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Sermon Notes

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## **Daniel's Model Prayer**

### **Daniel 9:1-19**

#### I. The Mystery of Prayer

- A. Character Both Formed and Revealed
- B. Eternal Plan Both Revealed and Accomplished

#### II. Context: History and Bible Study

***vs. 1-2 In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom-- <sup>2</sup> in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.***

##### A. Darius the Mede: First Year

1. "Babylon the great has fallen..."
2. Next stage of world history
3. Daniel turns to prophecy to understand it
4. Darius was Cyrus the Great's co-regent in the city of Babylon
  - a. history make it clear that Cyrus the Great was the real power
  - b. Darius was a relative, put in key position to rule Babylon

##### B. Daniel's Devotional Life

1. Daily, disciplined prayer (6:10)
2. Intensive, careful Bible study...

***"I, Daniel, understood from the books, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah, the prophet..."***

a. basis of Daniel's deep knowledge of God

b. AMAZING!!! How came Daniel by this scroll??

### C. Jeremiah's Words Vindicated: The Time Frame Revealed

#### 1. Jeremiah's suffering and rejection

- Jeremiah very unpopular prophet before Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians... was constantly prophesying that Jerusalem would be given to King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army, and that they would destroy it; he was considered a traitor and was imprisoned
- Jeremiah had all his prophecies written on a scroll, but the scroll was confiscated by King Zedekiah of Judah, the final King of Jerusalem before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city... Zedekiah listened to line after line of pure, hot truth from the scroll of Jeremiah... he cut column after column after it had been read and burned them in a firepot he was using to warm himself
- God ordered the scroll rewritten by Jeremiah's secretary Baruch
- Jeremiah also sent on a portion of the scroll to be read by Semeiah in Babylon
- Eventually, Jeremiah's words came true... Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

#### 2. Jeremiah's clear prophecies: Exile for Seventy Years

***Jeremiah 25:11-14 This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years. <sup>12</sup> "But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt," declares the LORD, "and will make it desolate forever.***

***Jeremiah 29:10-14 This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile."***

#### 3. Jeremiah's Scroll

We will never know in this world how Daniel came to have a copy of Jeremiah's scroll... it's highly unlikely there were many copies at all;

Yet, Daniel received this scroll as the inerrant, inspired word of God's prophet

All of Jeremiah's words had come true... but there was more to be fulfilled

The Seventy Years were almost up!!

#### D. Isaiah's Stunning Contribution: A Specific Name

1. Two hundred years earlier... Israel's greatest writing prophet
2. God's detailed clarity... even down to the name

***Isaiah 44:28-45:1 who says of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say of Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt," and of the temple, "Let its foundations be laid." ' "This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him***

In Isaiah 40-48, God repeatedly boasts of His ability to foretell the future; knowing Cyrus's name two hundred years in advance is just more evidence of this supernatural power of God

Daniel knew the word of God; Daniel was reading the signs of the times

#### E. History Follows Prophecy

1. Cyrus the Great rampaging, conquering all nations as Isaiah 45:1 said he would
2. Seventy Years of Captivity ending
  - a. 605 B.C. the Exile begins
  - b. 539 B.C. Cyrus the Great conquers Babylon... 67 years
  - c. 586 B.C. the Temple destroyed
  - d. 515 B.C. new Temple rededicated... 71 years
3. Seventy Years a guideline for both events

#### F. Daniel Passionately Motivated to Pray

***I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.***

Moved NOT TO LAZINESS BUT TO PASSIONATE PRAYER!!

John Calvin: "The faithful do not so surrender in the promises of God as to grow lazy, and become idle and slothful through the certainty of their persuasion that God will perform His promises, but are rather stimulated to prayer. For the true proof of faith is the assurance when we pray that God will really perform what He has promised us."

### III. Daniel's Preparation for Prayer (vs. 3-4)

#### A. Prepared Daily and for Years

##### 1. Daily prayer life

***Daniel 6:10 "Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God, just as he had done before."***

##### 2. Daily personal holiness

Prayer is deeply hindered by sin habits and worldliness

Daniel was dead to the world and its allurements

***1 Peter 4:7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.***

Implication: if you're not "clear-minded and self-controlled," you won't be able to pray

***William Gurnall: "When people do not pay attention to what God speaks to them in His word, God will as little pay attention when they speak to Him in prayer."***

##### 3. Ninety years of walking with God

#### B. Prepared by the Word of God

##### 1. Daily immersion in the word made Daniel ready to pray

##### 2. Word alone has record of God's promises... the entire basis of our prayers

***John Trapp: "Prayer is putting the promises of God into clothing."***

***Thomas Manton: "One way to get comfort is to plead the promises of God in prayer. Show Him His handwriting; God is tender of His Word."***

3. We are not at liberty to make up our own requests, but rather to pray according to God's will

We are not trying to bend God's eternal plan to our feeble understanding, but rather to heat up our hearts with His eternal purposes.

***Richard Baxter: [Prayer transforms us and make us ready to receive what God has purposed to give us} even as he that is in a boat, and by his hook lays hold of the shore, as if he drew the shore toward him.]***

C. Prepared by Extraordinary Humbling

1. Means of humbling
  - a. fasting
  - b. sackcloth and ashes
2. Not to get **God's** attention but his own

No amount of fasting or sackcloth wearing would ever get God's attention

Augustus Toplady knew this in his "Rock of Ages"

***"Not the labors of my hands, can fulfill thy laws demands; could my zeal no respite know; could my tears forever flow; all for sin could NOT atone... thou must save, and thou alone!!"***

No, our fasting and acts of humiliation are to get OUR attention... to focus our wandering minds and frivolous hearts on serious spiritual matters at hand

3. These means show deep seriousness in preparation
4. Also a way of showing grief over sin

How often we swagger into God's holy presence, forgetting who we are and who He is

Holiest people have two things as they approach God: 1) deep and emotional sense of personal sinfulness and unworthiness; 2) deep sense of God's immense love and forgiveness through Christ

We deal too lightly with sin... Daniel didn't

D. Prepared by Turning to God

***vs. 3 "I set my face toward the Lord my God, to seek Him..."***

1. Daniel turned his face toward God

Total concentration on seeking the face of God; God was all he wanted, God was everything to him

2. In Daniel 6, he prayed toward Jerusalem... he'll get to that

E. Prepared by Words of Awe

**vs. 3 "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands**

1. To whom are you speaking???
2. Daniel calls God "great and awesome..." lit. "terror-inducing"
3. Daniel also remembers God's covenant promises
  - a. we would have no right to enter God's presence except His covenant promise
  - b. God is a covenant-keeping God... this is the whole basis of Daniel's prayer
4. YET Daniel remembers WHO God is faithful to... THOSE WHO OBEY!!

#### IV. Daniel's Deep Confession (vs. 5-14)

A. Daniel: Deeply probing himself and his people

Illus: 12 years old, acute appendicitis... on operating table for four hours;

Light dealing with sin is inadequate!! Need to probe with surgeon's tools to get all the contagion out

1. Daniel doesn't merely want a quick time of confession
2. Daniel humbly includes himself in the sins of his people
3. People close to God are ALWAYS conscious of personal sin & unworthiness

B. Central Issue: Rebellion against God's Word (vs. 5-6, 10-13)

1. Horeb: Ten Comm. Given; People, trembling, asked that God not speak directly to them
2. God agreed, promising to speak through His servants, the prophets
3. Yet, Israel constantly rebelled against the prophets God sent
  - a. ridicule

Hezekiah sent men riding through Israel to invite them to Jerusalem for the Passover feast, and the people ridiculed them, laughing them to scorn

b. anger & rejection

Jeremiah prophesied that Jerusalem would fall to the Babylonians, and the people became outraged and rejected him; they even imprisoned him in an abandoned muddy well

