

ADRIAN ROGERS

LEGACY

C O L L E C T I O N



DANIEL

These transcripts are taken straight from live audio recordings of Adrian Rogers during his tenure as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. As such some of the transcripts may contain stutters, stammers, transcription errors, and other authentic remarks as would be common in a live setting.

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The Coming Kingdom of Christ

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: October 9, 1980

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 2

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

DANIEL 2:44

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Introduction

I want you to be finding in your Bibles, please, Daniel chapter 2—the second chapter of Daniel. Today, we’re speaking on this subject: “The Coming Kingdom of Christ”—“The Coming Kingdom of Christ.” Daniel chapter 2. It’s not that hard—part of the Major Prophets. But, it is important that you have your Bibles open to Daniel chapter 2.

How many times have you ever prayed like this: *“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come”*? (Luke 11:2) How many times have you

prayed that prayer? I wonder, have you ever really thought about the thing for which you were praying? You were praying for the greatest event of all of the ages to take place, and that is the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom. My dear friend, this is the central point of all of the Scriptures—the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. The new birth is very important, but in the New Testament, the new birth is mentioned but nine times. Baptism is very important, but in the New Testament, baptism is mentioned but twenty times. Repentance is very important, but in the New Testament, repentance is mentioned but seventy times. But, at least three hundred and eighty times in the New Testament, we hear about the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And, one Bible scholar has pointed out one in every twenty-five verses in the entire Bible speak of the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and point with eager fingers to His return. Jesus is coming again.

And, there have always been signs of the times, but no generation has seen the signs that we have seen. You see, the Bible spoke of the course of the age, and some of these things, in a sense, could be called signs. Jesus spoke of “wars and rumours of wars.” (Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7) He spoke of famines. He spoke of earthquakes. He spoke of distress of nations. (Matthew 24:7; Mark 13:8; Luke 21:11) But then, He said something unusual when He said—then, when He said, “When you see all these things come to pass—all of these things—when you see these things coming to pass at one time, when you see an intensification of these signs, when you see a multiplication of these signs, when you see a distillation of these signs, when you see a convergence of these signs, when all of these things begin to come to pass, then look up; lift up your eyes, for your redemption draweth nigh.” (Luke 21:28)

Alexander Maclaren was a great preacher, whose name you preachers will recognize, who lived in another day. Alexander Maclaren said, “The primitive Church thought more about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ than about death or about heaven. They were not looking for a cleft in the ground called a grave but a cleavage in the sky called glory. They were not looking for the undertaker; they were looking for the Uppertaker.” So said Dr. Alexander Maclaren. And, the early Church called the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and the establishment of His kingdom “*that blessed hope.*” (Titus 2:13)

Now, in the second chapter of Daniel, there is a marvelous and wonderful lesson, and I just pray God that you’ll keep your Bible open there as we read together about the coming kingdom of Christ. For the Bible says in Daniel 2, verse 44: “*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...*” (Daniel 2:44) Daniel 2:44: “*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be*

left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” (Daniel 2:44) When the Lord sets up His kingdom, there’s not going to be any transition committee. And, He won’t ever need another one. Dear friend, when He sets up His kingdom, it will stand forever, for He is King for life. You didn’t vote Him in, and you won’t vote Him out. It is the coming kingdom of Christ, and we’re going to look at it today and see.

Now, actually, our message has two basic points. Point number one: I want you to see the corruptive kingdoms of men. And, point number two: I want us to see the coming kingdom of Christ. Now, in Daniel chapter 2, a great drama is about to unfold, and there are four basic scenes in that drama.

A. **The Sleepless Sovereign**

And, scene number one is what I call “the sleepless sovereign.” Look in chapter 2, verse 1: *“And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake [forth] from him.”* (Daniel 2:1) That is, here was a case of royal insomnia. He’s turning and tossing and punching his pillow. He can’t get comfortable. He can’t go to sleep. He has it all. I mean, he’s the king. He’s got wealth. He’s got servants. He has power, but he can’t go to sleep. You have to feel sorry for him because, dear friend, no matter what you have, if you can’t sleep, what good does it do you?

I heard about a lady who called her pastor in the middle of the night—about two in the morning. She said... He said, “What do you want?” She said, “Pastor, I’m having difficulty going to sleep. Would you preach me a sermon?” Well, friend, listen, the Bible says that God *“[gives] his beloved sleep.”* (Psalms 127:2) But, here was a sleepless sovereign, old King Nebuchadnezzar. He’d had a dream. It seemed to him almost like a nightmare, but he could tell that it was more than the normal dream. It had unusual implications. He felt that he couldn’t even quite recall the dream much less all of the details and the meaning of the dream.

B. **The Fraudulent Fakers**

Scene number two: After the sleepless sovereign, we call...we find the fraudulent fakers, because the king called in the intelligentsia, and the priests, and the prophets of that day. And, look in verse 2: *“Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.”* (Daniel 2:2) But, they struck out. Notice verse 10: *“The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king’s matter: therefore there is no king, lord, [or] ruler, that asked such things [of] any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean.”* (Daniel 2:10) They’re saying, “King, you’re being unfair. You won’t even tell us what the dream was all about; and

then, you want us to tell you both... You won't even tell us the dream; and then, you want us to tell you the dream and what it was all about?" He's a pretty smart king. He knew if he told these guys what the dream was, they'd cook up something, you know. Anybody can say something. But, he said, "So I'll know that you're shooting straight with me, you tell me, first of all, what the dream was; and then, secondly, you tell me what it means." Well, of course, they struck out.

You know, we've got a lot of soothsayers, Chaldeans, magicians, and false prophets today. And, they come forth, and they try to tell us what to believe, what to do, and how to act. But, I want to tell you the reason that they could not give the answer to this dream is they did not know the answer, because the dream dealt with the future. And, I want you to learn something and learn it well: the devil doesn't know the future—the devil doesn't know the future. All he has, concerning the future, is an educated guess. Only God knows the future. And, therefore, dear friends, all of the devil's prophets are wrong prophets and they are false prophets.

Now, we talk about the devil being so smart, and so wise, and so cunning, and so crafty. He may be all of those things in his own perverted way, but I want to tell you something else about the devil: the devil is a knucklehead. Now, I mean that. If he were not a knucklehead, he wouldn't be the devil. I mean, can you imagine anyone thinking he's going to overthrow God? I mean, if the devil really realized how this thing's going to end up... He's going to end up in the lake of fire. That's what the Bible says. (Revelation 20:10) But, he actually thinks, in his perverted wisdom and arrogance, that he's going to topple God from His throne. The devil—I say, the devil—is reeking with ignorance when it comes to the future.

C. **The Praying Prophet**

But now, I want you to notice the third scene in this drama here. First of all, there's the sleepless sovereign. Then, there are the fraudulent fakers. And then, there is the praying prophet. Look, if you will, in verse 19: "*Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.*" (Daniel 2:19) Here is God's man who wasn't in the dark. No panic with Daniel—just peace, and praise, and prayer. And, God spoke to Daniel, for the Bible says, "*Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but [that] he revealeth his secret [to] his servants the prophets.*" (Amos 3:7) And, God has not left us in the dark. Hallelujah! We have a light—"a more sure word of prophecy...that shineth [as a light] in a dark place." (2 Peter 1:19) And, we don't have to be stumbling in the dark; we can be praising God in the light. And, I thank God for a man like Daniel who was able to tell the signs of the times and tell us the king's dream.

D. **The Disclosed Dream**

Now, the last scene here in this little drama that we're talking about is the disclosed

dream. Daniel told the king not only what the king dreamt, but he also told him what the dream meant. And so, I want us to see the disclosure of this dream. Notice, in verse 31, Daniel tells the king what the king wanted to know: *“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible”*—that means it was frightening to look at—*“The image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and . . . arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, [and] his feet part of iron and part of clay.”* (Daniel 2:31–33) Now, Daniel said, “King, I’m going to tell you what you saw.” And then, he says, “After I tell you what you saw, I’m going to tell you what it meant.” First of all, he said, “You saw a great statue, an image, and it was made of metal—a polymetallic colossus. Its head was of gold—beautiful, fine gold. Its chest and arms were of silver. Its belly and thighs were of brass. Its legs were of iron, and its feet were part iron and part clay.” And, he says, “King, that’s what you saw.”

Now, you say, “Brother Rogers, what does all of that mean? I . . . Does it have any meaning for me today?” It has more meaning for you today than you may possibly have ever dreamed of. It is speaking of the kingdoms of this world, and it is God’s object lesson and prophecy of the kingdoms of this world. And, here in this image you have a short course in world history.

I. The Corruptive Kingdoms of Men

Now, I want you to see that it’s speaking of kingdoms. Just take your Bible and look in verse 37: *“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given [unto] thee a kingdom.”* (Daniel 2:37) Now, Daniel is talking to Nebuchadnezzar, and he says, “Nebuchadnezzar, God has given to you a kingdom.” Then, look in verse 39: *“And after thee shall arise another kingdom.”* (Daniel 2:39) Look in verse 40: *“And the fourth kingdom shall be [as] strong as iron.”* (Daniel 2:40) Look in verse 44: *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.”* (Daniel 2:44) Kingdoms, kingdoms, kingdoms, kingdoms—he’s talking about the kingdoms of this world. And so, you have to understand this in order to understand this marvelous prophecy here in Daniel chapter 2. Daniel is talking about the corrupting kingdoms of man, and we’re going to see this in just a moment.

A. The Babylonian Empire

For example, the head of gold stood for a kingdom, and we don’t have to guess what kingdom the head of gold stood for, for it stood for Babylon. Look, if you will, in the first part of verse 39—or verse 37: *“Thou, O king, art a king of kings”*—now remember, Daniel is speaking to Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon—*“for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power . . . strength, and glory”*—and then, he says—*“And*

wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given [unto] thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold”—the head of gold there obviously stands for King Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom. We don’t have to guess about it. The Bible tells us that the head of gold represents the Babylonian Empire. And, the Bible calls Babylon in the book of Isaiah *“the golden city.”* (Isaiah 14:4) And, what a marvelous, magnificent kingdom was the Babylonian kingdom! It held sway over the known world, but only for so long, for Daniel went on to prophesy that Babylon would not stand forever. And so, notice in verse 39, the first part—*“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee.”* (Daniel 2:37–39)

B. The Medo-Persian Empire

Now, who came after Babylon? If you’re a student of history, you know the Medes and the Persians—the Medo-Persian Empire—came, and they overthrew Babylon. Now, why was the Medo-Persian Empire described as by the chest and arms of silver? Well, they were great collectors of taxes and had vast hordes of silver. And so, accurately and symbolically, they are represented here as the chest of silver.

C. The Grecian Empire

But, we’re not finished yet. There comes along another kingdom. Look in the last part of verse 39: *“and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all [of] the earth.”* (Daniel 2:39) Who took over the next worldwide kingdom after the Medes and the Persians? The Greeks, under Alexander the Great. You remember—Alexander the Great conquered the known world and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. And, brass becomes symbolic of that Grecian kingdom. As a matter of fact, the Greek soldiers wore coats and armor of brass, and we read about the brazen-coated Greeks. And, that was that Grecian kingdom, but it fell also.

D. The Roman Empire

And, after the Greeks came the iron legions of Rome. Look in verse 40: *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.”* (Daniel 2:40) And so, the Roman Empire came. And, we speak, as I’ve said, of the iron legions of Rome, and the Caesars rule the known world.

Now, Daniel was speaking at a time when these things had not come to pass. Daniel is using the telescope of prophecy, and Daniel is seeing far-off events. Daniel said, “After Babylon will come another kingdom. After that, another kingdom. After that, another kingdom, and after that, another kingdom.” He said, “There will be four worldwide kingdoms before the end of time.” No one else will ever rule for the known

world until the end of the age. Others have tried it. Hitler tried it; he failed. Napoleon tried it; he failed. Mussolini tried it; he failed. Stalin tried it; he failed. The Russians, the Chinese, the Americans, perhaps the British—they've all tried it at one time or another perhaps, but they've all failed. There will be no other worldwide kingdom until the end days. And so, here Daniel is looking down through time, and he is prophesying the kingdoms of the world.

But then, he comes to the end of time, and I want you to notice this, because this deals with you; and so, look at it very carefully. Notice in verse 41: he goes on to say, *“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters' clay, and part of iron, the kingdom”—that is, the fourth kingdom—“shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay”—now, put a star by verse 44—“in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.”* (Daniel 2:41–44)

What kings? The kings represented by the feet and the toes. There were ten toes in this image, and Daniel makes special reference to the toes because the Bible prophesies that, as the Roman Empire disappeared from the face of the earth, in the last days, the Roman Empire is going to be revived and reconstituted in a ten-nation confederacy. It will not be as monolithic as the old Roman Empire. “Just as iron and clay do not mingle and mix” (Daniel 2:43)—and this kingdom will be part of iron and part of clay. It will not have that strength and that cohesion of the old Roman Empire. But, there's going to be a confederacy of kings that are going to come out of that old Roman Empire. Just as the feet are an extension of the legs, this kingdom is going to be the residual extension of the old Roman Empire.

Now, men have laughed at this, and they've scoffed at this. And, the idea of Europe reunifying again—the idea of the old Roman Empire coming together again—under ten nations has been laughed at, and scorned, and mocked. But, I want to tell you, dear friend, people are not laughing any more, because Jean Monnet, a Frenchman, had an idea about the United States of Europe, and he started preaching that idea and teaching that idea. And, one by one, the nations of Europe started to come together until, at the early part of last year, there were nine nations who had come together and formed what they called the “European Economic Committee,” the Common Market. And, there was one more nation that petitioned to come in: Norway petitioned to come in. And, there was a lot of discussion, and it looked like Norway was going to be admitted into the Common Market, this ten-nation confederacy out of the old Roman Empire. But, a referendum was held, and Norway decided not to come in. I believe it was a part of the

fulfillment of prophecy, because Norway was not a part of that old Roman Empire. And then, Greece petitioned to come in. There was discussion and debate, but Greece was admitted May 28, 1979—in our day, in our age, just a few months ago. Greece was admitted to the Common Market. And now, there is a confederacy of nations—ten nations out of that old Roman Empire. And, notice what verse 44 says: *“in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.”* (Daniel 2:44)

Now, you say, “Brother Rogers, are you absolutely certain that the Common Market is the fulfillment of this prophecy?” No, I’m not certain, and you’re not certain. But, I’m saying, ladies and gentlemen, it certainly is significant to my heart. And indeed, it may be that this is the final form of human world government. And, you see, the Bible teaches that it is out of this confederation of nations that the antichrist is going to rise. Revelation chapter 17 tells us very clearly that the antichrist is going to come out of a confederation of ten nations—out of the revived Roman Empire. Revelation 17 tells us that. (Revelation 17:12)

And oh, we’ve been...we’ve been primed, and gotten ready for it. We watch *The Incredible Hulk*. We watch *Superman*. We watch *Wonder Woman*. Some of us even watch *Supermouse*. And, everything is super; everything is great. We go to the Super Bowl. What is happening? Our minds are getting preconditioned for the devil’s superman, who is going to take over. He is going to be the devil in the flesh just as Christ was God in the flesh. He’s going to receive his power, and his strength, and his authority from the devil, and he’s going to do great wonders. And, he’s going to be cruel and ferocious, but he’s going to be suave on the outside. And, the Bible says, “Through peace”—not through war, but through peace—“he will deceive many.” (Daniel 8:25)

Do you know what, speaking of this world empire and the...over which antichrist is going to rule, do you know what the Secretary General of the UN had to say? I want you to listen to these words; they’re highly significant. He said—and I’m quoting him now: “I do not wish to seem overdramatic, but I can only conclude from the information that is available to me as the Secretary General that the members of the United Nations have perhaps ten years left in which to subordinate their ancient quarrels and launch a global partnership to curb the arms race, to improve the human environment, to defuse the population explosion, and to supply the required momentum to world development efforts.” Do you know what he said? Plain English: “We’ve got ten years to form a one-world government or it will be too late.” That’s what the Secretary General of the UN said. And now, you see these nations in Western Europe coming together, and you see this concentration of wealth and power. And, you read in the Bible that out of this ten-toed confederacy is going to come the antichrist.

But, I want you to see, dear friend, when antichrist comes, everybody will think that it is progress. From what we’re saying—seeing—in the Word of God, it is not progress; it

is regression. It is not evolution; it is de-evolution. Notice what God said to Daniel—that each one of these kingdoms is inferior to the last, just as silver is inferior to gold, and brass is inferior to silver, and iron is inferior to brass, and clay is inferior to iron. (Daniel 2:39–40) Here is a picture of the deterioration—the deterioration—of civilization as we know it. But, you see two streams that seem to be running in contradistinction: here we see human civilization just crumbling around us; and yet, on the other side, we see this buildup of knowledge and technology.

Daniel prophesied something else very strange in Daniel chapter 12 and verse 4, and you may want to take a note of it. For God said to Daniel—after Daniel prophesied, He said, “[Now] Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.” (Daniel 12:4) He said, in effect, as I understand it, “Now Daniel, there are certain things that I’ve told you, and there are certain things that I pointed out to you and made known unto you, Daniel, that will not be interpreted rightly until the end of time, until the generation to which I have written these things comes into being. Seal up the prophecy! Close the book until the time of the end.” And then, He said something very unusual about that time of the end. He said, concerning the time of the end, in Daniel 12, verse 4, that “knowledge shall increase and men shall rush to and fro.” (Daniel 12:4)

I read recently that knowledge is doubling every ten years—not truth. Truth can’t ever double. You see, knowledge may double, but *if it’s new, it’s not true*. Friend, truth is fixed forever, but knowledge, what man learns, his information that he’s storing up... And, and, it’s...we’re just living in a day of a knowledge explosion. I read recently that seventy-five percent of all of the scientists who’ve ever lived in all of history are alive at this moment, and I read also that half of the medical knowledge is outdated every ten years. I also found out that seventy-five percent of the medicines that we use today have been developed since World War II—seventy-five percent of those medicines. And, the computer, of course, has done a lot for this knowledge explosion. I was reading about some of the electronic devices that are available to mankind today, and I was interested to note that the United States Navy now has a computer that is capable of storing seventy million pieces of information on a little, thin piece of tape not bigger than a square inch. Can you imagine seventy million pieces of information on a little piece of tape that big? And, I also read about a computer that is capable of doing sixty billion transactions in one second. Now, now, just think about that. I said just like that—sixty billion transactions.

In the last days, “knowledge shall increase, and men shall rush to and fro.” (Daniel 12:4) Go to the airports: here they come, and here they go. Go out on the highways: here they come, and here they go every morning. All these people going this way, and all those people going that way. Why don’t they just move and stay home? But, they’re all moving—these going this way, those going that way. Everybody’s going. They don’t

know where they're going, but they're going. And, we have the ability—you talk about men rushing to and fro—we have the ability now to put man in orbit at seventeen thousand five hundred miles an hour. 'Round the earth he goes. And then, we break him out of that orbit at twenty-five thousand miles an hour, and he streaks out toward the moon. Men rush to and fro.

I heard about a fellow the other day who called out here to the Memphis Airport, Delta, and wanted some information about a flight to Atlanta. He said, “Can you tell me how long it takes to fly to Atlanta, Georgia, from Memphis, Tennessee?” The man said, “Just a minute.” He said, “Thank you.”

We have come to where we'll believe almost anything—I mean, as we think about what modern technology can do. And yet, it seems that the more we know, the deeper we sink, and we're literally afraid of the Frankenstein monsters that we've created. And now, the chemists are able to pattern new forms of life. Who knows, before long, whether they'll be making human robots and clones and raising people in test tubes to be slaves again? What kind of problems are we going to face in the days to come? Who knows? But, I know, dear friend, that there is a picture here not of progression, but a picture of deterioration, and it is deterioration in the face of a knowledge explosion.

And, what is God showing? God is showing, dear friend, that man's answer is never going to come out of his head. We'd better lay our intellectual pride in the dust. If you think that we're going to think our way out of the problems we're in, you are dead wrong. Here God gave Daniel a picture of the corrupting kingdoms of men. And, as the knowledge quotient goes up, the moral quotient goes down. And, we're living in great danger. We go from a head of gold to feet of clay. Now, that's point number one: the deteriorating kingdoms of men—the corrupting kingdoms of men.

II. The Coming Kingdom of Christ

Now, over against that, God gave Daniel another vision—not only the corrupting kingdoms of men, but He also gave Daniel a vision of the coming kingdom of Christ. And, what a blessing that is! Continue to read here in Daniel chapter 2. I want you to read now in verse 44: “*And in the days of these kings*”—this ten-toed federation—“*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever*”—hallelujah!—“*Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron*”—the clay—“*the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.*” (Daniel 2:44–45)

What is He talking about? He's talking about verse 34. Look at it: “[*And*] thou sawest

till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” (Daniel 2:34) What does that stone represent? If the image of gold, silver, brass, iron, and clay represents the corrupting kingdoms of men, what does this stone represent? Daniel was watching. He saw the image over here; and then, he looked up at a mountain and he saw, being chiseled supernaturally out of that mountain, a huge stone. And, suddenly it begins to roll. And, it tumbles, and it falls, and it picks up speed, and it smashes that image on the feet. And, when it hits that image on the feet, the entire colossus—the entire image, all of it—just crumbles, and it becomes like powder and like dust, like chaff, and it’s blown away. Just like that, it’s gone! That’s what Daniel saw.

What does it represent? Well, let’s let Jesus tell us what it represents. I want you to turn, if you will please, to Matthew chapter 21. Begin reading with me in verse 42: “[And] *Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore [I] say...unto you, The kingdom of God*”—now, notice He’s talking about kingdoms here—“*Therefore [I] say...unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof*”—did you know that Christians are called “a holy nation”? And then, notice in verse 44, as He talks about that stone—“*And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*” (Matthew 21:42–44) Now, Jesus here is talking about the same thing that Daniel was talking about in Daniel chapter 2. That stone is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. And, I want you to notice several things about the Lord Jesus Christ, according to His own words and according to the prophecy of Daniel as we think about the coming kingdom of Christ.

A. Jesus Is the Slighted Stone

Jesus is that stone, and, first of all, He is the slighted stone, for the Bible says that He is “*the stone which the builders rejected.*” (Matthew 21:42) Now, Jesus was prophesying that the Jews and the Gentiles, by and large, would reject Him. “*He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*” (John 1:11) It is illustrated by Jesus being a stone that is rejected by the builders.

Tradition tells us that when the temple was built, they sent out the specifications for the stones to the quarry, and the stones were cut in the quarry, loaded on wagons, and sent to the temple site. There was one strange-looking stone that was sitting there in the

middle of the workyard, and the workers kept stumbling over it. It was there, and it seemed to be in the way. It never seemed to fit in anywhere in all of the plans. After a while, the foreman said, "Get that thing out of here," and they took their pry bars, and they rolled it over and over and over a hill and down into a valley and let it rest there when the weeds grew up around it. Finally, when the temple was ready to be completed and they were ready to put the cornerstone in place, they sent to the quarry and said, "Send the cornerstone." The quarry sent back and said, "We've sent it." And, they said, "No, you haven't. We don't have it." They said, "We know we sent it. You look for it."

You know where it was, don't you? Down in the valley, surrounded by weeds. And, in shame and humiliation, they had to go get that stone that they had discarded, that stone that they'd set at naught, and bring it back and give it the chief place. Now, that's a picture of the Lord Jesus: *"the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner."* (Matthew 21:42) This world doesn't think much of Jesus right now, but I want to tell you, one of these days, He's going to show *"who is...blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and [the] Lord of lords."* (1 Timothy 6:15)

B. Jesus Is the Solid Stone

Jesus, the slighted stone, is to be the cornerstone. But, not only is He the slighted stone; He is the solid stone, for it is upon this cornerstone that the temple rests. He is the solid stone. He is the Rock of Ages. He, and He alone, is the One upon whom you can stand. And, dear friends, I want to tell you, you may move on that stone, but it'll never move under you. I thank God today that I'm preaching a hope that is steadfast and sure. He is the solid stone.

C. Jesus Is the Stumbling Stone

But furthermore, I want you to see that He is the stumbling stone, for the Bible says, *"The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner... And whosoever shall fall on [it] shall be broken."* (Matthew 21:42–44) You think of how many times those men fell on that stone and banged their shins. You think how many times they tripped over that stone and hurt themselves. Dear friend, did you know that you can trip over Jesus and hurt yourself? Did you know, today, that you can misunderstand who the Lord Jesus Christ is? And, if you stumble at what I'm saying... And, some of you will get...some of you will get your hackles up by what I say about Jesus. I want you to hear what I'm going to say about Jesus. I want to make it big, bold, clear, and plain—no ifs, doubt, or peradventure about it: Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven! The only way! *"Neither is [the] salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* (Acts 4:12) Jesus said, *"[I'm] the way, the truth, and the life: [and] no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6) Now, there are some people who won't like that, and they'll stumble at

that. But, the Bible says, “Whoever will stumble at that stone, will be broken.” (Matthew 21:44)

D. Jesus Is the Smiting Stone

Now listen, He is the slighted stone. He is the solid stone. He is the stumbling stone, and He is the smiting stone. Go on and see what the Lord Jesus said: and He said, “[And] on whosoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” (Matthew 21:44) Now, some stumbled over Him at His first coming, but, dear friend, when He comes again, people are going to be crushed beneath Him.

Now, that’s...that’s a part of the Lord Jesus that some people don’t understand. Some people think when the Lord Jesus comes, He’s going to come with lavender and rose water, dancing on eggshells, wearing a bowtie. But, I want to tell you, dear friend, He is coming as the great and mighty God, and the Bible says He is coming “*in flaming fire taking vengeance on [those who] know not God, and [who] obey not the gospel of our Lord [and Savior] Jesus Christ.*” (2 Thessalonians 1:8) And, the Bible says, “*On whomsoever [this stone] shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*” (Matthew 21:44) That’s exactly what Daniel was talking about. Daniel said, “I saw a stone. That stone was cut out of a mountain without hands. And, when it came, it struck the kingdoms of this world, and they crumbled.” (Daniel 2:45)

This Christmas season, as normal, our choirs will sing “The Hallelujah Chorus,” and I’ll tell you, the part that always thrills me is where they quote that passage from Revelation, where “*the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and...his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever [and ever and ever].*” (Revelation 11:15) Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen! That’s going to happen. He is the smiting stone, and “*the kingdoms of this world [will] become the kingdoms of our Lord, and...his Christ.*” (Revelation 11:15)

Conclusion

Now, in the few moments that I have left, I want to tell you how Jesus is coming again to set up His kingdom. Are you ready?

A. Jesus Is Coming Supernaturally

First of all, the Lord Jesus is coming supernaturally. Now, notice, if you will please, in verse 34, the Bible says that stone “*was cut out without hands.*” (Daniel 2:34) That means it’s not a result of human effort.

I remember when I was in a ministerial alliance. I went one day. It was the first and last day I went to it—one of those homogenization meetings. It wasn’t here. It was down in Florida, where everybody got together on get-together. And, I thought, “Well, you know, it seems like I don’t cooperate enough. Maybe I ought to cooperate a little more.

So, I went there, and I got with those people. And, the very first thing—right out of the box, they were voting on whether they were going to let a false cult be a part of that ministerial alliance. And, I said, “Fellows, don’t you understand that that man denies the deity of Christ? Don’t you understand that he teaches something completely contrary to what we preach?” And said, “Don’t you understand that if we were to bring him into this association, it would look like we were approving what he believes and would give him a status as a Christian minister? Don’t you realize the confusion that would cause?” And, I never will forget what a liberal minister of one of the mainline denominations said to me. He said, “Rogers, if we don’t cooperate, we’ll never bring in the kingdom.”

Well, friend, you’re not going to bring it in. That stone’s cut out without hands. (Daniel 2:34) Incidentally, that was my first and last day. I said, “You vote him in; you vote me out.” They did. Goodbye.

All right. Now listen, listen, let me tell you something. By the way, *if you don’t stand for something, you’ll fall for anything*. Did you know it? Listen, He’s coming supernaturally. It’s not that we’re going to work and bring in the kingdom. It’s not that we’re going to finally get this old world in shape. If you think that we’re going to salvage this world, you’re wrong. It’s like painting the decks of a sinking ship. There is a course of deterioration—not evolution, but de-evolution. And, the Second Coming of Jesus is going to be supernatural. He’s coming supernaturally. He’s “*cut out without hands*.” (Daniel 2:34)

B. Jesus Is Coming Suddenly

Secondly, He’s coming suddenly. Look again in verse 34: the Bible says He “*smote the image*.” (Daniel 2:34) This is a cataclysmic action. It just all comes tumbling down all at once. He is coming suddenly. “*In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh*.” (Matthew 24:44)

C. Jesus Is Coming Sovereignly

But, I want to tell you, not only is He coming supernaturally, not only is He coming suddenly; He is coming sovereignly. Look, if you will, in verse 44: “*And in the days of [those] kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever*.” (Daniel 2:44) Hallelujah! The great God is doing it. As I said before, you didn’t vote Him in; you’re not going to vote Him out. He is going to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Now, you say, “Dear R, dear friend, Brother Rogers, why—why—has God waited so long?” I don’t know why He’s waited so long. The Bible says, “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as [we] count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish*.” (2 Peter 3:9)

Do you remember, some of you—I remember; I was just a little boy—but in World War II, we had what we called D-Day, and at D-Day, the back of the enemy was broken. But, it was months later and thousands of casualties later, that we have V-Day—“Victory Day.” You remember that? I want to tell you something, friend: the cross was D-Day. That’s when the back of the enemy was broken. The Second Coming of Jesus is V-Day. That’s victory! That’s when He shall come with trumpet sound. That’s when the Lord Jesus Christ is going to rule and to reign.

When He came the first time, He came to a robe of shame. When He comes again, He’s going to get a robe of glory. When He came the first time, we crowned Him with thorns. When He comes again, dear friend, we’re going to crown Him with diadems. When He came the first time, we put a wilted reed in His hand. When He comes again, He’s coming with a rod of iron. When He came the first time, He was the slighted stone. When He comes again, He’s going to be the smiting stone. When He came the first time, He was the smitten stone. When He comes again, He’s coming as the cornerstone—as the Lord of lords and the King of kings, that stone cut out of that mountain.

D. Jesus Is Coming Surely

He is coming supernaturally. He is coming suddenly. He is coming sovereignly. And, I want you to notice one last thing. Look, if you will for just a moment, in verse 45—the last part of verse 45: *“and the dream is certain, and the interpretation...sure.”* (Daniel 2:45) He is coming surely—oh, He’s coming surely. *“The dream is certain...the interpretation [is] sure.”* (Daniel 2:45) Just as surely as there’s a God in heaven, just as surely as this book is the Word of God, just as surely as I stand behind this pulpit, just as surely as you hear my voice, Jesus Christ is coming. And, remember when: *“in the days of these kings.”* (Daniel 2:44)

Now, pay attention. The Church will not be here when this happens. Incidentally, I’m going to be preaching tonight on “Will the Church go through the Great Tribulation?” This will take place at the close of the Great Tribulation. Now, wait a minute. Pay attention. If this is going to take place at the close of the Great Tribulation, and it’s going to take place *“in the days of these kings,”* (Daniel 2:44) and the Church will not be here when it takes place, just think how close we may be to the Rapture of the Church. Just think—just think—how close it may be.

The Coming Kingdom of Christ

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: February 20, 1983

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 2

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

DANIEL 2:44

Outline

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Conclusion

Introduction

Now, just open your Bibles there to Daniel the second chapter. And, really, the title of our message this morning is “The Coming Kingdom of Christ.” How many times have you prayed like this: “*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come*”? (Matthew 6:9–10) Have you ever prayed that? Lift your hand. “*Thy kingdom come.*” Have you ever thought about what you were praying for? You were praying for that time when Jesus Christ literally, actually, bodily is going to reign here upon this earth. There is a coming kingdom of Christ where He is going to rule and reign here upon this earth. And it will transpire at His second coming. And the greatest prophetic event of all of the ages is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Now, the new birth is important, but it’s only mentioned eight times in the New Testament. Baptism is important, but it’s only mentioned twenty-one times in the Bible. Repentance is important, but only mentioned seventy times. But I want to tell you, my dear friend, that the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is mentioned in 380 direct references in the Word of God to that time when Jesus Christ is going to come again. As a matter of fact, one out of every twenty-five verses in the Bible points with eager

fingers to the return of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. And well it is written in the Main Reading Room of the Library of Congress of the United States of America these words: “One God, one law, one element, and one far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves.” And that one far-off divine event for which all of God’s creation is moving is the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And I know that you’ve heard preachers say over and over again, “We’re living in the last days.” And your mind may be saying, “Well, they’ve been saying that since I was a little boy, and I’ve heard that before.” And you may be like those in Peter’s day, saying, “Where’s the promise of His coming?” But, friend, there is a convergence of the signs. There is a multiplication of the signs. There is an intensity of the signs—all of these things coming together in a burning focus that tells us that the coming of Jesus Christ is near.

I want us to look and see what happened here in the second chapter of the book of Daniel. Let me say that the background for this passage of Scripture that we’re reading this morning is this: It’s about six hundred years before Christ came to earth the first time. And the Jews, God’s chosen people, are in exile. They’ve been carried away to Babylon. And Daniel is among them. He has been taken as a prisoner of war. He’s a slave. And he’s there in the land of Babylon, and an amazing drama is about to unfold before our eyes.

A. A Sleepless Sovereign

The first thing I want you to notice is a king who cannot sleep—what I would call a sleepless sovereign. Look in chapter 2, verse 1: *“And in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.”* (Daniel 2:1) That is, he had royal insomnia. He had it all. He was the king, but he couldn’t sleep.

Let me tell you something, friend. If you don’t have anything, but you can go to bed at night and sleep, you’re blessed—did you know that? And you can sleep if you know the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Bible says, *“He giveth his beloved sleep.”* (Psalm 127:2)

But this king was having a nightmare. He was having visions, and they were troubling him. The king is trying to sleep, and he cannot sleep.

Incidentally, did you hear of the woman who called her preacher at two in the morning, and he said, “What on earth is wrong with you?” She said, “Well, I can’t go to sleep.” He said, “What do you want me to do?” She said, “Would you preach to me for a while? That would put anyone to sleep.”

B. Some Fraudulent Fakers

All right now, I want you to notice not only a sleepless sovereign, but I want you to notice some fraudulent fakers. There were in the kingdom at that time some

soothsayers, some astrologers, who purported to be able to tell the future and to delineate the meaning of dreams. And the king wants to know the meaning of his dream, and so we look in verse 2: *“Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.”* And verse 3: *“And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.”* (Daniel 2:2–3) Now, if you’ll just skip on down to verse 9, he really puts these people into a box, as it were: *“But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can shew me the interpretation thereof.”* (Daniel 2:9)

Now, the background of verse 9 is this: They said, “King, you tell us the dream; we’ll tell you what it means.” He said, “No, you tell me what it means first, because if I tell you the dream, anybody can make up a story. So that I know that you really have an insight, you tell me the dream and the meaning.” *“The Chaldeans answered”*—verse 10—*“before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king’s matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.”* (Daniel 2:10–12)

Now, these fakers, these frauds, these charlatans, they were the intelligentsia of that day. They were the rulers. They were the preachers. They were the prophets. But they were all full of the devil and they were full of darkness.

Now they were fortunetellers. What about fortunetellers? Half the fortunetellers are fakers. They’re like the lady, you know, Madam Zonga, who has a sign out in front of her house: “Hears all, knows all, tells all. Blow your horn so I’ll know you’re here.” You know, half of them are fakers. The other half are demon-possessed—demon-possessed. There are people who have a spirit of divination. There are people who are inhabited by the devil. And therefore their prognostications, their prophecies, their visions sometimes come true.

You say, “How is that, Brother Rogers? How do they know the future?” They don’t know the future. Well, wait a minute. You said sometimes their prophecies come true. They do, but sometimes they don’t. You see, not one of God’s prophecies will fail. Not one jot, not one tittle, shall fail from the law till all be fulfilled. (Matthew 5:18) What’s the difference therefore? You see, the devil makes an educated guess. The devil is privy to information that you and I are not privy to. The devil, having his agents, his demon spirits all over the world—and there are myriads of them, millions of them, perhaps

billions of them all over the world—they hear of things, they see things, they know things, and therefore they are able to make an educated guess.

But the devil doesn't know the future. If he did, he wouldn't be the devil. I mean, he'd have better sense. You see, the devil actually thinks he can overthrow God—and he can't. He doesn't know the future. His future is in hell. I want to tell you something, friend. The devil's a knucklehead. He really is. He's a knucklehead to think that he could overthrow Almighty God. He does not know the future. And these men, had the king given them certain facts, and had demon spirits interpreted those facts for them, they might have made an educated guess.

C. A Praying Prophet

But I want you to notice something else here: I want you to notice a praying prophet. There was someone who did know the answer. And look, if you will, in verse 19 of chapter 2, this same chapter—and the Bible says, *“Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.”* (Daniel 2:19)

You know, the Bible says, *“Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”* (Amos 3:7) Thank God there's a Daniel. Thank God that God always raises up His men, men in whom the Spirit of the Lord is, and men who can read the handwriting on the wall, and men who can tell the king's vision. And here was Daniel, and Daniel understood it all. And everybody else is in pandemonium that day, but not Daniel. Daniel is blessing the name of his great God. Even though the vision that he saw was a terrible and a horrifying vision, Daniel is blessing the name of God, because he's seen the end of it. I've told you before, *there are three classes of people in America: those who are afraid, those who don't know enough to be afraid, and those who know their Bibles*. Daniel knew the Word of God, the will of God, and the way of God. And Daniel now is going to interpret the king's dream. Are you ready for it?

Now I want to take our message today and divide it into two sections. The first section is what I want to call the collapsing kingdoms of men; the second section, the coming kingdom of Christ.

I. The Collapsing Kingdoms of Men

Now I want you to notice this picture of the corrupted, collapsing, corrosive kingdoms of men. Here's what Daniel said that the king saw. Let's begin to read here in verse 31 and we'll just read right on. Now in chapter 2, verse 31: *“Thou, O king, sawest...”*—here's what Daniel is saying to the king. He said, ‘I'll tell you what you saw. Not only will I tell you what you saw; I'll tell you what it means’—*“Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image”—*that is, “You saw a huge statue.” *“This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.”* Now, that doesn't

mean it was bad art. That means it was just terrifying. It frightened you. *“This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands...”*—now, here’s the tie-in with last Sunday’s message. A stone cut out of a mountainside without hands, out of a quarry, supernaturally cut out. Now, remember that Jesus Christ, the chief cornerstone, is a supernatural stone and a strategic stone—*“a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”* (Daniel 2:31–35)

Well, I’ll tell you, dear friend, if you’d had a dream like that, you’d wonder what it meant, too, wouldn’t you? Now, that’s what the king saw. He saw a poly-metallic colossus, a huge, huge image—head of gold, breasts and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay. Now, Daniel’s going to say to the king, “King, I’m going to tell you what all of this means.” And I want you to notice what Daniel said to the king.

First of all, he let the king know that this image represented the kingdoms of this world. There are no ifs, ands, and buts about it. This image was a picture, a prophecy, of world history. Look, for example, in verse 37: *“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”* (Daniel 2:37–38) So we don’t have to guess about it. There’s no need for some imagination, no fanciful interpretation. Clearly and plainly as black ink on white paper, the head of gold represented the Babylonian kingdom: “You king, and your kingdom, that’s the head of gold.”

All right then, let’s continue to read. As a matter of fact, Isaiah 14:4 calls Babylon *“the golden city.”* (Isaiah 14:4) And so, the head of gold represents Babylon. Well, what about the breasts and arms of silver? Well, what do they represent? Another kingdom. Look, if you will, the first part of 39: *“And after thee shall arise another kingdom”*—now, notice the phrase—*“inferior to thee.”* (Daniel 2:39) Now, the idea here is not one of evolution; it is one of devolution. It is not one of progress; it is one of deterioration. Just as silver is inferior to gold, the next kingdom would be inferior to the last one.

I just remembered a silly little story about a preacher who was leaving a church, you know. And a lady was crying. And he said, “Well, don’t worry: you’ll get a better preacher next time.” “Oh,” she wept all the more, and said, “that’s what they said last

time: it keeps getting worse.”

Or like the lady who said to the preacher, “Preacher, every sermon you preach is better than the next one.”

Well, that’s what was happening to these kingdoms. They were getting worse. Now, what was the next kingdom? The next kingdom was the kingdom of Medo-Persia. Now, Daniel does not call the kingdom here Medo-Persia. He just says another kingdom will come. You know, the king of Babylon had every reason to believe that Babylon would reign forever mistress of the land and the sea, conqueror of all that was before her. But what Daniel was saying is, “King, this kingdom is going to pass away, and another kingdom is going to take your place.”

Don’t you have kind of the feeling in your heart—or didn’t you used to have—that America is just always going to be here? Not a thing in the world that says that. There’s no more reason for us to believe that America will always be here than there would be for us to believe that Babylon, because it was so great and so glorious, would exist forever.

And so, there’s another kingdom coming. As a matter of fact, the Persians had a great, vast system of taxes, and they had more silver than Bunker Hunt. I mean, they had silver, and they had a lot of it. And so theirs is represented as a kingdom of silver.

And then, after that, another kingdom is coming. Look in the last part of verse 39: “...and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.” (Daniel 2:39) And so, brass is inferior to silver, as silver is inferior to gold. And this speaks, as we look backward and see which kingdom did come, of the kingdom of the Greeks under Alexander the Great and others. And these Grecians were known for their brass. As a matter of fact, if you visit Greece today, you’ll see the brass trays and the artifacts—and the historians spoke of them as “the brazen-coated Greeks.” And so, there was another kingdom now inferior to that one.

But now, let’s continue to read and look in verse 40: “*And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.*” (Daniel 2:40) Now, what was the fourth kingdom? Well, as you study world history, you’ll see what God was showing the prophet Daniel. After the Babylonian kingdom would come the Medo-Persian kingdom. And after the Persian world empire would come the Grecian world empire. And after the Grecian world empire would come the Roman Empire. Now we speak of the Roman Empire in these words: “the iron legions of Rome,” because never was there a military power on the face of the earth like Rome. How strong Rome was!

And so he’s not finished yet. But there’s something else that’s going to be a part of the future. Look, if you will—skip on down to verses 41 and following: “*And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall*

be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” (Daniel 2:41–43)

Now, what is he saying? He’s saying this: that the last form of human world government is going to be a ten-nation kingdom, a confederation of ten kings. You say, “Where do you get ten?” There were ten toes—ten toes. And he says the feet with the ten toes are part of iron and part of clay. That is, some are stronger than others, and they’re mingled together. But there is not that monolithic structure of former kingdoms. There was a head of gold, pure gold. There were breasts of silver, pure silver. There was a belly of brass, pure brass. There were legs of iron, pure iron. But now, feet of clay and iron.

What does it represent? Well, it represents kingdoms. Notice in verse 44: *“And in the days of these kings”*—what kings? The ten toes—*“shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.”* (Daniel 2:44) Now, what is the significance of this? Well, I want to tell you what the significance of it is. If you were to go get a history book and study world history, you would find out that in all of world history there have only been four worldwide kingdoms: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. That’s all. Just as God’s Word has said. But God’s Word also says in the last days, just before Jesus Christ comes, and just before Christ sets up His kingdom, there is going to be a federation of ten nations.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I believe firmly that we’re living in the time of the ten toes. There is today in Europe a federation of ten nations. You see, there was a Frenchman whose name was Jean Monnet. And Jean Monnet conceived of the idea of a confederated united states of Europe. He says, “Why is the United States of America so strong?” Well, they don’t have fifty individual nations over there. They have one nation federated together with a federal government.” And he said, “Why cannot Europe come together like that? Why cannot we reunite Europe?”

Now, for years people used to laugh and scoff at the idea of the old Roman Empire coming back together under ten nations. But I want you to know in 1972, when I came to be your pastor, there were six nations in that Common Market. And then, three more came into the Common Market. Denmark came in. Great Britain came in. And Ireland joined. Now, there were nine nations. But the Bible says clearly there are going to be ten. And so we waited and we watched and we wondered. And then, there was another nation that was petitioning to come in, Norway. And it looked like Norway would be the tenth nation. But something was wrong. Norway was not a part of the old Roman Empire. That is, Norway was not an extension of those legs of iron. And they took a

vote, a referendum, in Norway, and they said, “We don’t want in.” That left the door open for another nation to come in, Greece, part of that old Roman Empire. And in May 1979, Greece became a part of that ten-nation confederacy, filling it out completely, and the old Roman Empire now.

“Oh,” you say, “not like it used to be.” No! The Bible says it won’t be like it used to be. It used to be solid iron. It’s not solid iron today. Part iron and part clay, but a federation of ten nations exactly as the Bible prophesied that it would be millenniums ago. What an amazing book we have in our hand today! And so, today, Great Britain, Luxemburg, West Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Denmark, Italy, Belgium, Greece—ten nations out of the old Roman Empire. And the Bible says *“in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.”*

I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that the stage is set for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I really do believe it. You say, “Brother Rogers, can you prove emphatically that the Common Market with ten nations is a fulfillment of this prophecy? No, I cannot. They may disappear. They may dis-federate. And God may send another federation of nations. I’m well aware of that. But I am telling you this, ladies and gentlemen: As we look at it, and as we see it, it could well be that the God of heaven is telling us to be ready, for in the days of these kings the God of heaven and earth is going to set up a kingdom.

Now, notice. The devil is promising always progress. The devil’s big lie is evolution, and he would like for us to believe that man is on his way onward and upward. But the picture in the book of Daniel is not one of progress; it is one of deterioration. It is one starting with the head of gold and ending up with feet of clay. And what God is saying is that all of the kingdoms of this world are destined to failure. And if you’re putting your hope in human progress and civilization and society, you’re painting the deck of a sinking ship. That’s what you’re doing. That’s the reason Christians have been taught to pray, *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”* (Matthew 6:10)

But oh, what a blessing it is to me to look into the Bible and see how what has happened fits in the sockets of God’s Word! And one of the great proofs of the inspiration of this book is fulfilled prophecy—when the Bible prophesies in the last days that the Jews are going to be back in their land, and they are in their land, and the trouble spot of the whole world today—just go home and read your paper—is Israel. What’s happening in Israel, that tiny, little, seemingly insignificant nation? God says, “In the last days, I’ll make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people.” (Zechariah 12:3) It’s become that.

Look in your Bible in the book of Ezekiel and see what the Bible prophesies about Russia, that in the last days Russia shall be a mighty power, getting ready to make an incursion into the Middle East. And, ladies and gentlemen, that time is here just as

Ezekiel saw so long ago.

Open your Bibles and see what the prophet John saw on the Isle of Patmos as God gave him a vision of Red China, and an Asiatic horde, an army of 200 million, over against the Euphrates River getting ready to march and to move. Who would have ever thought that there would be such an army? When John the Apostle wrote that, there were not 200 million people on the face of the earth. And yet *Newsweek*, in an article that I have, reports that the leadership of Red China boasts, saying, “We have a militia of 200 million”—exactly the number—exactly the number—that old John gave on the Isle of Patmos.

Friend, who would have ever thought that there would be in Europe today a confederation of ten nations, just exactly, precisely, as God showed old Daniel so long ago?

Vance Havner said that he was riding on a train one time with a man, and they were talking about the events of this world, and this man said to him, “Boy, if it were all written in a book, no one would believe it.” He said, “That’s just it: It is written in a book, and no one believes it.” Amen? It is right here in the Word of God. And what did God show to Daniel so long ago? Friend, that the kingdoms of this world are collapsing. They are corroding. They are deteriorating. They are coming apart.

II. The Coming Kingdom of Christ

But now I want us in the few moments that we have just to turn it over and look at it from another viewpoint, because notice what else Daniel saw: Daniel saw the sudden and the sure return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Look, if you will, in chapter 2 now and verse 34: *“Thou sawest”—he says—“till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together...”*—I mean, the whole thing comes a’ tumbling down—*“broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”* (Daniel 2:34–35)

Well, what on earth does that mean? Well, notice in verse 44 what it means: *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people,”*—that is, “You’re going to leave yours to the Persians. They’re going to leave theirs to the Greeks. And they’re going to leave theirs to the Romans. But it will not be left unto other people”—*“but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”* Now, watch verse 45: *“Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the*

gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter:”— now, put a star by this, mister— *“and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”* (Daniel 2:44–45) No ifs, no ands, no buts, no maybes: there’s coming a kingdom that will last forever.

Now, Daniel was watching. He saw this mighty image. And then, up there on a mountaintop a stone is being cut out of the mountain. It’s being quarried out. He can see the chips fly. He can see the stone being torn. But there’s no chisel, no hammer, no hands. Supernaturally, this stone is cut out, and it’s dislodged from that high mountain. And it starts to move, and it starts to roll, and it starts to pick up speed. And with great, ponderous power it comes and it smites the image. Where? On the head? No! On the breasts? No! On the legs? No! Where? On the feet! You see, Christ is coming in the days of these kings. And when He does, all of world history just disintegrates. It all comes to pass.

Now, that, my friend, is a picture of the coming kingdom of Christ, for that stone, the same stone that we preached about last Sunday morning, represents the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me give you a verse—jot it down—Matthew 21:42 and following: *“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”* That is, “It’s cut out without hands. No man did this.” Now, notice what Jesus went on to say about this stone: *“Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God”—*now He’s talking about kingdoms—*“shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth fruits thereof.”* You remember the Bible says in the book of 1 Peter we’re becoming a new nation? And listen. *“And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken:”—*remember Peter said it would be a stumbling stone? Ah, but wait a minute—*“but on whomsoever it shall fall,”—“on whomsoever it”—*the stone—*“shall fall”— “it will grind him to powder.”* (Matthew 21:42–44) By the chaff, you see, of a summer threshing floor: Jesus is that stone.

I told you that He was a supernatural stone. He is. I told you He was a select stone. He is. I told you that He was a strategic stone. He is. I told you that He was a solid stone. He is. I told you, dear friend, that He was a stumbling stone. Yes, and a sure stone. But here He is a smiting stone—a smiting stone, a smiting stone. This stone is going to fall. And when He falls, He’s going to fall powerfully.

Now, listen. In the few moments that we have left, let me point out to you how the kingdom of Jesus is going to be set up, how the kingdoms of this world are going to become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. (Revelation 11:15) Don’t you get excited when our choir does the Hallelujah Chorus, and they sing that part that the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and all creation says Hallelujah? How is it going to happen?

A. He Is Coming Suddenly

Well, first of all, I want to say that it's going to happen suddenly. Look in verse 34. The Bible says this stone smites the image. (Daniel 2:34) That is, it is coming with a blow. They won't even see the stone coming. They won't know till it falls. Suddenly, swiftly His kingdom is going to come.

B. He Is Coming Sovereignly

Secondly, not only is it coming suddenly; it is coming sovereignly. Look in verse 44: *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom.”* (Daniel 2:44) That is, the stone is cut out without hands, no human effort. We do not bring in the kingdom; God brings in the kingdom.

There are these people who have the idea that somehow we are going to work until everything is just so wonderful and then Jesus is going to come. They used to have a group of people who called themselves postmillennialists. You know what a postmillennialist is? A postmillennialist is someone who believes that the world is going to get better and better and better and then finally Jesus will come. You can't find many of them around. I mean, look at the mess we're in! Friend, we are premillennialists. You know what a premillennialist is? A premillennialist is somebody who believes that Jesus Christ must come before you can have the millennium. He comes before: premillennial. You can't have a millennium without Jesus Christ, and we'll not have peace without the Prince of Peace.

You hear the politicians—oh boy, they stand up and take a swig of water, and then they'll say with pomposity, “Ladies and gentlemen, we must beat our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks,” as if we could do it. (Isaiah 2:4; Joel 3:10; Micah 4:3) And we're experts at winning the war and losing the peace. Now we can't even win the war. I saw a cartoon the other day in a magazine: one politician was saying to the other, “Now, since we beat our swords into plowshares, what are we going to do about all of these plowshare murders?”—people killing one another with plowshares.

Now, listen. Whether it's a pruning hook that somebody takes for a weapon, or a plowshare, or whatever else, I want you to know, ladies and gentlemen, there will be no peace until the God of heaven sets up His kingdom. And that's the reason that we as Christians should not fail to pray every day, *“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.”* (Matthew 6:10) The stone was cut out without hands.

C. He Is Coming Surely

The next thing I want you to notice, dear friend: Not only is Jesus Christ coming sovereignly, but Jesus Christ is coming surely. Look, if you will again, in verse 45 and the last part of verse 45—look at it: *“The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof*

sure.” (Daniel 2:45) Hallelujah! He is coming! I’m on the winning side! We cannot fail! Everything that you see, friend, is going to turn to rust and dust and mold and corruption.

*Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.*

—ISAAC WATTS

Conclusion

Why follow a loser? Why? Do you know what Woodrow Wilson said? I like it. Woodrow Wilson said, “I had rather ultimately succeed with a cause that will temporarily fail than to temporary succeed with a cause that must ultimately fail.” Do you understand? That’s what Daniel said to the king: “King, you’re the head of gold, but you’re going down the tube.” Alexander the Great is going down the tube. And Caesar is going down the tube. But Jesus is going to set up a kingdom, and it’s going to last forever. And, friend, the way into that kingdom is the new birth.

The Coming Kingdom of Christ

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: March 20, 1988

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 2

Sponsored by: Sponsor

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

DANIEL 2:44

Outline

Introduction

I. Jesus Christ Is Coming Supernaturally

II. Jesus Christ Is Coming Suddenly

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Conclusion

Introduction

I want to speak to you tonight about “The Coming Kingdom of Christ.” And it is all wrapped around the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, which is the greatest event of the ages.

Now we are not overemphasizing things when we emphasize the second coming of Jesus Christ. The new birth, for example, as important as that is, is mentioned only nine times in the New Testament. Baptism, as important as that is, is mentioned merely twenty times in the New Testament. Repentance, as important as that is, is mentioned seventy times in the New Testament. But the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is mentioned three hundred and eighty times. As a matter of fact, if you take the Bible and study it carefully, you’ll find out that one out of every twenty-five verses in the Bible speaks one way or another and points with eager fingers to the sure return of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the central note of the preaching of the New Testament Christians.

Alexander Maclaren, who is a great Bible expositor, said this: “The primitive church”—he meant by the primitive church, the early church—“thought more about the second coming of Jesus Christ than about death or about heaven.” And then he went on to say, “They were not looking for a cleft in the ground called a grave, but a cleavage in the sky called glory.” He said, “They were not looking for the undertaker; they were

looking for the upper taker.” They were looking for the Lord Jesus who would take them into glory. And in the dome of our capitol building in Washington, D. C., these lines are inscribed: “One God, one law, one element, one far-off divine event to which all creation moves.” And that is the coming kingdom of Christ.

Now I want to talk to you about what is going to happen politically, what is going to happen geographically concerning the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the second chapter of Daniel. Now let me tell you when this event that I’m about to describe to you took place. The Jews were held captive in Babylon. It was about six hundred years before the Lord Jesus Christ was born, and an amazing drama begins to unfold. I begin to read here in chapter 2:1: “In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.”

Now Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon. He has a good case of royal insomnia. He cannot sleep. Now he has a soft bed, no doubt. He has the finest of amenities, no doubt. But he cannot sleep. Thank God, God’s children ought to be able to sleep, for the Bible says, “He giveth His beloved sleep.”

I heard about a woman who called a preacher in the middle of the night. He said, “My goodness, what’s wrong?” She said, “Preacher, I can’t go to sleep. Would you mind preaching to me on the phone so I can go to sleep?”

Here was a man who was a king who could not sleep. Now the reason he could not sleep was that he had a horrendous dream. So I begin to read in verse 2: “Then the king commanded to call the magicians, and the astrologers”—and, by the way, astrology began in Babylon—“and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans”—these were the intellectual, the intelligentsia, the high muckety-muck of that day. They were also false prophets—“for to shew the king his dreams. And they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled to know the dream.” Then skip on down to verse 9: “But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, that I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof.” And then notice what these Chaldeans said. “The Chaldeans answered before the king, and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can shew the king’s matter: therefore there is no king, lord, nor ruler, that asked such things at any magician, or astrologer, or Chaldean. And it is a rare thing that the king requireth, and there is none other that can shew it before the king, except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. For this cause the king was angry and very furious, and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. And the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain; and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain.”

Now what has happened is this: That the king calls his magicians, his soothsayers, his diviners in and says, “I dreamed a dream. Tell me what the dream meant.” They said, “Very fine, King-o, you tell us the dream and we’ll tell you the meaning.” He said, “No deal.” He said, “If I tell you the dream, how do I know you really have the meaning? You’ll just make up something. If I know that you’re really tuned in, you tell me the dream and the meaning.” They said, “King, we can’t do that.” He said, “All right. You’ll be liquidated.”

And then the king is looking for someone else. And we read here in chapter 2:19: “Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.” Now you know that Daniel was a Hebrew boy who was carried away to captivity to Babylon. And there in Babylon he continued to serve the Lord. He kept himself pure and clean, and God revealed to Daniel the future. As a matter of fact, the Bible says, “Surely, the Lord God will do nothing, but that He revealeth His secret to His servants, the prophets.” And Daniel was a prophet of God, and he’s praying, and God reveals to Daniel the dream and the interpretation.

Now Daniel is called before the king and this is what happens – chapter 2:31. Look at it. Daniel speaks to the king, and this is what Daniel says: “And thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image”—that means, boys and girls, a statue. “This image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible”—that means, boys and girls, it was frightening to look at. “This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king.”

Now what happened is this: That Daniel said “King, I’ll tell you what you saw. You saw a great statue. And this statue was a very fearful looking thing. It had a golden head. It had a silver breast. The arms and the chest were of silver. And then the belly was of brass. And then it had legs and the legs were of iron. And then it had feet and the feet were part iron and part clay.” The king said, “That’s right. That’s what I saw.” And Daniel said, “Now I’m going to tell you in a moment the meaning of this dream.”

Now I hope that you won’t think that this is just a little bit of Bible bric-a-brac; that this is not just something that is interesting, because what I have to say to you, and what God will have to say to you from the book of Daniel, is so vitally important two thousand, six hundred years after this event took place. As a matter of fact, this event took place

not primarily for Nebuchadnezzar, not primarily for Daniel, but primarily, I believe, for those of us who live in this age.

Now what was all of this that King Nebuchadnezzar saw? What was it that Daniel prophesied? It was, ladies and gentlemen, a forecast of the future, and it was a forecast of the sure ruin of human civilization. What God was showing through Daniel, the prophet, was that civilization as we know it is on a downward trek, that civilization as we know it will come to an untimely end. This metal statute I'm going to show you represents world history and human kingdoms. Let me make that very clear to you.

Notice as Daniel begins to give the interpretation, verse 36: "This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king. Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." Now right away we have the first clue. These various metallic parts in this poly-metallic colossus represent kingdoms and their kings. And so God says through Daniel, "Babylon is represented by the head of gold." This was the first world empire that the world has ever known. Isaiah 14:4 calls Babylon, "the golden city." And so Nebuchadnezzar and his kingdom are represented by this head of gold.

And then read the first part of verse 39. And he says, "After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee..." So right away God is saying that the Babylonian empire would not last, that there would come another kingdom. It would not be like the golden kingdom of Babylon. It would be inferior. And, of course, you know that silver is inferior to gold. Now we can look backward in history and we can study and see what kingdom succeeded Babylon, and it was the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians, called the Medo-Persian kingdom. And these Persians had a great system of taxes. And as a result, they got vast hordes of silver. And so it is absolutely apt that they would be described with the terminology of silver.

But we continue to read in verse 39: "...and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all of the earth." We know from a study of history, as we look backward, as Daniel looked forward, that there was a third world-wide empire. It was the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great, who died at the age of 33. His prowess was so great that he is described in another place in the Bible like a leopard—rapid speed, rapid conquest. But here he's described as the belly of brass. Now the Greeks made great use of brass or bronze in their armor. As a matter of fact, the language of antiquity calls them "the brazen-coated Greeks."

And so, first you have the head of gold. That's Babylon. Then you have the chest, the breast of silver. That's Medo-Persia. Then you have the belly of brass. That is the Greek Empire under Alexander the Great. And then the thing seems to deteriorate even

more until the statue now has legs of iron. Iron is stronger than gold and silver and brass, but not nearly as valuable. And verse 40 speaks of that. “And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, it shall break in pieces and bruise.”

Now what is God talking about there? He’s talking about the fourth world empire that has controlled all of the earth, and that was the last world empire to do it – the Empire of Rome. As we told you this morning, at that time Rome ruled the world. And we speak even today of the iron legions of Rome because of the brute strength with which Rome ruled.

Now let’s continue to read, though, because every detail is important. We read that there will also be feet part of clay and part of iron. Begin reading in verse 41: “And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided...” And we know that the Roman kingdom was divided. The eastern and western divisions are represented by the two legs. And then it says, “...there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.” Now watch verse 42: “And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay.” Now, dear friend, what our Lord is speaking about here is the last form of Gentile rule, and He calls it a kingdom, part of iron and part of clay.

Now in Revelation 13, and in other places in the Bible, the Bible prophesies that the last kingdom of prophesy will be a ten-federated kingdom or a kingdom made up of a federation of ten nations. Now you know this image had a head. It had arms and breasts. It had legs. And it had feet. And on those feet were ten toes. Now notice the Bible makes it very clear that those ten toes represent ten kings. Notice in verse 42: “As the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken.” And now notice verse 44: “*In the days of these kings*”—what kings? The ten toes—“*shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...*”

Now these ten toes are part of iron. That is, they have come out of the last world empire, which is the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire surrounded the Mediterranean basin. And the Bible teaches that when there is a federation of ten nations, it will be in the days of those kings that come out of the old Roman Empire that the God of heaven is going to set up a kingdom.

Well, that brings us to a question. Has there been a federation of ten nations in our day? Indeed, there has been. There was a Frenchman named Jean Monnet who conceived the idea of a United States of Europe. And so he got an economic federation

of nations to begin to work together, and they formed an alliance. And finally, ten nations joined up in this economic federation. And we call it today the Common Market. And there were nine nations, and then Norway wanted to join. And it looked like Norway would join, but Norway backed off and Greece instead joined. That's very interesting because Norway was not a part of the old Roman Empire, but Greece was. Greece has now joined the Common Market. And these nations: Great Britain, Ireland, Denmark, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Belgium, West Germany, France, and Greece make a ten-nation federation. And these ten nations now make a federation of ten nations, 250 to 300 million people, that are really part of iron and part of clay. It is not a monolithic nation like the United States or Canada or Great Britain, but these toes are mingled together. The Bible says in verse 43, "Whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." What a beautiful representation God gives of these last days.

And then God says in verse 44: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom...." Now out of this federation of ten nations the Bible makes it clear that the antichrist is going to arise. Now Spain has made application to come into the Common Market. Portugal has made application to come into the Common Market. The nations of the Common Market will change some because the antichrist is going to come in from some unknown nation, and three nations will be run out, and then antichrist is going to take over the Common Market.

I spoke this morning about Jeane Dixon, and I said that Jeane Dixon, I believe I spoke about her this morning, or maybe a week or so ago, but she's in the back of my mind somewhere as we spoke on the subject of prophesy. And I said that Jeane Dixon knows not enough to get her prophecies from God because she's sometimes wrong, but she knows too much to get her prophecies from man, and so there's only one other source that she gets it from. She has a link with the netherworld, I am convinced. In July 1965, I tore an article out of the *Readers Digest*, and it was the, a condensation of her book "The Gift of Prophecy." She thinks of herself as a prophetess, having the gift of prophecy. And it's quite interesting. The article concludes with the following words—listen to it. This is what Jeane Dixon, the prophetess, so-called self-styled prophetess, had to say. "A child born in the Middle East on February 5, 1962 will revolutionize the world and eventually unite all warring creeds and sects into one all-embracing faith. This person, who has been the subject of some of Jeane Dixon's strongest, clearest visions, was born of humble peasant origin." It kind of reminds you of Jesus, doesn't it? "Mankind," she says, "will begin to feel the great force of this man about 1980, and his power will grow mightily until 1999, at which time there will be peace on earth to all men of good will." Friend, that was in the *Readers Digest*. And many people read that and

said, “Won’t that be wonderful when that comes to pass.” Well, you say, “If she’s not a true prophetess of God, will that come to pass?” I don’t know. I don’t know whether it will or not, but it gives me an insight into the way the devil thinks. It gives me an insight into the unholy ambitions of the devil and what the devil himself wants to do.

Now the stage is set as I gave you the signs of the times this morning from Matthew 24. And now as we speak of the political signs of the times, we learn again that the stage is set, for the Bible says in Daniel 2:44 “It is in the days of these kings”—that is, the ten toes—“that the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed”.

Now let’s see what happens, therefore, when our Lord sets up His kingdom. Well, go back to chapter 2:34 and I’m going to show you something else that the king saw. Daniel is describing the king’s vision, and he says, “You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces.” That is, a stone is going to smash these toes. Have you ever dropped a stone on your toes? A man said, “I used to call a spade a spade till I dropped one of my toe.” Have you ever dropped a stone on your toe? All right. Now here’s a stone that smites this image on its toes. And the Bible says, “...and brake them to pieces”—verse 34. “Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

Now what does this speak of? My friend, this speaks of the coming kingdom of Christ. And that stone represents the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for the Bible says, “The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.” Now what you see is the corruptive, corrosive kingdoms of men, and then you see the coming kingdom of Christ. And you must see both of these together in order to understand what God is talking about. God is saying here that the kingdoms of men will deteriorate. Notice it begins with a head of gold. It ends with feet of clay. That man is not progressing; man is digressing, and he is on a retrograde. The devil speaks of human progress. The devil speaks of the evolution of mankind and that we’re moving onward and upward.

I remember a number of years ago, there was a popular cowboy song that used to be sung about a cowboy riding his horse over the thirsty desert and the burning desert. And this is what the, the cowboy was saying to his horse as they saw a mirage out there on the horizon. It seemed as though there was a pool of cool, clear water out there. And the cowboy is singing to his horse, and he says this: “Keep a-moving, Dan. Don’t you listen to him, Dan. He’s a devil, not a man, that paints the burning sand with water, cool, clear water.”

Now that's what the devil does. He is a devil, not a man, and he takes this wilderness of a world and he says there is hope. But, my friend, I want to tell you that if you put your hope in what is called human civilization, you remind me of someone arranging the deckchairs on the Titanic, because what God is saying here that man is not moving upward, he is moving downward. He is moving like a Shakespearean tragedy to an untimely end. And we see it happening all around us. I was thinking this afternoon as my heart and mind was going over this message, it is amazing, absolutely amazing how history is fitting into the sockets of God's Word. For example, this same book of Daniel says, "In the last days knowledge shall increase and men shall rush to and fro."

Ha, ha. I may have told you about the man who called the Memphis Airport and said, "How long does it take to fly from Memphis to Dallas?" The person who answered said, "Just a minute." He said, "Thank you," and hung up.

We do rush to and fro. Have you read any of the articles lately on superconductivity? It's an amazing thing. We seem to be on the threshold of a new breakthrough that is a greater breakthrough than the transistor or the microchip. And the scientists are saying the things that I'm reading, and I read every article I can get on it, they're saying that they're making breakthroughs now in quantum leaps. It will radically, dramatically change the way we live.

But God's Word says, "In the last days knowledge shall increase..." The Bible speaks of the last days of Israel being in her land. And God said that He's going to gather the nation Israel out of all lands. You read Ezekiel 37, 38, and 39. People used to scoff and laugh at that prophecy. They don't laugh at it any more. May 14–15, 1948, the Republic of Israel was constituted. God said, "I'll make Jerusalem a cup of trembling for all nations." Tell me if it's not so this day. Tell me if it is not so right now that Jerusalem has become the cup of trembling, exactly as God said.

In Ezekiel 38 and 39 the Bible speaks of an invasion of the Middle East from a northern power. The northern power has to be Russia. As a matter of fact, the words that are used in that passage aptly describe Russia. If you were to draw a line from the North Pole to Jerusalem, it would go right through Moscow. And it speaks of a great northern power that is going to invade Israel in the last days.

I was reading recently of a man who had a conversation with the columnist, Jack Anderson. And Jack Anderson says that he knows by good reliable sources that the Russians now have twenty-six divisions on the brink of Iran, twenty-six divisions. We don't have that many divisions out protecting all of America's interests in other places. What do you think they're doing there? They're waiting for their time. They're waiting for their chance to make their incursion into the Middle East just as God's Word says that it would be. As a matter of fact, Soviet Ambassador, Anatoly Dobrynin, said this, and I

want to quote: “If the Israelis threaten us, we will wipe them out within two days. I can assure you our plans are all made for this eventuality.” That’s what the Soviet ambassador said. He said, “We’re ready. We are spoiling for a fight with Israel.”

I read in the Bible where the Bible speaks of an army coming across the River Euphrates. And the Bible speaks there of an army of two hundred million. When the apostle John wrote that, there weren’t two hundred million people on earth, much less an army of two hundred million. DeMyro has said, and our news magazines have reported that the Red Chinese indeed have an army of exactly that same number, two hundred million.

We read where the apostle Peter speaks of the elements melting with fervent heat, and we say, “Well, the elements don’t melt. They cannot melt.” Actually, the word fervent heat literally means fever heat, internal heat. It is an apt description of a nuclear concoction of nuclear fission where “The elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up; and the heavens will pass away with a great noise.” People used to laugh at those things. They don’t laugh at those things any more.

I’m telling you, if you’ll put the message this morning and the message tonight together, you can see, my friend, that the time is set. The stage is set for the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Now His coming is described here in the book of Daniel as a mighty stone that is cut out of a mountain and it strikes this image upon its feet.

You say, “Pastor, does that stone speak of the Lord Jesus?” Yes, indeed it does. Put in your margin Matthew 21:42-44: Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it., And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken...”But now, notice this. “...and on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” Now Jesus is speaking of the same thing that Daniel was speaking of. Jesus Christ is that stone. I want to say several things about Jesus Christ, that stone that’s going to smite this image.

First of all, He is a solid stone.

“On Christ, the solid rock, I stand.

All other ground is sinking sand.”

But not only is He the, the solid stone; friend, He is the slighted stone. He said, “The stone which the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner...” This world has no room for Jesus. Can you imagine going to the Halls of Congress or to the halls of our great universities or to the center of commerce and saying, “Gentlemen, the

answer is Jesus Christ?" Oh no. The builders think they can build utopia. They worship at the shrine of their computers and their cyclotrons, but they have no room for Jesus.

The solid stone is the slighted stone. And He's also the stumbling stone. Jesus said, "Therefore, I say unto you, that whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken." And if you stumble on the Lord Jesus Christ tonight, you'll surely be broken. Some of you will stand on Him. Some of you will stumble over Him tonight. And if you stumble, you'll be broken. But the worst is yet to come. Not only is Jesus the solid stone and the slighted stone and the stumbling stone; He is the smiting stone. He says, "On whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

I. Jesus Christ Is Coming Supernaturally

Now Jesus is coming again. And I want to show you from the Bible and from the book of Daniel how Jesus Christ is going to come. I want you to notice certain aspects of His coming. First of all, I want you to notice that Jesus Christ is going to come supernaturally. Look in verse 34. It's a key verse. Daniel said to the king, "King, you saw till that a stone was cut out without hands that smote the image on his feet..." Now what does that mean: "cut out without hands"? It means that men don't do it. There's no human work. There's no human effort that's going to bring in the kingdom of heaven. When Jesus comes, He's not going to come when the world is good enough for Him to come, but, really, when the world is bad enough, when men have done their dirty worst, when we have come from a head of gold to feet of clay. At that time, our Lord is going to come. I've never been a member of the local ministerial association. I've tried before because I feel that I ought to cooperate with every brother, sister in the Lord Jesus Christ. But I've gone to these things and I've found such a duke's mixture of believers and unbelievers that the Lord wouldn't let me go. The Lord wouldn't let me attend.

When I was a young man pastoring in Fort Pierce, Florida, I decided I would go to the local ministerial alliance. And when I got there, the very first they were doing, they were voting a Mormon elder into the local ministerial alliance. And I said, "Well now, gentlemen, do we want to do that?" I mean, I was a new boy on the block. I mean, I'm just there at the first meeting. I rained on their parade. I said, "Do you want to do that?" I said, "Don't you realize that what they believe and what we believe are different?" Now I want to say to any Mormons who are listening, I respect you and I give you every right to believe what you believe, but I want to say what you believe and what I believe are distinctly two different things. I want you to know that. As east is east and west is west. And you have every right to believe that, and I have every right to believe what I believe. But I said, "Don't you realize that these people are going from door to door and house to house and they are teaching and preaching a message that is contrary to the message that we as Bible-believing Christians are supposed to preach?" And I remember a man

from a liberal denomination. He leaned over and looked at me, and he said with a look of exasperation on his face, he said, “Now, Adrian, if we don’t cooperate, we’ll never bring in the kingdom.” I said, “Well, fellows, if you vote him in, at the same time you’re voting me out.” They voted me out. They voted me out. That’s all right. I have survived. I have survived.

But I’ve thought about that so many times, where this man said, “Now, Adrian, if we don’t cooperate, we’ll never bring in the kingdom.” Now, friend, I want to tell you, men are not going to bring in the kingdom. God’s going to bring in the kingdom. And this stone is cut out of the mountain without hands.

II. Jesus Christ Is Coming Suddenly

How is Jesus going to come? Verse 34 tells us He’s going to come supernaturally. And verse 34 also tells us that He’s going to come suddenly. Notice: “Thou sawest that a stone was cut out with hands, without hands, which smote the image on its feet...” Now it is a cataclysmic thing, as this stone falls off the mountain, hurls down the mountain, and with great force strikes these ten kingdoms, which will be the kingdom of antichrist.

I was reading, in 1888 the Corps of Engineers came to a little town in Pennsylvania and examined the great dam that was outside that town. And they found some flaws and some weaknesses in that dam. And they told the people in the city, “You had better watch. It would be best to evacuate. This is not a safe place.” Some people moved out. Nothing happened. The people moved back in. And they said, “Well, evidently the dam is all right.” And then the Corps of Engineers came back again and examined the dam with the same message. Three times they came. Three times they gave the warning. But the people thought, “Well, the dam has held all of these years. Surely, the dam will still hold,” and they did nothing until one day a young boy rode furiously through the valley, and he was shouting at the top of his voice, “The dam has broken! Run!” But they were not able to run, and three thousand, seven hundred people were drowned in the great Johnstown Flood. They’d been warned once. They’d been warned twice. They’d been warned thrice, but they thought they had plenty of time. But when the dam broke, death came suddenly.

People hear a preacher like me preach, and I preach that Jesus is coming. They get excited and they go back to their home and nothing happens. Then I preach it again and nothing happens. And they say, “Well, evidently it’s not going to happen.” But as someone has well said, “The raging waters of God’s wrath are furiously pounding against the dam of His mercy.” And one of these days that dam will give way, and the Lord Jesus will come.

III. Jesus Christ Is Coming Sovereignly

Now, my dear friend, I want you to know that when He comes, He's coming supernaturally. This stone was cut out without hands. And when He comes, He's coming suddenly. And when He comes, He is coming sovereignly. Notice verse 44: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed..."

In World War II we had something called D-Day. D-Day was the day when the back of the enemy was broken. I think all of us remember D-Day. And then there was V-Day when the victory was finally wrapped up. Now there were many long months between D-Day and V-Day and many casualties before the final victory. But the enemy's back was broken at D-Day.

Now, friend, Satan's back was broken at Calvary. That was God's D-Day. But I want to tell you, God's V-Day is coming when Jesus comes again. That's the day. There'd been some suffering. There'd been some casualties. But our Lord is coming in glory. When He came the first time, He came to and wore a robe of shame. When He comes again, He's wearing a robe of splendor. When He came the first time, they crowned Him with thorns. When He comes again, He'll be crowned with glory. When He came the first time, they put a wilted reed in His hand and mocked Him. When He comes again, He'll have a golden scepter. When He came the first time, He came to a cross. When He comes again, He's coming to a throne. The first time He stood before Pilate. When He comes again, Pilate will stand before Him. When He came the first time, He was the smitten stone. When He comes again, He will be the smiting stone. We sing about it in the "Hallelujah Chorus." "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ."

One other way that I want to tell you that our Lord is coming—look at the end of verse 45. And this is what Daniel said to the king "...God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter"—now watch it—"and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof is sure."

IV. Jesus Christ Is Coming Surely

Jesus Christ, my friend, is coming supernaturally. Jesus Christ is coming suddenly. Jesus Christ is coming sovereignly. And Jesus Christ is coming surely. The dream is certain, no ifs, ands, and buts about it. No maybes. No perhaps so's. He is coming. And when is He coming? When is He going to come? Verse 44 says in the time of those kings.

Conclusion

Now, friend, I believe that the stone may fall at any moment. I believe that today the

Lord Jesus will come and take away His church, or tomorrow, or the next day, and the horrible tribulation events will begin to take place. Are you ready? Are you saved? Do you know Christ as your personal Savior? Are you certain if you died right now you'd go to heaven? Are you certain if Jesus came right now you'd go to heaven? You can be if you'll trust Him.

I want heads bowed, eyes closed, no one looking around, no one stirring. And I want to ask this question while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, how many in this vast auditorium tonight could say, "Brother Rogers, if Jesus Christ were to come today for His church, or if I were to die today, I'm certain that I would go straight to heaven," may I see your hand. Hold it up where I may see it. Fine. Take it down.

Now how many would say, "Brother Rogers, I could not say for certain that I know I'm saved, but I want to know that I'm saved. I'm concerned about my soul. And I want you to pray for me." Well, friend, if you want me to pray for you, I will pray for you, and I'll pray sincerely. This is not a physiologically gimmick. It's not some form of manipulation. I want to pray for you. I'll not embarrass you or call you by name or point you out in any way whatsoever. I simply want to pray for you. And while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, if you would say, "I'm not certain that I'm saved. I want to be certain. I want to know that I'm saved. Please pray for me," would you just slip up your hand and then take it down. Hold it up where I may see it. Yes. God bless you. Are there others? Slip it up high and then take it down. Let me see it wherever you are. Hold it up high and then take it down. Up in the balconies. Yes. Pray for me. I see you. Are there others? Slip it up and then take it down. Anyone else? Yes, I see you. God bless you. "I'm not certain I'm saved, Pastor. I need to be. I want to be. I'm concerned about my soul. Pray for me." And, my friend, prayer will never hurt you. It will only bless you and help you. Someone else? Pray for me. Pray for me. Yes, I see you. God bless you.

All right. Now how many would say, "Brother Rogers, I am saved, but I must confess that as a Christian I've been walking far away from my Lord. And if Jesus Christ were to come, though I believe I'm saved, in my heart I'm not really ready to meet Him because I know that I'm cold and indifferent and backslidden, and I need a personal revival in my heart. And I'm going to be humble enough and honest enough before you and before God to ask you, my Pastor, to pray for me. I need to get my heart warmed and right with God and back on the track of soul winning, and I need a personal, spiritual revival. Pray for me," would you slip up your hand. Hold it up where I may see it. Many of you. Just keep it up for a moment and then take it down. Pray for me. Of course, I can't remember all of the names, but God sees your hand and that's what's important. Someone else? Pray for me. Yes, I see you.

You're a member or a Christian. You may not even be a member here, but you'd say, "I need a personal revival. And I've been impressed today with the urgency and the

emergency of the time in which we live. Pray for me.” Someone else? Yes, many of us. Thank God for that. That makes my heart warm as a pastor to know that your heart is tender toward the things of God. Someone else? Pray for me. Pray for me. God bless you.

Now how many would say, “Brother Rogers, I am not a member of Bellevue Church, but I am saved. And if God wants me to be a member of this church, I want to be a member of this church. I want to know and do God’s will concerning my church membership. Would you pray with me that as a Christian I might know and do God’s will concerning my church membership,” may I see your hand. Would you slip it up. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. Pray for me. I want to know and do God’s will about my church membership. Anyone else? All right. Thank you.

Now let us pray together. Our Father and our God, in the name of Jesus we come to pray for these, dear Lord, who need to be saved; these who’ve said, “I’m not certain that I’m saved. I want to know.” O God, I pray that the forces of darkness shall be pushed back and, Lord God, that You’d let the light of the glorious gospel of Jesus shine into hearts tonight. Help people to understand that Jesus Christ was smitten, bruised, broken for their sin; that He paid for their sin on the cross. And help them, dear Lord, to see Jesus wounded and bleeding on their behalf on that cross. And help them to know tonight, dear God, that their sin debt has been paid if they’ll only trust Christ. Lord God, give them courage tonight and obedience tonight to trust in Christ and to be saved. Lord God, I want to pray tonight from my heart for these, my brothers and sisters in Christ, who said tonight that they need a personal revival; O God, who have said that they need to be saved or from a life of lethargy and indifference, even though they are saved to go to heaven. God, I pray that there will be in their hearts tonight a recommitment to the Lordship of Christ and that, Lord, they and myself will learn to tarry and be obedient until Jesus comes. And I pray, my God and our God, for precious brothers and sisters who are looking for a church home. I pray, Father, that You’ll give them to us and us to them in fellowship and love. And, Lord, lead and confirm Your will in the hearts of those who should be a part of this fellowship. In Jesus’ holy name we pray, amen.

The Terminal Decade and the Second Coming of Christ

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: March 25, 1990

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 2:19–45

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

DANIEL 2:44

Outline

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Introduction

Daniel chapter 2—our subject tonight is a very serious subject. Tonight, I pray that you'll give me your utmost attention. I believe that Jesus Christ will come in the decade of the nineties. I want to make it very clear that I'm not setting a date. Anybody who tries to set a date is living on the borderline of blasphemy, if he's not crossed it. But on the other hand, the Bible says that we're not children of darkness that that day should overtake us as a thief (1 Thessalonians 5:4–5).

