

Daniel 06-02-12b

Let's continue our study in Daniel chapter 9. We've seen in our first session this morning the principles that ought to guide our spiritual life in general and our prayer in particular. Prayer is a very important expression of our spiritual life. It is not to be underestimated.

It is not to be left as an afterthought or an emergency first aid kit to be pulled out from under the car seat when something bad happens, as is so often the case. One of these days we'll revisit our study from several years ago on watch and pray, if you remember that. That is the essence of the Christian life.

It's the essence of the life of any believer in any age. Watch and pray. Be alert and keep talking to God.

That's how you succeed in fulfilling the plan and purpose of God. Watch and pray. I thought about revisiting that for this morning, but we have this 70-week prophecy and it's time to get into it.

So, Daniel, seeing the time, observing the time, knowing that the day of deliverance is near, as we might argue is the case for us today, it always gets me where people say, I saw somebody say this somewhere yesterday, they were saying, ah, you know, these prophecy nuts have been saying Jesus was coming back forever. Eh, forever in a day, somebody saying, oh, we're in the end times, the end is near, walking around with a sandwich board, you know, doom, get ready, cut a hole in a sheet, it's all about to end, Armageddon is nigh, and so on. They've been doing it now, and a thousand years from now they'll be doing it.

And I thought, you know, this is Bruce Moreland, by the way, that's actually correct. A thousand years from now, people in the millennial kingdom who know the schedule are going to realize that the end is near, because the release of Satan and the Gog Magog rebellion will be very near, a thousand years from now. And unbeknownst to themselves, they're actually correct.

A thousand years from now there will be people saying the end is near. It won't be the same end, it won't be the same people, but it will in fact be taking place. But it's important to know where we are in God's plan.

It's important to know that we are in the latter days. This gives us comfort when we look around. I was talking about this to Elizabeth in the last few days because it is a real depressing landscape looking around at the teenage generation.

Of course, you know, people were saying this and have been saying it for a long time. And yet, if those people who talked about teenagers in generations gone by saw this crop, they would be down on their knees thanking God for their teenagers. And it is a reminder when you go to Thessalonians and Paul says, in the latter days men will be.

And while these have always been true, the spirit of Antichrist has always been at work. You've always had your ne'er-do-wells. You've always had rebellion and anarchy and spiritual darkness.

I think you can make a pretty convincing case that it has never been like it is now. You can point to a lot of dark days in American history, but not dark days like we have now. When have we ever had the perversions and the level of evil accepted and promoted and embraced in the public forum that we have today? When have we ever seen our core national values of freedom and sticking up for the little guy and intervening where somebody is being tortured and oppressed and murdered by dictatorships and so on? We've never questioned that.

How much outcry was there when Teddy Roosevelt sent the great white fleet? When we built the Panama Canal? Went down there and abused all those Panamanians and gave them the basis for their national economy for a hundred years. Brought them out of the fly-be-specked jungle into the modern world by going down there and building that canal. And yet, when we gave it back to them some years ago, all you could hear was, oh, the mean old imperialistic Americans, look at the abuse we inflicted on the Panamanians by coming down and building our canal.

The Panamanians ought to be down on their knees thanking God for that canal. They would still be a malaria-ridden, swampy patch of ground if it wasn't for Theodore Roosevelt going down there and building that canal. And why we gave it back is another question.

But the fact remains that we are truly in the latter days as we have never been before. The signs that people referred to in earlier generations and said, look how everything's going into the handbasket are exponentially greater now than they ever have been. We have never had the level of infanticide that we have in this country today.

We have never had the level of and accepted and touted and embraced and whole organizations dedicated to it. We have never had the level of rejection of God and his role in nature. The NCSE, what is the National Center for Science Education, they have reared their head in these, Dover and other places where people have tried to get intelligent design included in school curriculums and so on.

Do you know what the basis of the, and it sounds great, oh well, of course, they must be like some great organization. The National Center for Science Education, oh wow, that's probably, they're ubiquitous, they're everywhere, they've got their finger in pies. You know why they were founded? Specifically to eradicate creationism in any way, shape or form.

