

DANIEL'S PRAYER FOR ISRAEL

(Dan 9:1-2) 04/29/20

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I. DANIEL'S DEVOTION (Dan 9:1-3)

A. Context

1. Seventy Weeks - Chapter 9 contains one of the most well-known and important prophecies for the Jewish people. It is in regard to God's program for Israel contained in Daniel's prophecy of "seventy weeks" (490 years).
2. Jeremiah and Prayer - However, the catalyst for that prophecy was Daniel's reading of Jeremiah's timeline for Israel's return to Jerusalem. After reading Jeremiah, Daniel sought the Lord and prayed for Israel.
3. Answer by Gabriel - Daniel's answer came with the appearance of the angel Gabriel who outlined Israel's near future as well as distant future in Dan 9:24-27.
4. Daniel's Prayer for Israel - Though the Seventy Week prophecy is monumental, the majority of this chapter is taken up with Daniel's prayer for Israel. The chapter can be broken up in three sections: Daniel's Devotion (1-3), Daniel's Prayer (4-19), Daniel's Seventieth Week (24-27).

B. First year of Darius, i.e. Cyrus (1)

1. Title - Once again, we take a brief look at the identity of **Darius the Mede**. One position identifies this particular Darius as an appointed viceroy. We follow the view that "Darius" is a title in Daniel similar to that of the title "Caesar."
2. Cyrus the Great - Cyrus the Great (550-530 B.C.) conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. and continued until his death in 530 B.C. He was the king of the Medes, Persians, and also the Chaldeans (Babylonians).
3. Daniel's Timeline - Daniel was under Cyrus' rule until his death in approx. 530 B.C. and wrote the book of Daniel sometime between 536 and 530 B.C.

C. Daniel Read Jeremiah (2)

1. Jeremiah Prophecy - What was one of Daniel's preoccupations? It was the reading of Jeremiah, the prophet who wrote during Judah's exile. It is interesting that one prophet would read the writings of another prophet (1Pe 1:10-11).
2. Destruction and Captivity - Jeremiah wrote of the **desolation of Jerusalem**, which means that Jerusalem was destroyed, and that Judah was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. (Jer 25:11-12).
3. Restoration of Israel - In addition, Jeremiah also wrote of the restoration of Israel after **seventy years** (Jer 29:10). Some maintain that the seventy years of captivity were between 586-516 BC, concluding the rebuilding of the Temple. Others hold that the seventy years were between 606-536 BC, concluding with the decree of Cyrus to release Judah.

D. Daniel Prayed to the Lord (3)

1. Daniel and Friends Prayed - When Nebuchadnezzar was going to kill all the Magi in his kingdom because they could not tell him his dream, Daniel asked his friends to seek God for the answer (Dan 2:17-18).
2. Daniel Prayed Under Pressure - Though it is probable that the lion's den incident (Chapter 6) takes place later than Chapter 9, Daniel continued to pray in spite of the threat of death by the lion's den (Dan 6:10).
3. Daniel Spurred on to Pray - Daniel may have been spurred on to pray for Israel's restoration after reading of Jeremiah's account of the seventy years (Jer 29:11-14 cf. Dan 9:3-19).
4. Daniel's Prayer Characteristics - Daniel's tremendous prayer could be broken into three sections: the reputation of God, the repentance of Israel, and God's restoration of Israel. However, there are numerous characteristics that will be mentioned in detail in the following section.

II. DANIEL'S PRAYER (4-19)

A. Prayer in Regard to the Word (2)

1. Devotions

- a. Reading and Prayer - Believers refer to the word “devotions” as a regular time of Bible reading and prayer. These two facets can be seen in the life of Daniel.
- b. Discernment - First, he “**observed in the books.**” The word “observe” is the Hebrew word *bên* and means to discern in order to understand. The Lord gives us discernment when we read, observe, study, and apply the Scriptures (Pro 2:1-6).
- c. Detailed Study - Look how detailed Daniel’s study of the Scriptures was. He was searching the “desolations of Jerusalem” and the “seventy years” of exile (2Ti 2:15).
- d. Devotionals - There are many good devotionals out there today. But I have always been partial to having devotions through a book of the Bible with a good commentary.
- e. What About Application? - It is the Holy Spirit that makes the application for us. You read the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit applies it to each individual’s situation. Daniel is a prime example.

2. Response of Prayer

- a. Application - Daniel studied the Scriptures and it was the Scriptures that led him to application. Jer 29:10 talked about Judah’s restoration after seventy years. As Daniel read, he read Jer 29:11-14. He learned that prayer was the proper response of the exiles leading up to their release. Daniel applied what he read and therefore, he prayed. We have it recorded in vv. 4-19.
 - 1) Full of Applications - Scripture is full of applications, exhortations, and imperatives (Heb 12:1-4; Eph 5:22-6:18).
 - 2) Action and Knowledge - Most applications are instructions on actions we are to take or not to take (prohibitions). Some applications apply to the believer’s knowledge (Rom 8:28). They lead us into thinking biblically and living by biblical principles.
- b. Prayer According to the Word
 - 1) Pray through the Word - Devotions also include prayer. What or how should we pray? We can pray through the Word of God. I don’t mean praying the Word like incantations or as some formula (Mat 6:7).
 - 2) Daniel’s Example - Daniel prayed about what he read in Jeremiah.