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ is the greatest prophetic event of the ages. Now there are many things in the Bible that are important. The new birth is important, but the new birth is mentioned only nine times in the Bible. Baptism is important, but baptism is only mentioned twenty times in the Bible. Repentance is important, but repentance is

mentioned seventy times in the Bible. But 380 times, one out of every 25 verses, the Word of God says that Jesus Christ is coming again.

There was an old time preacher named Alexander MacLaren, one of the great expositors, and he said this: “The early church thought more about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ than about death or about Heaven. They were not looking for a cleft in the ground called a grave, but for a cleavage in the sky called glory. They were not looking for the undertaker, but for the upper taker.” I like that.

And did you know that, in this nation, that is trying to forget its spiritual heritage, if you were to go to Washington D. C., and go to the Capitol building, and look up at the dome of the Capitol building, you would see inscribed these words: “One God, One Law, One Element, and One far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves”? Our fathers who founded this nation believed in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. But we live in a generation that I would call a lost generation. But I believe this lost generation may be the last generation, and this so-called *new age* will be the last age.

Now there have always been signs of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And we know that Jesus Christ could come at any moment from the time of the apostles right on. And Jesus taught the apostles to be looking for the Second Coming of Christ. But then also, He gave us signs. And Jesus said, “*When ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh*” (Mark 13:29). And the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of these signs as the beginning of sorrows. And the word that Jesus used for sorrows was *labor pains*.

Now if anybody’s had any experience having a baby born into the family, you know something about labor pains. Labor pains, at first, begin slowly—most of the time, anyway—and not quite as hard. Then, they get more intense, and they get closer together. And when you have the doctors tell us—and I can tell you from experience; not that I’ve felt any, but I’ve sympathized with quite a few—there is the intensification of those pains, and the convergence of those pains, and then, you know that a baby is about to be born. Now Jesus spoke of the signs of the times that we’ve had all of these times, but He said, “*When ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh*”—intensified, and multiplied, and converging, then you can know that it is very, very near.

Now the scripture that I’m going to read to you took place about 600 years before the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And in the second chapter of this book, you’re going to find a king—his name is Nebuchadnezzar, and he was the king of Babylon. And he couldn’t sleep. He has a case of royal insomnia. Now dear friend, the Bible says that God “*giveth his beloved sleep*” (Psalm 127:2). I hope that you have learned that He does give you sleep, and learn how to go to sleep, when you close your eyes at nighttime.

I heard of one lady who called her pastor on the phone, and said, “Pastor, I’m having

difficulty going to sleep. Would you mind preaching to me for just a little while?" I know many of you find that as an occasion to go to sleep. You know, I've always felt that maybe I really was a good preacher; because, after I preach, sometimes, there is a great awakening.

This king, Nebuchadnezzar, can't sleep. And when he did sleep, he dreamed. And he dreamed some nightmares. He had a dream that he couldn't understand, so he called in the soothsayers, the Chaldeans, the prognosticators, the magicians, the astrologers—and they were false prophets. And he said, "I dreamed a dream. Tell me the meaning of the dream." They said, "Oh, sure, king. We'd be glad to do that." He said, "But wait a minute. So I'll know that you're on the level, you tell me the dream first, and then tell me the meaning." They said, "King, can't anybody do that." Well, dear friend, of course, all of these prophets are exactly that: false prophets. And all of the devil's false prophets, I don't care how demon-inspired they are—you remember this about every one of them—they don't know the future. Not a one of them knows the future. The devil doesn't know the future. As a matter of fact, the devil has the idea that he can overthrow God. That ought to tell you he doesn't know the future.

Now friend, I want to tell you this: the devil is a knucklehead. I mean, I'm serious—he is a knucklehead. He actually, can you imagine that he thinks that he can overthrow almighty God? And so they said, "Well, king, nobody could tell you the meaning of your dream." Then, somebody said, "There is a man. There is a man who knows God. I believe that he can tell the meaning of the dream." Of course, they were talking about the prophet Daniel. Remember what I told you, this morning, in the message—that I said that God doesn't do anything, except He reveals His secret to His servants, the prophets (Amos 3:7)? *"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do"* (Genesis 18:17). God didn't hide it from Abraham, and God did not hide it from Daniel.

Now Daniel was praying, and he was a man in touch with God. Chapter 2, and verse 19: *"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven"* (Daniel 2:19). And I hope, my dear friend, when you see the vision that God gave Daniel, that you'll bless the God of Heaven. I want to tell you, I am an avid listener to the news. I am an avid reader of newspapers. And if I were not a Christian, I would be a number one pessimist. I mean, I would be a royal pessimist. But I am an optimist, because I know the Word of God. *There are three classes in America: those who are afraid, those who don't know enough to be afraid, and those who know their Bible.* The thing was revealed to Daniel the prophet. And what a revelation God gave to Daniel the prophet!

Now I want you to see what happened here in this particular situation. I begin to read, now, in verse 31. Daniel says to the king: *"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a*

great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.” Now it doesn’t mean it was ugly; it means it was terrifying. It struck terror to look at it. *“This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king”* (Daniel 2:30–36).

Now what is all of this? God gave Daniel a vision, and here’s what Daniel saw. Daniel saw, and said, “King, this is what you dreamed. You saw a great statue. It was made of metal. It was a poly-metallic statue. It had a head of gold. And this great statue had a chest—breast—of silver. And it had a stomach, or belly, of brass. And it had legs of iron. And then, it had feet and toes that were part iron, and part clay.” And then, he said, “King, I’m going to tell you what this represents. All of these metals, and this great colossal image that you’ve seen, represent all the kingdoms of the world that ever had been, or ever will be.”

I. The Collapsing Kingdoms of Men

Now let me show you that this statue represents kingdoms, if I might. Look in chapter 2 and verse 37 of this same chapter. And by the way, our subject, tonight, is “The European Community and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ,” or “The Common Market and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.” Look, if you will, in verse 37: *“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory.”* And then verse 38: *“And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold”* (Daniel 2:37–38). And so the golden head on this image represented the king and kingdom of Babylon. As a matter of fact, Isaiah chapter 14 and verse 4 called Babylon *“the golden city”* (Isaiah 14:4).

But now also, not only was there a head of gold—there were breast and arms of silver. Look, if you will, in verse 39: *“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee”* (Daniel 2:39). Now what you have here is not evolution, but devolution. Not going upward, but downward.

There was a kingdom that came after the Babylonian kingdom, and that was the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. Now the Persians were people who knew how

to tax. They taxed almost everything. They had a vast system of taxes, and, therefore, the Persians had hoards of silver, represented by the arms and chest of silver. The Median and Persian Empires, right arm and left arm.

And then, next, look in the last part of verse 39: *“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth”* (Daniel 2:39). Here’s the third world empire. And that was the Grecian Empire. And the Greek armies were noted for their armor. And the poet spoke of the brazen-coated Greeks; they wore their brazen armor. And so after the Babylonian Empire, came the Medo-Persian Empire. And after the Medo-Persian Empire, there came the Grecian Empire, under Alexander the Great, who conquered the known world, and then wept, because there was no more world to conquer.

And then, look in verse 40. Here’s the fourth empire, and the fourth kingdom. Now Daniel is looking way out into the future now: *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise”* (Daniel 2:40). That was the Roman Empire. Have you ever heard the expression “the iron legions of Rome”? How strong was the Roman Empire? Not as eloquent as the head of gold. Not, perhaps, as wealthy as the chest of silver. Not, perhaps, as swift as the belly of brass. But strong as iron was the Roman Empire.

But then what? Then what? Look in verses 41 and 42, because now we’re getting down to our day and our age. And how important it is that you understand this: *“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay.”* Now the kingdom is beginning to deteriorate just a little more. And then, we get down to the very toes of the feet, and notice: *“And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken”* (Daniel 2:41–42). Now what God is saying is this: that there is coming out of the old Roman Empire a federation, not like any other empire; there’s coming a world kingdom represented by ten kings. As there are ten toes on both feet, there are going to be ten kings, ten kingdoms that have come out of the legs—that is the old Roman Empire.

Now that, my dear friend, is what is taking place before our eyes today, I honestly believe. What we’re seeing is a federation of nations in Europe that we call the European Community. Now many people are amazed at what is happening. And they’re amazed at how rapidly it is happening. I have this article from *USA Today* last month. It says, “Piece by Piece an Empire Crumbles.” Now what you have here is exactly what Daniel prophesied: the crumbling, collapsing kingdoms of men. And I want to read a little bit of this. “When the Berlin Wall came tumbling down last November, something

else also began to crumble: the Soviet Empire in Eastern Europe.” And may I tell you, for the record, that I have preached to you many times that communism would never rule the world? Communism would never rule the world—I told you many times. I can go back and document that communism would not rule the world, that the last world empire before the Second Coming of Jesus would not be in the heart of Soviet Russia, but would be in the heart of Europe. Now we go on to read: “From Berlin to Bucharest, from Budapest to Prague, and from Sophia to Warsaw, the once solid Soviet block is no more. ‘The communists had disintegrated,’ said Czechoslovakia’s Rita Klimova, in describing last November’s historic uprising that led to the downfall of the local hard-line Stalinist regime, ‘without a single shot being fired.’ So swift have been the changes that free elections are now scheduled soon in most of the Eastern European countries.” We’re talking about behind the iron curtain. “East Germany: The communist party may be voted out of power, on March 18.” This is dated February 5. Well, friend, they were. “The communists have now endorsed the idea of a German reunification.”

That’s very important in Bible prophecy. Because when Russia does invade Israel, as Russia will invade Israel, according to Ezekiel chapter 37 and 38, one of the allies of Russia is going to be Gomer, which is Germany. And right now, the Soviets—oh, don’t feel too sorry for the Soviets. Mikhail Gorbachev is having more influence in Eastern Europe than many of us would like to believe. And may I tell you that the Soviets are still the great military power that the world has ever known?

But you see, what is happening here, with the crumbling, the falling of the Berlin Wall, is getting ready for Ezekiel chapter 37 to be fulfilled. And then, “Czechoslovakia: President Václav Havel’s Civic Forum, a loose democratic coalition, is expected to carry influence of the June 8 parliamentary elections. Bulgaria: The still ruling communist party picked a liberal reform-minded leadership in this past week to avoid the party’s collapse. Free elections have been promised for May. Romania: The National Salvation Front has agreed to rule as a part of a coalition government until the May 20 election. Hungary: It has moved the quickest, and the furthest, and holds its first free elections March the 25th. Poland: Poland’s once ruling communist party has dissolved itself. Instead, there are now two parties, both leaning toward Western European-style social democracy, which seems to be the wave of the future in Eastern Europe.

Now there’s one thing that all of the commentators say—all of them—and I heard President George Bush say it not long ago: “It took us by surprise.” And we are amazed at how fast it happened. Aren’t you amazed at how fast it happened? Now if you’ll read the Book of the Revelation, which is prophecy, it speaks of “*things which must shortly come to pass*” (Revelation 1:1). And the word *shortly* does not mean, “immediately”; it means, “when it happens, it will happen with rapidity”—“things which must rapidly come to pass,” “things that are going to come to pass with cataclysmic action.” And so we see

a brand new thing happening now on the scene. We see now something happening in Europe that we're calling a Common Market, or a European Community.

Now on December 31, 1992, they have set a deadline for the European Economic Community to become a reality. And according to these strategists, now, here's what's going to happen: All national barriers, customs, tariffs, and non-tariff barriers to travel, employment, investment, and trade are going to be eliminated. Twelve nations now have entered into a pact. These 12 nations are Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and West Germany. All of them are saying now that you can just get a European passport, and just go from country to country. We're going to have a common currency; it's all going to happen.

Konrad Adenauer, who is post-war West Germany's outstanding chancellor, said—and I quote: “I want to stay alive longer for only one reason: to see a United States of Europe in my time.” And then, he went on to say: “The integration of Europe must be achieved. I am convinced that it is the sole salvation for the Christian West.” And many people are going to be convinced of that. But he was wrong. It's not going to be the salvation of the West. It is going to be the coming kingdom of Antichrist. But I can understand why he would think that it would be the salvation of the West, because it's going to make so much sense. The Bible says, when the Antichrist comes, he's going to come on a platform of peace. And the Bible says, *“and by peace shall destroy many”* (Daniel 8:25).

I, dear friend, have clipping after clipping that would tell you of those who speak now of a one-world government. And they see the headquarters of that one-world government in Europe, the United States of Europe. We are already hard-pressed to keep up with the Japanese, but my dear friend, the Japanese are going to be hard-pressed to keep up with the Europeans, after 1992. George Rathjens, Professor of Technology at MIT, published this conclusion in *Harvard Magazine*, and he says, “We must accept world government or die.” Now listen to this: “The distinguished scholar, collaborating with four other MIT/Harvard experts, adjudged that man can expect a nuclear war in the next 25 years, probably being triggered by one of the smaller nations, such as Israel, her Arab neighbors, India, or Pakistan, or one of the African nations, and spreading through the world. The consensus of this brain trust was that the only inhibiting force to make such a portentous holocaust unlikely would be”—quote—“A very nasty kind of world government.” Now what they're going to say is, “World government or holocaust.”

Now Sir Winston Churchill—we all thought quite a bit of him—said, “A world super government is the only solution to man's ills.” Again, an organization called the Institute for World Order has commissioned teams of social scientists to work out a plan for a—

quote—“preferred world”—end of quote. Dr. Saul Mendlovitz, a professor of international law at Rutgers University, and president of the Institute for World Order, says—and I quote: “There is no longer a question whether or not there will be a world government by the year 2000. The questions are how it will come into being—cataclysm, drift, and more or less rational design—and whether it will be totalitarian, benign, or participatory. The probabilities being in that order.” But notice what he says now. This is the professor of international law at Rutgers. This is not a Baptist preacher. He says there’s no doubt, by the year 2000—that’s one decade away—there will be a world government. He doesn’t even argue about it. Dr. P. H. Spock, a statesman from Belgium, says this: “The truth is that the method of international committees has failed. What we need is a person, someone of the highest order, of great experience, of great authority, of wide influence, of great energy, either a civilian or a military man, no matter what his nationality, who will cut the red tape, shove out of the way all other governments, wake up all of the people, and galvanize all governments into action. Let him come quickly.

Do you know whom he was asking for? The Antichrist. Now this is Belgium. Belgium is the headquarters of this European community. My dear friend, I’m just telling you this: that the news articles over and over again are telling us that there is a world government coming. I took this out of our local newspaper, Friday morning, December 1: “Gorbachev Sees New Era”—listen to this—“European summit suggested for ’90 in Rome.” By the way, there’s going to be a revival of the Roman Empire. “Rome: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev called Thursday for a convening as early as next year of a 35-nation European summit conference that would include the United States”—listen to what old Gorby said—“saying that the world is on the threshold of an entirely new era.” Now this is not some six or seven guy saying this. This is Gorbachev saying this. Gorbachev described his vision of a new Europe as a commonwealth of sovereign democratic states to replace the east-west division of the continent. No longer the Soviets and the West.

Now “Europe: a New Era”: “Gorbachev said, in his world-changing speech in Rome, that the pro-democracy changes sweeping communist countries in Europe were irrevocable. He said the Soviet Union had erred in long rejecting religion, and now needed his moral force to help make his plans for a restructured society to work.” Do you hear that? He’s saying, “We’re going to use religion to make it all work.” Now don’t you think he got converted. He didn’t get converted, but he saw the power of religion. And you read in the Book of the Revelation, you’re going to find that the Antichrist is riding upon a scarlet beast, which is false religion. He goes on to say: “His thoughts on religion came on the eve of an historic meeting with Pope John Paul II. Their meeting today will be the first between a Soviet Communist leader and the spiritual guide to the

world's 850 million Roman Catholics.”

Listen to Gorby: “We have changed our attitude on some matters, such as religion, for example, which, admittedly, we used to treat in a simplistic matter,” says Gorbachev. They’re saying, “Hey, we can use religion.” Here it is—Sunday morning, December 2: “Gorbachev, Pope End Seven Decades of Conflict.” There’s Gorby, and there’s the Pope, shaking hands. “Pope John II welcomes Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to the first ever meeting between a Kremlin chief and a Pontiff at the Vatican Friday.” And then, here’s what the headline says right under that: “Summit to begin quest for a new global order.” World religion? We’re ready for it. Here’s the summit meeting. Now you’re seeing everybody get together. O my dear friend, they’re not getting together on the Word of God; they’re just getting together on what they think is survival. It is incredible.

But it’s not just these fellows who are getting into the act. Have you noticed the kind of newspaper articles that we’re getting lately? Here’s one taken just a few months ago from *USA Today*, which I subscribe to. And here is a full-page ad by none other than the Reverend Moon: “Reverend Moon Breaks Silence, Gives First Interview in 13 Years to a Soviet Newspaper.” Would you think that the Soviets would interview Reverend Moon? Why sure. This interview appeared in the Russian language, in a weekly Moscow newspaper, and the name of the paper is *Rubizon*, I guess, which means, “Abroad,” with a circulation of over one million, serving leading intellectuals and leaders throughout the Soviet Union. The following is a translation of the complete text as it appeared in the newspaper. And there it is with the Russian headlines, and now it’s printed in your newspaper for you to read. And there is the Reverend Moon.

And do you know what he says? He’s saying that, “All of the people in the world need to come and follow me, and we will have peace”; and, “probably each reader of this interview would agree with one thing, and disagree with another; but it appears that the words of Reverend Moon eloquently attest to the fact that the conception of new thinking opens up before us new horizons for cooperation for mankind.” Well, there he is—Reverend Moon. What do you want—moonshine or sunlight? I’ll take the sunlight myself.

All right now, here’s another. This time, none other than *The Wall Street Journal*, last Friday. And here is the Maharishi. And he’s got his big ad in there. Here’s a picture of the Maharishi—his holiness. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi: “Here’s a very beautiful, unique, and unprecedented opportunity for every head of state. I invite the leaders of the world to examine this offer and alliance with natural law in the light of the latest discoveries of modern physics; the discovery of a unified field of natural law. It is very easy with anyone with the slightest intelligence”—anyone with the slightest intelligence—“to understand that, if the unified field of all the laws of nature could be accessible to anyone, nothing would be impossible for him. Through my dedicated science and

technology, the science and technology of the unified field, any government leader can have easy access to the unified field, and raise the administration of his government to be in perfect alliance with the administration of nature's government." And so here's an alliance with nature's government, through Maharishi's science and technology, to create Heaven on earth.

Well, we laugh at some of these things; but, dear friend, you put them all together, and they're not laughable. I mean, when you see this concordance, and just wrap it all up in this new ageism that we're going to be bringing a message on next Sunday night, and where I will be showing you again that the New Age is the last age, it's just incredible.

Meanwhile, back to the Word of God. Come right back here with me for a moment. What Daniel said is this—Daniel said, "I saw all of the kingdoms of the world. I saw the Babylonian Empire. I saw the Medo-Persian Empire. I saw the Grecian Empire. I saw the Roman Empire. I saw them all. And then, I saw a realignment of the old Roman Empire under 10 kings and 10 nations." Now that my dear friend, are the kingdoms of men.

II. The Coming Kingdom of Christ

But now, I want you to notice what else God showed Daniel—and I love this part. I love this part, dear friend. God also showed Daniel the coming Kingdom of Christ. He showed Daniel the collapsing kingdoms of men, and then, He showed Daniel the coming Kingdom of Christ. Look in chapter 2, now, and verse 34 of this same chapter. Daniel says, "King, you saw..."—"You were watching too?"—"...*till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet...*"—now, notice this stone doesn't strike the image on the knees; not on the solar plexus, not on the chest, but "*upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth*" (Daniel 2:34–35).

Now what on earth does that mean? Well, just fast forward to verse 43, and look—and here's what Daniel said that meant: "*And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay*" (Daniel 2:43). What Daniel says is that the European Community, the revived Roman Empire, with its new Caesar, will not be monolithic, like the legs of iron. It will be part of iron, and part of clay. That is, you'll have all of the idiosyncrasies and ethnicities of all of these various kingdoms. But watch: "*And in the days of these kings...*"—what kings? Pay attention now, folks; in the days of the

reunified Roman Empire—*“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people,”*—all these other kingdoms were superseded by some other kingdom—*“but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms,”*—and hallelujah, I love this next part—*“and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter:”*—now listen to this; and he says here—*“and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure”* (Daniel 2:44–45).

Now my dear friends, let me tell you what’s going to happen. That stone is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew chapter 21, verses 42 and following: *“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God”*—see, this stone represents the kingdom—*“shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”* Now watch this: *“And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder”* (Matthew 21:42–44).

Now that stone is the same stone that Daniel talked about that ground this image to powder. Now let me just say several things about that stone.

1. The Slighted Stone

First of all, that stone is the slighted stone. People overlook that stone. *“The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner”* (Matthew 21:42). And you know, there’s a tradition. I’ve told you before that, when they were building the temple—Solomon’s temple—they said, “We need the cornerstone, and we can’t find it. Where’s the cornerstone? Send the cornerstone.” They said, “We sent the cornerstone.” They said, “We don’t have the cornerstone. It’s not in the construction yard.” “Where’s the cornerstone?” They said, “We don’t have it.” They said, “We know we sent it.” And then, they remembered. There was a stone that was in the middle of the yard. Nobody could figure out what it was for, and they took the ply bars, and rolled it out of the way, down into the valley Kidron, and they had to go get that stone down there. The one that the builders rejected—that stone—has become the head of the corner. Jesus Christ, today, is the slighted stone. The world has rejected Him. They’re trying everything.

I’m amazed, my dear friend, not so much that people will not believe in Jesus; I’m amazed in what they will believe. I mean, have you ever thought how foolish the New Age is? The Maharishi meditating on a dewdrop, and Shirley McClain vibrating to her crystals, and all that. I mean, folks, that is colossal insanity, when you think about it. *“The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.”*

2. The Solid Stone

He is a slighted stone; but friend, He is a solid stone, the Lord Jesus Christ. And you'd better find it's your place to stand, dear friend; but it won't tremble under you.

3. The Stumbling Stone

But also, He's the stumbling stone. Many people stumble over the Lord Jesus Christ. There are people who hear me preach, and they say, "Well, he's all right," until I say one thing. I say, "Jesus Christ is the only way. There is no other way." They say, "I just can't buy that. That's narrow." And they stumble over the Lord Jesus Christ. They can't accept the Lord Jesus, and this is what He said: "*The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner*" (Matthew 21:42). Jesus has become a stone of stumbling—the stumbling stone.

4. The Smiting Stone

But what Daniel was talking about here is not that He's the slighted stone, or the solid stone, or the stumbling stone, but He is the smiting stone. Now in the days of a unified Europe, an Antichrist is going to rise; he's going to be a new Caesar. And in those days, Jesus Christ is going to come. I believe the Antichrist may be alive today, and we have a follow-up message to the message tonight. I'm going to bring the message tonight to a conclusion.

III. How is the Lord Jesus Christ Going to Come

But how is the Lord Jesus Christ going to come? May I mention four ways, and then we'll be finished.

A. He is Coming Supernaturally

First of all, He's going to come supernaturally. Look, if you will, in verse 34. Look at it, in verse 34. The Bible says here that, "*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands*" (Daniel 2:34). Men are not going to bring in the Kingdom. All of man's efforts will not bring in the Kingdom. Jesus Christ is coming supernaturally. We should work for peace, but we should pray for Jesus.

B. He is Coming Suddenly

Not only is He coming supernaturally; He is coming suddenly. Do you see the word *smote*? He "...smote the image..." (Daniel 2:35). That is, this stone is just going to fall from Heaven suddenly on the kingdom of Antichrist.

C. He is Coming Sovereignly

Not only is He coming supernaturally, not only is He coming suddenly; He is coming sovereignly. Look in verse 44: "*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed*" (Daniel 2:44).

When I was a little boy, our nation entered into a war with the Japanese. I can remember that Sunday morning, when my daddy called me in, on December 7, 1941, and said, “Son, America is at war.” I was just a little boy, nine years old. And I remember walking off to Northboro Elementary School, sitting up there on the bicycle shed, and thinking about America being at war. I remember that day. Oh, I can remember, though I was still young, when we had a day called D-Day. Do you remember D-Day? That was when the enemy’s back was broken. My dad said, “Son, we won the victory.” And I remember what a day that was: D-Day.

But there was another day that came. Some of you will remember that day: V-Day. D-Day was when the enemy’s back was broken. V-Day was when it was all over. Do you remember that? How many of you remember V-Day? Oh, friend, I went downtown, West Palm Beach, and they were leaping and dancing. The people were just like that on the streets. I saw sailors kissing girls they’d never seen before, and everybody was leaping, and dancing, and the horns were blowing. And you couldn’t buy firecrackers in those days, because nobody had any gunpowder to spare. But people had brought out firecrackers from all over the place, and they were shooting guns in the air, and leaping, and dancing. I got so excited, because D-day had turned to V-day.

And my dear friend, you listen to me. D-day was Calvary. That’s when the enemy’s back was broken. And I thank God for that. For the Lord Jesus said, “*Now shall the prince of this world be cast out*” (John 12:31). Satan sails a sinking ship, and Satan rules a doomed domain. But oh, one of these days, V-Day is coming, when the Lord Jesus will come from Heaven, and that stone will smite the image on its feet. Don’t you want to be in that crowd, singing “O Victory in Jesus”?

He is coming, my dear friend, sovereignly. He’s going to set up a kingdom. When He came the first time, He wore a robe of shame. When He comes again, He’s going to come in splendor. When He came the first time, He was the smitten stone. When He comes again, He’ll be the smiting stone. “*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*” (Revelation 11:15).

D. He is Coming Surely

There’s one last thing I want to say about it. Not only is he coming sovereignly; but, also, He is coming surely. Look in the last part of verse 45—and the Bible says, “*The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure*” (Daniel 2:45). I can tell you, dear friend, there’s a lot we don’t understand; but, I can tell you this much: that the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. And,

*Jesus shall reign where’er the sun
Does his successive journey run;*

*His Kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.*

—ISAAC WATTS

Conclusion

My dear friend, we don't have to wait for Antichrist to rise for Jesus to come and take His Church away. We don't have to wait for 10 nations to sign a confederacy for Jesus to come and take His Church away. He can come tonight. He could come at any moment.

Father God, in this very sacred and solemn moment, I pray that many will give their hearts to Jesus Christ. In His wonderful name I pray. Amen.

The Coming Kingdom of Christ

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: September 6, 1984

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 2:31–45

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”

DANIEL 2:44

Outline

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Conclusion

Introduction

Now Daniel, whether you know it not, or understand it or not, had, by the Holy Spirit, an insight into the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And I say, without fear, without hesitation, without reservation, and without fear of contradiction, that the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is the greatest event of all of the ages. Even greater than His first coming is His Second Coming. And you would be amazed to study the Bible in the light of the Second Coming and to find out how much emphasis the Bible places upon the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Do you know that, sometimes, preachers who preach a lot on prophecy are accused of riding a hobbyhorse? They're accused of having some sort of a pet theory that they keep reading into the Bible. But I tell you, the more I look at the Bible, the more I'm convicted that we are not preaching enough of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I believe that things ought to be preached to the same proportion that God writes them in the Word of God. And it's an interesting thing. You find, in the Bible, for example, the

new birth as important as that is, is mentioned nine times. Baptism, as important as that is, is mentioned 20 times. Repentance, as important as that is, is mentioned 70 times. But I want to say, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is mentioned specifically in the Bible at least 380 times. The Bible keeps telling us over and over again. Some Bible scholar has pointed out that 1 out of every 25 verses in the Bible, in some way, points with eager fingers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

One of the great Bible expositors of yesterday was a man named Alexander McLaren. And I like what Alexander McLaren said about the Second Coming of Christ and the way the early Church—that is, what he called *the primitive Church*—thought about the Second Coming of Christ. He said—and I quote: “The primitive Church thought more about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ than about death or about Heaven. They were not looking for a cleft in the ground called *the grave*, but a cleavage in the sky called *Glory*. They were not watching for the undertaker, but for the Uppertaker.” I like that, and oh, dear friend, that’s the way all of us ought to be looking, for the Lord Jesus Christ is going to come and take us up. And as Eleanor so beautifully sang, “To be with Him will crown it all.”

