

Daniel 06-02-05b

Let's turn now to Daniel chapter 9, where we pick up this morning, having laid a pretty extensive foundation for this in our scripture reading from Deuteronomy. You'll see in your New King James that this chapter is titled, Daniel's Prayer for the People. Chapter 8 ended with unconsciousness.

Verse 27, I, Daniel, fainted and was sick for days. Afterward I arose and went about the king's business. I was astonished by the vision, but no one understood it.

He was amazed, he was disturbed, he was troubled by this vision. Now, there are those who take passages like this and say that the prophets and the apostles, Paul on the road to Damascus when he was still Saul, that they were epileptics or they were subject to seizures and when they were sick for days and so on, that there was something the matter with them and that these were some sort of ecstatic experiences that were the product of some sort of malady. Here we are worshipping God based on goofy people that had strange experiences and we've taken it to be the voice of God.

But here's a question for you, since we obviously don't think that's the case. Why would it be that Daniel would faint and be sick for days after receiving this vision? It seems as though you find the promises of God when you take in the word of God, it will be health to your navel and morrow for your bones and you'll be like the tree planted by the rivers of water bringing forth fruit. Getting a direct revelation from God such as this seems to me, comporting yourself around the heavenly realms and hobnobbing with angels and what not, that he would be invigorated and glow in the dark for days or something.

Be like Moses coming down from the mountain and have to put a bag over his head to keep from scaring people because he had been in the divine realms and yet it seems to have had the opposite effect. And he's sick and he's troubled and he's ill from this experience and the fact that this happened could have been left out of scripture even if it were the case, but it's put here for our perusal. So as we step over the threshold from chapter 8 to chapter 9, we ask ourselves the question, why did Daniel faint and why was he sick from this vision? Well, I would offer two explanations.

You remember that scripture teaches no man can see God and live. God is holy, we are not. God is perfect and righteous and dwells in a condition of glory that is beyond our ability to survive.

And this is not so much a revelation of God's Word alone in the sense of eating a scroll or comprehending a set of laws such as Moses received on the mountain. But this is essentially entering into the presence of God himself and to the extent that Daniel still partakes of human flesh and is fallen and is in this sense representative of the nation of Israel. We have seen many times how the king sort of embodies the nation, whether it's Herod dealing with John the

Baptist and with Jesus or whether it's King Saul or the later kings in Israel and Judah sort of reflecting and embodying the attitudes of the people and their fate sort of reflects what's going on with the nation.

Daniel here, looking at these future things and seeing this picture of these kingdoms and looking at the judgment of God represented by these kingdoms and then the judgment of God upon these kingdoms because of transgression it says in verse 12, an army was given over to oppose the daily, he cast truth down to the ground, he did this and prospered. This is going to involve the transgression of desolation, the giving of the sanctuary and the host to be trampled underfoot and the holy things are trampled and you remember the feeling that Jesus had when he went to the temple and saw that it had been changed from a house of prayer to a den of thieves and Daniel entering into this and seeing this, it actually results in physical illness for him. Daniel is a man who cares about the things of God, who has been given unusual insight into the things of God, the ability to interpret dreams and visions.

He is a national prophet for God. He has spent years and years in public life receiving revelation from God in positive ways and it doesn't say that he got sick after he saw and interpreted the vision for Nebuchadnezzar or interpreted the handwriting on the wall and so on. But this involves the people of Israel and Daniel in a sense represents them as this national prophet.

He is on the top side and Ezekiel is on the bottom side. And here is, I think, one of the major keys because so many people, if you go by a commentary or a book about the book of Daniel and it gets to this section and talks about the horns and the abomination of desolation and so forth, they will all say, this is Antiochus Epiphanes, you have the disappearance of the Babylonian Empire, you have the Medes and the Persians, and then you have Greece coming up, and you have the one horn that's broken off and the four horns that come up in its place and then the little horn and here is Antiochus Epiphanes and he came in and sacked Jerusalem. He sets up the abomination in the temple.

