

Daniel

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] We are going to commence with Daniel chapter 9, and before we actually get into the content, I just want to brief you a little bit regarding one particular issue that is going to figure very heavily in what is coming here in Daniel chapter 9, and that has to do with a phrase, the times of the Gentiles, and that is a very, very significant term that is used in Scripture, and we find it in multiple places, but one of the more prominent ones has to do with Romans chapter 10, where the Apostle Paul says, I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, that blindness, blindness, and this is not 20-20 vision kind of blindness, but this is a mental blindness, an intellectual blindness, that blindness in part, not in total, but blindness in part, has happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in.

The times of the Gentiles is the day and age in which we are living right now, and it is Gentiles as opposed to the dominance and the supremacy of the nation of Israel.

Israel, for all practical purposes, is and has been dominated by Gentiles. And our Lord, upon entering the city of Jerusalem for the last time, when he knew that his crucifixion was near, he prophesied and said that Jerusalem is going to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and that not one stone would be left upon another, etc.

Well, we know that that happened in 70 AD. It was about 30 years after Jesus, well, actually about 40 years after Jesus prophesied that, when the Roman general would come in and literally level the city, and there would be in excess of a million Jews put to death during that carnage.

This was the long siege that happened in Jerusalem, and you'll recall that, well, you won't recall, because you weren't there, neither was I. But if you recall reading from history that Titus, who was the Roman general, who later would become the emperor of Rome, he lost control of his men.

[2 : 58] He told them that he wanted the temple spared simply because of its beauty and everything. But by the time the Roman soldiers broke through the walls, they were so angered and incensed because of the death toll that the Jews had taken among their fellow soldiers.

And it was revenge time for them, and they lowered everything, the temple and everything else. So that was the beginning, in a very real sense, of the times of the Gentiles, and that was in fulfillment of the prophecy that Christ had made about Jerusalem being trodden down of the Gentiles.

And it still is, too. Another phrase that is used in the Old Testament, and I do not recall which of the prophets it is. I think it's one of the minor prophets, where the expression is given that because of their disobedience and because of the times of the Gentiles that God was turning them over to, that Israel, the nation, will be the tail and not the head.

And that's what they are today. This tiny little nation, about the size of New Jersey, is in many ways relatively insignificant, but in other ways is greatly significant because of their strategic covenant with God and Abraham.

But they have been struggling for survival ever since, and they are still struggling for survival today. And they are functioning on the world scene as the tail and not the head.

[4 : 34] But the time is coming, and this is exactly what Daniel is going to be telling us about here in chapter 9. The time is coming when that role is going to be reversed. And Israel, tiny little insignificant Israel, is going to turn out to be the head and not the tail.

And all nations will flow into Israel. And the time is coming, said the prophets, when ten men will take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew.

And says, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. And the Jewish nation and the Jewish people will be in the ascendancy at that time.

And this is during the millennial reign of Christ, when he is ruling and reigning in Jerusalem. And David, vice-regent, will be reigning under him. He will be resurrected, and we will all be resurrected

for that time.

And it's going to be a glorious time. And this is when the times of the Gentiles will have come to an end. We are right now living in that time.

[5 : 41] But it is running its course. And Gentile domination and supremacy is only for a time. And the clock is running out.

We don't know exactly when that's going to end. But it is going to culminate in what Daniel is going to refer to as the 70th week.

And it will be a period of seven years during this time of tribulation, such as the world has never seen. This is what Jesus is talking about in Matthew 24.

And it will absolutely decimate the earth. And two-thirds, two-thirds, don't forget the fraction, in the Holocaust, in World War II, one-third of the Jews in the world were eliminated in the Holocaust under Adolf Hitler and Adolf Eichmann.

But in this time that is coming, it will be two-thirds of the Jewish population all over the world will be eliminated.

[6 : 55] And the time is also coming when there will be one-third of the world's population absolutely decimated.

We are not talking millions. We are talking billions. We cannot conceive of this kind of number, of this kind of Holocaust worldwide taking place.

But that's exactly what's going to happen. And it will be under the machinations of the Antichrist who will be energized by Satan himself. And Satan's goal and objective has always been the opposite of God's.

God's is life. Satan's is death, destruction, deception. And that's going to work its way during this seven-year period called the Tribulation.

And this is essentially what Daniel chapter 9 is about. But before we get to that, we've got some material to cover before we get there.

[8 : 00] So let me just back up just a little bit in Daniel chapter 8 and verse 27, where Daniel says, I was exhausted and sick for days after he'd seen this vision.

And then I got up again and carried on the king's business, but I was astounded at the vision. And there was none to explain it. The vision he's talking about is the content that we covered in chapter 8 about these different kingdoms that are going to rise and will be disposed.

