

GRADE 9

BIBLE

What specific principles can we learn from Daniels' prayer life?

Daniel prayed earnestly, not only with the appropriate words, but with the right attitude, as well. He came to God humbly, with sackcloth (coarse cloth made out of camel or goat hair) and ashes. He prayed relying on God's righteousness and His mercy, not his own good works. By remembering that we are sinful human beings, unworthy of God's love and salvation, we can have the same kind of humility that Daniel did.

When confessing his sins, he included the sins of his people. He never blamed his leaders for the misfortune that had befallen his people as a nation; rather, he included himself as he presented his and their sins to God. Instead of blaming all of our nation's problems on our president, or tracing all of our church's problems to our pastor, or blaming our parents for all the trouble that goes unnoticed around the house, we can take some responsibility and include ourselves in the problem as we confess it to God.

Not only did he use and quote Scripture while he prayed, he claimed God's promises, as well. We can have the faith that Daniel did by simply remembering that God always has and always will keep His promises.

Why was the third decree to "restore and build Jerusalem" the beginning of the time prophecy, and not the first or second decree?

In Daniel 9:25, Gabriel prophesied, "... that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem". Neither the first nor the second decree fit this description, "to restore and to build".

The first decree, given in 538 B.C. by Cyrus the Great, gave the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem and begin to rebuild their temple. Nineteen years later, Darius I Hystaspes gave the decree again when asked for confirmation.

The third decree was given in 457 B.C. by Artaxerxes I Longimanus. This time, power was given to appoint religious and political judges over the people, and the Jewish law was re-established as the foundation for the government. This was the “restoration” part of the prophecy.

The third decree also allowed the Jews to rebuild their entire city, not just their temple. This was the “building” part of the prophecy.

These are the two factors that show why it is the third decree Gabriel spoke of in the time prophecy, not the first or second.

Daniel 9:27 foretold that Jesus would “make a strong covenant with many for one week”. From your reading, can you explain how the year of the cross was foretold and how Jesus kept His promise?

The 70-week prophecy, mentioned in Daniel 9:24-27, spans all the way from the decree to restore Jerusalem to the stoning of Stephen. The main focus of this time period, foretold by Gabriel’s prophecy, was the atonement for the Jew’s sins. During the last week of this time prophecy, the Messiah made a strong covenant: a promise kept no matter what the cost.

Jesus was baptized at the beginning of the 70th week. If the time prophecy started in 457 B.C., and we remember that a day in prophecy stands for one year (see Ezekiel 4:6), then we arrive at A.D. 27 as the date for His baptism. Nearly all Bible scholars agree that Jesus’ death fell three or four years after His baptism, under the reign of Pilate

(A.D. 26-36). That leaves us with a date of A.D. 30 or 31, the middle of the week. The first Passover Jesus attended, after He was baptized, fell in the spring of A.D. 28. His second Passover occurred in the spring of A.D. 29. Jesus' third Passover took place during the spring of A.D. 30. The Messiah's last Passover, during which He died, thus occurred in the spring of A.D. 31 – exactly three and a half years after His baptism.

When John saw Jesus walking toward him and the River Jordan, he cried, “Behold, the Lamb of God” – John 1:29. While the Israelites were traveling to the Promised Land, a man could be reconciled with God and be forgiven his sins by offering a lamb as a sin offering (see Leviticus 4:32-35). This pointed to the real Lamb of God, Jesus. His was the blood that was spilled to atone for our sins. When Jesus died, the veil of the temple was ripped in two (see Mark 15:38). This symbolized that the earthly sanctuary services were no longer needed; for the true Lamb had been sacrificed.

This falls right in step with Gabriel's prophecy in Daniel 9:27, when he foretold that in the middle of the week Jesus would bring an end to the earthly sanctuary services. The end of the week was marked by Stephen's death 3 ½ years later (the last “half” of the week) in A.D. 34.

When Jesus died, His “strong covenant” was fulfilled. In place of the earthly sanctuary services, forgiveness was free to those who sincerely wanted it. Instead of the chosen few who made up the Jewish nation and God's people, anyone who believed in Christ, and truly wanted to obey Him, could claim membership in God's family. And now, anyone could claim the power to live the life of a Christian, to live a life that exemplified Christ.

This covenant was even offered to the Jews who had so hated Him and even the priests who had led the mob in crucifying Him! Acts 2:38-39 shows this. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to al that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” That day, about three thousand Jews were baptized and added to the church. And in Acts 6:7, it says that “a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith”. Jesus’ covenant was so forgiving, so unconditional, so attractive, that even some of those who had been partly responsible for His death accepted it and became Christians.

When Stephen was stoned, the Jews who had not accepted Jesus showed that they did not want anything else to do with Him or His covenant. Their hearts were permanently hardened against the Holy Spirit; they could no longer hear His voice and had not desire to. Sadly, Jesus drew away His presence, and the week of Jesus’ strong covenant with the Jews ended.

Psalm 15 gives a description of traits that God values. Verse four ends, “... He who swears to his own hurt and does not change”. Our Perfect Example, Jesus, demonstrated this to its fullest extent during His life and death. He endured to the awful end, even when it wasn’t convenient. He agreed to die for the human race, even when it seemed as though no one cared. He accepted death for us because He had promised. And then He rose again, so that when He comes, we can rise, too.

Explain the four phases of the judgment.

The first phase of the judgement, in which we are now living, started in 1844. During this judgement, Jesus investigates the book to see who has proven faithful and will remain in the Book of Life (see Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14).

The second phase of the judgement will be at Jesus Christ's second coming, when He separates the sheep from the goats (see Matthew 25:31-46).

During the third phase of the judgement, the saints in Heaven will evaluate the records of the fallen angels of the world (see Revelation 20:6 and 1 Corinthians 6:2-3).

After the verdict is decided and sentence is given, the last phase of the judgement is carried out. Satan, his angels, and those who turned against God will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone to be destroyed.

Study the chart on page 250.

The chart was interesting. It was more evidence that the Bible does not contradict itself.

CHAPTER TEN

What is the significance of Daniel 10:13? What does this prove about God and His working in the affairs of mankind? How does this verse substantiate the fact that God is in control?

Daniel, ninety years old now, was disturbed about a particular problem raging between King Cyrus, the Samaritans, and the Israelites. Cyrus had give the Jews permission to rebuild their city and temple, and the Samaritans didn't appreciate that. "Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled

them in building, and hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose” – Ezra 4:4-5.

As was his custom, Daniel prayed, fasting from sweets and rich foods to keep his mind clear and alert. Jesus appeared after three weeks in all His glory to Daniel in a vision. Daniel was so overwhelmed by His holiness and brightness that he fell to the ground, unconscious.

He was awakened by Gabriel, who explained to him that his prayer had been answered. “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia” – Daniel 10:13.

Michael is identified as Jesus the archangel, our Lord and Savior (see Revelation 12:7-8, Daniel 12:1, and Jude 9). The prince of the kingdom of Persia was a powerful demon, under the instruction of Satan.

God had cared for His people in the past. Now, when their future depended on King Cyrus’ decision, he sent Gabriel, and finally Jesus, to resist the evil spirit intent on destruction. Here, we are reminded that God is still interested in humankind, and that He is in control of world events.