This is all Antiochus. Well, the key here is in verses 15-17 of chapter 8 and we have to understand this as we go into chapter 9. Then it happened when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning. You get the idea this is something that Daniel often experienced, seeing a vision and seeking the meaning.

He went back and prayed with his friends when he first got to Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar issued that challenge. Suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man. I heard the man's voice.

Between the banks of the Ulai, or actually it says between the Ulai, we find out later that there is an angelic presence that's hovering over the Ulai. I think this is a couple of chapters future. Called and said, Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.

Daniel is seeking and he gets the answer. You shall seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart. Jesus said, seek and you shall find.

Knock and the door will be opened. That's what Daniel is doing. So, Gabriel comes near where Daniel is standing.

Verse 17, And when he came, I was afraid and fell on my face, but he said to me, What does he say? What's the first thing out of Gabriel's mouth? Understand, son of man, that the vision refers to what? The time of the end. Now, in what sense is Antiochus and the Maccabees and that whole thing, in what sense is that the time of the end? This word for end is Kets. Q-E-T-S.

Kets. Kets. And it comes from Katsats.

The verb. It's Kof and then two Tsares in a row. So, it's Q-T-S-T-S.

Katsats. And even it's onomopoetic because it means to cut off. The verb means to chop something off.

To cut it off. And so, the noun that comes from it, Kets, means, well, you're going along, going along, going along, and then it cuts off. This refers to the time of the cut off.

The time where it's chopped. Well, what got chopped? Did the age of Israel come to a halt when Antiochus set up the abomination? None of that fits. Now, it certainly is a near fulfillment, but it lifts up and he says, look, son of man, the first thing you've got to understand here is this vision is for the time of the end.

And so, all interpretations that say, well, this was all completed, fulfilled, and exhausted by what happened in the days of Antiochus, aren't paying attention to Gabriel. There's a little bit of a wordplay here as well because what does the name Gabriel mean? Gibor, in Hebrew, means mighty man. The giboreem are the mighty ones.

And gibor-el, this is the mighty one of God. It can also mean my might. If you take the I in there, Gabri, my might, is the Lord or is of the Lord.

Gabri-el. Gibor-el is the piecing out of it there. So, you have the gibor-el, and then you have Daniel.

God is my judge. But he's not called Daniel here. What's he called? Son of man.

So, you have the mighty one of God, and you have the son of man. The mighty one of God is talking to the son of man here. And he says, understand, this vision refers to the time of the end.

So, here's the mighty one of God standing there speaking. Daniel here is the son of man. Then he starts explaining.

We've seen all this. We went through the explanation of the ram, and the king that arises in his cunning. He causes deceit to prosper.

He exalts himself in his heart. He destroys many in their prosperity. He rises against the prince of princes.

But he shall be broken without human means. None of this really applies to, that by the way is verse 25, doesn't really pertain and apply to Antiochus. Antiochus, very shortly after his attack on Jerusalem and doing the abomination thing, he's dead within a few years.

In fact, about six years later. He's dead. But look at verse 26.

We looked at this last time. The vision of evenings and mornings, which was told, is true. Therefore, seal up the vision for what? It refers to many days.

For it is unto many days. In fact, look at the italics there. Because unto many days.

Seal up the vision. The vision of the evenings and the mornings. And we have that repetition of that.

2300 evenings and mornings. The lilas and the bokers. So then Daniel fainted and was sick for days.

And you get the idea that he has entered into things. This is such a powerful transport that Daniel can almost not physically sustain it. That he has taken as much as a human in a fallen condition can experience.

But also, as the representative of the nation of Israel, he is to take these things and communicate them to Israel. And he is sort of representing Israel. God can't show it to all of the people, so God shows it to Daniel.

And Daniel is going to turn around and convey it to the people. And this really is sort of the response of the nation of Israel. Right? If Israel doesn't have a king, they have a prophet.

And so Daniel sort of stands in. He is the embodiment. He is the personification in this context for Israel.

He is getting the message that God wants to give Israel. And he is the conduit. He is the point of the spear of Israel here.

So he gets it first and he is going to turn around, write it down and convey it to them. What is the reaction of Daniel? What happens to him? Well, it's symbolic. God could have made sure that he was well.