That's their charter, that's the reason they were formed. Everybody throws rocks at the Creation Research Institute and some of these others or some other organization someplace that is pro-creation. And they say, look at this, isn't this horrible? This organization exists for no other reason than to promote creationism in American education.

Well, how about your little NCSE that is chartered and ordained and held up and funded for the

very same opposing reason? It's this clash. But when in our history have people made a concerted public and widely supported effort to eradicate God from everything? Get him out of the Pledge of Allegiance, get him off the money, get him out of the classroom, get him out of the courtroom, get him out of the government. We won't be happy until we never hear God mentioned.

It traumatizes me to hear somebody else say anything to or about God. It traumatizes me to be at a ballgame and hear somebody pray. It traumatizes me to be in a courtroom and hear somebody say, so help me God.

It traumatizes me to have anybody say Christ or Christmas. My rights have been violated. I'm going to sue.

Never in our history has it been this level of antipathy and animosity to the things of God. Never. And people can argue, well, they've always been anticipating the end times.

They've always, well, not like this. And don't let anybody tell you they have. This is a similarly fallacious argument to the idea that, well, all religions are bad.

And Islam and its extremism, well, that's just, that's no different than Christianity and its extremists. What are you smoking to say that? When's the last time you saw a big group of Christians get together burning some foreign flag and dancing on it and saying, hooray, the infidels got bombed or some infidels got killed? When's the last time a Christian group got together and danced on a burning flag and celebrated the death of somebody elsewhere in the world? Never. Oh, the Crusades.

Well, yeah, let's go back 900 years and find something to drug the Christians about. And that was not mainstream Christianity. You've got a bunch of nut balls that went over there trying to, you know, hack up the infidels and take Jerusalem back for God without a shred of scriptural support.

That has nothing to do with the present. That's a millennium ago. I mean, let's talk about current events.

That's like people saying, oh, I'm oppressed because of slavery 150 years ago. I mean, wake up. It's not 1864.

It's not 1875. And you're not black in the South subject to the carpetbaggers and you're not an ex-cotton chopper. So get over it.

This is the 21st century. Let's live in the present. And who is a terrorist? And what motivates him? What quote-unquote holy book says not, here is the historical record of Israelites going in and wiping out Canaanites who were depraved, pagan, baby-sacrificing degenerates.

No, here is a book that says all of you who are currently participating in your religious faith

should want to eradicate the infidel. The Koran is not a historic record of Mohammed and his battles 1400 years ago. It is a book that says you currently existing believers in Islam, you dedicated ones, should hate, despise, and eradicate the infidel.

That's what the Koran says. Read the surahs. Look it up.

The Bible nowhere says you current Christians should go around and find your enemies and wipe them off the face of the earth. What does the New Testament say about your enemies to a Christian? Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you.

Pray for those that spitefully use you. Anybody that tries to make an equivalence between New Testament Christianity and Koranic Islam is a nutcase. Is shallow thinking, ill informed, and prejudiced.

And is wanting to broad brush all religion. I heard another quote this week. Good men do good things.

Bad men do bad things. But only religion can make good men do bad things. Ah, come on.

How shallow is the muddy field of your mind? Only religion can make good men do bad things. So I guess greed, and desperation, and peer pressure, and covetousness, and the sinful nature never make good men do bad things. It's only religion that will make a good man do a bad thing.

And of course they don't carry out the corollary. If good men do good things, bad men do bad things, only religion can make good men do bad things. Is it also true that only religion can make bad men do good things? Why don't you carry it on out? If religion has this transforming power on good men to make them do bad, well, how about the bad men suddenly doing good? Well, we don't want to talk about that.

It's just inane. You just want to stand on the porch and wait for Jesus. You just don't even want to look around in the world anymore sometimes.

Well, we are in the latter days, and this is what Daniel sees coming. Now, he prays this prayer. He sees the schedule of human history, and he knows where he is, just as we look at the schedule of human history and we know where we are.

The other thing people completely are oblivious to is the overarching plan of human history. People have been waiting for the return of Jesus for a long time, and of course that's a valid expectation because the return of the Lord Jesus for a Christian is as near as your last breath. When your last cardiac palpitation takes place and you go brain dead, the next thing you're going to see is Jesus.

And there's nothing wrong with the idea that the return of the Lord is imminent because for everybody that dies, you're there. When you die, you're not tapping your foot in a disembodied

state. You're not hanging around in Abraham's bosom.

You're not up there listening to flights of angelic instrumentalists playing some kind of holy symphony. Absent from the body, face to face with the Lord. That's what the Bible teaches.

When your soul departs your body, it leaves not only space, but time. And it will reenter at the face of the archangel and the trump of God. When that shout occurs, just as the Old Testament saints.

It says here in Daniel, we're going to see it. The time is coming when there's going to be the voice of the Lord and those who sleep in the dust are going to hear that voice and awake. Some to a resurrection of happy things and some to a resurrection of not so happy things.

We'll get there. But that voice is heard by those who sleep in the dust and they awake. Now what happens when you wake? I woke up this morning.

I woke Patti up this morning, which is unusual. Usually she's up and around before I am. And so when I wake up, my first instinct is to reach over and say, yeah, she's gone.

Well, I reached over this morning and went flack and woke her up because she was still there. And when you wake up in the morning, I'm sure your experience is like mine. You are not aware of the passing of time.

If you sleep soundly, now light sleepers, maybe they are every 15 minutes. You're looking at the clock and all 3, 3.15, 3.30. But a lot of us die. Go to sleep at 2, 2.30, 3 in the morning.

Well, whenever. Maybe you go to bed earlier. Joseph and I don't.

But when you wake up, your last thought was 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 hours ago. And you pick up where you left off. And you're not sensible to that intervening passing of time.

And that's how death and resurrection are. That's why the Bible consistently pictures the dead believer as asleep. When you're asleep, you're not aware.

When you're asleep, you're not tracking. You can't put a Berlitz cassette under your pillow and wake up speaking Russian. And why would you want to? You don't learn when you're asleep.

You don't gather facts when you're asleep. You don't sense the passing of time when you're asleep. You fall asleep.

You wake up. And the Bible says over and over, believers sleep in the dust and awake. Stephen, when he's getting stoned, and he says his last prayer, Father forgive him.

Just like Jesus did, he fell asleep. Don't trouble yourselves. Those who are alive will not precede those who are asleep.

For the dead in Christ will rise first. Absent from the body, face to face with the Lord. We are

close.

And I don't care if we've misunderstood Scripture and Jesus doesn't come back for a thousand years. We are close to the return of the Lord Jesus. The end of your life is the return of the Lord Jesus.

Any history following your death is immaterial. I was looking at some pictures of my ancestors yesterday. I got a fresh batch of family heirloom photos and things from a great aunt.

And looking at my great-grandpa, my great-great-grandpa, my great-great-great-grandpa pictures and artifacts from back when. Here are these people standing around. Rebecca and I were looking at them.

I was explaining to Rebecca, here's this picture of these old parties sitting around and they've got all their kids in front. Well, those kids are the old parties who are 70 and 80 years old now. And some of them have already passed away.

But you look at them and they're these little toddlers and young people, six, eight years old. My dad's standing there. His brother hasn't even been born yet.

And they're cousins and they know each other as little kids, just like our kids know each other and know their cousins now. And we were looking at that saying, you know, as it is with you now and your cousins and you're in your youth and in your prime, look at these people. That's where they were.

The lady who gave me the pictures is a little tyke. And in some of the pictures, her mother is the little tyke. And my grandpa is the little tyke.

And they're, you know, six, eight, ten years old. And it just gives you a sense as never before in history, photographs that we have over these last 150 years give you a sense of the change that takes place in people. I have to identify for my daughters who their grandpa is when he's young because he just looks so different.

And who grandma is. And, you know, we don't recognize the effects of sin over the slow passage of time the way you do when you look at a photograph and you say, my goodness, you mean that 85-year-old uncle that we visited with in Tahlequah? That's him when he was 22? And here's his... We were looking at Norman and Jeanette. They used to come over and visit with us in Tahlequah.

And they were in their 80s. They were in the old folks' home. And here's a picture of them when they're in their 20, 22 years old.

And they look better than us. And you think, wow, you know, how the mighty have fallen, so to speak. That's what happens as time passes.

We degenerate. We deteriorate. We get old.

But it happens so slowly that we're not aware of it. Well, it's important to know where we are. It's important to understand.

And not just take that for granted, but make that the basis of prayer. That's what Daniel does here. He says, Lord, in verse 16, according to all your righteousness... This is what Daniel founds and grounds his prayer upon.

Lord, according to your righteousness, I pray, let your anger and your fury be turned away from your city, Jerusalem. He doesn't say, let it be turned away from my city, Jerusalem. Your city, Jerusalem.

This is a city, by the way, that Daniel has not seen in what? 70 years? Your holy mountain. Because for our sins and for the iniquity of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people are a reproach to all those around us. Have you ever felt like a reproach? Sometimes socially.

I remember any time I'd go to a new school and all the kids know each other and you're the strange one and you're the odd one out and you're the object of curiosity, especially if you go to a new school that's small. It seems like they were all smaller when I was young. And you're the weird platypus amongst the swans and the ducks of the school and they're looking at you like, whoa, where did you come from? And you feel like a reproach.

Well, Daniel says, we are a reproach. People look at us and shoot out the lip and mock and say, oh yeah, you're the great... Tell me again about your great Solomon and all of his building and stuff. I see you down here digging in the mud by the river Kabar.

Oh yeah, you're great. You're a wonderful people. Josephus, one of the reasons he wrote his Antiquities and the Jewish Wars and so on was trying to convince people that hey, the Jewish people really are great and you're doing them a disservice by mocking them and deriding them and making fun of them.

That was Josephus' whole thing. That's the reason he wrote what he wrote. And that's why in some places he kind of exaggerates and smooths over some things.

We are a reproach. Now 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. Sounds like he's mixing the two persons there, doesn't it? For the Lord's sake, cause your face to shine.

Is the Lord a different person? What's he talking about here? This is the Lord as he is known to the people of Israel. Make yourself manifest. Daniel knows that he's the Lord, but for the sake of his role and function and manifestation as Lord of Israel.

For the Lord's sake, cause your face to shine on your sanctuary which is desolate. Oh my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations.

Now this might sound a little cheeky. Are God's eyes shut? Is God unaware of the desolations that he himself has brought on? What kind of a prayer is this? This is, we call this anthropopathism, anthropomorphism. Ascribing to God human feelings or human attributes, eyes and ears and so on when God is spirit.

Those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see.

This is poetic language. This is symbolic language. Daniel is saying, Oh Lord, now is the time for you to respond to our plight.

We have suffered the judgment. We acknowledge our sins. We recognize the reason that these judgments have come upon us.

So now, as it were, hear our supplications. See our need and respond. The city which is called by your name, we do not present our supplications before you because of our righteous deeds.

Remember what we talked about in the first lesson? We don't have to, you know, kind of build up a good record and then go to God. It's not our righteous deeds. Now our righteous deeds have a place.

We saw Friday night, the bride of Christ is going to wrap herself in the righteous deeds of faith that constitute that linen white garment. The army that is the great cavalry that will accompany the Lord Jesus to come down and slay the armies of the Antichrist and capture alive the beast and the false prophet and have them kicked into the lake of fire, those are the righteous deeds of the saints. Nothing wrong with righteous deeds, but that is not the basis of approach.

Two different things. Righteous deeds are great in their place, but that's not what you need to approach God. We would never be able to approach, we could never confess God if we had to wait until we had righteous deeds built up.

Not on account of our righteous deeds, we don't present our supplications, but because of your great mercies. God is a God of mercy. Daniel understands this as few ever have.

Oh Lord, hear. Oh Lord, forgive. Oh Lord, listen and act.

Hear, forgive, listen and act. It's in exactly that order. We know that that's how God responds, and that's how we should initiate our recovery procedure.

We know that God hears, so we need to pray. We know that God forgives, therefore we need to confess. We know that God listens, therefore we need to make supplication.

And we know that God acts, therefore we need to live in trust and in hope that He is going to act and is going to act in accordance with His promises and His covenants. Do not delay for your own sake, my God, for your city and your people are called by your name. Daniel makes the case that it is in God's interest to answer this prayer.

We tend to pray because it's in our interest. Oh God, I'm hurting, make it stop. Oh God, this person is hurting, make it stop.

Oh God, there's a problem, please fix it. Why? We need to be thinking in terms of God's interest. Hurry up, God, for your sake, your city, your people, your name.

Once again, four things. This is full of fours, because it's a universal prayer. It's earthly and it's for the people in every direction.

Those who are high and those who are low. Those who have been faithful and those who have not. It's so many different ways.

It's a four-fold prayer. And here, he says, do not delay for your sake, for your city, your people, and your name. We can build this kind of case when we pray to God and we can have confidence that God will act.

In many cases, God has refrained from acting simply waiting for us to assemble our prayer and make our supplication and express and exercise our faith. We don't develop faith if it doesn't get exercised. If we see the solution coming a long way off, it doesn't require faith.

Faith is what you can't see. Faith is what we don't know. Faith is what is around the corner, out of sight, and yet what we do know is God's character, God's promise, God's grace, God's faithfulness, God's forgiveness, God's cleansing, God's mercy summed up in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we walk in His footsteps. Now, verse 20. Daniel says, While I was still speaking... You get the idea that this was a prayer that may have spanned some significant period of time, measured perhaps in hours.

We have difficulty sustaining a prayer for five minutes. Ten minutes is a hugely long prayer for us. The Lord Jesus would pray all night long.

He goes to the disciples and says, Could you not watch with me one hour? When's the last time any of us prayed for a solid hour? We can pray for a solid hour, but praying is a whole different thing. I'll tell you what, though. Your prayers will become more lengthy and effortlessly you won't even realize how long you've been praying when you have substance, when you have the ideas from the Word of God, the promises, principles, and doctrines of God's character, of God's plan, of the Lord Jesus Christ, of examples in Scripture, and they flow into your mind and you can write your own book as you pray.

And there's not enough time to get the prayer in. The phone rings or the doorbell rings or there's a requirement or a knock at the door and your prayer is interrupted instead of frantically trying to see, well, how can I pray for more than a minute without repeating myself? While I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, all of these were ongoing, 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. Evidently, Daniel has been praying all day long.

And this, the evening offering, is circa 3 p.m. in the afternoon. They have to have time to prepare the offering after the noon meal, offer the offering, and clean up afterward before the sun goes down. The sun goes down as early as 5.30 or 6, so 3 p.m.-ish is when the evening offering was typically made.

You'll note that the Lord Jesus, on the cross, at the ninth hour, from darkness from the sixth to the ninth hour, and that offering is completed at the ninth hour, which is circa 3 p.m. So, about the time of the evening offering, this is mid to late afternoon, the man Gabriel reached me, flying swiftly, and he informed me, and talked with me, and said, he informed me, and talked with me, and said, that Daniel is praying. Now, notice, it comes to Daniel's attention, as he's reviewing his scriptures, and he comes across the 70-year thing, and it dawns on him that it's very close, in terms of years, and he makes this an issue in prayer. That same day, while he's still in the midst of the prayer, here comes the answer.

This is a sign of great divine approval. God puts the stamp of approval on the way Daniel is praying, the content of his prayer, the request and supplication that he makes. Look how fast God responds.

Before Daniel even finishes the prayer, an angel shows up, to talk to Daniel, to communicate with him, and say, oh Daniel, I have now come forth, to give you skill to understand. You think, well look, Daniel, of all the people living on the planet at this time, has more skill to understand than anyone. But, there are some things that Daniel still doesn't understand.

And Gabriel comes and says, I'm here to give you what you lack. This is what you need, a skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications, the command went out.

As soon as Daniel said, our Father who art in heaven, God said, Gabriel, get your stuff on, I'm sending you down to Daniel. All it took, was the initiation of the prayer. God was so ready to send the answer, that Daniel doesn't get five words out of his mouth, before Gabriel has been dispatched.

And before Daniel can finish the prayer, here's the answer. What does this tell us? What is the interpretation and application? God is waiting, and God is watching, for us to figure out how this life works, and to express that in our prayers to Him. And when we do, our answer, Now notice, Daniel doesn't get lifted out, and transported back to Jerusalem here, does he? He's going to have to subsist, until the 70 years are complete.

But what does he get? What does he get? What is the answer to his prayer? Skill to understand. You know, one of the biggest problems with little children, when you want to take them to the doctor, or you want to teach them something, is they don't understand, and they're afraid. I'm

afraid of the inoculation.

I'm afraid of the dentist. I'm afraid of the doctor. I'm afraid of going to school for the first day.

I'm afraid of going into this strange place. I'm afraid of daycare. I'm afraid of the nursery.

I'm afraid of whatever. I'm afraid to be held up high. I remember when my girls were toddlers, and I would first put them up on my shoulders.

Scared them to death. Never been up that high. And one of them got over it a lot more quickly, than the other one did.

One of them is kind of more of an adventuresome type, and pretty quickly, the other one was much more sensible, and said, you know, small kid, big height, bad thing. But how do we get over those fears? You know, we don't have unreasonable fear about certain things. I'm not fearful when I go to the dentist.

I was when I was little. I was when I was an adult, and had to go to an army dentist. But I'm not afraid now, because I have knowledge.

I have understanding. I know what's ahead of me, and that it's not bad. But people have an unreasonable fear, because they don't understand.

What does Daniel get as a result of his prayer? It's not deliverance. It's not, oh, well, Daniel, great, here, get a staff in your hand, and here's a couple of tablets, lead the people out of the land of Chaldea, back to Jerusalem. That's not what he gets.

What is the answer to his prayer? The answer to his prayer? Skill to understand. I see what's going on. I understand what the plan and purpose of God is.

That's what gives us comfort. That's what nourishes and strengthens our faith. That's what gives us the ability to serve God, is skill to understand.

What did James say? If any of you lack wisdom, let him stew hopelessly in confusion. Is that what it says? If any of you lack wisdom, what? Let him ask of God. Ask, and it shall be given.

Seek, and you will find. Knock, and the door will be opened. God is a gracious God, but you know God doesn't open the door until you knock on it.

God knows your request before you ask it, but He doesn't answer it until you ask. As soon as Daniel starts asking, the answer is on its way. Gabriel is dispatched as soon as Daniel bends his knees.

But not until then. It's been 60 odd years, and no Gabriel came to explain to Daniel the things that he's about to explain here. It's not until Daniel lifts in the Scripture, draws a conclusion from Scripture, builds a prayer on the basis of Scripture, and takes his case to God.

And immediately, one of the highest ranking angels in heaven goes straight to Daniel. I mean, it's just mind-blowing that this is the nature of God's response to the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man. And not because we've done works of righteousness, but because we've claimed God's cleansing grace.

That's how we are righteous. So, at the beginning of your supplications, the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved. Now, God loves Daniel more than Michael, or Azariah, or Hananiah.

Is that why He's getting this answer? What does it mean to be greatly beloved? God loves the world, does He not? God is love. God loves us all. Does He love some of us more than others? Love, in Scripture, is a policy.

It is a policy of benevolence, of benefit, of proactive intervention on behalf of someone. And that comes by qualifying for it. That qualifies by having the capacity to receive and to understand and to benefit from the proactive, positive, beneficial intervention of God.

God can't intervene on our behalf if we are incapable of receiving it. I was about three years old, and a friend of my dad's came over and gave me a present. It was a baseball glove.

And I mean one of the old Yogi Berra gloves. Not like the ones you see now. It was one of the old ones that looked like a... It always reminded me of the hand of a bear.

It laid perfectly flat. Old, dark brown leather. Had the pouch there.

Boy, I would love to have that thing now. I could not even bend it. I could stick my arm up in there.

But I couldn't work it. I couldn't catch anything with it. It was a cool, cool glove, but I had no use for it.

I couldn't use it. And it threw from pillar to post as we moved from Barstow to Oceanside to Barstow to Oceanside to Claremore and pillar to post. And I had it.

And over time, the leather dried up and it started to tear. And when I finally got old enough to bend it, the thing was unusable. I had no ability to make use of that gift.

It was a great gift. I'd love to have it now. It would be a collector's item.

Just like my autographed picture of Johnny Unitas and some other stuff went astray. But I didn't have the ability, I didn't have the capacity to make any use of that gift. God can't give us gifts when we have disqualified ourselves and eliminated ourselves from having the ability to make use of them or have capacity for them.

Daniel has done. That's why he is beloved. God didn't look down and say, Ah, that Daniel.

What a kid. Chip off the old block. I love him.

That's not beloved. He's beloved because he is a man of faith. Because he is a seeker.

He is one who knocks. He asks. And God says, That's what I'm looking for.

That's the one I see capacity. There's a cup I can pour blessing into. There is a soul that will appreciate the skill and wisdom that I'm about to impart.

So that's what he does. You're greatly beloved, therefore, you think about this matter. You consider this matter.

And you understand this vision. If you think about it, you'll understand it. Here it is.

Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city to do several things. List some out. To finish the transgression.

To make an end of sins. To make reconciliation for iniquity. To bring in everlasting righteousness.

To seal up vision and prophecy. And to anoint the most holy. How many things is that? Six.

Almost complete, but not quite. It's going to finish out the first 6,000 years of human history. And get everything to anoint the most holy that is going to carry forward into that seventh millennium.

Now, 70 weeks are determined to complete transgression. What has Daniel just been praying about? What is the whole content of the first half of chapter 9? Oh Lord, we have sinned. We have rebelled.

We have strayed. We have disobeyed our leaders, our princes, our kings, our elders. We have rebelled.

We have not obeyed your voice. We have transgressed the law. We have departed.

The curse and the oath have come upon us because we have sinned over and over again. That's what Daniel is talking about. Gabriel comes and says, look, 70 weeks are determined on your people and your holy city.

How many times did Daniel mention the holy city up here? He said, your city, Jerusalem. Our fathers, Jerusalem and your people are a reproach. He says, look, let's talk about the city.

Let's talk about sin. 70 weeks are determined for your people and your holy city to finish the transgression. To wrap it up.

To make an end of sins. To make an end of sins? Wow. By the end of the 70th week, sin will have been ended? How does that work? To make reconciliation for iniquity.

To bring in everlasting righteousness. To seal up vision and prophecy. And to anoint the most holy.

Well, each of these is going to deserve some treatment. We will do that in detail next time. But, look at verse 25.

Know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Mashiach, the prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. The street shall be built again and the wall even in troublesome times. After the sixty-two weeks, i.e. after the sixty-nine weeks, because there are seven that are set apart by themselves, and then sixty-two, so after the seven and then after the sixty-two, Mashiach shall be cut off but not for himself.

The people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. Daniel is saying, hey, wait a minute. The city and the sanctuary were already destroyed.

We haven't even gotten them rebuilt yet. But they're going to be destroyed again. The end will be with a flood.

At the end, till the end of the war, desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week. But in the middle of the week, he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.

And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate even until the consummation which is determined is poured out on the desolate. That ends chapter nine. And that ends this communication from Gabriel.

And you wonder if Daniel says, so I pray for the restoration. I confess the sins. And I'm looking forward to the return back to the land.

And while I'm still praying, Gabriel comes. And this is the answer? Do I have the skill to understand this message? Well, we hope you do. We hope that when we look at it in detail next week, we will also be given skill to understand and see exactly what is and is not being said in this very famous passage of scripture.

This word of God that's communicated by an angel to the prophet Daniel. That's what we will pick up next time. Father, thank you for the pattern of prayer, for the priorities that are illustrated for us as far as our spiritual life before you.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will remind us of our opportunity as believer priests to represent ourselves before you in prayer and to receive from you wisdom and skill through the truth of your word. We pray that we can live in a way that is pleasing in your sight and glorifies our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask it in his name.

Amen.