

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

## BOOK OF DANIEL

### CONFESSION (DANIEL 9:1-6)

#### DANIEL SETS THE STAGE CHRONOLOGICALLY

This event was during the time of Darius, right after Babylon fell under Belshazzar (chapter 5 and 6). At this point Jerusalem had laid in ruins for about 50 years from the Babylonian invasion that took Daniel captive

#### JEREMIAH 25:11-13 HAD PROPHESIED THIS

He mentions the "Desolation of Jerusalem" under the Babylonians before the Persians would overtake them a generation before it happened

- Notice Daniel regards Jeremiah's writings as scripture though it was fairly recent. This may be because he saw the prophecies come true.

#### DANIEL TRUSTED GOD'S TIMING

Seeing how controlling the Mede-Persian empire was and not knowing exactly when the 70 years of captivity Jeremiah spoke of began, it must have been difficult for Daniel to trust his people would ever return to Jerusalem

#### THE WORD LEADS TO PRAYER, AND BACK AGAIN

It was an examination of the Word that led Daniel to prayer. Then, he goes back to the Word for further encouragement and challenge to his spiritual life

- **We should be students of the Bible and consistent prayers. When we do these things, the Word seems to come alive.**

#### A PROPER APPROACH TO PRAYER

Daniel did not approach God commanding Him, but with humility. He also fasted with ancient Jewish rituals of sackcloth and ashes, which means he set his comforts aside in order to focus on God.

- We've seen that Daniel had a **prayer life and lived righteously**; things that are crucial for communication with God

#### A REALLY GOOD MODEL PRAYER

v4 starts one of the longest and most influential prayers in the Bible. Daniel not only **confesses** for his sins, but for the collective sins of his people. He refuses to separate himself from his people (we) and the responsibility of praying for them

#### IT IS OUR FAULT, NOT HIS

Here, Daniel very clearly gives us insight on how and why the people of God were in the position they were: "We have **sinned, done wrong, acted wickedly, rebelled, and turned away from your commands.**" (v5)

- The consequences of poor choices are not exclusive to one group, but applies to all "kings, leaders, fathers, and all in the land."

#### THIS IS A RELATIONSHIP (ROMANS 10:9-13)

- God has a conditional covenant with people; that if we follow His commands and have a relationship with Him, we will be saved. One cannot expect a healthy marriage if there is no communication.

#### THE ONE (DANIEL 9:7-14)

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS BELONGS TO YOU

Daniel acknowledges the shame of his people for their disloyalty towards God.

- This passage heavily contrasts the attitude to our sin today. We seem to have little shame or remorse for anything we do. And, **Christianity has tipped more to removal of shame than removal of sin.**

#### A MERCIFUL GOD HAS BEEN REBELLED AGAINST

Daniel recites the history of rebellion from the past: "His instructions that He set before us through His servants the prophets"

- Moses, Jeremiah, Solomon, and the other leaders that received word from God and went through trials that should have shaped the Jews to be in alignment with God

#### WE MUST UNDERSTAND CONSEQUENCES

If we choose to live in opposition to God and His commands, we cannot be surprised by the consequences that follow

- Deuteronomy 28:63 is a clear reminder that God is "glad to make you prosper... and glad to destroy you...and deport you from the land you are entering to possess" if we fail to follow Him.

#### DON'T MISUNDERSTAND GOD

We don't follow Christ out of fear, but out of love. Passages like Deuteronomy 28 are vital because it alludes to what eternity will be like in the absence of God

- God is perfect light, and darkness cannot be in Him (1 John 1:16, 2 Corinthians 6:14). So, the consequence of not adopting the light is utter darkness.

#### UP TO THIS POINT THERE IS STILL NO PETITION TO GOD

Daniel is still on his face weeping for his people. Daniel was amazed that after all God's people had gone through, they refused to completely follow God.

- We live in similar times today. Like the Jews, we have adopted many of the secular patterns and culture of our time.

#### DANIEL DID NOT COMPLAIN

Though Daniel didn't understand all of God's ways, he affirmed that He is perfect in all He does and that God's people deserve judgment if they fail to follow Him.

- The mind of the Christian must be shaped around the belief that we are owed nothing, and that fellowship with God is an honor

Jesus came "not to condemn, but to save us from condemnation." (John 3:17), but when **mercy is spurned, judgment is inevitable.**

#### PETITION (DANIEL 9:15-19)

#### IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU WE WERE FREE

Daniel reminds the reader, and possibly himself, how the Jews escaped slavery: It was not by their hand, but by the power of God.

- The resurrection of Christ in the NT serves the same purpose as the parting of the Red Sea for the Jews. It made a way to escape our enemy and have salvation.

#### THE DELIVERANCE OF THE JEWS WAS FAMOUS

Though the entire world had heard of the miraculous Red Sea event, most of the Jews were several generations removed and failed to believe in God's power

- Don't we also have a tendency to forget the greatness of God, His work in our lives, or even how fortunate we are over time?

#### ONCE GREAT, NOW RIDICULED

Though the reputation of the Jews and of God was once great, now the people of God and even God Himself are made fun of and ridiculed. The world saw that Jerusalem had fallen and the temple was not preserved. Where was their God?

#### THIS BROKE DANIEL'S HEART

He cared about 2 things: the reputation of God and the reputation of God's people.

- The petitions start to gush out of Daniel because he wants the city and the people that bear God's name to be restored so the reputation of God will be restored

#### NOT FOR HIM, BUT FOR HIM (V17)

Daniel pleads with God to show favor to His people so they can restore the temple and establish a new testimony of the One True God. Daniel understood that **the acts of God's people are instrumental in creating God's reputation on earth!**

- **We don't do good works for us, but for the glory of the Father!**

#### WE MUST ALSO KNOW WHERE OUR STRENGTH LIES (V18)

It's clear that "we are not presenting our petitions before You based on our righteous acts, but on Your abundant compassion." Daniel did not dare challenge God's schedule. Daniel knew that God's timetable is perfect, and that we have no ability to be righteous without God's Spirit in us.

#### THIS IS A PRAYER WORTH PLAGIARIZING

Like the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6), this prayer is not designed to be recited as much as the structure is to be emulated. Though there is minimal thanksgiving, the prayer clearly communicates appreciation for God's grace and patience

- The reverence and awe seem to contrast the flippancy many Christians come into the presence of God with today.

#### OUR HEARTS SHOULD BE HURTING

- The prayer and petitions of chap. 9 are about the restoration of Jerusalem, God's people, and God's reputation
- This should give us clarity on what should break the heart of God's followers: our city, our brothers/sisters in Christ, and Jesus's reputation with non-believers

#### REBUILDING A DESOLATE TEMPLE

- We need to be pro-church, not forsaking the assembling together (Hebrews 10:25)
- We also need to acknowledge the brokenness and failures of the church
- We need to edify not crucify
- We must live above reproach (Philippians 2:15) and avoid the appearance of evil (1Thessalonians 5:22)

#### WE MUST INVEST WISELY

- We're the temple, and if we are to restore it, we must allow God to move in and through us
- We must pray, study, lead groups, and give more time, energy, and money for the cause of the Kingdom.
- We must pour Christ into us, so we can pour Christ onto others!