You know, the hypnotherapists, the people that get hypnotized, one of the last things they do after they regress someone or tell them they're going to bark like a dog when they hear a bell ring or whatever, what do they do? They say, you're going to wake up, you're going to feel fine, you're going to feel refreshed. And they plant this post-hypnotic suggestion that ensures that the, because if they don't, oftentimes people who come out of a hypnotic trance, and by the

way, hypnosis is a real thing. You can really separate the interface between the brain and the soul and interpose yourself and tell things directly to the conscious mind and bypass the filtering and the reason and all the rest of it that God put together.

Your brain is like a sandwich, your mind is like a sandwich. You've got the brain and you've got your mind and you've got your soul. Well, hypnosis separates your first layer of defense and gets underneath that, gets inside the sandwich and starts piping stuff straight into your consciousness and straight into that interface.

Demon possession, demon influence can do the very same thing. Drugs do the very same thing. There are several different ways of peeling off that first piece of bread and getting into the main part of the sandwich and bypassing a lot of what God gave us by way of filtering and common sense and reality check and so on.

Well, if they don't plant this post-hypnotic suggestion, all hypnotherapists, if you look into this at all, one of the last things they always do when they wake somebody up is they say, you're going to awake feeling fine and feeling refreshed because if they don't, people wake up feeling bad because this is unnatural. This is like coming out of your Novocaine wearing off or your post-operative trauma and you've been traumatized. Something's been peeled apart that's normally together.

And if they don't say you're going to feel fine or feel refreshed, you feel lousy. Well, God could certainly do that for Daniel and God did not. And Daniel records his illness here.

And you won't find anybody making any comment about this, but I think it's very significant. Why? Because this speaks of Israel. Daniel is the representative of Israel.

So, sick for days, afterward amazed, and nobody can comprehend the vision. Who's the no one? Well, Daniel has a circle of... I don't know if Hanani or Mishael or Azariah, they're probably gone by then. We don't have any further mention of them.

But if any of them were still around, Daniel would go to his old friends and say, boy, you'll never believe what was revealed to me last night. Does this make any sense to you? And they're saying, well, look, you're Daniel. If you don't understand it, how are we going to understand it? Daniel probably has servants.

Daniel has fellowship. God provides for him. Does he have a family? Was he married? Did he have children? We don't know.

It doesn't say. We know for sure he didn't have children, right? Duh. He was made a eunuch when he first came to Babylon.

But, you know, servants and so on. He obviously discussed this with people and none of them understood it either. And they're saying, well, you know.

But, fainted and was sick for days. This speaks of, and we have this happening in other places, where Israel is going to be out of the picture. Just glance forward.

Turn a page in your Bible to chapter 10, verse 8. I, Daniel, alone saw the vision. Men who were with me did not see the vision. Great terror fell upon them.

They fled to hide themselves. Therefore, I was left alone when I saw this great vision. No strength remained in me.

My vigor was turned to frailty in me. I retained no strength. Yet, I heard the sound of his words.

And while I heard the sound of his words, I was in a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. We're going to see when we get to 10, the same thing we're seeing here. That this represents the condition of the nation of Israel.

Israel as a nation right now is asleep. Israel as a nation right now is not up, clothed, and in its right mind. There is an illness that comes upon the nation of Israel.

From the time of the captivity in Babylon until the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, who comes like the sun with healing in His wings. Why does the Savior come at the first advent with healing? Because they're sick. And this illness, as these nations rise up, God's people are supposed to be prevailing.

They are the ones who are supposed to be dominating. They are the ones who in Deuteronomy prevail. And other nations are afraid of them.

And other nations respect them. And they are prosperous. And they are blessed.

But what happens to them? They are dominated. They are sick. They never again achieve what they enjoyed under David and Solomon.

And the early days of God's blessing, where there was respect for God, where they did enjoy those blessings that God promised on Mount Gerizim. They missed all of that and they became ill. And they are troubled and they are astonished and they are amazed and they don't understand the revelation of God's Word.

