronomy, the covenant, and the consequences of disobedience.

1. **Bridge (Verses 15-16):**

- This section reviews God's past deliverance of Israel from Egypt and briefly reasserts the people's wickedness. Daniel reminds God of the Exodus, highlighting that he is a covenant keeping God.
- The bridge also previews Daniel's supplication by stating the request will be for God to turn his anger from Jerusalem, which was the object of the punishment. He appeals to the righteous acts of God, because His honor is tied to his people.

1. **Supplication/Plea (Verses 17-19):**

- **Central Theme:** The supplication is based on the plea "to listen" (Shema) as Daniel begs God to hear their prayer, pay attention to their desolation, and act on their behalf. Daniel is pleading for God to restore the desolate sanctuary and Jerusalem.
- **Grounds for the Plea:** Daniel does not base his plea on any merit of the people, but on God's character, mercy, and reputation. Daniel wants God to act not because Israel is righteous, but "for your own sake" because God's name is tied to the city and its people.
- **Urgency:** The plea is urgent and includes a series of short, staccato requests: "Lord, hear. Lord, forgive. Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not."

1. **Daniel's Identification with his People:**

- Even though Daniel is portrayed as a righteous individual throughout the book, here he identifies fully with his sinful people and takes ownership of their sins and their failures. He acts as an intercessor on their behalf. He is not saying "they sinned" but "we sinned"

Key Quotes:

- "This chapter is about repentance and God's promise of restoration."
- "In chapter 9, it's not really a vision, and it's more like an epiphany. He's given a revelation by an angel, Gabriel."
- "Sadly, most of the writing done on this chapter deals with those last four verses. The first, the biggest part of the chapter is discussed, but it's sort of the lead-in, gone through rather quickly to get to what's of great interest to people, which is the 70 weeks."

- "God's hand is moving and active in all of these. So, God is the one who's behind Darius being king. He was made king."
- "Well, Daniel's a smart guy. He can figure out the time, right? He knows what time it is. Babylon's been punished by a Median Persian king, but there hasn't been restoration yet. Where's this glorious restoration? Well, the people had also been told that they needed to repent."
- "The Hebrew word Shema means to hear or to listen, and by extension, it means to obey."
- "Daniel goes round and round this theme of we didn't listen."
- "We have sinned, we have done wrong, we have acted wickedly, we have rebelled."
- "To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us, open shame."
- "Because we didn't listen, God has fulfilled this curse against us."
- "Daniel pleads with him to act for his own glory, not because of anything his people have done."
- "He's standing with his people, interceding on their behalf, and owning their sin. I'm one of them."
- "Restore your temple, restore your sanctuary."

Conclusion:

Dr. Widder's lecture highlights Daniel 9 as a pivotal chapter focusing on themes of repentance, confession, and God's character as the basis for hope. The emphasis on Daniel's extensive prayer of repentance, often overlooked in favor of the 70-weeks prophecy, underscores the critical role of acknowledging sin before seeking restoration. The lecture sets the stage for the coming revelation by Gabriel, and the promise of restoration is not based on anything good about the people, but is completely based on God's mercy and His faithfulness to His character.

4. Study Guide: Widder, Daniel, Session 13, Daniel 9 -- Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration, Part 1

Daniel 9: Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. How is Daniel 9 different from other chapters that include Daniel's visions?
2. What are the three main sections of Daniel 9, according to Dr. Widder?
3. Why is there so much detail about Darius in the first verses of Daniel 9?
4. What prophecies from Jeremiah does Daniel reflect upon in Daniel 9?
5. What does Daniel do to show his seriousness about confessing his people's sins?
6. What is the significance of the Hebrew word *shema* in Daniel's prayer?
7. What are some of the similarities between the prayer in Daniel 9 and other prayers in the Old Testament?
8. How does Daniel contrast the nature of God and the nature of his people in his confession?
9. According to Daniel, what was the unique consequence of Israel's sin?
10. On what basis does Daniel ultimately appeal to God for forgiveness and restoration?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Unlike chapters 7 and 8, which contain symbolic visions, Daniel 9 is more of an epiphany or verbal revelation given by the angel Gabriel, with a large portion of the chapter focused on prayer and confession rather than symbolic imagery. It focuses on repentance instead of symbolic visions.
2. According to Dr. Widder, Daniel 9 is divided into three sections: verses 1-3, which provide the context; verses 4-19, which contain Daniel's prayer of repentance; and verses 20-27, which contain the revelation given by Gabriel.
3. The detail about Darius, including his lineage and how he became king, highlights God's hand in the rise and fall of kingdoms and fulfills prophecies about Babylon's

fall to a Median and Persian king. It also emphasizes the significance of 539 BC, the first year of Darius' reign.

