

DANIEL: THRIVING IN A GODLESS CULTURE
XI: The Blessing Of Staying Right With God Amid Apostasy
(Daniel 9:1-24a)

I. Introduction

- A. As believers living in a spiritually decaying, godless culture, we need to live affirmatively in victory over sin.
- B. Daniel as a young man was taken captive by godless Babylonians, and he lived through Persia's conquest of Babylon, righteously and wisely serving the Lord in a godless culture as a great example for us.
- C. We view Daniel 9:1-24a on the blessing of staying right with God amid apostasy (as follows):

II. The Blessing Of Staying Right With God Amid Apostasy, Daniel 9:1-24a.

- A. We previously learned that the Daniel 7-12 visions describe challenges God's people would face after Daniel's era under future godless empires until the arrival of Christ's Kingdom. Couched in this section of such visions is a great lesson on the blessing of staying right with God amid apostasy that we face.
- B. We thus view that lesson in Daniel 9:1-24a for our insight and edification:
 - 1. Daniel's great prayer of confession in Daniel 9:3-19 was preceded by his reading of Jeremiah 25:11-12 and 29:10 that predicted that Israel's captivity in Babylon would last for 70 years. (Daniel 9:1-2)
 - 2. From the Mosaic Law, Daniel knew that this 70-year time period fulfilled Leviticus 26:33-35 where Moses predicted that were Israel taken captive from her land in God's discipline, she must stay in captivity for the same number of years that she had failed to observe her land sabbath years that were to be observed every seventh year (Leviticus 25:3-7). Israel had not kept any of her land sabbaths for 490 years, thus missing 70 years' worth of land sabbaths, so she was destined of God to stay in captivity in Babylon for 70 years.
 - 3. Daniel thus knew that the first year of Darius, 538 B. C., 67 years after he had gone into captivity, the time was near for the end of Israel's Babylonian Captivity, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Daniel 9:1.
 - 4. God in Leviticus 26:40-45 had directed that Israel needed to confess her sins to be restored to the land following national captivity, so Daniel obediently sought God for blessing in Daniel 9:3-19 (as follows):
 - a. Daniel was part of a theocracy, so though he was not personally responsible for the sins of Israel's idolatry, he was part of the nation that had thus sinned, so he prayed confessing his nation's sins, Daniel 9:3-15:
 - i. Throughout this confession, Daniel repeatedly admitted that Israel had sinned against the Lord, not heeding His prophets, and that the nation had deserved God's punishment, cf. Daniel 9:5-6, 10-12.
 - ii. In contrast, God was perfectly righteous and He had long called Israel to repent, and upon not getting that response, the Lord had eventually sent the nation into captivity, Daniel 9:4, 7, 9,14-15.
 - b. After his confession, Daniel asked God to end His punishment and restore Israel to her land, Dan. 9:16-19.
 - 5. While Daniel was giving this great prayer of confession and petition, God sent the angel Gabriel to touch him about the time of the 3 p. m. evening sacrifice in Jerusalem, Daniel 9:20-21; Ibid., fn. to Daniel 9:21.
 - 6. Gabriel told Daniel that he had been sent to give him "insight and understanding," that when Daniel had first begun to appeal for God's mercy, the word from God had gone forth that Gabriel was to come to give Daniel this insight, for Daniel was highly beloved of the Lord, Daniel 9:22-23. In other words, God was delighted in Daniel's prayer of confession and supplication, and He highly loved this man for his great desire and effort via his prayer to be and to stay righteous before the Lord!
 - 7. Thereupon, Gabriel said that God had decreed [literally] seventy "sevens" (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Daniel 9:24) to occur for Daniel's Hebrew people and the holy city "to finish transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy [place]," Daniel 9:24 NIV. This prophecy is highly informative both for Daniel and for believers down through history beyond even our time and into the Great Tribulation! (Matt. 24:15 with Dan. 9:27)
 - 8. The seventy "sevens" are defined by the context as the seventy "sevens" of land sabbaths that Daniel had considered back in Daniel 9:2 (Ibid., fn. to Daniel 9:24), so, just as Israel had experienced 490 years under God's rule of her as a nation in her land, she would experience another 490 years in that land under God's rule, namely, another set of seventy "sevens," before the institution of the Messianic Kingdom!
 - 9. This news was a great divine reward of insight to Daniel for his evident effort to stay upright before God!

Lesson: *For practicing righteousness in his prayer of confession and supplication in his spiritually difficult era, Daniel was richly blessed with great insight for him and for all saints on the timeline to the Messianic Kingdom.*

Application: *May we like Daniel practice righteousness before God for His rich blessing in our apostate era!*