This syndrome Daniel experiences following this vision speaks of the nation. And even when they return from Babylon, they're a sick nation. They never again regain anything.

They're going to be under the Medes and the Persians. They're going to be under the Greeks. They're going to be under the Romans.

And then they're going to go out altogether and fall asleep to wake in that 70th week that Daniel is going to tell us about here shortly. And so this is significant because in and of itself this illness and weakness for many days is a communication to Israel. Don't expect to get well under the bear and under the goat and under the nations that they represent.

You're going to be ill for many days. You need a Savior. You need a healer.

Why did Jesus heal constantly in the early part of His earthly ministry? It was symbolic. I am here to heal you. You're sick.

You're a nation that is weak. You've gotten away from God. You have fallen under all of these curses from disobedience and apathy and indifference.

Here is your salvation. Here is the light that shines in a dark place. Here is the deliverer.

Here is the great physician. This illness is predictive. Israel is going to labor under this for 500 years until the Lord Jesus comes.

That's why that verse is there. So, chapter 9 begins. In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans, in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet that he would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

Daniel has the Scriptures. Daniel has the Bible. I understood by the books, plural, by the Scriptures the number of the years by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet.

Daniel was alive before Jeremiah died. Daniel was a young man and Jeremiah was still around. They overlapped.

And yet, much like Peter saying that these ne'er-do-wells twist the writings of Paul as they do the other Scriptures, other of the same kind, Peter thus labeling the writings of Paul Scripture, divinely inspired. In much the same way, Daniel here labels the writings of Jeremiah as Scripture. He says, I understood by the Scriptures, by the books.

This is the word for the Scriptures. And the writings of Jeremiah the prophet, these are some of those books. Essentially, here you have Daniel labeling the writings of Jeremiah Scripture.

He puts them on the same par. That God would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Now, how does this work itself out? Depending on how you figure it, I think that when you go to the first year of Darius the Mede, this is approximately 539 B.C. 539 B.C. Now, when was Daniel taken captive? 603, 604, along in there.

So, Daniel has been in exile, how long? About 65-ish years, right? It's 539. He was taken captive in 604. Nebuchadnezzar.

Nebuchadnezzar. So, that's about 65 years, right? Now, I want you to think about this for a moment. Just bear with me.

I'm not a math guy. But, we know what's coming up. How many times in Ezekiel and Daniel and Revelation have we talked about the 69 weeks of Daniel and the 70th week? But how is it

presented, the 69 weeks? Does he say 69 weeks are determined on your people? He says 62 and 7, right? And we add it up and get the 70.

62 and 7. Now, he's in the 65th year. This is in the first year of Darius. So, just for the sake of argument, let's say it's halfway through Darius' first year.

65 and a half years since Jerusalem was first desolated by Nebuchadnezzar, hauling away the first set of captives. So, this is 62 plus 3 and a half, right? 62 years plus 3 and a half years. Which is interesting.

When you think of the 62 weeks of years followed by the final week of years. I mean, 62, when 70 years and you wind up here with the 3 and a half added to the 62. And we know so many things begin in the 70th week of Daniel, halfway through.

So, you have 62 and then you have this 3 and a half. He's at the 65 and a half year mark, so to speak. So, it's basically been 65 or 66 years since Daniel was taken captive.

And he says, I know from the scriptures and specifically from the writings of Jeremiah that the desolation of Jerusalem is going to be 70 years. So, Daniel, looking at this, sets his face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications with fasting sackcloth and ashes. There are 3 and a half years left to run until the 70 years are completed.

Right? Or is it 4 and a half? Somewhere in there. He's got about that long until the 70 years are completed. So, it's less than 7 years.

It's less than 6 years. It's less than 5 years. He's a couple of years ahead as he looks at the fulfillment of this prophecy.

He doesn't wait. It's not the 70th year, in other words. He's not saying, well, Lord, as I look at my calendar and my sundial here, I see that it's time for our desolation to be finished.

He begins praying several years in advance. What does he say? I set my face to the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications with fasting sackcloth and ashes. These are the signs of mourning.

