

"Daniel's Prayer"

Part 1

Daniel 9:1-19

Introduction: Last week in our study we looked at Daniel 8, and, in that study, we considered the little horn that would rise out of the Grecian Empire. His name was Antiochus Epiphanes, and he was used by God to chasten the people of Judah. When the Grecians came to power it was under Alexander the Great and the Grecians brought with them their Hellenistic practices. That was the worship of false gods and the following of Greek philosophies. There were many of the Jews who desired to cast off the worship of Jehovah and follow the false gods and philosophies of the Grecians. God allowed this to continue for a time and then He brought the chastening when the transgressors were come to the full. Therefore Daniel 8 gives the details about the chastening that would come upon the Jews under Antiochus.

Chapter 8 also tells us about the 2 programs of God. Israel was and is in a time known as the indignation which is a time of facing the discipline of God for their sin and unbelief. At the same time the world is under the Times of the Gentiles in which God is working with the Gentile world powers to accomplish His purpose for Israel.

In Daniel 2-7 the focus was upon the Gentile world powers and then as we come to chapters 8-12 the focus will be on the people of Israel under the sovereign hand of God. Chapters 1-7 are written in Aramaic and chapters 8-12 are written in Hebrew. It is as if Daniel understood the Times of the Gentiles and then he wanted to know what would happen to his people during the Times of the Gentiles. God answers that request in 8-12, and He will reveal to Daniel what his people will experience in the indignation.

Tonight, as we come to Daniel 9, we will see the prayer that Daniel offers up on behalf of the Jews.

➤ The Discovery

Notice Daniel 9:1-2

Verse 1 takes us back to the end of Daniel 5 and the beginning of chapter 6. In the first year of Darius, Daniel was studying the Scriptures and as he was reading the book of Jeremiah, he discovered that the captivity was to last 70 years. When Daniel discovered the length of the captivity the year was 538 BC which means that the Jews had been in the captivity for 67 years. Therefore, they were approaching the end of the captivity for they had 3 more years to go. This is what led Daniel to the prayer that will follow. But before the prayer we need to see what Jeremiah had written concerning the captivity.

Jeremiah 25:9-12

⁹ Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the LORD, and Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations.

¹⁰ Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle.

¹¹ And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

¹² And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations.

Jeremiah 29:10

¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

From these verses Daniel knew that the captivity would be 70 years, and they were at this time in the 67th year. We must ask the question, "Why 70 years?"

2 Chronicles 36:17-21

¹⁷ Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand.

¹⁸ And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon.

¹⁹ And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

²⁰ And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia:

²¹ To fulfil the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

Here in verse 21, we see the reason for the captivity being 70 years long. It was to allow the land to enjoy her Sabbaths. This is recorded in Leviticus 25.

Leviticus 25:1-7

And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,

² Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

³ Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

⁴ But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

⁵ That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.

⁶ And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee.

⁷ And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

Every seventh year the land was to rest. Israel had not practiced this for 70 Sabbaths which was 490 years. From the time of the Judges until the Babylonian captivity. The Sabbaths that were missed were then given to the land in the 70-year captivity.

Getting back to Daniel this was what he found as he read the book of Jeremiah.

➤ The Prayer

Notice Daniel 9:3

Daniel fasted and Daniel put on sackcloth and ashes. The fasting was for the purpose of focus, and the sackcloth and ashes were a sign of an inward sorrow. Daniel was broken over the sin of his people, and he was determined to make it right.

Notice Daniel 9:4

In verse 4 we see that Daniel made this prayer personal. He calls it HIS confession. Daniel will identify himself with the sins of his people 32 times in this prayer. Daniel knew that the sin had to be confessed.

Jeremiah 29:10-12

¹⁰ For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

¹² Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

¹³ And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

¹⁴ And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity...

Notice Daniel 9:4 again.

In this verse we also see the basis for Daniel's supplications. There are two words here that reveal this. The first word is "mercy", and it refers to God's lovingkindness. It speaks of God's faithful love for His unfaithful people. In the Old Testament communion, deliverance, enabling, enlightenment, guidance, forgiveness, hope, praise, and preservation are all based upon God's lovingkindness. Daniel knew of God's love for his people and therefore he could pray as he does based on the lovingkindness of God.

The second word that reveals Daniel's basis for prayer is the word "covenant". Daniel knows that God is a covenant keeping God. If we notice the verse closely, we see that Daniel refers to THE covenant. This is the Mosaic Covenant. This covenant was conditional. If Israel walked in obedience, they would be blessed but if they walked away from God they would be cursed. So, the implication is that if they were under a curse then they needed to repent to be restored to the side of blessing. Daniel knew God would be true to His covenant and that was Daniel's basis for the prayer of confession. There were then 2 bases for prayer.

1. The lovingkindness of God.
2. The faithfulness of God to His Word.

Application:

Let us learn from this that the better we know the Word of God the better we can pray in the will of God. Praying in the will of God brings about answers.

1 John 5:14-15

¹⁴ *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:*

¹⁵ *And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*

We will stop here for this evening and next week we shall step into the details of the prayer.

Conclusion:

We often read prophecy to satisfy curiosity. But looking at Daniel 9, we see that prophecy should drive us to pray.

Matthew 6:9-10

⁹ *After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.*

¹⁰ *Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

Too often we are content to know that God in His sovereignty will carry out His Word as it is recorded in prophecy. Daniel, however, did not shut up the book once he knew that the captivity was almost over. He did not start packing his suitcase to go home. He prayed! This is what we should do as we come to understand prophecy. Why do we pray because God will bring it to pass regardless? Because prayer is for us. Prayer is you and me aligning ourselves with the will of God. When the Rapture happens, I want to be in the will of God, and I am sure you want to be in His will also. Well then as we see the pieces of prophecy coming together let us keep short accounts with God and let us pray for His will in our lives.