4. Daniel reflects upon Jeremiah's prophecies about the 70-year desolation of Jerusalem, specifically found in Jeremiah 25 and 29. These prophecies describe the punishment of Judah and their subsequent restoration.
5. Daniel responds by turning his face to the Lord, seeking Him with prayer, pleas for mercy, fasting, and wearing sackcloth and ashes, which signifies his deep remorse and commitment to confessing his and his people's sins.
6. The Hebrew word *shema*, meaning "to hear," "to listen," and by extension, "to obey," is central to Daniel's prayer. In his confession, Daniel admits that the people did not *shema* God and His prophets; in his supplication, he implores God to *shema* them.
7. The prayer in Daniel 9 shares similarities with other penitential prayers in the Old Testament, particularly those in Nehemiah 9 and Ezra 9. These prayers share similar themes, such as confession, repentance, and appeals for God's mercy, echoing the language of Deuteronomy regarding obedience and consequences.
8. In his confession, Daniel contrasts the righteousness of God with the open shame of his people, acknowledging their sins, wickedness, and rebellion. He juxtaposes God's covenant faithfulness and loving-kindness with the people's unfaithfulness and disobedience.
9. Daniel states that the calamity brought upon Jerusalem was unique in all the heavens, surpassing even the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. This signifies the severity of the people's sins and their deserved punishment.
10. Daniel ultimately appeals to God for forgiveness and restoration not on the basis of his people's righteousness but on the basis of God's character, past redemptive acts (like the Exodus), and reputation. He emphasizes that God's honor and name are at stake.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the role of confession in Daniel 9, focusing on how Daniel expresses the sins of his people and the implications of his role as an intercessor on their behalf.
2. Compare and contrast the themes of listening and obedience (or lack thereof) in Daniel's prayer, exploring the importance of *shema* in both the confession and supplication sections of the chapter.
3. Discuss the significance of the historical context established in Daniel 9, paying close attention to the mention of Darius and the prophecies from Jeremiah, and explaining how this context shapes Daniel's understanding of his present situation.
4. Examine the structure of Daniel's prayer, explaining how it is divided into confession, a bridge, and supplication, and how each section contributes to the overall purpose of the prayer.
5. Explore the relationship between God's righteousness and his mercy in Daniel 9, discussing how Daniel appeals to both attributes and what this reveals about the nature of God and his relationship with his people.

Glossary of Key Terms

Chaldeans: The term used in Daniel 9 to describe the Babylonian kingdom, reflecting the time before the rise of the Median and Persian empires. It emphasizes the end of their reign and the transition to the next power.

Covenant: A solemn agreement between God and his people, outlining their responsibilities and blessings, emphasizing a relationship founded on faithfulness and obedience.

Darius: A king of the Median and Persian empires, mentioned in Daniel 9, and the successor to the Babylonian kingdom. His reign signifies a new phase in history and a move toward the restoration of the Jews.

Exile: The forced displacement of the Israelites from their homeland to Babylon as a consequence of their disobedience, a period of punishment that forms the backdrop of Daniel's prayer.

Epiphany: A sudden and striking realization, often associated with a religious experience or revelation, describing the nature of the revelation Daniel receives from Gabriel.

Jeremiah: A prophet whose writings are consulted by Daniel to understand the timing of the restoration of Jerusalem, whose prophecies about the 70-year exile become a crucial backdrop to Daniel's prayer.

Median: A reference to the people of Media, a group related to the Persians, who played a crucial role in the downfall of Babylon, and whose lineage is highlighted in reference to Darius.

Penitential Prayers: Prayers of confession and repentance found in the Old Testament, including Daniel 9, Nehemiah 9, and Ezra 9. These prayers typically express sorrow for sin and beg for God's mercy.

Persian: Refers to the people and kingdom associated with Persia, who, along with the Medes, conquered Babylon. The Persian connection to Darius highlights a shift in world powers and the changing times.

Prophets: Individuals in the Old Testament who spoke on behalf of God, delivering messages of judgment, warning, and hope. Their words are referenced by Daniel as a standard the people have failed to meet.

Restoration: The act of returning the Israelites to their homeland from exile and rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, a promise that Daniel seeks to see fulfilled.