These are the signs of self-abnegation. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession and said, O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, keeps His covenant and mercy with whom? With His people? With those who love Him. All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose, who put themselves in that category.

With those who keep His commandments. With those who love Him. With those who keep His commandments.

Jesus said, the one who has my words, He keeps them. He's the one that loves me. Daniel understood this.

What does he say? O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned. We have committed iniquity. We have done wickedly.

We have rebelled by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Neither have we heeded Your servants, the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us, shame of face, as it is this day.

To the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off and all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You. O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, our fathers, because we have sinned against You. In the same way that we are enjoined to pray for those that have the rule over us, you find here Confession for the Nation by Daniel, and he specifically names those in authority.

You can pray for those that have the rule, and Daniel confesses on their behalf. And it says, It is our kings, it is our princes, it is our elders and our fathers who received the Word of God from the prophets and did not heed it, and led the people astray and the people willingly followed, because they also heard these words and they also strayed. To the Lord our God belongs mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.

We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets, beginning with Moses and coming on down. Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law and has departed so as not to obey Your voice. Therefore the curse and the oath written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, has been poured out on us.

Hence our scripture reading in Deuteronomy 25 this morning. Because we have sinned against Him, and He has confirmed His words which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster, for unto the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem. This is pretty strong words when you think about the flood and you think about Babel and you think about the judgment of God through Israel on the Canaanites.

And yet Daniel says, nothing under heaven touches the judgment that God has brought on Israel. Why? Further to fall. What other nation has been the place of dwelling for God and His glory? What other nation, what other capital city has housed the very temple and the very presence of God? From those to whom much is given, much is required, much is expected, and you fall a lot further when you're elevated to that height and then you are disciplined and judged.

It's not the same as destroying the town of Gath or the capital city of Egypt when it is the dwelling place for God and it is destroyed and its people are scattered. This is a much bigger disaster. Now, as it is written in the Law of Moses, how does Daniel know this? How does he

know what's written in the Law of Moses? When was the last time he was in Jerusalem and heard anybody read it? He's got his own copy, doesn't he? Daniel's a man of influence.

Daniel's a man of power. Daniel's second or third in the kingdom. What does Daniel do with his influence? He gets himself a copy of the Word of God.

He gets himself a copy. And he studies it and he's familiar with it. He knows what's in it.

As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God that we might turn from our iniquities and understand your truth. He's confessing on behalf of the nation. Therefore the Lord has kept the disaster in mind and brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though 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, he's been reading Exodus, hasn't he? He's been reading Leviticus. He's been reading Numbers. He's been reading Deuteronomy.

And has made Yourself a name as it is this day. We have sinned. We have done wickedly.

Three times in this prayer, Daniel comes back to this theme of confession. And Daniel has been the most faithful man in Israel. He's the most blessed man in Israel, and yet he confesses on behalf of the nation.

And he is in sackcloth. He is in ashes. Do you notice anything about this prayer? Who is Daniel praying to? He's praying to the God of Israel.

Praying to God the Father. And so he uses the second person. He says, O Lord, we have sinned against You, in verse 8. What happens in verse 9? He starts talking about God in the third person, doesn't he? To the Lord our God belongs mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.

Now why does the person change? Who is Daniel talking to here? He's talking to God. If I'm talking to you, I use you, either singular or plural. And why would I start talking to you and then start saying Him? Why does Daniel, as he's talking to God, change into the third person? Look at the phrases that use the second person, and look at the phrases and sentences that use the third person.

His prayer begins in verse 4. I prayed to the Lord my God, I made confession, and I said, O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him and with those who keep His commandments, we have sinned, we have done wickedly, rebelled, but departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. And he freely switches between the second and third person. And he addresses God and then talks about God in the third person.

And when he talks about God in the third person, he talks about God's eternal and timeless

characteristics, doesn't he? He said, God is a God who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him and with those who keep His commandments. This is always true, isn't it? We have sinned, committed iniquity, we have done wickedly, rebelled, but departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. We didn't heed Your servants, the prophets.

O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face as it is this day. The countries in which You have driven them because the unfaithfulness which they committed against You. And he confesses directly to God in the second person and says, we have committed these iniquities against You.