Now you know, Madalyn Murray O’Hair wants to remove every vestige of the thought of God from us as she possibly can. But do you know, in order to do that, she’s going to have to climb up into the dome of the Capitol Building of the United States of America, there, in Washington D.C., and erase these words inscribed in the dome of our Capitol: “One God, one law, one element, and one far-off divine event toward which all creation moves?” That’s in the Capitol, talking about the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—and we all know there’s something in the air.

We all have a feeling that this lost generation may be the last generation, and that Jesus Christ will come soon. “Well,” you say, “since Hector was a pup, preachers have been saying that.” Well, that may be true. Let me say, dear friend, because preachers are saying it, doesn’t mean that He’s not coming—it means that He is coming. “Oh,” but you say, “Pastor, they were talking about the signs when I was a little boy.” True, but what we’re seeing today, dear friend, is a multiplication of the signs. What we’re seeing today is an intensification of the signs. What we’re seeing today is a convergence of the signs, as they’re brought into a burning focus.

So the Bible has given us many signs of the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But I don’t believe that we’re going to find one that is more poignant and more powerful than we find here, in the second chapter of the Book of Daniel. And I want to just jump into this chapter, because it’s long; and, for the sake of time, I’m going to just more or less paraphrase part of it. But for our text, or for a basic passage tonight—Daniel 2:31—I’ll read the Scripture, and then I’ll come back and explain it: “*Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness*

was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible”—now, that’s the King James Old English way of saying, “It scared me to death; it was terrifying.” That’s what he means—“This image’s head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth” (Daniel 2:31–35).

I am infinitely grateful tonight that God Himself has explained this passage, because, if He hadn’t, dear friend, I don’t believe that you, or me, or anyone else would have had the foggiest as to what it means. But thank God, there is an explanation, and we don’t have to stammer or stutter about it. This is one of the finest prophecies in all of the Bible concerning the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Now what happened is this: that the king, Nebuchadnezzar, had a good case of royal insomnia. He tried to sleep, but he could not sleep. I’m so grateful to know the Lord Jesus Christ, and I’m so grateful for that passage of Scripture that says, *“He giveth his beloved sleep”* (Psalm 127:2). And there are some nights when my mind wants to race. Does yours ever just want to race, and you just want to think of things, and you get in that squirrel cage thinking? I just stop and rebuke the devil, praise the Lord, and say, “Lord, You’ve got a promise in Your Word. You give Your beloved sleep. Good night, Lord,” and just go to sleep, and just turn it off that way, because He does—He gives His beloved sleep. But this king couldn’t sleep. He had, really, kind-of a case of insomnia that was coupled with a nightmare.

By the way, I heard of a lady, one night, who called the pastor in the middle of the night. And he answered the phone at about one o’clock, and she said, “Pastor, I can’t get to sleep. Would you please just preach to me for a while, so I’ll go to sleep?”

Well, here was this king, and he couldn’t sleep; and so, he had a dream in the midst of this, and he was tossing and turning. And there was a nightmare that he had in his fitful sleep that he could catch. The next day, he called his soothsayers—he called them the Chaldeans—there, in Babylonia. And he said, “I want you to tell me the meaning of this dream. It wasn’t like any other dream.” They said, “Sure, king, you tell us the dream, and we’ll tell you the meaning.” He said, “Uh huh.” He said, “You tell the dream and the meaning, so I’ll know you’re not faking.” Now they said, “Well look, you’ve asked something no king on earth has ever asked anybody to do.” He said, “Well, if you tell me the dream, I’ll reward you. And if you don’t tell me the dream, I’ll fix your wagon.”

Well, I tell you, there were some men there, who went out of the prophecy business

in a hurry, because they did not know, and there was no way that they could know. You see, these people, these so-called *prognosticators*, these soothsayers, and these fortune-tellers—they're all a bunch of fakers, they are. "Well," you say, "don't they sometimes know the future?" They never know the future—never know the future. They get it right sometimes—sure, they do—but it's an educated guess, not their guess. They have help. The devil helps them. "Well," you say, "why don't they get it right?" Because the devil doesn't know the future.

The devil doesn't know the future. You take someone like Jeanne Dixon or some of these others—how do you explain them? Well, they are not of God, because God's never wrong, and she frequently is. But she knows too much to be getting it from human intuition and human intellect; so, it doesn't take much imagination to know where she's getting it, does it? She doesn't get it from herself, and she doesn't get it from God. But you see, the Bible warns over and over again about this matter of soothsaying and fortunetelling, and it goes back to dark mysterious religions of Babylon. It goes all the way back to the tower of Babel, way back there in the beginning, where there was all of this false religion. They were fakers; they were frauds.

But thank God, there was a man whose name was Daniel. He was God's man. And do you know something? The Bible says, "*Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets*" (Amos 3:7). And we don't have to be in the dark. We can know that we know that we know what's going to come to place and come to pass, because God has given it through His prophets.

And so the king called Daniel, and somebody recommended Daniel, and said, "The Spirit of God is in him." Daniel said, "Yes, king, I'll tell you. First of all, I'll tell you what you saw; and then," he said, "I will tell you what it means." And he described what he saw. Daniel saw a great statue—it was huge; it was immense; and it had a golden head; and it had a silver breast; it had a brazen belly; it had legs of iron; and it had feet—part of iron and part of clay.

Daniel said, "That's what you saw; and then, as you watched, there was a mountain. And upon that mountain was a stone, and that stone became dislodged from the mountain. It was cut out of the mountain. It was quarried out of the mountain. But," Daniel said, "there were no hands that were doing this. It was supernaturally removed, excised from the mountain, and that stone started to tumble furiously down the mountain, and the stone came down the mountain." Daniel said, "And it hit the image on its feet; and, when it did, the entire image with its head of gold, with its chest and arms of silver, with its belly of brass, with its legs of iron, and its feet of iron and clay, just crumbled, disintegrated, obliterated."

Then, Daniel said, "This is what else you saw in that dream. That stone started to grow, and grow, and grow, and grow, and it became a mountain—not an ordinary

mountain—a mountain that filled the whole earth.” The king said, “That’s it! That’s what I dreamed! All right, now I know that you know what it was I dreamed. Now,” he said, “tell me what it means.” And here’s one of the most significant prophecies in all of the Bible. Actually, it has basically two sides: One: it speaks of the sure ruin of civilization; secondly, it speaks of the sudden return of Christ.

I. The Kingdoms of Men

Now let me show you how it does this. These various parts of that image’s body really represent kingdoms—human kingdoms. I want to make it very clear and very plain. Look, for example—just get your Bible out and look—in Daniel 2:37–40: *“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.”*

Now so you don’t have to be a seminary graduate to understand that the head of gold represented the Babylonian kingdom with its kings. “Thou art the head of gold.” And then, look down, if you will, in verse 39: *“And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth.”* Gold is superior to silver; silver is superior to brass; and so, you see, that the gold, the silver, and the brass represent kingdoms. And then, very clearly, in verse 40: *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise”* (Daniel 2:37–40).

So again, we look, and we don’t have to guess; we know that we know that the legs of iron represent a very strong kingdom that has power in it. And then, we skip on down to verse 43: *“And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings”*—that is, the very feet, the ten toes of the feet, represent kingdoms. In those days—*“shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom”* (Daniel 2:43–44).

So it’s very obvious—it’s very plain—that God is speaking of kingdoms. Now the head of gold represents Babylon. Indeed, Isaiah 14:4 calls Babylon that *“golden city.”* Beautiful, marvelously beautiful, there, on the banks of the Euphrates, was Ancient Babylon. Oh, the Hanging Gardens—one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Here was a kingdom of laws and customs that was run carefully, precisely, and minutely. It was a culture, and it was described as a *golden city* and a *golden kingdom*. Nebuchadnezzar ruled over that kingdom. But now, after the Babylonians ruled, there came along another kingdom—the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians. These are

described in the first part of verse 39: *“After thee shall arise another kingdom”* (Daniel 2:39).

Now this kingdom is represented by silver, because historians tell us that the Medes and the Persians had a vast system of taxes. And they had more silver than the Hunt brothers. They had stored up silver, and they were known for the vast hoards of silver; and so, God describes that kingdom as *the kingdom of silver*.

And then, the belly and the thighs—they represent Greece. Look, if you will, in the last part of verse 39: *“And a third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth”* (Daniel 2:39). Now the Greek armies were known for their armor of brass, and the ancient writers used to refer to them as *the brazen-coated Greeks*. And that was the kingdom under Alexander the Great. That kingdom was powerful. It took the kingdom first from Babylon. And after the Babylonians, came the Medo-Persian Empire; and, after the Medo-Persian Empire, came that Macedonian Empire and then that Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great, who conquered the whole world, and died at the age of 33, and wept because there were no more worlds to conquer. But then came finally a fourth kingdom—in verse 40, we see it: *“And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron”* (Daniel 2:40). That speaks of Rome. From time immemorial, people have spoken of the *iron legions of Rome*, because Rome was a strong, militaristic, marching, strong, invincible kingdom—and strong as iron. It was in the days of Rome that our Lord was born, that He ministered.

But now, wait a moment. The Roman kingdom is divided. There are two legs. And you know from history, there were an Eastern and a Western Empire that came out of Rome. But now, notice—we’re going to see something that’s not yet taken place. All that we’ve talked about thus far has been in the past, but there’s something yet to take place. Look in verse 41: *“And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes—“part of potters’ clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided”—we’ve seen that—“but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet”—notice the toes now—“And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay”* (Daniel 2:41–43).

Now the final form of Gentile kingdoms, therefore, is going to be a federation of ten nations—not monolithic, like the legs of iron, but kingdoms that are loosely federated, a confederation of nations—ten of them, part of iron and part of clay. What does this represent? In this place, and in other places in the Bible that we could point out, had we time, we could show you, clearly and plainly, that the Bible prophesies that, in the last days, when Jesus Christ will come again, there will be a federation of ten nations

represented by these ten toes.

Now there was a Frenchman whose name was Jean Monnet. Jean Monnet had, in his heart, a desire to have a United States of Europe, just like we have a United States of America. And people have tried to federate Europe, but they have not been able to do it, because there were so many boundaries, so many customs, so many laws, so many armies. But finally, in the last days, there began to be a confederation, and this confederation took place. And first of all, five nations confederated together; and then, in 1972, four more nations came in. Denmark came in. Great Britain came in. Now you would not think Great Britain would have moved into the Common Market, because Great Britain is generally, well, she's the proud mistress of the land and the sea. And few would have thought that the British would dilute their sovereignty and come into this; but Great Britain did.

And not only Great Britain, but Ireland. And so now you have nine members. There were six, and then three joined; but there was one more, because the Bible says that there are going to be ten nations in the last days. Denmark was to join the common market. Denmark was to come in. And everybody thought that Denmark was going to come in, but there's something wrong. If Denmark had come in, and if Denmark had been part of the ten-nation federation, it would not have squared with what the Bible says, because the Bible says that these ten nations are to be an extension of the legs—that is, they're to come out of that old Roman Empire. They are to be a reconstitution, a refederation, a regathering of the old Roman Empire. And then, in 1979, not many years ago, just five years ago, a strange thing happened: Denmark said, "We're not going to join the common market; count us out." And Greece said, "Count us in." Greece, a part of that old Roman Empire, came in. And since 1976, we see this colossus, this statue, if indeed this is the fulfillment of prophesy.

And I want to say something. I want to make it abundantly clear, right now: I am not saying absolutely that it is—I'm saying I *think* it is. I know this much: I know there is now, in Europe, a federation of ten nations that comprise that area that was once the old Roman Empire; and, it is an exact description, in my estimation, of what Daniel saw—part of iron and part of clay. Great Britain, Ireland, Denmark, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Belgium, West Germany, France, and Greece are confederated together in what we call, today, *the Common Market*.

II. The Deterioration in Civilization

Now these things, therefore, speak of the kingdoms of men. But I want you to see the deterioration in civilization. Now we have an idea today—and it's being taught—that man is moving always onward and upward, but the Bible doesn't teach that. The Bible doesn't teach evolution; it teaches devolution—that is, man is not progressing upward;

man is progressing downward. He is not going from clay to gold; he's going from gold to clay. The image started with a head of gold; it ended up with feet of clay.

Now what is God showing us? God is showing us that civilization is going to continue to unravel. Men are never going to bring in the Golden Age. Now the evolutionists say that man sprang from the beast; the Bible teaches that man is headed for the Beast—and that beast is the antichrist. The behavioral psychologist today says that man needs a boost from beneath; the Bible says that he needs a birth from above. He needs to be born again. Men just generally always get it wrong. And so here we have a picture of the disillusion, and the devolution, and the deterioration of humanity and civilization.

Now it's an amazing thing to me that people mock this Book. One of the great ways that I know that the Bible is the Word of God is fulfilled prophecy. Now I just want to say parenthetically here, if you look at the world situation today, you will be amazed as to how that history fits into the sockets of prophecy. For example, the Bible tells us, in the last days, there's going to be a certain condition. In Ezekiel 37 and 38, the Bible teaches that Russia and her allies are going to be at the North, ready to invade the Middle East. That's precisely the situation we have now, and the incursion in Afghanistan is more to set the stage. And now that the Syrians have made their presence so strong in Lebanon, Lebanon is becoming a bridge for Russia, in the last days, to come against the people of Israel, exactly as the Bible prophesied it would be. The Bible prophesies, in the last days, that there's going to come a great army from beyond the Euphrates.

Now the Euphrates River is that river that separates the Middle East from the Far East. Now what is beyond the Euphrates? China—Red China is there. It's an interesting thing that the aged Apostle John, when he looked through the eyes of faith and inspiration, he saw coming an army of 200 million from across the Euphrates. Now someone would have said that John must have eaten too much ice cream and sauerkraut and taken a ride on a roller coaster, if he said that there was an army of 200 million. For, when John wrote this, there weren't 200 million people on the earth, yet John said, "I know what I saw." "Well, John, maybe you got the decimal point in the wrong place." "No," John said, "I know what I saw. I saw an army of 200 million."

I was reading in a national news magazine a while back—that the Red Chinese have now boasted that they have a militia of—are you ready for this—of 200 million, exactly. Precisely the number that ol' John saw on the Island of Patmos, 2,000 years ago—that army positioned on the other side of the Euphrates River. The Bible prophesies that, in the last days, there's going to be a reunification of that old Roman Empire of ten nations—not a monolithic structure like the United States of America; part of iron and part of clay. They all still have a semblance of sovereignty, but now, they interrelate. We see exactly that in the Common Market.

You know, ol' Peter, the big fisherman—he said, in his epistle, that there was coming a time in which *“the elements shall melt with fervent heat”* (2 Peter 3:12). The earth also, and the works that are therein, should be burned up. He said, *“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire”* (2 Peter 3:7). That’s a rich term, isn’t it?

Now the King James says they are *“reserved unto fire”*—reserved unto judgment, but, literally, the Greek language is that they are “stored with fire.” That was back before we knew anything about the atom. That was back before we knew anything about nuclear science. That was back before man split the atom. But now, we know that all of everything is stored with fire. In the atom is unbelievable power. It’s supercharged with fire. You just split the atom, and that fire erupts and it burns. Nagasaki and Hiroshima can tell you that the atom is stored with fire. And everything, dear friend—the air we breathe is fire; this microphone is fire; this paper is fire; these clothes are fire; this rug is fire; and, the dirt beneath us—it’s all stored with fire.

What keeps it from all flying apart? Jesus. The Bible says, *“By him all things consist”* (Colossians 1:17). He’s the One that keeps those atoms from flying apart; He’s the One that keeps those elements from melting. But Jesus said that the heavens and the earth, which now are reserved in fire, reserved unto fire, literally, “stored with fire.” But He said, “One of these days they’re going to melt with fervent heat.” And the words *fervent heat* literally mean “fever heat.” That is, from internal combustion, there’s going to be a chain reaction that is going to destroy. The Bible says they’re going to *“pass away with a great noise”* (2 Peter 3:10). People who don’t believe the Bible say that it all started with a big bang. Man always gets it wrong—it ends with a big bang; it ends with a big bang. They’re going to pass away with a great noise.

Now when you take the atomic weapons that we have now, 35 tons of TNT for every person on Planet Earth—the equivalence of fire, and the elements that have not yet been disintegrated and let loose—that’s just talking about the atomic weapons that we have now. Just the atomic weapons that men have—35 tons of TNT. Think of the situation: There’s the Common Market; there’s Soviet Russia; there’s Red China; there’s the atomic bomb.

And then, on top of all of that, the Bible says that Israel will be back in her land in the last days. Why? For 18 centuries, they laughed at the idea that Israel would ever be reconstituted as a nation back in the land. She’s there tonight. And I want to tell you, dear friend, that God performed a military miracle, a sociological miracle, a language miracle, and an agricultural miracle. God performed an ethnic miracle, and God brought Israel back and set her in her place in the last days, where the Bible says that she’s going to be, in Ezekiel 37 and 38.

Don’t you believe the stage is set? I do—I do. I tell you, when you look at the Bible...

Dr. Vance Havner and a man were sitting down, one time, talking about the world situation. And this man said to Dr. Havner—he said, “You know, it’s amazing.” He said, “If men were to write it—if someone were to write it in a book—no one would believe it.” Dr. Havner said, “That’s just it: Someone has written it in a book, and people don’t believe it.” It is there. Right there, in the Word of God.

And so these ten toes—what do they represent? They represent to me that federation of nations that will be in existence in the last days, when Jesus Christ returns.

Now let me show you something. These ten nations represent the first form of Gentile world powers before Christ comes again. Now I want you to see what’s going to happen. Look, if you will, in chapter 2, verses 34 and 35, again: *“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were part of iron and clay, and break them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth”* (Daniel 2:34–35).

Now the stone represents the Lord Jesus Christ. You say, “Are you certain?” Yes. Look in verse 43: *“And whereas thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another even as iron is not mixed with clay”* (Daniel 2:43).

Now here’s the key, in verse 44—here’s what the choir sang about; here’s what Eleanor sang about: *“In the days of these kings”*—what kings? The ten kings, the ten toes, the days in which we’re living—*“the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people”*—Nebuchadnezzar left his to the Medes and the Persians; the Medes and the Persians left theirs to Alexander; Alexander left his to Caesar; Caesar left his to others; but God’s Kingdom—*“shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever”* (Daniel 2:44).

Now this represents the Lord Jesus Christ. He is that stone. Now Matthew 21:42–44 impinge upon this. Jesus Christ Himself refers to Himself as the stone, and He says, *“Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”* Now watch, he’s talking about the Kingdom: *“Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder”* (Matthew 21:42–44).

A. **Jesus is the Slighted Stone**

Now that's exactly what happened to this image. It was ground to powder by the stone that fell. Now Jesus Christ makes it clear that He is the stone. Now notice what He said about Himself: Number one, He is the slighted stone, *"the stone which the builders rejected"* (Matthew 21:42). *"He came unto His own, and his own received him not"* (John 1:11). They slighted Him, they looked over Him: *"The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner"* (Matthew 21:42).

I've told you before, but tradition says that, when they were building the temple, you know, they cut out the stones from the quarry and shipped them there, to the temple site. They did this so that the temple could be built without the sound of the hammer or chisel. And so they crated these stones and sent them up there to Mount Moriah, to the temple site. And they were coming along fine, until they got ready for the cornerstone, or the foundation stone. And they sent to the quarry, and they said, "We're ready for the foundation stone. Send it." And they said, "We've already sent it." They said, "No, you haven't sent it." They said, "Yes, we did send it. We know that we sent it. You go back and check; the cornerstone is there."

And do you know what had happened? They'd sent the cornerstone, and the cornerstone sat in the construction yard so long nobody knew what it was. They didn't understand it; they kept banging their shins on it; and, they kept stumbling over it. It was there in the way, until the foreman said, "Get that thing out of here." And they took their crowbars, and rolled it over into the Kidron Valley, down into the weeds, and forgot about it. The cornerstone was down; and so, they said, "We know we sent it." And they said, "Oh, we know where it is." And they had to go down there in the valley, and take that stone, which the builder rejected; and, it became the head of the corner. Now that's an illustration of the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. **Jesus is the Stumbling Stone**

This world, now, you know, we don't want to stumble over Him—"He's in our way; get rid of Him." And one of these days, dear friend, we're going to find out He is God's cornerstone. He was the slighted stone.

C. **Jesus is the Solid Stone**

He, dear friend, is the solid stone, because He says that we're to stand on Him. And it's very clear. He says, "This stone is the head of the corner." And so I thank God that I'm standing on Him.

D. **Jesus is the Smiting Stone**

He's the stumbling stone; but I want to say, primarily, He is the smiting stone. Listen: *"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall,*

it will grind Him to [pieces]” (Matthew 21:44).

III. How the King is Coming

Now I’m almost finished, but let me just tell you tonight how the king is coming. Now I like that song by Bill Gaither that the choir sang; but, I’ll tell you, there’s a lot of imagery in that song, but not much theology. It’s all right; it’s a good song, if you understand his poetry and imagery. But don’t get your theology from that song. But the King is coming—they’re right about that. Now let me tell you something about the coming of our Lord, and how He’s going to come, according to the Book of Daniel. I just want to mention these things very quickly, because I’m just talking too long tonight. But there are three or four things I want you to notice about how Jesus is going to come, when He comes.

A. He is Coming Supernaturally

Number one: He is going to come supernaturally; His Kingdom will come supernaturally. Look, if you will, in verse 34 of this prophecy: *“Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out”*—what’s the next phrase? I can’t hear you—*“without hands”* (Daniel 2:34). Now what’s the importance of that? That means that man had nothing to do with it. It is God’s work all the way. It is supernatural. Now we should work for peace, but you’d better pray to Jesus. The only peace this world is ever going to really know is when Jesus, the Prince of peace, comes—and that is supernatural.

I remember when I was down in Florida, one time—a young brash preacher—and I’d just gotten out of seminary. And I wanted to do everything that you were supposed to do. I wanted to represent my church well. And they had the local ministerial association, so I said, “Well, I better go down there.” I went down there, and I looked around at these fellows: Some of them had their collar on backward—and nothing wrong with that. Dr. Lee says, “If he wants to walk into his while I back into mine, that’s all right—nothing wrong with that.” But they got to talking, and one of the major things they were discussing was whether they were going to admit the leader of a particular false cult into that ministerial association. And I was there the first time. I mean, I didn’t want to open my mouth the very first time I was there. I couldn’t believe it—it was obviously a cult—and I said, “Well gentlemen, wait a minute.” I said, “You’re not going to vote him into this organization.” They said, “Yes.” They said, “He’s part of the religious scene here.” I said, “Well, is this a Christian organization?” “Well, yes.” I said, “Don’t you know that his disciples are going from door to door denying the very tenets of the Word of God; and, when people believe what he teaches, they’re twice-fold a child of Hell? Not only are they lost, but they’re lost in religion—and that’s the worst kind of lost to be. Did you understand that?”

I never will forget what one of these brethren from one of the mainline denominations—who, out of kindness, I'll not mention his name, to protect the guilty—I never will forget what he said to me. He leaned over, and he said, "Now Adrian, if we don't cooperate, we'll never bring in the Kingdom." Oh, dear friend, he never will bring in the Kingdom, cooperation or no cooperation. God is going to bring in the Kingdom. It is cut out without hands, and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ does not come about by human effort. We are not going to bring in the Kingdom. And dear friend, I am not trying to bring in the Kingdom by my preaching. I'm trying to save souls and snatch them, as brands from the burning.

Now my hope is not in this world's kingdom—I want to tell you that. If your hope is there, then you believe in rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

B. He is Coming Suddenly

Now Jesus is coming supernaturally. He is coming not only supernaturally, but I want to say that He is coming suddenly. Look, if you will, in verse 34 again, of this same chapter: "*Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon His feet*" (Daniel 2:34). Now get the idea it is cataclysmic. He is coming suddenly, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; and, like a falling stone, He's going to come. That is, He may come tonight in a split second, in the twinkling of an eye.

C. He is Coming Sovereignly

And not only is He coming supernaturally, and not only is He coming suddenly; He is coming sovereignly. Look, if you will, in verse 44: "*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed*" (Daniel 2:44). Jesus Christ is coming to rule, and to reign; He is coming as Sovereign.

I was a little boy when World War II started. I remember that day, December 7. It was on a Sunday morning. I was not in Sunday School. I wasn't a Christian. My dad wasn't a Christian. I remember that day—coming home and learning, "Son, we're at war. Listen to the radio, Son." I remember learning about the terrible things that were happening, as I saw my older friends and neighbors as they marched off to war—some of them not to come back again.

But then, I began to get interested in history, and to see what was happening. And as I got older, as that war progressed, I remembered two big days. One was D-Day and the other was V-Day. Do you remember those days? D-Day was when the back of the enemy was broken. Oh, there was some more fighting, some more casualties, but, basically, that's when the enemy's back was broken. And V-Day, that's when the victory was pronounced, and won, and received.

Now I want to tell you, dear friend, D-Day is when Jesus died on the cross. V-Day is when He's coming again, in power and great glory. And I'm looking forward to that day.

Let me tell you... Oh, do you remember? How many of you were around when the Japanese surrendered, and the war was over, and you remember? Let me see your hands. Now you kids don't know anything about rejoicing.

Do ya'll remember that? Boy, folks, I'll tell you, I can remember it. I didn't know. My mom and dad called me, and said, "Son, the war is over; the war is over." Well, that meant that we could have bubble gum again; that meant that we could turn on the lights again. Where I was, you couldn't even turn on the lights. We were there on the seacoast. They'd arrest you if you turned on the lights, because you would silhouette our ships, and they'd be torpedoed there, going up and down the coast of Florida. We had even to paint out the headlights on the automobiles. They'd just blacken them out, so you just couldn't go along at night. No neon signs, no outside lights—you had to turn off the lights at night. It was a dark world, a gloomy world, a fearful world, a world without things. And they said, "The victory has been won." The lights went on all over the city.

People went out and turned on neon lights. I could even remember what they looked like: They were blue, and green, and red, and yellow. And people poured down downtown in West Palm Beach. The people were thick as hair on a dog's back. They were down there—they were milling; they were laughing; they were crying; they brought their guns out and shot them in the air.

Do you remember that? And people fished out firecrackers and things that they'd been hoarding away, and they exploded; and, everybody got kissed. I mean, there was dancing in the streets, and people were kissing one another; and, they were shouting, and weeping, and praising, and leaping, and dancing. I don't know how it was in your town, but that's the way it was in our town. The war was over, and we had won.

