

Growth Group Lesson
February 26-27
Daniel 9

Recap from Daniel 8: Daniel receives a second vision that illustrates particular kingdoms rising and falling. In each succession, God is sovereignly at work for the good of His people, though they will experience great suffering at the hands of each kingdom. In the midst of tragedy, God's people have the hope of Jesus ruling over all nations.

Big Idea: Daniel confesses sin on behalf of Israel, representing them before God. He asks God to redeem Judah from captivity in Babylon according to His good character and promises.

Spend some time praying with your group and asking for help in understanding and applying His word. Review and reflect on the prayer requests shared the previous week. Give praise for the answers to your group's requests.

Read Daniel 9:1-19

Daniel is a picture, or type, of Jesus. He portrays what the Messiah will be like, similar to Joseph in Genesis 37-50. Men of integrity who lead with humility under a corrupt kingdom. In Daniel 9, Daniel takes on the role of High Priest (in a Temple-less nation), confessing his own sins and the sins of Israel.

1. Why did Daniel think that Judah's captivity would end soon? **Verse 2, Jer. 29:4-14**
2. Why was Daniel so bold in asking God for release from captivity?
3. What does Daniel appeal to in asking God for release? **Verses 15-19**
4. How does Daniel's prayer inform the ways that we should pray and confess sin?
5. Do you have someone in your life who you can regularly confess sin to? How has that benefited your life? If you do not have someone, what benefit do you think it would have for you? If not, would you be willing to speak to someone from this group?

Daniel speaks of covenant blessings and curses as the basis for Judah's captivity. Deuteronomy 28 outlines specific blessings for obedience to the covenant agreement between God and Israel, as well as specific curses for disobedience. The curses consist of the natural consequences of Israel's rebellion against God. God gives Israel over to their own sin.

6. What is Daniel's opinion of God's character in orchestrating their captivity? **Verse 14**
7. When you see tragedy *in the world*, how do you view God's character? Is it easy to believe He is good and just? Why or why not?
8. When you experience tragedy *in your own life*, is it easy to believe He is good and just? Why or why not?

Daniel intercedes on behalf of Israel like a High Priest, foreshadowing the intercession that Jesus would have for all believers. **Read Hebrews 7:23-28, Hebrews 10:19-22**

9. Why is Jesus able to intercede for believers according to these verses?

10. These verses tell us that through Jesus, we may have confidence to come to God in prayer. In your life, what would a confident prayer life look like? What would your life be characterized by?
11. What in your life keeps you from coming to God confidently?
12. Do you believe that prayer is effective in your life? Why or why not?

Read Daniel 9:20-27

Daniel's prayer has gone out and God replies by sending an angel to reveal more to Daniel. God's response is that there will be seventy years of captivity according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, but even more time before Israel is truly rescued. There are many views on the interpretations of these numbers, however, it is most important to note the sovereignty of God in sending His Messiah to rescue Israel and the nations from their spiritual exile.

The purpose of these visions and predictions is for giving hope to God's people in the midst of suffering and persecution.

13. How does knowing the ultimate outcome of God against evil give you hope?
14. How does it change how you relate to God?
15. How does it change how you relate to others?
16. How does it change how you live missionally?

Spend time praying for one another and those in your community who need to experience the love of Jesus.