We have sinned against You, again in verse 8, the second time he confesses. And then once again, the timeless truth, to the Lord our God belong mercy, forgiveness, that we have rebelled against Him. And this is the timeless truth.

Even those who rebel, God is merciful and God is forgiving. We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God to walk in His laws which He set before us by His servants the prophets. And he varies this and you get the idea this is like someone, a suppliant before the king.

And there are times when you feel comfortable addressing him in the second person and saying, you, O king, are merciful. We have been unfaithful to you. And then other times you talk about God in the third person and it is addressing His glory and His timeless attributes and His qualities.

And it is as though you are not even comfortable talking about God in the second person and you, in this conversation with Him, talk about Him in the third person. It is very interesting to see the interchange. All Israel has transgressed Your law and departed so as not to obey Your voice.

Therefore the curse that Moses spoke of has been poured out on us because we have sinned against Him, the God that Moses spoke of and communicated to us. He has confirmed His words which He spoke against us and against our judges when He brought upon us this great disaster. We have not made our prayer before the Lord our God that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.

O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, verse 16, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city, Jerusalem, Your holy mountain, because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us. Therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant. Notice all of this appeal is now in the second person.

Daniel builds his foundation looking to the past, looking at the law, acknowledging that God had warned Israel that God was righteous and just to bring out these judgments. And a lot of this switches between the second and third person. But when he gets into the appeal, it is all You and Your and He is exercising this direct relationship.

The third person reminds us Your iniquities have separated between You and Your God and Your sins have hid His face from You that He will not hear. And the third person speaks of this separation and this distance where Daniel almost has to talk about God in the third person instead of the second. Because you just get the idea that he is speaking in his sackcloth and ashes with bowed head and he is a little hesitant to use the second person with God except to recount His mercy and so on.

And then after he establishes this foundation of recounting the Word of God, claiming the grace of God for forgiveness, now he goes into the second person and he says, O Lord, according to Your righteousness, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away. He doesn't just look at Scripture and say, You know, Lord, the 70 years are up. It's time for You to bring us back and restore us.

Daniel knows that the condition for renewal is confession, contrition, change of mind away from dead works and faith toward God. So this whole section in verses 16 through 19, Therefore our God, hear the prayer of Your servant and his supplications and for the Lord's sake, cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary which is desolate. O my God, incline Your ear in here, open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name.

For we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive.

O Lord, listen and act. Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name. You see that tremendous shift in the appeal.

Having confessed, Daniel asks for restoration, for cleansing, for forgiveness. Then in verse 20, While I was speaking, praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. Once this appeal is made, it's well before the 70 years is up, but the answer comes.

Gabriel flies swiftly and brings God's answer. It took a long time for Israel to fall away. It took a long time for the judgment to bring about renewal and repentance, but reflected in Daniel, summed up in him, in this great prayer, the answer comes swiftly.

It reminds us of the glory of God that departed slowly in the book of Ezekiel, but is going to return so swiftly for restoration and renewal. And this is the pattern for us as individuals. As goes the nation in the Old Testament, so goes the individual Christian in the New Testament.

We can confess not only our own sin, but corporate sin. We see sin in our larger community, whether it's in our family or our community, or in our state, or in our nation, in the world at large. And we can bring this before God and acknowledge it because there's such a contrast between the righteousness and justice of God and what goes on in the earth.

Jesus says, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

There's such a disparity now between what happens in heaven and what happens on earth. And that attitude of acknowledgement founded on the Word of God, claiming the grace of God, brings this swift answer. It doesn't mean that the 70 years are going to end any sooner, but the promise is there.

The hope is there. The comfort and encouragement is there. And Daniel isn't going to be sick after this vision because this is the promise.

Well, we have to leave off here. We'll pick up in the middle of Daniel chapter 9 next time with this great 70 weeks prophecy that is so central to our understanding of the present and the future. But let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for these great and timeless truths that are revealed to us in the book of Daniel. And throughout your Word, we pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress them on our hearts. We ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen.