

MARCH OF EMPIRE - LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF DANIEL

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CHAPTER 14

The Wonderful Prayer of the Prophet

LESSON TEXT -- Daniel 9:1-19

*Daniel Was a Good Man, a Great Statesman and a Wonderful Prophet -- Only to King Nebuchadnezzar and to Daniel was the MARCH OF EMPIRE Ever Revealed -- The Rise and Fall of Medo-Persia and the Rise and Fall of the Grecian Empire Was Revealed Unto Daniel -
- The Nondescript Beast Represented the Fourth and Last World Empire and Occupied Daniel's Chief Attention -- Daniel Was a Sincere Student of Prophecy -- What He Learned from the Writings of Jeremiah -- The Babylonian Captivity Was to End and Did End in Seventy Years -- Jeremiah Also Prophecied a Second Dispersion and Regathering of the Children of Israel from Many Nations -- Isaiah Also Prophesied of a Future Restoration -- Daniel Did Not Understand -- The Wonderful Prayer of the Prophet -- GOD's Great Purpose in This Age is the Calling Out of the Church -- Eventually All Prophecy Concerning Israel Will Be Fulfilled --
The Vision of the Seventy Weeks*

DANIEL STATESMAN AND PROPHET

Daniel, you will remember, was one of the Jewish captives who were carried away to Babylon at the time of the Babylonian captivity. Daniel remained in Babylon during the seventy years and through the wisdom that GOD gave him he became a great statesman and a man of power and influence in a Gentile kingdom. He served first under Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. After Babylon fell at the hands of the Medes and Persians, Daniel also served under Darius and became first of three presidents who ruled over a hundred and twenty princes.

THE MARCH OF EMPIRE REVEALED UNTO DANIEL

Not only was Daniel a good man and a great statesman, but he was also a great prophet, for GOD revealed unto him the march of empire during the times of the Gentiles, which began with the Babylonian captivity. Daniel, therefore, became the great prophet to the Gentiles. Therefore, the Gentile nations of the world today would do well to study and understand the teachings of this remarkable book of prophecy, which gives to them a prophetic outline of GOD's dealings with the past, present, and future, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

THE RISE AND FALL OF TWO GREAT EMPIRES

Our last lesson was based upon Daniel 8:15-27 where we have recorded the interpretation of the ram and goat vision which was given to Daniel in the earlier portion of the eighth chapter which we have already studied. From our study we have learned that the ram and goat vision had to do with the rise and fall of the Medo-Persian Empire and the rise of the Grecian Empire, which after it became strong, was divided into four divisions.

We learned also that, out of one of these four divisions; namely the Assyrian division of the Grecian Empire, the Antichrist is to come, who will arise to world dominion over the Revived Roman Empire during the closing days of the present dispensation.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

With this information in hand, we are ready to proceed to a study of the ninth chapter of Daniel, in which we find further information which is of interest and importance to all who desire to know the reason for, and the outcome of current events, as they are coming to pass throughout the world today, in relation to the Jews and the Gentiles.

Let us not forget that when GOD had given to Daniel a vision of the march of empire, under the symbolism of four different kinds of beasts, Daniel's chief interest centered in the nondescript beast which represented the fourth world empire, namely, the Roman Empire, which, according to the vision was to be the last world empire during the times of the Gentiles.

Therefore, in Daniel 7:19-20, he said, **"Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows."**

I am constrained to believe, therefore, that all the rest of the Book of Daniel, following this question, was given by the Lord in response to Daniel's desire to know these things. It is natural therefore, that in the ninth chapter of Daniel we should expect to find some very Definite information regarding the last World Empire and the ten kings who are to rule over the world, when that time comes and the Antichrist, who was symbolized by the little horn in the vision of Daniel 7:20.

LESSON TEXT

Now let us give attention to our lesson text which is found in Daniel the 9th chapter and see for ourselves just how it was that GOD set about to make known to Daniel, those things which he desired to know, about the last World Empire, the ten kings, and the Antichrist. In Daniel 9:1-2, it says, **"In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; In the first year of his reign, I**

Daniel understood by books, the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem."

WHEN THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY WOULD END

These words reveal, that important information was given to Daniel during the first year of the reign of King Darius which was near the end of the seventy years' captivity. The passage also suggests the manner in which Daniel secured or received this information. Daniel came to understand that the captivity of the Children of Israel in Babylon would end in seventy years by reading the prophecies of Jeremiah, for he said, **"In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books, the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."**

WHAT JEREMIAH SAID

The only way to come to a proper understanding of this or any other prophecy is to study it in the light of its context. Since Daniel discovered the length or duration of the Babylonian captivity from the writings of Jeremiah and discover for ourselves those things that Jeremiah had written concerning the captivity of the Children of Israel.

For instance, in Jeremiah 25:8-14 the prophet said, **"Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands."**

THE SEVENTY YEARS OF CAPTIVITY WERE HISTORICALLY FULFILLED

From this prophecy by Jeremiah, it is plain to see that the Babylonian captivity came about as the result of the unbelief and the disobedience of the Children of Israel, and GOD, in His permissive will allowed them to be taken captive to punish them for their sins. The duration of the captivity was plainly stated to be seventy years, after which time they were to be restored

to their own land.