- a) God was a covenant-keeping God (Jer 33:25-26 cf. Dan 9:4).
- b) God called for repentance (Jer 26:3 cf. Dan 9:5, 13).
- c) God promised restoration (Jer 29:14 cf. Dan 9:18-19)

B. Prayer in Regard to the Will of God (2)

1. Will of God for Daniel - Daniel read God’s will for the exiles. Daniel was an exile. Therefore, Daniel read God’s will for himself. So, when Daniel prayed, he prayed according to God’s will (Rev 22:20).
2. Will of God for Believers - We have been studying the book of Revelation and Daniel. Both those books teach about God’s future program, His will. Those things should become part of our prayers (holiness, judgment, Lamb of God, repentance, salvation).
3. Revealed will of God - There are some things that we do not know what the will of God is. But there are so many other things revealed in the Word of God that it ought to keep us busy doing the will of God.
 - a. Sanctification is the Will of God - The Thessalonians may have asked Paul, “what was God’s will for their lives?” He answered them that the will of God for them was their sanctification (1Th 4:3-5).
 - b. Renewing our Mind teaches us the Will of God - If we want to learn God’s will and have discernment determining it, then we should not be conformed to this world

- but should be renewed in our minds. Then we will know and be able to determine God's will (Rom 12:1-2).
4. Pray according to the will of God
 - a. Align Our Will - Our prayers are to be in accordance to God's will. Prayer is not twisting God's arm to get what we want. In a sense, prayer is aligning our will with God's will.
 - b. Answered Prayer - If we know God's will, we can ask anything according to His will and it will be answered (1Jo 5:14-15).
 5. If we know God's will, why pray?
 - a. Not Fatalism - Christians should not adopt a fatalistic view of God. This is saying we don't have to pray because God's will happens anyway. Such an attitude shows immaturity. It shows a lack of knowledge of the Word and a lack of knowledge of our personal God.
 - b. He commands us to pray - We pray because we are commanded to pray (1Th 5:17; Eph 6:18). It is similar to evangelism. Why should we evangelize when He will bring the elect? Did we ever consider that He chose not only to save the elect, but save them through the prayers of the saints? It is the same with prayer.
 - c. His will and Our Prayers - Sometimes God is waiting for His people to pray. At times, He wants His people's prayers to be a part of His will (Jam 4:2-3).

Quote

The prophet Daniel, while he was in captivity in Babylon, carefully studied the book of Jeremiah and discerned that the seventy-year exile was nearly over (see Daniel 9:1-2). In Luke 2 an old man named Simeon and an elderly woman named Anna were both in the Temple when Jesus' parents brought Him there. Simeon and Anna knew from the Old Testament prophecy that the time of the Messiah's coming was near. They were eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel (Luke 2:25). This salvation was something even the prophets wanted to know more about when they prophesied about this gracious salvation prepared for you. They wondered what time or situation the Spirit of Christ within them was talking about when he told them in advance about Christ's suffering and his great glory afterward (1 Peter 1:10- 11). We should eagerly follow the pattern of these godly men and women. We should be compelled to study prophecy if for no other reason than to follow the example of godly saints in Scripture who recognized its importance. (The End)

CHRONOLOGY OF DANIEL AND KINGS

Babylonian Reign - Nebuchadnezzar (605-562 B.C.).

- Ch. 1: Daniel raised to power (604 B.C.) [“Neb.’s 1st yr”]
- Ch. 2: The image dream (602 B.C.) [“Neb.’s 2nd yr”]
- Ch. 3: The fiery furnace episode (600 B.C.?). [Neb.’s 4th yr?]
- Ch. 4: The tree dream (570 B.C.?). [Neb.’s 35th yr?]

Babylonian Reign - Nabonidus/Belshazzar (556-539 B.C.).

- Ch. 7: Vision of four beasts (553 B.C.) [“Bel.’s 1st yr”]
- Ch. 8: Vision of ram and goat (551 B.C.) [“Bel.’s 3rd yr”]
- Ch. 5: Handwriting on the wall (539 B.C.) [“Bel.’s 14th yr”]

Persian Reign – Cyrus (“Darius”) (539-530 B.C.).

- Ch. 9: Vision of seventy weeks (538 B.C.) [“Cyrus’ 1st yr”]
- Ch. 6: The lions’ den (537 B.C.) [“Cyrus’ appointments”]
- Ch. 10-12: The final vision (536 B.C.) [“Cyrus’ 3rd yr”]