Listen, friend. You isn't seen nothing; you isn't seen nothing. You wait. You wait until the skies burst open, and the King of kings, the Lord of lords, comes in His splendor and His glory, and He sets up His Kingdom. And we're in it, folks—we're in it. We're going to rule and reign with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

He's coming sovereignly. The first time He came, He wore a robe of shame. When He comes again, He'll wear a robe of splendor. The first time He came, He came with a crown of thorns. He's coming again with a crown of glory. Let's read verse 45: *"Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure"* (Daniel 2:45).

Conclusion

Now mark it, and mark it well—and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof

sure—He is coming surely, just as surely as my name is Adrian Rogers. He's going to come. And I remind you, dear friend, that He's coming in the days of those kings. A ten-nation federation we're living in—times just like that. Let's bow.

Facing the New Age

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: June 7, 1987

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 3:1–6, 13–18

“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.”

DANIEL 3:16

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Introduction

Would you take God’s precious, holy Word this morning and find the Book of Daniel—the prophet of Daniel? It’d be the third chapter of Daniel that we’re looking for; it’s back toward the back of the Old Testament. If you did not bring a Bible with you today, most likely there are some there in the pew rack before you. We’re continuing a series on Antichrist—just a little brief three-part series. This is the last message, and I’ve entitled

the message today, “Facing the New Age.”

There’s a movement today known as the *New Age* movement. We’re going to be talking about it. It is really based in the spirit of Antichrist. The Antichrist is a world leader who is about to burst on the scene. He will globalize and homogenize all of the world’s religions and politics into one global force. This false leader is known as *the beast*, or, *the Antichrist*, or, *the man of sin*, or, *the wicked one*. We might well say he is the devil’s messiah; he will be Satan’s superman.

Now the story that we’re about to read is the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego—three Hebrews in Babylonian captivity, who were thrown into a fiery furnace because they would not bow down and worship a golden image. There is not a boy, not a girl, here, who has been in Sunday School, in my estimation, who has not heard this story. As a matter of fact, we’ve heard it so many times we may just check out and say, “Well, I don’t need to listen to that.” But I want to tell you, dear friend, that’s not just what God has done; it is what God will do. And it’s not just what God has said; it is what God is saying. And it is a very pertinent, powerful, and persuasive passage for us.

Today—chapter 3, verse 1: *“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.”* (Daniel 3:1–6).

Now you know the background: Nebuchadnezzar—a pagan king, satanically inspired, demon-filled, with an inordinate desire to be worshipped—sets up an image made of gold, 60 cubits high, out there in the plains of Dura. It stood like a missile on a pad. And he commanded everybody to worship, and he enforced the worship in many ways. There was an enticement to worship—beautiful music. But also, there was an enforcement to worship—“if you do not worship, you’ll be cast into a fiery furnace.” And so they struck up the band; and, when these Babylonian *Beach Boys* began to play—at that moment—everybody hit the dust. I mean, they all fell down before that golden

image. But when the dust was settled, there were three who did not bow down—three boys who knew God: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

I'll tell you more about them in a moment; I'll tell you what happened to them. But I want to tell you, friend, that what we have here is not just a little bit of folklore; it is a powerful and potent prophecy, as I've said, of him who is to come. When you go home, if you have time, I want you to maybe take time, or make time, and read Daniel 3 and Revelation 13. Put them out there, and read them side-by-side; and, you're going to see an amazing correspondence. You're going to see, for example, that the beast, the Antichrist, that comes is going to make an image. And he too is going to tell everybody to bow down and worship that image. And he's going to tell those that do not worship the image that they should be killed. The parallel is amazing. This image, which was 60 cubits high, verse 1 tell us, six cubits wide... And it had musical instruments—six various musical instruments—you read in verse 5 (Daniel 3:1; Daniel 3:5). Listen to it: six, six, six—You think that's by happenstance—that just happened? Oh no, that's the number of the beast. What you have here is a prophecy; what you have here is a foreshadowing; what you have here is a picture of the Antichrist who is to come. He sets up an ungodly image. He enforces a universal religion. He blasphemes Almighty God, and he unleashes unparalleled persecution for those who will not bow.

Now I want you not to think primarily in the past about what happened to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And I want you to think today, not primarily in the future, what is going to happen to those, after the Rapture, who are persecuted by the beast, the Antichrist. But I want to make the message intensely practical, and I want to talk to moms and dads especially about how to prepare your children for Antichrist. "Well," you say, "wait a minute. My children will not be here." I hope not. I trust you lead them to Jesus Christ. But there's something every one of us must remember—that the spirit of Antichrist is already in the world, and there are many antichrists.

Put in your margin, 1 John chapter 2 and verse 18—1 John chapter 2 and verse 18: *"Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists"* (1 John 2:18). Did you hear that? "The Antichrist shall come, but there are even now many antichrists" (1 John 2:18). And your child will be just as deceived and just as damned, if he is deceived by an antichrist, as he is the Antichrist. Do you understand what I'm talking about? Forget, therefore, what happened in a moment to those folks in the past, and forego your intellectual curiosity about what may happen to those in the future, and, let's deal with your boy, your girl, your neighbor, and maybe you, as today you will face the spirit of Antichrist that is already in the world.

I want to give you four principles that are so very, very vital and important in this day and in this age, if you would teach your children to survive, and how to face the new age.

I. Saturate Your Children in the Word of God

Number one: You must—you must—saturate them in the Word of God. Now the king says, “Bow,” and these boys did not bow. And notice, in verse 13: *“Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?”* Now notice verse 16: *“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter”* (Daniel 3:13–16).

Now what does that mean? It means, in plain English, we don’t have to think about it—we don’t have to think about it. We don’t have to get in a huddle and say, “What are we going to do?” We don’t have to call a committee meeting, and we don’t have to call home. We already know what we’re going to do. “We’re not careful to answer thee in this matter” (Daniel 3:16).

Now notice verse 17: *“If it be so”—*that is, “if you cast us into the fiery furnace”—*“our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not...”*—now, I hope you have an *if not* clause in your faith—*“But if not...”*—they did not mean, “if He is not able”; they knew He was able. Now “To Him who is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all that we can ask or think, to Him be glory forever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20–21). They knew He was able. They said, “If He doesn’t deliver us out of the fiery furnace”—not, “if He’s not able.” “If He has a higher plan, if He wants to deliver us through the fiery furnace, that’s fine. But if not, if He doesn’t deliver us—*“be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up”* (Daniel 3:17–18).

Now what caused these boys to do this? What caused these boys to have such a resiliency? What caused them to have such a firm faith? I’ll tell you what it was, dear friends: They had something that had been built into them. I have little doubt in my mind that these boys had been preconditioned by the pre-exilic revival meeting—there was a pre-captivity revival that took place unto good King Josiah, and the preaching of Jeremiah—and these boys had the Word of God built into them.

Are you listening? First John 2, verses 21 and 22—John says, *“I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son”* (1 John 2:21–22). Now what did John say? John said,

“I gave you the truth, little children, that you can overcome the spirit of Antichrist.” The spirit of Antichrist today, that will deceive your children, is the spirit of the New Age movement.

What is the New Age movement? Norman Geisler of Dallas Theological Seminary has written a little pamphlet that I want to quote from—quite exclusively and at length—and I hope you will forgive me for reading some of the material. But I can read it to you and put it to you more concisely. But I want you to listen; I want you to tune me in, and don’t tune me out. I am talking to you about teaching your children the truth; and, you must not only teach them what is right, but you must teach them what is wrong.

Now what is the New Age movement? Marilyn Ferguson, one of the leading propagandists for the New Age movement, writes in her book, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*—now, when she calls it a *conspiracy*, she calls it a *benign* conspiracy. That is, she thinks it is good conspiracy—I quote: “A leaderless but powerful network is working to bring about radical change in the United States. Broader than reform, deeper than revolution, this benign conspiracy for a new human agenda has triggered the most rapid cultural realignment in history—the great shuddering, irrevocable shift overtaking us is a new mind, the ascendants of a startling worldview.” Now that’s what she said.

Geisler goes on to say, in short, there are two basic beliefs held by the New Age movement. One: evolutionary godhood—I’ll tell you what that means in a moment. And number two: global unity. I quote: “The New Age movement believes in a global unity, which ultimately unites man with man—that’s social utopia—man with nature; ecological uniformity; and man with God—divine union. In this sense, the New Age movement is like a huge cosmic sponge that absorbs all religions, cultures, and governments. These two essential pillars of the New Age movement leave the following interpretations of the Christian faith: Number one—God is not a personal Heavenly Father, but an impersonal energy force. God is all, and all is God. There is nothing that is not God.” This view of God is called *pantheism*: *pan* meaning, “everything,” *theism* meaning, “God.” And pantheism, in turn, leads to a rather disturbing implication concerning the nature of man. Now notice—if God is everything, and everything is God, then what about man? Man is a part of all; and, therefore, he is God. No wonder New Age evangelist Shirley MacLaine shouted to the world, in her TV special, “I am God! I am God!”

There’s another lady—one time, back in the Garden of Eden, Satan said, “If you’ll do this, you’ll be like God,” also. It’s not old, folks; it’s one of the mustiest things around. MacLaine said, on that program, “The tragedy of the human race was that we have forgotten that we were each divine.” Then, what is salvation for the New Ager? It is simply the realization of his—of our—divine origin and nature. And if New Age salvation is knowledge, it follows that what we need to be saved from is ignorance and not sin. The New Ager believes in a pantheistic universe. What does he believe about Jesus

Christ? As a result, Jesus Christ is unnecessary for the redemption scheme for all humankind. New Agers reject the biblical teaching that Christ sacrificed His life in order to bring us forgiveness of sin. In fact, Jesus of Nazareth and Christ are two separate energies. Do you remember what John said? “Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is cometh of the flesh is not of God; it’s the spirit of antichrist” (1 John 4:3). Now listen. Here’s what they say: “The Christ spirit,” claims one New Age writer, “indwelt Jesus just as it indwelt Krishna and Buddha. The man Jesus was only divine in exactly the same sense in which we are divine.”

Now I don’t have time to get into all of that, and I don’t even want to give that much publicity to all of that, except I want to give you some things to spot; I want to give you ten things just to keep your radar up. Now especially for your children, listen.

A. Be Aware of the Names of the New Age Movement

What are some of the names of the New Age movement? The New Age movement comes under many different names, like “the Aquarian Conspiracy,” “new consciousness,” “New Orientalism,” “cosmic humanism,” “cosmic consciousness,” “mystical humanism,” “human potential movement,” and “holistic health movement.”

B. Be Aware of the Buzzwords of the New Age Movement

Now number two: Here are some buzzwords. If you hear these words, just kind of perk up your ears: awakening, enlightenment, centering, consciousness, cosmic energy, force of life, global village, holistic, human potential, self-acquisition, networking, planetary vision, Spaceship Earth, synergistic, transcendental, transformational, and transpersonal. Now of course you know that anybody can use these words and not be a New Ager, or not be a humanist—but just perk up your ears.

C. Be Aware of the Symbols of the New Age Movement

Number three: What are some of the symbols? If you’ll look around tomorrow, you’ll see these symbols everywhere: the rainbow, the pyramid, the triangle, eye in a triangle, Pegasus—it’s a winged horse, concentric circles, rays of light, swastika, yin yang—you know the circle with the little things in it, the goat head on a pentagram—most likely, you’ll see someone wearing that around their neck tomorrow, the numeral 666, and the unicorn.

Now obviously, if somebody has one of these symbols, or a rainbow in their car, or something like that, that doesn’t mean that they are a New Ager, anymore than somebody wearing a cross around his neck means that they are a Christian. But pay attention—pay attention.

D. Be Aware of God Being Viewed as an Impersonal Force

Four: impersonal force. If God is spoken of in terms of an impersonal entity like in *Star*

Wars—the Force, or identified with the world, or energy, in any way, then you have probably stumbled on New Age ground.

E. Be Aware of Believing Humans Have Unlimited Potential

Number five: human potential. Beware of movies, songs, lectures, literature, or even business seminars that claim that humans possess unlimited potential. Carried to this logical conclusion, it's just another way of saying, "We are God."

F. Be Aware of Sorcery

Sorcery—that's number six. When seminars or books attempt to talk to us about our potential at all, be attentive for modernized forms of sorcery. Sorcery may be divined as the ability to manipulate objects, people, or events by one's will or perception. Often this is done by visualizing, or imaging an event to occur; it's actually practicing the occult.

G. Be Aware of Human Goodness

Number seven: human goodness. Remember, the New Age movement is essentially a mystical form of humanism. New Agers carry the humanistic belief in the essential goodness of man to the point of Godhood. So be careful of any teaching that emphasizes the goodness of man or that ignores the reality of sin.

H. Be Aware of Christ-Consciousness

Number eight: Christ-consciousness. We should be particularly wary of someone who refers to Jesus Christ as *the Christ spirit*, or speaks of *Christ-consciousness*.

I. Be Aware of Mystical Feeling

Number nine: mystical feeling. New Age thought is permeated with the use of feelings to determine truth. MacLaine admitted that she had no proof of reincarnation, but she felt it was true. Mysticism is appealing when one ignores his or her rational faculties, but the Scriptures command us to test the spirits, whether they are from God, and to discern the difference between the spirit of truth and error (1 John 4:1). The New Age god would have us put all logic aside, but the God of the Bible encourages us to love Him with all of our hearts, souls, and mind (Deuteronomy 6:5).

J. Be Aware of World Unity

Number ten: world unity. The New Age movement believes in the unity of all religions and the eventual cooperation of all governments, thus they are a strong force behind the world peace and ecumenical movements.

If we discover any one of these warning signs in a movie, a song, book, seminar, or organization, then our spiritual detectors should be on alert for a New Age influence. Of course, like the warning signs of cancer, no single symptom is a sign of the disease. But if the symptoms persist for a long period of time, those who have been exposed should consult the Great Physician.

Now folks, I am telling you that your boys and girls will go to school tomorrow; you'll go to work tomorrow; and you will face the things that I'm talking to you about. And it may be a small thing here; it may be only a small thing there—but it is in the air like a fungus, and you'd better know what's happening.

Why did these boys refuse to bow? Somebody had put something in them. They knew better, and they would not bow. And they didn't have to think about it. All right, are you building the Word of God into your children? Are you seeing to it that they're in church? Are you seeing to it that the right kind of music and literature is in your home? Are the books, records, tapes, and things that are necessary in your home?

II. Prepare Your Children for Increasing Pressure

Number two: You be prepared for increasing pressure, and prepare them for increasing pressure.

A. There Was Emotional Enforcement

The pressure is going to come. The pressure came to these boys so long ago. Part of it was emotional enforcement. They had music—the Babylonian orchestra began to play. I have an idea that it was hideously beautiful. Notice, in verse 5: *“That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image”* (Daniel 3:5). The devil is a master musician.

You read about the description of the devil in the Book of Ezekiel, and the Bible talks about how his pipes, or tabrets, were prepared in him from creation. Now whatever that means... I believe it means orchestra—that, when he breathed, when he spoke, it was absolutely like a great pipe organ speaking. Hideously beautiful is Satan.

This was in our paper last week: A member of the rock band Slayer—*isn't that a good name for a rock band—Slayer says the group's music should not be blamed for a Lake City, Arkansas, man's attack of his parents. Eddie Krieger, 24, is accused of using a 10-inch knife and a two-by-four studded with nails to stab and beat his parents in their bedroom in the predawn hours of May the 10th. Police found Slayer's—here's the record—“Reign in Blood”—that means, “rule in blood”—that recording—in a stereo in Krieger's bedroom. The police chief said that Krieger told him that Satan had told him through a Ouija board to offer him a human sacrifice in exchange for the power Krieger believes the rock band members possess.*

You have a generation today who is listening to satanically-inspired music that's being drum, drum, drum, drum, drum, drum, drummed into their heads. And if you get to the bottom line, it says, “Worship the beast—worship the beast.” It does not appeal to the worship of God. Oh, granted—this is a bizarre illustration here. But sometimes it

takes a bizarre illustration to shock us and to bring us to the realization.

B. There Was a Social Enforcement

There was that emotional enforcement, but not only was that emotional enforcement, there was also a social enforcement. You see, I told you when thousands bit the dust there were only three left standing. That's hard to do, folks—when everybody else is doing it the other way, for you to stand alone. I'm going to talk next about standing alone, but to stand alone these boys did not bow, and I want to tell you that, when they did not bow, at that moment they were taller than that image. They wouldn't bow; everybody else was doing it. Now you see, your kids are going into a world where, if they even mention the things that I'm preaching about, they're going to look so square they were born in a box. That's the truth, folks.

In the newspaper, here, in our city last week, there was an article written about a group of people who called themselves *Fundamentalists Anonymous*. These are people who have been in Bible-believing churches, who they call *fundamentalist churches*. And by the way, the word *fundamentalist*, today, has become a dirty word to describe those who believe the Bible. The word *fundamentalist*, today, is only a put-down term; it's a word that's so corrupted that you can't even use it with any real meaning today. They mean, "You're like some wild-eyed, maniacal fanatic who has no brains." When they mean *fundamental*, they mean, "too much fun, too much damn, and not enough mental"—that's what they mean by *fundamental*. But it's a pejorative term that they use to describe Bible believers.

But here's an interesting thing; here was something that was put in dark print in the newspaper—It said—concerning Bible believers: "They have a mindset of seeing the world in black and white, good and evil"—that is, very totalitarian and authoritarian. That is, friend, if you say, "This is right, and this is wrong," that's totalitarianism; that's authoritarianism. And then, he went on to say, "We think it is a mental health problem, and translated in the political arena, it is a democratic problem." And you listen to that. "When you say, Bob Sorrell, 'God says this is wrong and this is right,' you're mentally ill. And besides that, you're standing against democracy. We ought to do something with you. We're either going to put you in a hospital, or we're going to lock you up. You, sir, are a troublemaker. So are you, lady; and you, sir—troublemakers. You're sick—or else, a criminal—because you believe in right and wrong." Do you want to stand alone? There's that emotional enforcement, friend.

C. There Was Governmental Enforcement

I want to tell you, there was that social enforcement; and then, on top of all of that, there was the governmental enforcement. Nebuchadnezzar got all of the sheriffs, the mayors, the princes, everybody there, and said, "We're going to worship this thing; we're going

to see to it that everybody else does.” And when the real Antichrist comes—he’s coming, friend, on one of Hell’s credit cards. You don’t have the mark—“no seal, no sale.” But more and more, you’re going to find the government closing down on Bible-believing churches and Bible-believing Christians—who say, “These people will not bow; they will not worship; they will not bend; they will not budge. We’ll see that they burn.” You prepare them for increasing pressure.

III. Teach Your Children to Stand Alone

Third thing: You teach them to learn to stand alone—just teach them, friend, to stand alone. Now that’s what the modern Christian doesn’t want to do today. Do you know what they would have done, if they’d been a modern mamby-pamby carnal member of one of today’s so-called evangelical churches? I’ll tell you what most of them would have done: They would have said, “Well, in Babylon, do as the Babylonians do.” Friend, let me tell you something: We are not put here to be diplomats; we’re put here to be soul winners. Today, we’re supposed to get along with everybody and everything—even the devil himself. Well, I’ll tell you what else some of them would have done: They would have said, “Well, let’s just go along now; it will give us a chance do good later.” Never do wrong just to get a chance to do right; just do right every time, and trust God.

Or else, I’ll tell you what many of them would have done today: They would have said, “Well, we’ll bow down outwardly; but inwardly, we love God.” Oh no. Jesus said, “If you’re ashamed of Me, I’ll be ashamed of you” (Matthew 10:32). You can’t be a secret disciple, friend. You’re going to have to learn to do as these three boys did, and say, “We’re going to stand—we’re going to stand alone.”

There was an ancient Christian, whose name was Athanasius, and an emperor named Theodosius. Athanasius would not go along with the emperor, and the emperor was perturbed. He brought this Spirit-filled Christian, Athanasius, before him, and he said, “Athanasius, you don’t understand; you just don’t fit in. Athanasius, don’t you know that the whole world is against you?” Do you know what Athanasius said? He said, “Then, Athanasius is against the whole world.”

If you were the only Christian on this earth, would you stand for Jesus? Would you? I mean, if the whole world were against you, would you? I mean, the whole world—you were the last Christian—would you stand? We’d better teach our children to learn to stand alone, because, dear friend, of the increasing pressure that’s going to come.

IV. Teach Your Children Not to Fear the Furnace

Now the last thing I want to say—and I’ll say it very quickly: You’d better to teach them not to fear the furnace—teach them not to fear the furnace. When they put these three Hebrew boys into that furnace, the fire was heated so hot that those who put them in

were burned like crisp bacon. These boys were thrown like chips of wood into the mouth of a fiery, burning Vesuvius, heated seven times hotter than it was normally supposed to have been heated. And then, the king came, and he looked into the fire, expecting to see three charred remains. But he didn't see three; he saw four walking in the fire. The fourth was like the Son of God (Daniel 3:25).

A. In the Furnace is the Cleansing of the Saints

You listen, friend. You don't fear the furnace, number one, because, in the furnace, the only thing that is there is the cleansing of the saints. When they brought those boys out of that fire, do you know the only thing the fire had touched was their bonds? The Bible says the smell of smoke wasn't even in their clothes (Daniel 3:27). Boy, I wish I could say that, when I come home from the barbershop! The smell of smoke wasn't even in their clothes. The only thing the fire burned off is what the world had put on.

Everybody is talking about Christians going through the fire today. Well, we may be, friend. I want to tell you, the Christian world can survive without a waterslide. Don't be afraid of the fire; it will cleanse you and purge you. The Bible says, of the Lord Jesus, *"He shall sit as a refiner...of silver"* (Malachi 3:3). The silversmith controls the heat, and the way he knows that silver is pure is when all the scum is cleaned off the top of it, and that molten silver reflects the image of the silversmith himself.

B. In the Furnace is the Companionship of the Savior

Second thing, dear friend: Not only was there the cleansing of the saint; there was the companionship of the Savior. Jesus was in that fire. Three went in—there were four in there—and three came out. That means that Jesus Christ is still in there. When you get in there, you'll still be in there, mister. You don't have to feel the fire. Joseph of Arimathea loaned his grave to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was buried in that grave and rose again. And ole' Joseph of Arimathea, I suppose, when he got ready to die, said, "Well, I don't have to go to that place. Jesus has already been there. He took all the cobwebs out of that place." Brother, I want to tell you, Jesus Christ is in the fire; He's been in the fire; and He's there. And you'll find Him there when you get there, and don't be afraid.

C. In the Furnace is the Conviction of the Sinner

You'll have the cleansing of the saint, the companionship of the Savior, and, I'll tell you something else you'll have: you'll have the conviction of the sinner. Brother, when you see a child of God—a boy, a girl, a man, a woman, who will not bow, who will not budge, who will not bend, and who will not burn—people who will stand for Jesus Christ and stand up, rather than fold up, I'll tell you what will happen: This world will begin to believe what we have is real, and you read it there.

Conclusion

O! Nebuchadnezzar said there is no God like the God of Heaven (Daniel 3:29). The Babylonian fire god was Ishum. Ishum had no power over Jehovah. But it was only shown when God's people wouldn't worship Ishum.

They put an embargo on Christ in China. When I was getting out of high school, the Chinese closed down the church in China and said, "It's over—no more religion." There were about a million Christians there. Now the Bamboo Curtain has come up a little bit, and there are fifty million Christians in China. Friend, I want to tell you, Christians are like teabags—their strength doesn't come out until they get in hot water.

Don't fear the furnace. Our God is able to deliver us. And you'd better start building something into the lives of your kids to teach them to face the New Age. I'm not going to say it's coming; I'm going to say, friend, it is here—the Age of Aquarius. Saturate them with the Word of God; prepare them for pressure; teach them to stand alone; and teach them not to fear the furnace.

When Faith Is in the Fire

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: July 12, 1992

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 3:1–7, 13–29

Sponsored by: Sponsor

“If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”

DANIEL 3:17-18

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Introduction

Greetings, my dear friend. Today, I'm going to be bringing a message from the Word of God entitled, "When Your Faith is in the Fire." And, what it really deals with is how to stand alone for the Lord Jesus Christ. Not a greater lesson needs to be learned today than this one: standing alone; because *we're twice-born men in a world of once-born men*; and, we're going to be going against the tide, most of the time. I hope it will be a blessing to you.

Thank you, Jim. That's a wonderful old song, and it is so true. For those today who have just said, "We don't want anything to do with those songs, those stories, those Scriptures concerning the blood,"

I remember hearing, one time, long ago, where a young professor from Cornell

University came to a budding young evangelist, whose name was Billy Graham, and that professor said to Billy Graham, “Young man, you’re a gifted speaker, and, obviously, you can have a great future. But,” he said, “I notice in your teaching, you refer to the blood of Jesus.” He said, “That is old-fashioned; it is out-of-date. It is repulsive and repugnant to many. And,” he said, “I just want to give you this word of advice: If you’ll leave out all of that blood stuff, you’ll have a great future.” Billy Graham said, “I determined then to preach on the blood of Jesus more than ever before.” Thank God for that.

*What can wash away my sin?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.*

—ROBERT LOWRY

Amen? Father, we thank You that, one day, a dear precious Savior, the Son of God, took our sin, our suffering, our shame, and our sorrow, and bore it to dark Calvary. And, there, with His rich red royal blood, paid our sin debt. Thank You, Lord, for the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, that “*cleanseth us from all sin*” (1 John 1:7). Oh, our God, we worship You today. We praise and adore You. And, we pray, dear God, that You will show Yourself mighty in this service. In Jesus’ dear name. Amen. Amen.

God bless you. Be seated. And, may I say a word of welcome to our Love Worth Finding family. You’re apart of this fellowship, a part of this team, a part of helping to get the gospel out around the world; and, we’re grateful for you. Thank you for your notes of encouragement. They mean more than you may dream. Thank you for standing with us financially, prayerfully. Thank you for telling others about this ministry. Today, I have a very important message from the Word of God.

I want to be teaching you today—and, actually, our Scripture’s going to be coming from the Book of Daniel—and, I want to be speaking today on this subject: “How to Stand Alone.” Now the noose is tightening; the war is getting hotter. My friend, you’re going to have to learn to stand alone; and, above all things, you’re going to have to be able to teach your children to stand alone, because, if our Lord tarries, they’re going to face a world even more difficult than the one you’re living in. This is a very important message, and I pray God you’ll be ready for it.

Well, amen. Be finding the Book of Daniel, and be finding the third chapter of that Book of Daniel. And, while you’re finding it, let me tell you about an ancient Christian. This man’s name was Athanasius. And, Athanasius was a bold, strong Christian; and, he would take stands, and other people would say, “He is arrogant,” or, “He is stubborn,” or, “He is narrow-minded.” The emperor’s name was Theodosius. And, Theodosius said to Athanasius, “Athanasius, the whole world is against you.” Athanasius said to Theodosius, “Then Athanasius is against the whole world.”

It takes courage. It takes courage, my friend, to stand alone. But more and more and

more, you're going to find that is necessary to learn to stand alone in the day and the age in which we live. And, if it is necessary now—in your office, in your school, on your team, in your neighborhood—if it is necessary now, as the days get darker, how much more necessary will it be for your children? So I want you to learn to stand alone, and I want you to teach your children to stand alone—not out of stubbornness, not out of arrogance, not out of narrow-mindedness, but to stand up for Jesus, and to stand on the principles of God's Word, and to stand for those things that are true, and righteous, and just, and the things that will last throughout time and eternity.