And now Daniel is spiritually preparing himself because the content, the meaning of that vision that is so problematic and so puzzling to Daniel is going to be revealed.

So let's get into chapter 9 then. In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, this is the Medes and the Persians, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans, which is pretty much synonymous with the Babylonians, 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 70 years.

Now remember, this is also the length of time that Israel is going to be subjected to Babylonian captivity. They're going to be carried into Babylon.

[9 : 39] The first deportation, from the time the first deportation is taken out of Jerusalem and made to go to Babylon until the time that a decree is issued under the Medes and the Persians for them to return to Babylon, like Zerubbabel and Nehemiah to rebuild the wall, etc.

It's going to be 70 years. This is the famous Babylonian captivity period, and it came about as a result of God chastening the nation of Israel for their sin, and their principal sin was idolatry.

Remember, this was the nation out of all the nations of the earth that God raised up that were monotheistic, one God, and they were warned not to connect themselves with their neighbors who worshipped multiple gods, but they ended up doing that anyway.

They succumbed to idolatry, and God, after giving them more than adequate time to repent and relieve, they refused to do so.

And if you read the prophet Jeremiah, virtually his whole prophecy, and it's the longest of all the prophets, and it's 52 chapters, but it's even longer than Isaiah.

[11 : 06] Isaiah is 66 chapters, and we tend to think that Isaiah is the longer, but he isn't. Jeremiah is, when you talk about verbiage and content and actual lines of copy, Jeremiah's prophecy is longer, and virtually the whole thing deals with the warning from Jehovah that if Israel does not repent, God is going to bring a pagan enemy against them, defeat them, tear down the city, and

carry them into captivity.

And of course, the vast majority, especially the elite, the intelligentsia, the administration of Israel, poo-pooed the whole thing, considered Jeremiah just a crazy old coot, he doesn't know what he's talking about, and after all, we are the people of God, and God would never allow anything like that to happen to us.

Well, that's exactly what did happen, and Jeremiah was right on. And now, they spent this time in captivity, and we read that in verse 3 of chapter 9, Daniel says, So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek him by prayer and supplications, with fasting sackcloth and ashes.

And I prayed to the Lord my God, and confessed, and said, Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant and loving kindness for those who love him, and keep his commandments, we have sinned.

And I really want to emphasize Daniel's statement here, because he is making himself a part of the problem.

[12:56] He's not saying, They have sinned, and God, I am apologizing for my people. They have gone, No, no.

This is a first person, plural, pronoun, We. And Daniel is not trying to wiggle out of this. He's not saying that he has no responsibility in this at all.

My hands are clean, and I'm lily white. No, no. He is identifying with the sin of the people. And really, that's something that needs to be done before any nation can turn around.

And what that means, so far as America is concerned, is that we as believers in Christ, we ought to follow Daniel's example, and when we pray for this nation, we needn't and shouldn't go to God and say, I am ashamed of what these people in the United States have done.

We need to take responsibility. We are a part of it. We are part of the mix. We are involved in the chemistry. And each of us has contributed in one way or another, whether through negligence or unconcern or indifference or whatever.

[14:19] We are part of the problem. We are part of the mix. One of my favorite little cartoon characters, I don't know that he's even drawn anymore, but his name was Pogo.

Remember Pogo? Little possum that lived in the swamp. A classic line, maybe one of the best lines ever delivered in the funny papers, in the history of the funny papers.

And it wasn't funny. And the line was, we have met the enemy, and they is us. Boy, that's putting it where it belongs.

We are all a part of the problem. And he says, we, we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, and rebelled, even turning aside from thy commandments and ordinances.

Fellas, this is an acknowledgement of the problem. And here, by the way, is where all turnarounds begin. All turnarounds begin, spiritually.

[15:21] It is with repentance. And repentance, contrition, contrition is the guilt that we, that we sense from our sin, and, and acknowledgement, without making any excuses for it, without blaming somebody else, without trying to pass the buck.

It's just taking responsibility. We have sinned. And verse 6, Moreover, we have not listened to thy servants, the prophets, who spoke in the name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land.

See these prophets? They are plural. They consist of the major prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and they consist of most of the minor prophets.

And Daniel here is saying, we haven't listened. We've turned a deaf ear to them. We've told them that they were crazy. We told, we told Amos, go someplace else and prophesy.

The land is sick of hearing you here. We don't want you around here. And we know how they mistreated Jeremiah, and Jeremiah's scroll that he had written, the whole thing, was presented to the king, with an effort, or in an effort, to get the king to read it, and to believe it, and to lead the nation in repentance.

