



Daily Verse and Comment

Daniel 9:1-4

(1) In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; (2) In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. (3) And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: (4) And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

King James Version

When Daniel prayed this, Judah had been scattered for about 70 years, and they were just about ready to go back to the Promised Land. [God](#) was just about ready to release them. Daniel was concerned due to what he saw in Babylon; it discomfited him. He likely saw some of the same conditions existing in Babylon that had caused the Jews to go into captivity in the first place almost 70 years before. His fears were justified because, when Ezra and Nehemiah went back to rebuild the Temple and then the wall around Jerusalem, very few Jews went back. In fact, it was such a small number by Ezra's count that he called a fast about it. He wanted to make sure that the people would be hidden on the way so that nobody would see them making the trip back to Judea and consider them "easy pickings."

When the church was finally begun in AD 31, Peter went to preach in Babylon because there was still such a large colony of Jews there. Indeed, they stayed in [the world](#) —in Babylon—and continued to multiply.

We can read between the lines of Daniel's prayer and understand that he was anxious over their return. Quite a number of commentators feel that this

cannot be all Daniel prayed. Really, all that we have here is an outline of what he said, the high points. After praying it, Daniel went back to his office or to his home and jotted these things down so that they would be remembered. God undoubtedly inspired that. So we are actually seeing only the essence of what he said. He certainly went into a great deal more detail with God.

When we pray for [repentance](#), we go into detail about things that we personally know about—especially those things that happen in our lives and perhaps those things that happen within God's work, of which we were aware. We do nothing about them then, but we certainly can ask God to forgive them.

Daniel begins by establishing between him and God that he, Daniel, understood that *God is faithful*. He keeps His covenant. He stands by Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28. When something goes out of God's mouth, it does not come back to Him empty ([Isaiah 55:11](#)). There are no "hollow threats" with God! Do we understand that? His [faithfulness](#) is one of the things that makes Him God. He can *always* be depended upon. He is Jesus Christ—the same yesterday, today, and forever ([Hebrews 13:8](#)). "For I am the Lord, I do not change" ([Malachi 3:6](#)).

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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