

INTRO – When reading Bible – surprised!

- . “teach us to pray” – only thing
- . Realized secret of His comprehensive impact
- . also realized own powerlessness in comparison

Wonder if we realize reason we feel so impotent, hopeless, lonely, empty, banal
weak, spineless, and fearful is that we do not know how to pray

Secret of having lives that are meaningful, significant, and influential can be
found in deepening our understanding of prayer

TODAY – Pt.9 series Daring to Be Different from Daniel – examine/ learn

Surface 2 Main observations about Daniel’s Prayer ...

FIRST BEFORE THAT – CHECK OUT SITUATION ON THE GROUND – Dan. 9:1-2

In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasueras, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans – in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of the years that, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, 70 years

Circumstances: Massive Transition – Babylon to Media/Persian – tectonic shift

- . Trans. Prime Op - (marriage/baby/job/move/ illness – COVID)

Another Prompt – Age: O.G. – early 80s – transition in itself (Difference 45 yrs makes)

- . going strong – no young buck – slowing down
- . been in exile for almost 67 years. (6 mos. To Xmas)

Final Prompt: Spiritual One – Jer. Prophecies (2 passages – also Lev. 26)

Jer. 25:11 – The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah ... (v.8) “Because you have not obeyed my word, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north” declares the Lord – “and for Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, my servant. I will bring them against the land and its inhabitants ... (11) This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years...

Jer. 29:1 – These are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders of the exiles and to the priests, prophets, and all the people, whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon ... (v. 10) For thus says the Lord: “When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place (Palestine) ...

What Was Clear: Jer. Prophesied 70 yrs

Unclear:

- . how precise the number was
options: literal/ approximate – lifetime/ symbolic
- . when 70 years began (605/587BCE?)

Timing Intrigues Him

Another Thing Crystal Clear: God was at work – correcting/ purifying people

All this Pings Daniel’s “spidey sense” – launches search – seeking God

DANIEL’S RESPONSE

Dan. 9:3 - Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking Him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth, and ashes. – probably not a single, isolated, 1-off prayer – summary of a season of prayer

Also Different ... Basically This is Intercessory Prayer

Normal Perspectives on Prayer:

- . avenue for relationship – know from 6:10 – natural as breathing (Thumbs Up)
- . means for receiving personal strength (Lk. 18 – praying or losing heart)
- . crisis management – trouble and it's our last resort

This Prayer is a little Different – Using it as a Strategic Weapon (Dr. V Grounds Quote)

What Do We Do When We Feel Disoriented ... hunker/ spiral fear/ seek escape/

Daniel Saw: Open Invite to Step Into Flow of Spirit – & Partner w God to Advance The Kingdom

(Surfing) – recognized the element of human engagement/partnership

What can I do? Where contribute? Responsibility to be part of answer/ solution and facilitate God's work

The Basis of Intercessory Prayer: listen to God for others – pray God's resources into them on

Their behalf (Moses and Joshua/ Amalekites – Ex. 17:8-13)

Here At BW – God wants us to individually/corporately be part of redemptive history

DEEPER LOOK AT THIS PRAYER – Flow

Dan. 9:3-4 - *I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments –*

Affirmation of God's Righteousness

Confession of Israel's Utter Rebellion – Dan. 9:5-8

We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened to your servants the prophets who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers and to all the people of the land. To you O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us – open shame as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them – because of the treachery that they have committed against You. To us O Lord, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you.

Recognition of God's Mercy and Forgiveness

Daniel 9:9 - *To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness (both plural), for we have rebelled against Him,*

Admission that Israel is Totally Undeserving

Daniel 9:10-15- *...and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against Him. He has confirmed His words which He spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the Lord our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. Therefore, the Lord has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that He has done and we have not obeyed His voice. And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt, with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned. We have done wickedly.*

Wraps Up – Desperate Plea For God to Act in Mercy and Forgiveness

Dan. 9:16-19 - *O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your*

wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for Your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O My God, incline Your ear and hear. Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city that is called by Your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of Your great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not – for Your own sake O’ my God, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name. – Prayer of Confession

Why A Prayer of Confession?

Reason: D. Realized Confession was absolutely Required in order to move forward – missing link in their ability to move forward!