[16:51] And the king read it, and threw it into the fire. Burned the whole scroll. Burned it. And the Lord told Jeremiah, that's not a problem.

Write another one. And he wrote another one. And that is what we have in our Bible, and it's called prophecy of Jeremiah. If you want some real insight as to what was going on in Israel at the time, or Judah at the time, that is going to cause the Babylonian invasion, Jeremiah spells it out.

He even tells them who the enemy is, and where they're coming from. And all they could do was consider Jeremiah a traitor, and one who was an alarmist, and one who tried to scare his people, and all the rest of that nonsense.

So, we have not listened. Daniel acknowledges that. Verse 7. Righteousness belongs to thee, O Lord, but to us.

Open shame. As it is this day, to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby, and those who are far away, and all the countries to which thou hast driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds, which they have committed against thee.

[18:17] Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him. God had extended the hand of forgiveness, and pardon to Israel, for decades.

And they just spurned it, and rejected it. And God's long suffering went on, and on, and on, so much so that some of the prophets, I'm sure, were wondering, how and why God is putting up with this. Why he doesn't bring the curtain down. The sins of his people is so great, and so grievous, and yet, the long suffering of God just continued on and on.

One of the prophets said, all day long, all the day long, have I stretched out my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people. God provided them opportunity after opportunity to reverse their course, to change, to repent, and they refused.

[19:35] And finally, the curtain did come down. And fellas, we are today, living in a similar kind of situation. I remember, reading a quote by, Billy Graham's wife, Ruth Graham, years ago.

Of course, she and Billy are both now with the Lord. But, it was a statement that she made, that really, really penetrated my mind, and I've never forgotten it. And she said, if God does not judge America, he will owe an apology to Solomon DeMora.

And I think that is right on. The hand of God is extended toward this nation, with an opportunity for repentance, and restoration, and a return to the values, that this nation once embraced.

And we just don't know, how long God is going to be willing, to put up with the nonsense, the sinful nonsense, that's taking place in this nation. And today, we see it reaching new heights, with the gender changing thing, all of this nonsense, and the rampant homosexuality, the vice, the drugs, and everything that goes with it.

You just wonder, what capacity, what is the capacity, and the long suffering of God, before he brings it all, to a screeching halt.

[21:09] And we are living, I think, on borrowed time. And the message of repentance, needs to go out to this nation, just as it went out to Israel. They turned a deaf ear, and maybe our nation, will turn a deaf ear too.

But, we owe it to them. It is just, shameful. Verse 10, 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.

Indeed, all Israel, has transgressed thy law, and turned aside, not obeying, not obeying thy voice, so the curse, has been poured out on us, along with the oath, which is written, in the law of Moses, the servant of God, for we have sinned, against him.

Remember, the Lord said, through Moses, all the way back, in Genesis, to the nation of Israel, I will bless those, that bless you, and curse those, who curse you.

And when Moses, gave his parting sermon, in Deuteronomy chapter 31, he warned the people, he said, you can choose, you can choose, which direction, you're going to take, and, if you choose, to follow the Lord, then these blessings, will belong to you, and God will see to it, that your needs are met, and if you rebel, against the Lord, then these cursings, are going to visit you, so know in advance, Israel, what the consequences, will be, of the decision, that you make, and after that, Moses passed off the scene, God buried him, on Mount Nebo, and a man, named, Joshua, came to, take over, in the place of Moses, and Joshua, makes it clear, from the get go, choose you this day, whom you will serve, whether, the gods, our fathers served, on the other side, of the river, the pagans, the foreign deities, or, the Lord, but as for me, and my house, we, will serve the Lord, we've made our choice, and,

[23:30] Joshua, tempted to lead him, in that way, so, we continue, with verse, verse 12, thus, he has confirmed, his words, which he had spoken, against us, and against our rulers, who ruled us, to bring on us, great calamity, for under the whole heaven, there has not been done, anything, like what was done, to Jerusalem, and he's talking about, Nebuchadnezzar, and what he had done, and

