

“TAKING GOD AT HIS WORD”

DANIEL 9:1-19

Theme: God is faithful to fulfill His Word – both in blessing and cursing.

I. Prioritizing Communication with a Covenantal God – 9:1-3

A. The Priority of Scripture – vv. 1-2

1. The time of the vision recorded here was 538 B.C. – about 67 years after Jerusalem had first been captured and Daniel carried off to Babylon (605 B.C.) – *“In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans . . .”*
2. As Daniel was such a devout man, he was studying the portion of the Old Testament Scriptures that had been revealed to that point – namely the book of Jeremiah – *“In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely seventy years.”*
 - a) Daniel obviously took the reference of Jeremiah literally – that a 70-year period would see the judgment of the Jewish people – cp. **Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-14.**
 - b) He realized that God could be trusted and that if the people of God prayed, God would fulfill His Word.
 - c) He also realized the great need that existed for confession of sin, which he does so eloquently in the following verses.

B. The Prayers of Supplication – v. 3

1. Hence, Daniel immediately turns to the Lord in prayer, seeking to respond to the thrilling discovery just encountered through the Scriptures.
2. The stress of this verse is on the attitude Daniel has as he approached God.
3. *“So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications”* – he turns to the Lord and offers a prayer of intercession (*“prayer”*), seeking the mercy of God (*“supplications”*).
4. Again, the attitude is seen clearly – *“. . . with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.”*
5. Godly men, believing God’s promises, do not become passive because of their faith – they immediately and passionately

approach the Lord with the truth of God's Word as they've found it – taking God at His Word – believing that He'll indeed fulfill it.

II. Pondering the Consequences of a Contempt toward God – 9:4-14

A. The Awareness of the Faithfulness of God – v. 4

1. He begins his prayer by expressing his awareness of the reliability of God – that He can be trusted.
2. He declares: *“O Lord the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments.”*
3. God is portrayed here as a gracious God who is faithful even as man finds himself struggling to fulfill his responsibilities.
4. As will be seen, there is here a great contrast between who and what God is, and who and what we as sinful men are.

B. The Amplitude of the Sinfulness of Men – vv. 5-8

1. The Comprehensive problem of sin in the lives of men is seen as Daniel confesses. He serves as a spokesman for the nation as a whole – *“we have sinned”* – refers to the lack of conformity to the holiness of God: “Missing the mark.”
2. *“committed iniquity”* – refers to a perversion whereby men distort what is good and act perversely.
3. *“acted wickedly and rebelled”* – refers to the idea of transgression, or doing what one knows is wrong.
4. *“even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances”* – provides the basis for why each of the previous areas are able to occur; “the departure from God's Word is the beginning of all moral disorders” (Leupold, p. 384)
5. Here you see the mark of genuine repentance – guilt is in no way minimized, rationalized, or justified.
6. He then proceeds to acknowledge to God just how pervasive the sin of Israel is:
 - a) It extends to *“our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land.”*
 - b) It extends to *“the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far*

away.”

7. Thus, again, there is a clear contrast between the God who is faithful and trustworthy and men who ought to be ashamed: *“Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame” - (v. 7).*

C. The Acquittal of God for the Plight of Sinners – vv. 9-14

1. Essentially, Daniel embarks on a discussion of the innocence of God regarding the plight of sinful men – that is, men bring the consequences of sin down on their own shoulders - *“Open shame belongs to us O Lord . . . To the Lord our God belongs compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him.” – (vv. 8-9).*
2. Daniel declares that what God expects of men is clearly revealed in the Scriptures, and that men need to take God at His Word – both with reference to blessings and curses – *“nor have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His teachings which he set before us through His servants the prophets.”*
3. He admits that all the people of God were being judged because they failed to obey *“the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.”*
4. Then Daniel says that God *“has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us . . . as it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us”* – they could have predicted what would happen to them – cp. [Deuteronomy 28:63-67](#).
5. The reason they are still under the judgment of God is because of what Daniel describes as obstinacy in the face of judgment.
6. Instead of being contrite and broken, they were resistant – *“yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. Therefore, the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us.”*
7. The only remedy to the judgment of God is repentance – when it does not occur, man is at fault – not God – *“The Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.”*

III. Possessing Confidence in the Character of God – 9:15-19

A. The Focus of the Requests for Grace – vv. 15-17

1. Now Daniel focuses on the ability of God who once did the mighty works in the day of Moses could still do them today – *“And now, O Lord our God, who have brought You people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day*

– we have sinned, we have been wicked.”

2. He then makes two requests:
 - a) *“Let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away”* – He is calling for mercy at the hand of God.
 - b) *“Let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary”* – a request for grace – especially in that the ability to sacrifice to the Lord was debilitated due to the inoperable condition of the Temple.

B. The Foundation for the Requests for Grace – vv. 18-19

1. Notice that Daniel declares that this is not a self-serving request – nor is it one of pride and arrogance – *“we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.”*
2. Thus, it is for the Lord’s name’s sake that Daniel wishes for these things to be accomplished:
 - a) *“have made a name for Yourself” – v. 15.*
 - b) *“Your people have become a reproach” – v. 16.*
 - c) *“Listen to the prayer of your servant . . . for Your sake, O Lord” – v. 17.*
 - d) *“See our desolations and the city which is called by Your name” – v. 18.*
 - e) *“For your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” – v. 19.*
3. It should be noted that Daniel uses four direct addresses of God in this verse, all serving further to indicate his interest in God’s glory and not the people’s or his own.

**God is faithful to fulfill His Word –
both in blessing and cursing.**