A SECOND DISPERSION AND REGATHERING OF ISRAEL

In the fourteenth verse (of Jeremiah, the twenty-fifth chapter,) it is plain to see that the prophecy by Jeremiah, not only referred to the Babylonian captivity but looked beyond that brief captivity to a time yet future when there would be a Regathering of the Children of Israel, not only from Babylon but from many lands. This is confirmed in Jeremiah 25:14, where he said, "**For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the works of their own hands.**"

Jeremiah also spoke of this final Regathering of the Children of Israel from many lands in Jeremiah 23:7-8, where he said, "**Therefore behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that they shall no more say, The Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, the Lord liveth, which brought up and which led the seed, of the house of Israel, out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.**"

ISAIAH PROPHECIED A REGATHERING OF ISRAEL

The Prophet Isaiah also foresaw and foretold this final Regathering of the Children of Israel. In Isaiah 11:10-12, it says, "**And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.**"

TWO RESTORATIONS MUST BE KEPT IN MIND

Thus, my friends, we see that in reading Jeremiah's prophecy in Jeremiah 25:8-15, we must be careful to keep in mind that fact that two restorations from captivity were mentioned by the prophet. The Babylonian captivity was to end in seventy years, but the restoration of the Children of Israel from many lands as suggested in the 14th verse belongs even yet to the future as we shall see later on in our study.

DANIEL'S SORROW OF HEART DROVE HIM TO PRAYER

It is interesting to note from our lesson text, in Daniel the ninth chapter, that Daniel had been studying the writings of Jeremiah on this important subject. It was not difficult for him to read and to understand that the Babylonian captivity would end in seventy years, but apparently Daniel did not understand what the Prophet had stated in Jeremiah 25:14, concerning the restoration of the Children of Israel from many lands. For that reason he was troubled in his mind and heart and began to seek the Lord in prayer and supplication, because of the desolation of Jerusalem and because he longed to see the deliverance of his people brought

to pass.

DANIEL'S WONDERFUL PRAYER

This is confirmed in Daniel 9:3-19, where Daniel said, "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; We have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses though we have rebelled against him; Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

Yea, all Israel have transgressed the law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore, the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against him. And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole Heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth; for we obeyed not his voice.

And now, O Lord our God, that hath brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and

cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies.

O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive;

O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake,

O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name."

DANIEL WAS NO NOVICE

Certainly, my friends, we cannot help but admire this wonderful prayer and supplication of the Prophet Daniel. It plainly shows the effect which the Word of GOD, especially as recorded by the Prophet Jeremiah, had upon him. It shows that he was not studying the subject of prophecy as many people do, merely as a matter of curiosity or to satisfy an intellectual hunger to understand the things of the present and the future.

No indeed, Daniel was no novice and he was searching the Scriptures with all sincerity of mind and heart and purpose in order to find out those things which GOD had revealed in His Word concerning the captivity of the Children of Israel and their deliverance. The nature and wording of his prayer showed that he had utmost confidence in the prophetic Scriptures. He was justified in exercising such faith in the word of GOD because in Amos 3:7, it says, **"Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealed his secret unto his servants the prophets."**

EVENTUALLY ALL PROPHECY WILL BE FULFILLED

We may rest assured, therefore, that what the prophets have spoken is true and that in due time all that GOD has prophesied through them will come to pass. In Psalm 25:14, it says, **"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."**

We can plainly see, therefore, that the prophetic Scriptures hold an important place in the plans and purposes of GOD, for they reveal to the believing children of GOD His plans and purposes for the present and future, and this enables them to yield their lives in consecration to Him, in doing those things that will help to bring about the fulfillment of GOD's plans and purposes in every age.

GOD'S GREAT PURPOSE FOR THIS AGE

A lot of time and energy and money is being wasted in this present age of grace by well meaning people simply because many national and church leaders and Christian people do not understand what GOD's great purpose is during this age. According to GOD's plan and

purpose, the great work of this age is the calling out of the church throughout the preaching of the Gospel from among Jews and Gentiles alike. During this age Christianity is "A minority movement in a pagan world." And that is all it will ever be, until JESUS returns to rule and reign and to establish the kingdom of righteousness over all the nations of the earth.

DANIEL DID NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND

From what the Prophet Daniel prayed in verse 19 of our lesson text, it is plain to see that he did not fully understand the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the restoration of the Children of Israel, which he was studying at that time.

There true enough, Jeremiah had prophesied that the captivity would end in seventy years, and in this he was not mistaken for at the end of seventy years, as we know, the captivity in Babylon came to a close, and a remnant of the Children of Israel departed out of Babylon and returned to their own land.

In verse 19 Daniel said, "**O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called thy name.**"

If we apply these words of Daniel to the Babylonian captivity, we can see how GOD heard and answered his prayer in a wonderful way, but if we try to apply them to the prophecy of Jeremiah 25:14, which refers prophetically to a restoration of the Children of Israel from all lands, where they are now scattered which restoration is still future, we can see how the prayer of Daniel would not entirely fit into GOD's plan and purpose for the Children of Israel as Daniel understood it at that time.

WHAT DANIEL THOUGHT

Apparently, in studying the prophecy of Jeremiah, in Jeremiah the 25th chapter, Daniel did not understand that there was to be two restorations from captivity, instead of one. No doubt Daniel thought that all of the prophecies which had been made known to him in the visions which we have studied concerning the march of empire, and the coming of the Son of man, would be fulfilled at the end of the Babylonian captivity, and that Messiah would come and establish the universal kingdom of righteousness at that time.

But, as we have tried to point out, (in this he was mistaken) and in order that he might be corrected on this point, there was given to him a vision of the seventy weeks, as recorded in verses 20 to 27 of this chapter, but we will not have space to take up a study of these things in this lesson.

~ end of chapter 14 ~