this was a brutal onslaught, the women were raped, men were, murdered, and executed, and, just, the brutality, was indescribable, in verse 14, verse 13, as is written, in the law of Moses, all this calamity, has come on us, and this is exactly, what Moses prophesied, all this calamity, has come on us, yet, we have not, sought the favor, of our Lord, our God, by turning from our iniquity, and giving attention, to thy truth, boy, there's so much, wrapped up in that verse, right there, and we can see the parallel, in this nation as well, therefore, and this is why, because of that, verse 14, the Lord has kept, the calamity, in store, and brought it on us, wow, this is judgment, having been, stored up, and finally, what shall we say, it's been kind of like, kind of like the proverbial, dike, that has been held back, to keep out, the ocean from pouring in, and once there is, a break in the dike, then the whole thing goes, and that's exactly, what's going to happen, in regard to Israel, the Lord has kept, the calamity, in store, and brought it on us, for the Lord our God, is righteous, with respect, to all his deeds, which he has done, but we, have not, obeyed, his voice, and the reason, the reason they didn't, of course, was because, they wanted to go, their own way, we pointed out, in time past, perhaps the greatest, consequence, of the sin, and rebellion, of our parents, was that the seed, of self-centeredness, was sown, in them, and they passed it on, to their progeny, and we all have, the seed, of self-centeredness, in us, as well, that is natural, that is natural, but what God, has provided, is something, that is supernatural, that enables us, to live above, and beyond that, and that's referred to, as walking in the spirit, and it is for believers, only, so it's a, it's a dynamic, that is just amazing, just amazing, and now, verse 15, now,

O Lord our God, who has brought, thy people, out of the land, of Egypt, that was, 1500 years earlier, with a mighty hand, and has made a name, for thyself, as it is this day, we have sinned, we have been wicked, no excuses offered, no extenuating circumstances, no blame shifting, it's just, we are guilty, we are the one, we have done it, O Lord, verse 16, in accordance, with all, thy righteous acts, let now, thine anger, and thy wrath, turn away, from thy city, Jerusalem, thy holy mountain, for because, of our sins, and the iniquities, of our fathers, my pages, stuck together here, iniquities, of our fathers, Jerusalem, and thy people, have become, a reproach, to all, those around us, so now, our God, listen to the prayer, of thy servant, and to his supplications, and for thy sake, O Lord, let thy face, shine, on thy desolate, sanctuary, O my God, this is a prayer, of desperation, I mean, Daniel is just, pouring out his heart, O my God, incline thine ear, and hear, open thine eyes, and see our desolations, and the city, which is called, by thy name, for we are not, presenting our supplications, before thee, on account, of any merits, of our own, but on account, of thy, great, compassion, here is another admission, Daniel is saying, we are not, asking for your mercy, because we are, in any way, deserving it, we are appealing, to your nature, and your character, that is filled, with compassion, O Lord, hear, O Lord, forgive, O Lord, listen, and take action, for thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, because, thy city, and thy people, are called, by thy name, actually,

Daniel is here, appealing to the Lord, on the basis of, is this going to, tarnish your reputation, and he is actually, indicating such, and he says, now, while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin, and my sin, and the sin, of my people Israel, and presenting, my supplication, before the Lord, my God, on behalf of, the holy mountain, that's of course, Jerusalem, of my God, while I was, still speaking, in prayer, then, the man, Gabriel, and he is referred to, as a man, but he is not, merely a man, he is the angel, Gabriel, and he has, an appearance, of a man, he's probably, flowed like a man, like a human being, this is the same Gabriel, that will later, appear to marry, the virgin, and announce, that she's going to be, the mother, of the Messiah,

Gabriel, has, a peculiar relationship, to the nation, of Israel, and he is here, on behalf of, the nation, of Israel, revealing this, to Daniel, and the text, goes on to say, while I was still, speaking in prayer, the man, Gabriel, whom I had seen, in the vision, previously, came to me, in my extreme, weariness, about the time, of the evening, offering, you've got to get, a picture of this, and I don't think, I can adequately, describe it, but, Daniel, is, a wasted man, he is absolutely, worn out, he's exhausted, he's just spent, he has been, agonizing, over the sin, of his people, and, they're turning, away from God, and he is, heartbroken, heartbroken, over this, and he is just, pouring out, his heart, to the Lord, and, asking, for, redress, from God, and,

[31 : 08] Daniel, in his extreme, weariness, sees, this angel, and verse 22 says, and he, Michael, gave me, instruction, and talked with me, and said, Daniel, I have now, come forth, to give you, insight, with understanding, at the beginning, of your supplications, the command, was issued, and I have, come to tell you, for you are, highly esteemed, so, give heed, to the message, and gain,

understanding, of the vision, and Gabriel, is saying, I'm going, to, spell it out, for you, this, is the interpretation, of the vision, that you have seen, and then, in verse 24, the explanation, is given, and that, is an appropriate, time for us, to, discontinue, this, for the present, and we will, take it up, the Lord willing, next week, this is the introduction, of the famous, 70 weeks of Daniel, it is not, an exaggeration, to call this, the linchpin, of Bible prophecy, it is, perhaps, the greatest, single, passage, of scripture, that elucidates, the future, what is coming, and how it's going, to be broken down, so, appreciate you being here, this morning again, thank you.