Now let me read to you some Scripture here—Daniel chapter 3, verse 1: *“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up... Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Therefore at that time, when all the people heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and all kinds of musick, all the people, the nations, and the languages, fell down and worshipped the golden image the Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up”* (Daniel 3:1–7).

Now let's just pause there. We're going to pick up the story in a moment, but already you're recognizing it's the story of three Hebrew children who were thrown into the fiery furnace, and which of us has not known that story for a long, long time? We learned it when we were in Sunday School—about these three Jewish boys who would not worship that image, who were thrown into the fiery furnace, because they wouldn't budge, and they wouldn't bow; and, we found out they, also, would not burn; and, they came out of that fiery furnace. And, we all rejoiced in that story. My friend, listen to me. That is not just simply what has been done; it is a record of what God is doing. And, it is not merely a record of what God has said; it is a record of what God is saying. And, you're going to find yourself, very soon, in a fiery furnace—some incendiary circumstance. Before long, you're going to find out that your faith will be in the fire, and it will be necessary for you, like these young men of old, to stand alone.

Now Nebuchadnezzar was an egomaniac, a megalomaniac. He was stuffed full of a sense of his own importance. So great was his ego, so great was his self-worship, that he had an image made of himself, and demanded that everyone would bow down and worship that image. I want you to see that gigantic image as it stood out there, on the plains of Dura, like some missile on a pad, waiting to be launched. And, I want you to hear the command given that everybody is to bow down and worship that image, or else you'll be thrown in a fiery furnace. That's all they needed. When the band struck up, there were thousands who hit the dust and fell down in obeisance before that golden image. Did I say *all*? There were three there that day who would not bow; and they were, indeed, because they stood alone, thrown into a fiery furnace.

Now this has great, great, great relevance for you, for me, today, in this age in which we live, and more, and more, and more relevance we'll have had, because, you see, Daniel is a book of prophecy, and Nebuchadnezzar is a type, a picture, an illustration of the Antichrist. Did you hear that? There is coming a man who will one day rule the world, as Babylon was ruled by Nebuchadnezzar. He will be the devil's messiah. He's called, in the Bible, *the Beast*; he's called, in the Bible, *the man of sin*; he's called, in the Bible, *the lawless one*; he is called, in the Bible, *the wicked one*; he is called, in the Bible, *the antichrist*. All of these are different appellatives, names, and descriptions of one incredibly wicked human being who may now be living, who will one day rule the world, during a period the Bible tells of as the Great Tribulation.

Now the evolutionists believe that man sprung from the beast. Man, we are headed to the Beast! That Beast is the Antichrist. Now you say, "Well, what does that have to do with me? I don't have to worry about the Antichrist. Don't I understand the Scripture to say that, when the Christians are taken out of the world, then the Antichrist will come?" That is true. I believe that. But I want you to put in your margin: "1 John chapter 2 and verse 18." Don't turn to it. Just jot it down, and let me share it with you. The Apostle John said, even in his day, "*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists...*"—did you get it?—"many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18). That is, the more you see antichrists, the spirit of antichrist that's in the world, boy, you realize that you're living in the last time. Now this man is a picture of Antichrist himself. There are three things I want you to see, primarily, as we look at this story.

I. The Fury They Faced

We see the story of these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who refused to bow down to the king's image. And, first of all, as we learn to stand alone, I want you to see the very fury that these boys faced—I mean, the pressures that were upon them.

Now again, let me show you that Nebuchadnezzar does picture and stand for the

Antichrist. Let me give you some interesting things. For example, Nebuchadnezzar made an image of himself, and told everybody to worship that. Put in your margin: “Revelation chapter 13, beginning in verse 13.” Just listen to it now, because time is short, and I’m going to go fast. You jot these scriptures down, and I’ll share them with you. Revelation chapter 13, verse 13. And, it’s speaking of the Antichrist now, not Nebuchadnezzar. This is way back in the last book of the Bible—not the Book of Daniel, but the Book of the Revelation. Listen to it: *“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven this on earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make and image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed”* (Revelation 13:13–15). Nebuchadnezzar says, “I’ve got an image here. If you don’t worship it, you’re going to be killed.” The Antichrist is coming; he’s going to make an image more incredible than the one Nebuchadnezzar made. And, if those people of that time will not worship that image, they will be killed.

An interesting use of the number six is here. Look, in chapter 3, verse 1: *“The king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits”* (Daniel 3:1). How many is threescore? Well, that’s 60. And, the breadth of it was what? Six cubits. And, how many pieces of orchestration were in the orchestra? Look, in verse 5: *“At what time ye hear the sound of the cornet,”*—that’s one—*“flute,”*—that’s two—*“harp,”*—that’s three—*“sackbut,”*—that’s four—*“psaltery,”*—that’s five—*“dulcimer”*—that’s six (Daniel 3:5). All through this thing, you find 666. Well, what is the number of the Beast, the Antichrist, that’s going to come? Revelation chapter 13 and verse 18: *“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six”* (Revelation 13:18)—666.

And so what I’m trying to say is this: that there was a man named Nebuchadnezzar. He is a type, a picture, a prophecy, and an illustration of the Antichrist that will come. The Antichrist will come. One day, he will set up an image. One day, he will use the number 666 to cause universal worship. But in this day and in this age in which we now live, the spirit of Antichrist is already in the world. There are many antichrists. And, if people in that day must stand alone, so must we, in this day, stand alone; and, there will be incredible pressure. Now I want you to see what ole’ Nebuchadnezzar did, so long ago, to try to get people to conform, because this basketball team will face these same pressures; these businessmen will face these same pressures; this choir will face these same pressures. May I give you five? Here they are:

A. **Emotional Enticement**

First of all, there will be emotional enticement. Look in verse 5: *“At what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image”* (Daniel 3:5). The Babylonian orchestra began to play; there was incredible music. You see, what does music do? Music touches the emotions. Weren't you blessed this morning by that music? Music is a gift of God. We have great, great music today. And, my heart was stirred; I worshipped; I praised; I thought; I learned; I resolved, as I listened to the music today. But the devil also knows the power of music. And, Satan is using music today, like never before, to enforce his diabolical plans upon the world. Satan is a master musician. The Bible even speaks of Satan as having tabrets of pipes in him (Ezekiel 28:13). When he speaks, it's like majestic music. Now his music can be hideously beautiful, or it can have a demonic beat, but it is Satan's tool as never before.

We're listening today—or some are listening and talking today—about the obscenity in rap music. I think that's an oxymoron, if there was one. But rap music. Or, think of MTV, which is visual pornography, and musical pornography wed together. See, first of all, Satan wants to capture a generation by music. And, who will deny—who will deny—that there is emotional enticement?

B. **Social Inducement**

But wait a minute—not only emotional enticement; secondly, there is social inducement. The Bible mentions, in verses 2 and 3, that everybody was doing this (Daniel 3:2–3). And, in verse 4, the herald cried aloud: *“To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages”* (Daniel 3:4). Everybody is going to be doing it. And, if you do not fall in line, if you do not step in time, if you do not do what you're told to do, in this day and in this age, you're going to be looked upon as an oddball. We're moving quickly to a one-worldism, a one-world government. The America that we have known is being diluted and being absorbed into a generation and into a globalism spurred on by the global gullibility of those who will not stand alone, and stand for what is right.

C. **Government Enforcement**

Now watch it. There—first of all—there's emotional enticement; there's the music. Then, there's social inducement; everybody is doing it. And then, there is government enforcement—government enforcement. Look, if you will, in verse 6: *“And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace”* (Daniel 3:6). Now the government, in that day, and the government, more and more in our day, is trying to squeeze everybody into a mold, and say that you cannot stand for this thing, or you cannot stand for that thing. “We will arrest you for contempt of court, or we will take away your tax-exempt status. We will do this; we will do that,

because you are in the way of the progress of peace.” And friend, Jesus said, “In the last days, there’s coming a time when those who kill you will think they do God a service” (John 16:2).

There’s a man named Jim Luce who has an organization called Fundamentalists Anonymous—that is, “I was once a member of a Bible-believing church”—now, they use the term *fundamentalist* as a sneer, as a pejorative term—“and, I finally came out; I extradited myself from that form of mind control”—that’s what they call it—“and now, for other people who were once caught up in this kind of an organization, here is a way to liberate yourself and to free yourself.” Now that’s not so bad. You just have to pity those people, and feel sorry for them. But I want you to get the mindset. I want to quote what he has said. Now listen to it. He’s speaking of you, if you’re a Bible-believer, and here’s what he says: “They have a mindset of seeing the world in black and white, good and evil, that is very totalitarian and authoritarian. We think it is a mental health problem, and, when translated into the political arena, it is a democratic problem.” He’s just simply saying, friend, “When you stand up and say, ‘The Bible says...and this is wrong, and this is right,’ you’re mentally sick. There’s a mental health problem, and when it becomes a mental health problem, then, it becomes a democratic problem. These are the people standing in the way of world peace.” Now if you think that’s a joke, friend, you go to the former Soviet Union and find all of those who were cast—not into prison, but into mental health hospitals, because they dared stand up and say, “This is wrong, and this is right; and, we will not go alone.”

D. **Spiritual Defilement**

And so not only was there this governmental enforcement; there’s going to be spiritual defilement. You see, the devil was behind all of this. Look, in verse 6: “*And whoso falleth not down and worshippingeth...*” (Daniel 3:6). Now learn this about the devil; learn this about the devil; learn this about the devil: The devil does not want casualties; he wants converts. The devil wants to be worshiped; and the Antichrist that comes—he wants to be worshiped. Again, Revelation chapter 13, verses 7 and 8: “*And it was given unto him*”—that is, the Antichrist—“*to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:*”—that’s governmental enforcement—“*and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (Revelation 13:7–8). And, that’s the power. That’s what we’re up against, my dear friends. We’re up against emotional enticement. We’re up against social inducement, governmental enforcement. We’re up against spiritual defilement. And, it is in the world everywhere, everywhere, everywhere. It’s in this city—it’s in your city, wherever you are listening to this program today—and you’re going to have to learn to

stand against it.

II. The Faith They Followed

Second thing I want you to see now. The very first thing is what I call the fury they faced.” The second thing I want you to see is the faith that they followed. I want you to see what it was that helped these three young men to stand alone, because these are the things that you’re going to have to have, and you’re going to have to have them in the hearts and lives of your children.

Now begin in verse 13, if you will—Daniel chapter 3 and verse 13: *“Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready at what time ye hear the sound of the coronet, flute, hark harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of the burning fiery furnace;”*—now, notice—notice—the spirit of antichrist here. Notice the contempt he has for God—*“and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?”* Now folks, here’s where it gets good: *“Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter.”* Now when he says, “We’re not careful,” that is, “We don’t have to hesitate. We don’t have to study about it. We’re not worried about it. We don’t have to ponder about it. We’re not careful to answer thee in this matter”: *“If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up”* (Daniel 3:13–18).

Now suppose we’re there, and we say, “Now boys, let’s give you some advice. You’re in a tough spot. I mean, your faith is about to be in the fire. Now fellows, let me just tell you what to do.” Now here’s the average carnal Christian speaking: “When in Babylon, do as the Babylonians do. Go along to get along. I mean, after all, it’d be a whole lot better for you to compromise a little bit here, and live a little longer, so you can do some more good, than just simply to be stubborn, and to stand up. And, after all, Christians are supposed to get along with everybody and everything—including the devil himself. So just don’t stand alone.” But these men did, and how did they do it? By the faith that they had. Now I want you to notice the faith they followed, and, I want you to notice three things about that faith.

A. A Settled Faith

Number one: It was a settled faith. Look, if you will, in verse 16. In verse 16, they said, “We’re not careful to answer you, O king. We don’t have to get in huddle. We don’t have to ponder it. We don’t have to say, ‘Now king, give us a night to sleep on it.’ We don’t have to have a committee meeting” (Daniel 3:16). You know what I believe these boys had done? I believe these boys had already been in a revival meeting. I believe they had been in a revival meeting before they were carried away captive. There’d been a revival in the preaching of Jeremiah. They had God’s Word hidden down in their heart. They already knew what was right. They already knew what was wrong. Let me tell you something, dear friend: There are too many of you spending too much time trying to make up your mind what you’re going to do about this thing, and this thing, and this thing, and this thing. One of the greatest things I have learned in life is *one big decision will keep you from a lot of little ones*. Just make one big one.

Have you ever—you and your wife—gone out to supper one night, and you pull out of the driveway, and she says, “Well, where you wanna go?” “Well, what do you want?” “Well, well, I don’t know,” and you’re steering the car all over the neighborhood like this. You go here, and then you... Look folks, if you know you’re going—to thus and such a place—when you come out, you just turn and go, right? I mean, you made one big decision; then, the rest of it’s just automatic. And, so it is in life, when you make a certain decision, when you say, “This is right, and this is wrong.” And then, when Nebuchadnezzar says, “What are you going to do?” You say, “Hey, I don’t have to think about it. I don’t have to think about it.” Their faith was a settled faith.

B. A Strong Faith

I’ll tell you something else about it: It was a strong faith. Look, in verse 17—they said, “*Our God...is able*” (Daniel 3:17). You’d better believe that! Man, I’m telling you, you’d better believe it. You’d better believe, when he says, “Who is that God that shall deliver thee?” (Daniel 3:15). You’d better believe there is a God who said, “Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee. I will” (Psalm 50:15). My dear friend, that’s the word of a holy God. He will deliver us. If He doesn’t deliver us through the fire, friend, He’ll deliver us in the fire. But He will deliver us.

*Have faith in God, He’s on His throne,
Have faith in God, He watches over His own;
He cannot fail, He must prevail,
Have faith in God, Have faith in God.*

—B.B. MCKINNEY

C. A Steadfast Faith

But here’s the point I want you to learn, and this is most important: That faith that was a

settled faith—we don't have to worry about it; we don't have to consult about it. That faith which was a strong faith: *"Our God...is able"* (Daniel 3:17). Now you listen to me, dear friend—It was a steadfast faith. Now here's something very interesting: In verse 18, he says, *"But if not..."*—look at it—*"But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up"* (Daniel 3:18). "Now God is able to deliver us. We don't have any doubt about that. And, He will deliver us—no doubt about that. But if not, we're not going to serve your gods. We're not going to worship your image." Now what does *if not* mean? Does that mean, "if God is not able?" Not at all. Does that mean, "if God does not deliver us?" No, that's not what it means. It means, "if, in this situation, we be turned to bacon; if, when you throw us like chips of wood into a fiery furnace, we're consumed, if that's the way it works out, fine. Fine. We're still not going to worship your god, Nebuchadnezzar."

Now they don't have any doubt as to God's power. That's not the point at all. They just simply might... It may happen that God, in His sovereignty, may want these boys to die in the flames. You can die in the flames. Now let me ask you a question: Does your faith have an *if not* clause in it? Hmm? *"Our God...is able to deliver us"* (Daniel 3:17). We all like that; we all believe that. But if He doesn't, are you still going to serve Him? Now folks, right now, we're getting down to the gritty part of the nitty, right here.

I want you to turn with me to Hebrews. Just stay there, in the third chapter of Daniel, and turn with me, this time—we're going to take a moment here—and turn to Hebrews; that's back toward the back of the Bible—in Hebrews chapter 11. Now this is very important—very important—in standing alone. You know, all of us like the story of these three men in the fiery furnace. Why? 'Cause they came out. We like it. But now, I want you to listen. In verse 32, a preacher's running out of time here; and so, he says, *"What shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again"* (Hebrews 11:32–35). Boy, now, if we just stopped there, we'd say, "Boy, sign me up. Where do I sign? Man I like that." You mean, why, just victory after victory. That's the most wonderful thing, and we love the stories of Daniel and the lion's den. Oh, how we love that! We love the story of David and Goliath—how we love that! We love the story of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace—how we love that! We love the story of our Lord raising the dead and healing the sick. We love those stories. We love the story of how Peter came out of prison. We all love those stories. But friend, it doesn't end there.

I want you to continue to read, now. And, in verse 35: *"And others..."*—oh boy; it's

the *“and others”* that’s going to get you, right now—*“and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.”*—friend, if God doesn’t give you what you want, He’ll give you something better than you want. Now you listen to me—*“and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:”*—well, you say, “Well, they were put in prison, but they got out after a while.” Oh? Look at verse 37: *“They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith...”* (Hebrews 11:35–39).

You say, “Well, if they’d just had enough faith, they’d been delivered. Oh, no. They got an “A” on the report card, through faith, and they were not delivered in the way that you and I would call deliverance. These three Hebrew boys—they knew. They said, “Our God is able, and He’s going to deliver us. But He may not keep us out of your fiery furnace, and He may not keep us alive in the furnace. That’s okay. We’re still not going to bow. We’re not going to budge” (Daniel 3:17–18).

Now my dear friend, you listen to me, and listen big, straight, and tall, and plain: It is one thing to have faith to escape; it’s another thing to have faith to endure. It’s one thing to be sick, and have faith to be healed; it’s another thing to be sick, and not be healed, and still praise God. And, that takes greater faith; that takes greater faith. All these, by faith, received an “A+” on their report card. They received a good report. My dear friend, it is one thing to be delivered; it’s another thing to die, and all by faith.

And, there had better be an *if not* clause in your deal with God, in your contract with God: “Our God is able to deliver us; and, if He doesn’t deliver us, it’s not because He can’t.” You read there, in the New Testament, where James was put in prison by Herod, and Herod cut off his head. Then, Peter is put in prison, and God delivers Peter out of prison. Therefore, God could have delivered James, but He did not deliver James; but, He did deliver Peter. And, why? Well, you can ask Him, when you get to Heaven. Friend, I just want to tell you that God is sovereign. God is a sovereign God, and God knows what is best. And, God may not always deliver you from your trials, and your tribulations, and your temptations. And, if He doesn’t, what are you to do? Just stand. Just stand, by faith.

Now let me tell you what faith is: Faith is not, primarily, receiving from God what you want. It is accepting from God what He gives. And, these boys—they have what kind of a faith? It was a settled faith—“We don’t have to worry about it.” Friend, it was a strong faith—“Our God is able.” And, it was a steadfast faith—“Even if He doesn’t deliver us, we’re not going to bow; we’re not going to budge; we’re not going to bend. We may burn, but our God will deliver us out of your hand, Nebuchadnezzar.”

Now folks, I want to tell you we just have some sort of fairytale faith, where we think that somehow, at the last moment, the Lone Ranger's gonna come ridin' over the hill and deliver us. That's not necessarily true. But I want to tell you, my dear friend, that there's a God in Heaven who's going to take care of you in the fire, through the fire, or whatever. I love Romans 8, verse 35: *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things"*—in all these things—*"we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"* (Romans 8:35–37). Friend, we didn't win with a field goal in the last two seconds. *"We are more than conquerors through him that loved us"* (Romans 8:37).

III. The Fellowship They Found

Now finally, and very quickly—and, I've spent too much time on the first two points, so I'm just going to give you the synopsis of the last point. I've talked to you about the fury they faced. I've talked to you about the faith they followed. I want to talk to you, for just a few moments, about the fellowship they found.

And, you can go read the story, when you go home. But what happened? They're bound. They're thrown into this fiery furnace. This furnace is heated seven times hotter than it's ever been heated. Why, the men that threw them in are burned with such burns that they cannot survive. There are these three boys down there, in the fiery furnace. Our young people here sing a little musical called *It's Cool in the Furnace*. There they are, walking around in the furnace. After a while, Nebuchadnezzar decides he'll go down, and have a look. He'll see how these three rebellious young men who would not bow and would not budge are doing. When he looks down there, he says, "Hey, wait a minute—didn't we put three men in the fire? Why," he said, "I see four walking around down there, and the fourth is like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:24–25). You listening? Friend, what happened, when they got down there? Three things.

A. The Cleansing of the Saint

First of all, the Bible says that the bonds—the ropes—that were put on them were all burned off. There was not even the smell of smoke in their clothes (Daniel 3:27). I wish I could say that when I come home from the barber's shop—not even the smell of smoke in their clothes. Listen to me. The only thing the fire burned off of them was what the world had put on them. You go through the fire—God's just cleansing you. He knows how to cleanse you. The times you'll grow the most are when your faith's in the fire. I can tell you, that's true.

B. The Companionship of the Savior

Now look, there was the cleansing of the saint; there was the companionship of the Savior. Jesus will never ever, ever, ever, ever be closer to you than when you take a stand for Him, and say, “No matter what anybody else is going to do, dear Jesus, I’m going to please You. And Lord, if it costs; Lord, if I’m cast in the fire; Lord, if I’m hated, castigated, refused, spurned, ignored, killed; Jesus, I’m going to stand for You.” I’ll tell you, Jesus will move in, and lock arms with you, and walk through that fire with you, my dear friend. If you want Jesus Christ to be real, you stop being a candle-legged Christian, Sunday-morning benchwarmer. Start to stand up for the Lord Jesus Christ. There’ll be the companionship of the Savior.

C. The Conviction of the Sinner

Last of all, and I wish I had time just to speak about an hour or more on all three of these: There’ll be the conviction of the sinner. There will be. Oh, Nebuchadnezzar looked down there. He said, “What’s happening here? Why aren’t they burned up? Because their God delivered them?” Those Babylonians worshiped the fire god. That’s what it’s all about. His name was Izbar. Izbar wasn’t like Jehovah. Nebuchadnezzar had to admit it: There’s no God like our God (Daniel 3:29). Do you know when this world is going to start having respect for the Lord Jesus Christ, the God of the Bible? When you and I, by the grace of God, stand alone. You’d better teach your children, friend, because the spirit of antichrist is already in the world (1 John 4:3).

Conclusion

Heads are bowed; eyes are closed; no one stirring. You won’t even begin to stand against the Antichrist—you won’t even begin to stand—if you don’t have Christ in your heart. Are you saved? You can’t teach your children, if you don’t know. Are you prepared to teach your children what’s right and what’s wrong? Are you?

Father, I pray that many, today, will give their hearts to Christ, will be saved, born again, supernaturally, and even, today, will open their hearts, and say yes to Christ. In His dear name. Amen.

Taking a Stand in a Foreign Land

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: March 3, 1996

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 3:1–28

Sponsored by: Sponsor

“If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.”

DANIEL 3:17–18

Outline

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Conclusion

Introduction

Find Daniel chapter 3. And when you've found it, look up here, if you would for a moment. And people do need the Lord. And Jennifer, that was beautiful. And as people find the Lord, and as the Lord—more aptly—finds them, because He is the seeking Savior—*“come to seek and to save that which was lost,”* they go through an experience called being *born again* (Luke 19:10).

A. **The Birthmarks of a Believer**

And being born, they have certain birthmarks. What are the birthmarks of a believer? What is true in the heart and the life of anybody who has received Christ as his personal Savior?

1. There Is a Desire to be Holy

Number one: There's a desire to be holy. If you don't have a desire to be holy, you don't have the nature of God, because He's holy. And if you don't have the nature of God, how can you say you're born of God? There's a desire to be holy.

2. There Is a Hunger for the Word of God

Number two: There is a hunger for the Word of God. You want to know what God has said. There is a consuming hunger to know the Word of God.

3. There Is the Inner Witness of the Spirit

Number three: There is the inner witness of the Spirit. God's Spirit bears witness with your spirit that you are a child of God (Romans 8:16). That's one of the birthmarks of a believer.

4. There Is a Desire to Share Jesus Christ

Number four: There is a desire to share Jesus Christ. I can never be convinced that anybody really and truly knows the Lord Jesus Christ who does not have a desire to share Him. It's inconceivable.

If you're saved, you desire to be holy. If you're saved, you have a hunger for the Word of God. If you're saved, you have the witness of the Holy Spirit. And if you're saved, you have a great desire that others might know Jesus Christ. These are not things you do in order to be saved. You're saved by grace alone. But these are birthmarks of the believer. These are traits of the twice born.

Now the desire to share the Lord Jesus is in all of us, but sometimes it gets damped down. Sometimes it gets smothered; sometimes we are inhibited—and why? Primarily, because of fear—primarily, because of fear. And this is particularly true when it comes to being a missionary. Now I want to talk to you today about, "Taking a Stand in a Foreign Land." And I want to deal with the fear factor, whether it's here or there, next door or around the world. The thing that God's people need to do in these days in which we live is to take a stand for the Lord Jesus.

Now the story that I'm going to read to you in Daniel 3 is a story that you've known since nursery school. It's the story of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. But I want to remind you that that story, number one, is true; number two, it is not merely what God has done—it is what God wants to do in this day and in your life.

Now here's the background. Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon. And in Babylon, there were some foreigners: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And these

young men had been transported into a foreign land, and they became missionaries there in that foreign land. Now Nebuchadnezzar was a pagan king, and he was an egomaniac. And he made an image of himself and set that image out there on the plains of Dura. And he commanded that everybody come down and bow before this gigantic image set out there on the plains of Dura, like a missile down at Cape Kennedy, and worship was commanded.

I begin in verse 1: *“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof six cubits: he set it up in the plain of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king sent to gather together the princes, the governors, and the captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, to come to the dedication of the image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. Then the princes, the governors, and captains, the judges, the treasurers, the counsellors, the sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, were gathered together unto the dedication of the image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up; and they stood before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Then an herald cried aloud, To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up: and whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace”* (Daniel 3:1–6).

Now folks, it's the burning fiery furnace that keeps some folks from the mission field. And it's the burning fiery furnace, or fear, that keeps us from going to our neighbors, next door, to worship. And so worship was commanded by Nebuchadnezzar to worship this image. And when the music began, everybody hit the dust, because the alternative was not too wonderful—except for three young men who stood there. And as preachers have said from time immemorial, “They wouldn't bow. They wouldn't bend. They wouldn't budge.” They just stood there and refused to worship.

Now remember this: Daniel is a book of history, but it's also a book of prophecy. And this Nebuchadnezzar is a picture, a fore-gleam, of Antichrist, who's going to come into the world and who is going to make an image of himself, and command that people worship that image. That day is very, very near. The *Antichrist* means, “one who is against Christ,” and, “one who is instead of Christ,” because the prefix *anti* means both of those things. He comes as a substitute Christ; he is a false messiah. But he is against Christ. He is the devil incarnate. He is Satan's superman. He is called *the beast*, and he wants to be worshipped.

Now this scripture that I just read to you may have far more application to your life than you dare dream. And it certainly has an application to those who are wrestling with

the subject of, “whether or not God has called me to be a missionary.”

By the way, let me just show you how he is a type—a picture—of the Antichrist. We know, for example, that the Antichrist is going to make an image of himself. Revelation 13, beginning in verse 13: *“And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed”* (Revelation 13:13–15).

Now it’s the same parallel—the same parallel. And in Revelation chapter 13 and verse 18, we read this: *“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six”* (Revelation 13:18). Now you have your Bibles open. Look, in chapter 3—Daniel chapter 3 and verse 1—the Bible says, *“Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of gold, whose height was”—what?—“threescore cubits,”—what is threescore? That’s 60. And then, look, if you will, in the rest of that verse—“and the breadth thereof six cubits”* (Daniel 3:1). Go over to verse 15: *“Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet,”—one—“flute,”—two—“harp,”—three—“sackbut,”—four—“psaltery,”—five—“dulcimer”—six* (Daniel 3:15). This thing is riddled with sixes—666.