c. physical attack & death

***Matthew 23:37 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you..."***

4. Worse: Israel broke the covenant by repeated sin, generation after generation!

C. Contrast: God's Righteousness and Israel's Wickedness (vs. 5-8)

1. God is a faithful, covenant-keeping God

2. Israel has been faithless, rebellions, wicked

D. Contrast: God's Merciful Forgiveness and Israel's Faithlessness (vs. 9)

***vs. 9 The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him***

1. God patiently waited for Israel to repent

2. Generation after generation, God warned Israel through His Word and the Prophets

E. The Sin History Recounted (vs. 10-11)

1. Daniel recounted Israel's woeful history

2. Key to true confession: WHAT HAPPENED?? Call sin sin

F. Mosaic Covenant Curses Fulfilled (vs. 11-14)

1. Destruction of Jerusalem was sworn judgment from God

2. God had laid it all out ahead of time through Moses

***Deuteronomy 28 Just as it pleased the LORD to make you prosper and increase in number, so it will please him to ruin and destroy you. You will be uprooted from the land you are entering to possess. <sup>64</sup> Then the LORD will scatter you among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship other gods--gods of wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers have known. <sup>65</sup> Among those nations***

***you will find no repose, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the LORD will give you an anxious mind, eyes weary with longing, and a despairing heart. <sup>66</sup> You will live in constant suspense, filled with dread both night and day, never sure of your life. <sup>67</sup> In the morning you will say, "If only it were evening!" and in the evening, "If only it were morning!"--because of the terror that will fill your hearts and the sights that your eyes will see.***

Summary: God has been totally righteous and just, faithful to His covenant promises in judging Israel and exiling them to Babylon, for the Jews had rebelled against God and broken His covenant, despite repeated warnings from God's servants, the prophets. "We are covered with shame, you are covered with righteousness."

## V. Daniel's Faith-filled Petition (vs. 15-19)

### A. Daniel's Motivation: God's Passion for the Glory of His Name (vs. 15)

1. God does everything for the praise of His glory
  - a. He chose Israel, and led them out of Egypt for His own glory
  - b. He destroyed Israel's enemies: Egypt and the Canaanites for His own glory
  - c. When Israel rebelled against Him and broke His covenant, it pleased God to scatter them to Babylon for His own glory
  - d. Now, Daniel is praying for God to exalt His own name by restoring Israel back to their homeland according to His promise through jeremiah
2. God's choicest servant always prayed with God's glory uppermost in their minds

Example: Moses interceding for Israel twice; God threatened to destroy Israel and make Moses into a great nation.

- 1) When Israel made a golden calf; 2) When Israel refused to go into the Promised Land

Both times Moses prayed based on the effect the action would have on God's name, His reputation

3. God's glory is the best motivation for every prayer

### B. Daniel's Petition: "Turn Your Wrath Away..." (vs. 16)

1. The time of punishment is over, according to your word
2. Again, a terrible admission of guilt



Israel should have been a city on a hill, for all nations to see the glory of God; instead they were a shameful nation exactly like the pagan nations they drove out

C. Daniel's Motivation: "For your sake..." (vs. 17)

Again, Daniel returns to God's highest motivation; God's own name's sake!!

D. Daniel's Focus: A Desolate Sanctuary and City

1. Daniel speaks of desolation: the emptiness of God's abandonment

Illus. Visiting the site of a house now torn down; wind blowing tumbleweeds; no one there

2. Concentration: temple and city... this will be important for Gabriel's answer

E. Daniel's Passion: Rebuilt Jerusalem, Restore Your People

1. Daniel's passionate request: rebuild Jerusalem

2. Daniel's vision: the glory of God's holy Name

3. Repeated petition: Hear!! Forgive!! Hear and act!!

F. Daniel's Motivation: God's Glory and Reputation, NOT Israel's Righteousness! (vs. 19)

## VI. Lesson and Applications: PRAY LIKE DANIEL

Lessons on Prayer:

1) Proper preparation and passion: the right emotion, the right knowledge!!

seriousness and humility in spirit; saturation in the word; fear of the Lord

2) Confession of sin

deep searching confession, nothing hidden; willingness to have God search the deepest parts of you; deep sense of personal sinfulness and unworthiness

***Include yourself in praying over America's sins!!***

3) Prayer according to God's will: informed by God's word

4) Prayer for the glory of God's name

Why does God make so much of His reputation and His name? So that all the nations on earth will hear of His glory and call on His name

***Romans 10:13 “For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”***

How can they believe in someone they've never heard of? God's FAME means salvation to the ends of the earth

PRAY LIKE DANIEL!!!!