Suggest: that behind this is Lev. 26 – striking parallels to Dan’s prayer/ Jer. prophesy

Lev. 26:14-15 – *But if you will not listen to me, and will not do all these commandments... I will set my face against you .. (18) And if in spite of this you will not listen to me then I will discipline you again sevenfold for your sins .. (21) Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you sevenfold for your sins ... (23-24) And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary to me, then I will walk contrary to you and I myself will strike you sevenfold for your sins ...(27) and if in spite of this you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me, then I will walk contrary to you in fury – and I myself will discipline you sevenfold for your sins... (31-35) And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars and cast your dead bodies upon the dead bodies of your idols and my soul will abhor you. I will lay your cities waste and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your pleasing aromas. And I myself will devastate the land, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled at it. And I will scatter you among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword after you, and your land shall be a desolation and your cities shall be a waste. Then the land will enjoy it’s Sabbaths (“sevens”) as long as it lies desolate whilst you are in your enemies’ land; then the land shall rest and will enjoy it’s sabbaths (“sevens”). As long as it lies desolate, it shall have rest – the rest that it did not have on your sabbaths (“sevens”) when you were dwelling in it*
striking parallels: “desolations”/ “sabbaths”/ “7-fold discipline”

Exile in Babylon – direct, natural consequence of walking away from God – fully culpable

Lev. 26:40-44 – *But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers in the treachery they committed against me in also walking contrary to Me, so that I walked contrary to them and brought them into the land of their enemies – if then their uncircumcised heart is humbled, and they make amends for their iniquity, then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and I will remember my covenant with Isaac, & my covenant with Abraham, & I will remember the land ... (yet for all that they have done), when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, neither will I abhor them so as to destroy them utterly and break my covenant with them – for I am the Lord, their God. ---- “but if they confess their iniquity and the iniquities of their fathers...”*

In Confession – We Accept Our Responsibility as Part of the Problem

Daniel recognized confession as a prelude and condition to moving forward

What is Confession? – agreeing with God about the reality of our actions – sin

- . Getting real with God about our moral failures,
- . We often try to spin/soften (Hybel’s story)
- . denial/ confirm bias/ fundamental attribution error/ cognitive flex

Daniel does none of these – no defending, justifying, spin, no excuses

- . stacks up multiple Heb wds to describe enormity -
- . no class of people spared – all implicated – including Daniel

Because of this – God took them to the woodshed

Daniel begs God for mercy to bring it to an end

Points to Great Truth – Daring to be Different means we fully own up to our sins

Benefits: . clear conscience

- . flooded with relief – weight of condemnation lifted
- . experience freedom to step into different future
- . motivated to take a different path and cooperate with God

AN ANSWER RELAYED – even before finished – **Dan 9:20-23** – *While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God – while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the first came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice. He made me understand, speaking with me and saying, “Daniel, I have now come out to give you insight and understanding. At the beginning of your pleas for mercy, a word went out, and I have come to tell it to you – for you are greatly loved. Therefore, consider the word and understand the vision.*

Even before finished – God starts sending an answer – how eager to respond??

Purpose: is to help Daniel understand - clarify – shed light

MSG EXPLAINED – except it does everything BUT bring clarity!

It is considered to be the most difficult passage to interpret in the Bible (Montgomery)

Read thru – notice how vague and indefinite the language – cryptic

Remind: reading not only prophetic literature – apocalyptic prophetic lit

Dan. 9:24-27 – *70 weeks are decreed about your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to put an end to sin, and to atone for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal both vision and prophet, and to anoint a most holy (“one”/ “place”/“time”?). Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed (“one”)- a prince, there shall be 7 weeks (“sevens”). Then for 62 weeks it shall be built again with squares (streets in grids) and a moat, but in a troubled time. And after the 62 weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off and shall have nothing. And the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Its end shall come with a flood, and to the end there shall be war. Desolations are decreed. And he shall make a strong covenant with many for 1 week (seven) and for half of the week he shall put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations, shall come one who makes desolate, until the decreed end is poured out on the desolator.* Utterly confusing

Spent half a dozen hours/ read over a dozen brilliant scholars – no one agrees

(Massive headache – theological gymnastics)

Yet – had to be meaningful in some way to Daniel/ future generations

Suggest Look at this differently – not chronology – timing – chronography

- . use of time as an artificial literary/theological construct used to structure Events so they can be insightful, communicate truth, inspire, motivate
- But not to try to predict WHEN future events would take place.
- . communicate with timeless impact

What Does God Want to Communicate?

Timing is Irrelevant – not 70 yrs - longer

What God is Going to be About in the Future – 6 infin. Of purpose: (purple)

Daniel is loved

God is not done with His people

The road ahead is messy
He's still holding on to His people
Not the Answer Daniel was expecting – but sometimes not what it's about the outcome/ answer
About Process of BECOMING God's people – mobilized to partner
(relationship of Mt. 24 [Olivet discourse] and Mt. 25 – Parables)

HIT OUR KNEES – (Ortberg Quote)

STAY ON OUR KNEES – God knows what He's doing and invites us to play a role

BW – create a culture of prayer

- . seek a supernatural God – works in supernatural ways – advance/complete
His grand, human project in the world
- . We have a part to play –
Monday Nights Open Prayer and Healing
Prayer Ministry
Stage – Altar Prayer Team

GAME ON!