Sackcloth and Ashes: Traditional symbols of mourning, repentance, and humility used by Daniel to express his deep remorse for the sins of his people.

Shema: A Hebrew word meaning "to hear," "to listen," and by extension, "to obey." It is a recurring theme in Daniel's prayer, emphasizing the importance of listening and obedience to God's commands.

Supplication: A humble request or plea, often made in prayer, representing Daniel's fervent appeal to God for mercy, forgiveness, and restoration.

5. FAQs on Widder, Daniel, Session 13, Daniel 9 -- Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Daniel Chapter 9 - Repentance and God's Promise of Restoration

1. What is the main focus of Daniel Chapter 9, and how does it differ from other chapters in Daniel?

- Daniel Chapter 9 primarily focuses on repentance and God's promise of restoration for Israel. Unlike other chapters that contain symbolic visions of kingdoms, Chapter 9 presents an epiphany, or verbal revelation, received by Daniel from the angel Gabriel. This chapter emphasizes Daniel's long prayer of confession and supplication, rather than symbolic imagery, before receiving a short revelation about the future.

2. What is the historical and chronological context surrounding Daniel's prayer in Chapter 9?

- The events in this chapter take place in the first year of Darius's reign (539 BC), after the fall of Babylon to Media and Persia. This marks the end of the 70 years of exile prophesied by Jeremiah and the beginning of a potential period of restoration for the Jews. Daniel is reading the prophet Jeremiah and is understanding the time is now ripe for restoration, but the people are not ready yet because they have not repented.

3. Why does the text provide so much detail about King Darius in verses 1-2?

- The detailed genealogical information about Darius (son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, made king over the Chaldeans) serves multiple purposes. It connects Darius to Persian royalty, emphasizes that he is both Median and Persian (fulfilling prophecy), and highlights that God's hand is behind his rise to power. This reinforces the theme of God's sovereignty over the rise and fall of kingdoms and shows the fulfillment of prophecies given by Isaiah and Jeremiah.

4. What prompted Daniel to pray the prayer of confession in verses 4-19?

- Daniel was prompted by his reading of Jeremiah's prophecies about the 70-year exile. While he recognized that the exile was coming to an end, he also understood the need for repentance. He saw a disconnection between the end of the exile and the lack of restoration and realizes confession is needed. He acknowledged that Israel had sinned and deserved their punishment and they must repent to see God's hand move to fully restore the people. He also recalled Solomon's prayer for forgiveness and restoration in exile.

5. What are the key themes within Daniel's prayer of confession (verses 4-14)?

- The key themes in Daniel's confession are: a) Israel's consistent failure to listen to God and the prophets; b) the stark contrast between God's righteousness and the people's shame; c) the fulfillment of the curses described in the law of Moses because of their sins; d) that they are guilty as a nation with all having turned from the law including the kings and commoners; and, e) the all-encompassing nature of Israel's sin which included sins of both commission and omission.

6. How does Daniel structure his prayer, and what is the significance of the word "listen" in his prayer?

- Daniel's prayer is structured into three parts: a confession of sin (verses 4-14), a bridge that reviews the confession and previews his requests (verses 15-16), and a supplication asking for God's mercy (verses 17-19). The word "listen" (or "shema" in Hebrew) is a crucial element, highlighting the central failure of Israel to listen to God. He repeatedly states that they *did not* listen, and in his supplication, he begs God to *listen* to their pleas.

7. What is the basis for Daniel's supplication and what does he ask of God?

- Daniel does not base his plea on any merit of the people, but solely on God's character, past actions, and his reputation. He reminds God of the Exodus and asks God to turn his anger away from Jerusalem, to restore the desolate sanctuary, and to act for his own glory. Daniel acknowledges that they do not present their pleas because of their own righteousness, but because of God's great mercy and because His name is associated with the city and the people.

8. How does Daniel's behavior in chapter 9 reflect the role of a prophet and what is the importance of this chapter to a proper understanding of the rest of the book?

Daniel acts as a prophet by identifying with his sinful people. He confesses their sins as if they were his own, and he intercedes on their behalf, owning their sin. He does this even though he is presented as a model Israelite in the book, showing his humility. This chapter is important because it sets the stage for the revelation of God's plan of restoration, which is revealed by Gabriel in the following verses, and it reveals the human need for repentance to unlock restoration. It shows the book as focusing on not just grand visions of history but also on the imp