Here’s this image that bears the mark of the coming Antichrist, and this is a prophecy, a fore-gleam, a picture of what is going to happen. Well, you say, “Pastor, what does that have to do with me? I thought you believed that when the Rapture comes, the Church is going to be taken out before the Antichrist gets here.” But remember what the Apostle John said: *“...spirit of antichrist...already is it in the world...”* (1 John 4:3). And your kids are facing what we would call today the spirit of antichrist, and so will you. I want to give you four thoughts today as we think about taking a stand in a foreign land and, or even, taking a stand next door.

I. As the End Gets Closer, the Days Get Darker

Number one: As the end gets closer, the days get darker—as the end gets closer, the days get darker. You’re going to face pressures in these last day that others have not faced. And what is the Antichrist going to do to try to mold and to meld humanity into the shape and the form that he wants?

A. There Will Be Emotional Enticement

Number one: There will be emotional enticement. Look, in verse 5, again—the Bible says here, in verse 5: “*That at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship*” (Daniel 3:5). The Babylonian orchestra begins to play. The devil is a master musician. As a matter of fact, the Bible describes him as having pipes, tabrets. He was like a great pipe organ—this incredible creature that God created before he became Lucifer. When he spoke, he would fill the universe with music. His very voice was music. And he’s still a master musician. And Satan has used, today, emotional enticement to win a great generation.

I spent about 15 minutes several weeks ago watching MTV. Now folks, I did not realize—I guess I’m naïve, Brother Phil—I guess I did not realize the filth, the debauchery, the pornography set to music that is going into the hearts and minds of young people today. That is the Babylonian orchestra that Satan has set up to entice young people. There is this emotional enticement. And this whole thing, everything that I saw, was built on lust. Young people today do not understand the difference between lust and love. Lust is insatiable; love is easily satisfied. Lust is self-centered; love is others-centered. Lust appeals to greed; love is centered in grace. But young people today have substituted lust for love, and they don’t know the difference.

B. There Will Be Social Inducement

But not only is there that emotional enticement in this story; there’s going to be that social inducement. You see, everybody fell down except these three. And when you take a stand here, or in a foreign land, you are going to be different. They will see you as a non-conformist. And I am amazed and grieved at how this world is being molded into a shape by social inducement.

Jim Patterson and Peter Kim wrote a book. The title of the book: *The Day America Told the Truth*. I read some statistics from these men. They surveyed 2,000 Americans about love, about marriage, about work, about leisure, about religion, and commitment to morals. Let me show you what they found and what they reported in this book, *The Day America Told the Truth*:

Seventy-seven percent of those that they surveyed said, “I don’t see any point in observing the Sabbath.” Seventy-four percent said, “I will steal from those who won’t really miss it.” That’s 74 percent who said, “I will steal.” Sixty-four percent said, “I will lie when it suits me, so long as it doesn’t cause any real damage.” They don’t understand the damage it does to the character. Fifty-six percent said, “I will drink and drive if I feel that I can handle it. I know my limits.” Fifty-three percent—more than half—said, “I will cheat on my spouse. After all, given the chance, he or she would do the same thing.”

Fifty percent said, “I will procrastinate at work and do absolutely nothing about one full day in every five. It’s a standard operating procedure.” As many as 41 percent said, “I will use recreational drugs.” We’re not talking about medicine; we’re talking about recreational drugs. Thirty percent said, “I will cheat on my taxes.” Thirty-one percent said, “I will put my lover at risk of disease. I sleep around a bit; but, who doesn’t?”

C. **There Will Be Governmental Enforcement**

Now when you take a stand here or there, you’re going to be different. There is emotional enticement; there is social inducement; and then, there is governmental enforcement. Now what happened is this: Nebuchadnezzar said, “You will bow down or else...” And again, verses 13 and 14: *“Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?”*(Daniel 3:13–14).

The government today cannot stand people like us. We are a thorn in their side. We stand in the way of what they call progress. As a matter of fact, there’s a group of people in the world today who call themselves *Fundamentalists Anonymous*. That’s like Alcoholics Anonymous. That is, they’re saying, “I was once a Bible-believing Christian, but I am no longer a Bible-believing Christian.” And here is what they say about you—and certainly what they say about me: “They have a mindset of seeing the world in black and white, good and evil, that is very totalitarian and authoritarian. We think it is a mental health problem. And when translated into the political arena, it is a democratic problem.” That is, you are—number one—sick. And—number two—you are standing in the way of democracy, if you stand up for truth. And you see things in the terms of black and white, good and evil, truth and error.

Somebody handed me this clipping the other day. It’s a news broadcast by Paul Harvey, and the title of the article is, “What Did Pastor Joe Say?” And this was February 10. Here’s what Paul Harvey said: “Man oh man! They won’t invite Pastor Joe to the Kansas State Legislature again! They invited Pastor Joe Wright of Wichita’s Central Christian Church to deliver the invocation—and he told God on them!” Now God knows what they’ve been up to. “No sooner had their guest chaplain concluded his prayer than three in the state Legislature were on their feet at microphones protesting, ‘He can’t talk like that to us!’ Representative Delbert Gross considered the invocation gross, calling it, ‘divisive,’ ‘sanctimonious,’ and ‘overbearing.’ Representative David Haley called it, ‘blasphemous and ignorant.’ Representative Sabrina Standifer echoed the indignation.”

Then, Paul Harvey asked this question: “What in the world did Pastor Joe say in Topeka that incited the righteous wrath of these from Hays and Kansas City?” And then,

he said, “I’ve gotten the entire text of his prayer.” Now if you want to hear the prayer that set these governmental officials on their ears and caused them to yell blasphemy, here’s his prayer: “Heavenly Father, we come before You today to ask Your forgiveness and to seek Your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, ‘Woe to those who call evil good’ (Isaiah 5:20), but that is exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values. We confess that we have ridiculed the absolute truth of Your Word in the name of moral pluralism. We have worshipped other gods and called it *multiculturalism*. We have endorsed perversion and called it an *alternative lifestyle*. We have exploited the poor and called it a *lottery*. We have neglected the needy and called it *self-preservation*. We have rewarded laziness and called it *welfare*. In the name of *choice*, we have killed our unborn. In the name of the *right to life*, we have killed abortionists. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it *building esteem*. We have abused power and called it *political savvy*. We have coveted our neighbor’s possessions and called it *taxes*. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it *freedom of expression*. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it *enlightenment*.”

“Search us, O God, and know our hearts today. Try us, and show us any wicked in us. Cleanse us from every sin, and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of Kansas and who have been ordained by You to govern this great state. Grant them Your wisdom to rule, and may their decisions direct us to the center of Your will. I ask it in the name of Your Son, the living Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.” That, my dear friends, stirred them up. Is that not amazing?

D. There Will Be Spiritual Defilement

Well, there’s going to be... Yeah, give him a hand. Praise God. But they see us now as—somehow—as impediments on the road to progress. There will be emotional enticement, social inducement, government enforcement, and spiritual defilement. In verse 4, it’s very clear that Nebuchadnezzar wanted worship. In verses 4 and following, and in verse 6: “*And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace*” (Daniel 3:6).

Now learn this about the devil: The devil does not want casualties; he wants converts. He wants to be worshipped. And you’re going to find that Satan is using everything he can to bring people to worship him in these last days. Boycotts, smear, intimidation, torture, intrigue, sex, psychological warfare—all of these things are meant to bring people to worship Satan. So first thing: As the end gets closer, the day gets darker.

II. As the Days Get Darker, the Saints Shine Brighter

All right, number two: As the day gets darker, the saints shine brighter. That's a wonderful thought. As the day gets darker, those of us who love the Lord Jesus Christ, who will not bow, who will not budge, and who will not bend—whether it be here or there—we're going to shine brightly.

Now what could Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego have done? Well, they could have said, "When in Babylon, do as the Babylonians do," and just go along to get along. And people think that we're supposed to do that today. They think that, today, we're to be diplomats, rather than soldiers, and we're to go get along with everybody—everything—including the devil himself.

There was an early Christian whose name was Athanasius. Athanasius took a stand for the truth. The Roman emperor, whose name was Theodosius, said, "Athanasius, the whole world is against you." He said, "Then Athanasius is against the whole world." And that's the way you're going to have to be. You're going to have to shine all the brighter.

And so he says to these folks, "You had better bow down." Now watch this—beginning in verse 13: "*Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Then they brought these men before the king. Nebuchadnezzar spake and said unto them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?*" (Daniel 3:13–15). Now what he does, right now, is he flings an insult and a challenge into the face of Almighty God.

Now I want you to notice—and I pray God that He will burn this in your heart; I have to keep reinforcing myself with this passage—I want you to notice how these three men answered.

A. It Was a Settled Faith

First of all, I want you to notice they answered with a great statement of faith, and it was a very settled faith. Look, in verse 16, if you will—it says, "*O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter*" (Daniel 3:16). Now what does he mean by that: "we're not careful?" That is, "We don't have to think about it. It's already settled. We don't have to be edgy. We don't have to get a politically correct statement. We are simply not going to do it. It's already settled." Here's the point: Where did these young men get that kind of conviction? What was it that caused Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to say, "King, we don't have to think about it. We don't have to talk it out. We

don't have to be careful. We don't have to use politically correct speech. We're not going to do it"?

There was a pre-captivity revival under good King Josiah and the preaching of Jeremiah. And the Word of God was in the hearts of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And so when they faced this kind of pressure, they were able to stand up, and to stand alone. And my brother, my sister, father, and mother, Sunday School teacher, church worker, we've got to build that into this generation—we've got to build that into this generation. If not, they're going to go down.

B. It Was a Strong Faith

It was a settled faith, and it was a strong faith. They said, in verse 17: "*Our God...is able to deliver us*" (Daniel 3:17). And God is able. We sing that song,

*Have Faith in God, He's on His throne,
Have faith in God, He watches o'er His own;
He cannot fail, He must prevail.
Have faith in God, Have faith in God.*

—B. B. MCKINNEY

C. It Was a Steadfast Faith

But not only was it a settled, and a strong faith; folks, it was a steadfast faith. Look, in verse 17—look at it. This is the key to all of it. He says, "*Our God...is able*" (Daniel 3:17). But in verse 18: "*But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up*" (Daniel 3:18). Now what they're saying is, "We don't have to worry about it. We know He's able to do it. Now if He doesn't deliver us, we're still not going to bow to your image." Now when they said, in verse 18, "If not," they did not mean, "if He's not able." They just simply meant, "if He has a higher or a different plan." God does not always deliver His people.

I had a man in my arms in an embrace a few months ago. I was in Los Angeles. We were spending three days fasting and praying. This man was a very wonderful man from Colombia, South America. And he was used in Cali, South America, to bring great revival. He's a medical doctor. Dr. Bill Bright consulted with this man when he was going to have 40 days of fasting, because this medical doctor knew much about fasting. And he sought me out after I spoke therein Los Angeles. He met me. He said, "I want to meet you. I want to get to know you." He said, "I want us to communicate." And as we talked and prayed, then he gave me his business cards. And I put this one in my billfold. And then, I put this one in my billfold. One is his address in Cali, Colombia, and the other his address in Pinellas Park, Florida. And I put that there with his phone number, so I could pray for him, and fellowship with him, and get to know this wonderful medical doctor who took a bold stand for the Lord Jesus.

A few days ago, I was reading the paper. I read where a man was shot by the drug cartel there in Cali, Columbia, and I looked at the name, Hugo Ruibal. And I said, "Could it be?" And I pulled the card out of my pocket. There was the name of the man that, just a few days ago, I had my arms around, and the two of us were weeping and praying. And I said, "There is a 20th-century martyr." The mob shot him because of the stand that he was taking for the Lord Jesus Christ and because they saw him dangerous to the drug cartel. I carry these cards now in my billfold just to remember and to remind me that our God is able to deliver, but He does not always deliver. And we have to understand that.

And don't think that God has failed, if we go as a missionary and die on a foreign mission field, or if we are harmed for the cause of Christ here in so-called *America*. God has not called us to play it safe. Our God is able to deliver us, but He may not deliver us. Zechariah was stoned. Tradition tells us that Isaiah was put in a hollow log and sawn in half. Stephen was stoned. James was beheaded. Peter was crucified upside down. But here's something very interesting: Herod put James in prison, took him out, and cut his head off. Peter was put in prison by Herod, and an angel delivered him. Now which one was in the will of God? They were both in the will of God.

Don't ever get your theology from circumstances. If you get your theology from circumstances, you're going to stay upset. Faith is not so much receiving from God the things you want as it is accepting from God the things that He gives. And so we might wonder, "What if we were in that situation? What if?" And it's possible, if we tarry, if things change as much in the next 20 years as they have in the last 20 years, it's possible that you may have to seal your testimony with your life. It's possible that some totalitarian power may say to you, "Deny Christ, or you will be eliminated." Well, here's what Jesus Christ said. And by the way, more people have died for Christ in this century than have died for Jesus in all of the centuries prior to this century. Don't think that the martyrs were way back yonder sometime.

What would you do? Put this verse down and never get it out of your heart and mind: Luke 21, verses 8 through 18. If they say, "Deny Christ, or I'll kill you; deny Christ, or I'll rape your wife; deny Christ, or I'll dismember your children before your eyes; deny Christ, or I'll put out the eyes of your granddaughter," what would you do? Don't worry about it—don't worry about it. Here's what Jesus said—Luke 21, verses 8 through 18: "*And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ;*"—that is, "they are antichrists"—"*and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them. But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by.*" And our world is aflame with terrorist acts even as I'm speaking right now. "*Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and great*

earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony” (Luke 21:8–13).

When you are brought, because of your faith in Jesus Christ, God says, “This is going to be your testimony.” Mission historians have said it is the blood of the saints that is the seedbed of the Church—the blood of the martyr. Now here’s what he says in verse 14—this ought to be underlined in your Bible: *“Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer...”*—that’s exactly what these three Hebrew children said. “We’re not careful. We don’t have to worry it. It’s already settled”—*“Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer:”*—and then, here’s what our Lord says—*“for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye...”*(Luke 21:14–15).

God says, “Listen. It won’t be you speaking. When you get yourself into that kind of difficulty for My name’s sake,” God says, “I will give you extraordinary grace. I will give you the mind of Christ and the tongue of the learned, and your enemies will not be able to gainsay or resist that.” Well, you say, “Does that mean I’m going to escape?” No. Listen to the rest of it: *“And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends;”*—now, watch this—*“and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake.”* But then, I love verse 18: *“But there shall not an hair of your head perish”*(Luke 21:16–18)—*“there shall not an hair of your head perish.”*

Now the Lord just says, “They’re going to kill you.” And then, He says, “Not a hair of your head is going to perish.” I feel like saying, “Make up Your mind. Are they going to kill me, or am I going...?” What He is saying is this, folks: that He is the Lord of life and death. And even if they kill you, they cannot destroy you. You’re there eternally with our Lord. And don’t worry about what you’re going to say, and don’t worry about saving your hide or your skin.

Now folks, this is not easy, but here is the point: As the end gets closer, the days get darker. As the days get darker, the saints shine brighter. And when you’re persecuted, it will be used as a testimony. Remember that, when you go back to the office tomorrow. Remember that, when you go to school tomorrow. Remember that, if God calls you to the foreign field. This does not dampen your testimony; it increases it.

III. As the Saints Shine Brighter, the World Sees Clearer

Now here’s the third thing: As the saints shine brighter, the world sees clearer—as the saints shine brighter, the world then sees clearer. Look, if you will, in verse 24. You

remember the story. They were put in the fiery furnace, and the Lord Jesus got into that furnace with them. And by the way, *Jesus didn't come to get you out of trouble; He came to get into trouble with you.*

I'm reading, now, chapter 3, verse 23: *"And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto the counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose,"*—three men bound; now, four men loose—*"walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God"* (Daniel 3:23–25). Now as the saints shine brighter, the world sees clearer.

A. The Cleansing of the Saint

Here's this man—this pagan, this infidel. Now what did he see? Well, first of all, he saw men that were bound walking loose. I'm going to tell you something: The only thing that the fire burned off of these men is what the world put on them. That's all, and that's all the fire will burn off of you. I mean, it'll just simply be purging; it'll be cleansing. And what you think is so terrible—God puts you in the furnace in order for cleansing.

B. The Company of the Savior

But not only was there the cleansing of the saint; there is the company of the Savior. Again, I tell you, Jesus Christ has never been closer to me than in those times when I have been persecuted for His cause. I've not been persecuted very much, but I know a little bit about persecution. And I love what Isaiah 43 says: *"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee"* (Isaiah 43:1–2).

C. The Conviction of the Sinner

But not only was there the cleansing of the sinner, the company of the Savior; there was the conviction of the sinner. Old King Nebuchadnezzar falls under great conviction.

Look, if you will, in verse 26: *"Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were*

their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.” That is, they didn’t even have the smell of smoke in their clothes. I wish I could say that when I come from the barbershop. Now watch verse 28: *“Then Nebuchadnezzar spake, and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king’s word, and have yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god, except their own God”* (Daniel 3:26–28). And then, he made a decree that no one could speak against the God of Israel.

Conclusion

Now what have I said? As the days get shorter, as the time gets nearer, the days get darker. As the days get darker, the saints shine brighter. As the saints shine brighter, the world sees clearer.

Do you know what’s going to convince this world? Not that you and I have it easy, necessarily, but that you and I are not afraid of their inducements, their enticements, their enforcements; that we are able to stand and stand alone; that we will not bow—we’ll stand up.

I want to put it in the hearts of the people of Bellevue, whether you’re standing here in our city, or whether God calls you to a foreign land, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, that you will not bow; you will not budge.

Many years ago, there was a man who spoke in a great assembly—perhaps more people than are here in this great hall tonight. This man was eloquent, but he hated God. He did not believe in Jesus Christ. He was a scholar, but he was infidel. And point-by-point, with logic, and sarcasm, and vitriolic speech, he decimated what you and I stand for. The people were cowards and cowered down. And they were dumbfounded, and they were shocked that a man could speak so against God—against Christ, against the Bible, against what we believe. Then, finally, when he finished, he stood erect, and he said, “Is there anybody who can contradict what I’ve said?” And when he said that, everybody sat there. They were stunned. And then, a little lady stood up, and she began to sing,

*Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss.
From victory unto victory
His army shall He lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
and Christ is Lord indeed.*

And when she had sung like that, others stood—like you stood. They sang the second stanza.

*Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own.
Put on the gospel armor,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls or danger,
Be never wanting there.*

Sing it with us:

*Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone.*
—GEORGE DUFFIELD, JR.

How to Pray for America

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: October 3, 2004

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9

“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:”

DANIEL 9:3

Outline

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Conclusion

Introduction

Would you bow your heads one more time. If there is something that you've been holding onto—if you've been afraid to trust God with it—would you deal with that thing right now. And if you've been making excuses and saying, “Lord, You can't use me,” would you repent of that sin right now. Lord, thank You—thank You—for this great song and for John. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.

Take your Bibles, and turn to Daniel chapter 9. And when you've found it, look up here, and let me tell you that this “God-blessed America” of ours is at a crossroads. In the year 2000, we had an election, and we went through a 36-day ordeal; and, we found out that our nation is divided—almost split 50-50. And then came September the 11th, 2001, when we found out that we, as a nation, were under assault by a deadly, cruel,

and merciless enemy. And we saw that we had come into a time of a clash of civilizations and world values. I say again, we are at a crossroads; we are in a crisis—and we dare not be lackadaisical. Francis Schaeffer said, “One of these days—soon, if we do not change—we’re going to wake up and find the America that we once knew gone.”

Now I am not going to bring a pessimistic message. We are going to disabuse ourselves of pessimism, but we’re going to get serious this morning. I am talking to you about prayer for America—prayer for America—a revival prayer. Our greatest resource is prayer; our only hope is God. Do you believe that? I hope you believe that with all of your heart.

Now the scripture that we are going to look at this morning—let me give you the background for it. God’s people had been taken captive by the Babylonians. By the way, *Babylon* was the ancient name for modern-day Iraq. They’d been taken captive, and Daniel, now, is praying to the Lord and asking God for deliverance. You say, “What does that have to do with America?” Ladies and gentlemen, this God-blessed nation of ours has been taken captive by the world, the flesh, and the devil. And we need a national, moral, and spiritual revival; and, without that, there is no hope. Only prayer can hold back the judgment of God. The raging waters of God’s wrath are furiously beating upon the dam of His mercy.

Now God is a merciful God. But if we do not pray, we are going to get exactly what we deserve. Now I want you to notice the kind of prayer that God answers.

I. We Are to Pray with Serious Concentration

First of all, we are to pray with serious concentration. Look in Daniel chapter 9, verse 3—Daniel says, “*And I set my face unto the Lord God...*”—have you ever set your face? Ever said, “Dear God, I am going to pray with every inch, every ounce, every nerve, every sinew”?—“*I set my face...to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes*” (Daniel 9:3).

Now we pray, but much of our prayer has little effect, because it’s not the arithmetic of our prayers—how many; it’s not the rhetoric of our prayers—how eloquent; it’s not the geometry of our prayers—how long; it’s not the emotion of our prayers—how sweet; it is not the logic of our prayers—how argumentative. Friend, it is the faith and fervency of our prayers.

And when we talk about the nation, we must talk, first, about the house of God, for the time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God. We, as a church, need to repent. Churches across America are playing church. We pray without fasting; we witness without tears; we give without sacrifice—is it any wonder that we sow without reaping? We need God in America again, and prayer is the order of the day; but

not just any prayer—listen to me—prayer and fasting—prayer and fasting. Does that seem odd to you? Does that seem like somehow it is fanatical—that we, in this 21st Century, should pray and fast?

Jesus said, “*When you fast*”—not, “*If you fast*,” but, “*When you fast*.” Matthew chapter 6 and verse 5—Jesus is talking about prayer, and He says, “*And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward*” (Matthew 6:5). Jesus is saying, “Don’t pray to be seen of men.” But then, He says, in verse 16 of the same chapter, “*Moreover...*”—now, He links prayer and fasting—“*Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward*” (Matthew 6:16). Our Lord didn’t say, “*If you fast*”; He says, “*When you fast*.”

Leonard Ravenhill said that, “The Church has gone from its upper room with its fire to its supper room with its smoke.” Now I am not against fellowship. Matter of fact, if you study the history of the Bible, you are going to find out that God had His great feast days. When we meet together at the throne of God, we are going to come to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And our Lord is constantly saying to His children, “Come and dine—come and dine.” But I want to tell you, there is also fasting that is mentioned in the Bible. Now your pastor is calling you to fast and to pray—to fast and pray for America, and to fast and pray for this church as we seek a new pastor. We are to pray.

Now what is fasting? Fasting is not merely going without food. Fasting is going without food—and water, sometimes—for a spiritual purpose. It is not dieting. It is not cutting down on our eating for health’s sake, though we ought to do that. Somebody said, “We live off of half of what we eat; the doctor lives off the other half.” What is fasting? Fasting is giving up food, and water, and certain pleasures for a spiritual purpose. It’s like a spiritual string tied around your finger. And every hunger pain is a reminder to pray and to seek the face of God. God always links fasting with spiritual activities. The Bible speaks of fasting and prayer, fasting and watching, fasting and worshiping.

A. **What Is the Motivation for Fasting?**

Now why should you fast? What is the motivation for fasting? Why should I, as a pastor, call you to fasting and prayer? Well, Daniel prayed. His prayer was a concentrated prayer. It was a prayer with fasting in sackcloth and ashes. Sackcloth and ashes speak of humility before God. Now what is the motivation for fasting? The *why* is as important as the *what*. It is possible to fast for the wrong reasons. Remember what I told you before—what Jesus said: “Don’t fast to be seen of men” (Matthew 6:5).

Now there are certain things that you have to be aware of, when you fast. Number one is self-centeredness—that you want to boast about the fact that you are fasting. Now Jesus warned about giving money in public to be seen of men. Jesus warned about praying in public to be seen of men. And Jesus warns about fasting to be seen of men. He doesn't mean that we cannot pray in public. He does not mean that we cannot give in public. He does not mean that we cannot fast in public. As a matter of fact, in the Bible, there were public fasts that were called for. But don't be like a Pharisee. Remember the Pharisee in the temple? He stuck out his chest, and began to brag about himself, and said, "I fast twice a week." But he didn't know anything about justice, and mercy, and forgiveness. Avoid exhibitionism. Avoid self-centeredness. Avoid legalism. Don't get the idea that you can buy a blessing by fasting. If any of us have a blessing, it's going to be because of God's grace and God's mercy.

I know that the devil has abused this thing of fasting, and that's the reason we don't hear much about it in the modern church anymore—because we are fasting, but for the wrong motivation. Fasting is to be done unto the Lord. Put this in your margin—Zechariah chapter 7 and verse 5: *"Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even these seventy years,"*—now, here's the question—*"did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?"* (Zechariah 7:5). We fast unto the Lord.

B. **What Can Fasting Do?**

Now I said America is in a crisis. Christianity today—our modern American Christianity—is at a crossroads. What can fasting do?

Well, fasting will strengthen your prayer life. Put down, Joel chapter 2, verse 12: *"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning"* (Joel 2:12). You want to turn to God? One of the ingredients of turning to God is fasting. Put down, Jeremiah chapter 29 and verse 13: *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me"*—now listen to this—*"with all your heart"* (Jeremiah 29:13). Half-hearted praying is an abomination to God. Heaven bends an ear, when we pray with fasting. When we fast, we are giving Heaven notice that we are serious—that we are seeking God with all of our heart.

Listen. Fasting strengthens prayer; and, because it does, it holds back judgment. I've told you, and preachers across America are telling us, we are ripe for judgment. But if we fast and pray, God will hold back the judgment that we deserve. Put in your margin, Jonah chapter 3, verse 5: *"So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them"* (Jonah 3:5). Now Jonah had come to Nineveh, and he preached judgment. But the people had rather have forgiveness; and so, they proclaimed a fast. They humbled

themselves before God. And God stayed the judgment that Nineveh was due. Jonah chapter 3, verse 10: *“And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not”* (Jonah 3:10). God said to Nineveh, “I’m going to judge you.” Nineveh said, “No, Lord. We will fast and pray.” And God says, “Very well then. I will not judge you.”

Now Nineveh was the capital of Assyria. It was ripe for judgment. Put this in your heart and in your mind: God had rather show mercy than judgment. God wants to forgive. God wants to show mercy. Have we crossed a deadline in America? Is it too late for our nation? No, absolutely not. Jeremiah chapter 18, verses 7 and 8—listen to this—God says, *“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them”* (Jeremiah 18:7–8). God says, “If I prophesy judgment, if judgment is there, if I’m going to bring judgment—but if that nation will turn, if that nation will seek my face, then I will turn from the judgment that I sought to bring to them.”

Put down, Exodus chapter 32, verse 14: The Bible says here, *“And the LORD repented of the evil”*—repented of the evil—*“which he thought to do unto his people”* (Exodus 32:14). The people of Israel needed judgment, but God repented of the evil. Now *repentance* means, “a change of mind.” God changed His mind. Put down this scripture—Psalm 106 and verse 23: *“Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them”* (Psalm 106:23). May God give us some more like Moses, who will stand in the gap, who will stand in the breach, who will pray and say, “O God—God—have mercy upon America.”

Friend, we are in a cosmic battle, and our weapon is prayer. I love what Ron Dunn had to say about prayer. He said, “Prayer is like a missile. It can fly at the speed of sound. It can reach any target anywhere, and there is no antiballistic missile that can shoot it down.” We need to understand that—that God has prayer.

C. **How Should We Fast?**

How then should we fast? Well, first of all, examine your motivation. Why do you do it? Ask God about your fast. Don’t let me tell you to fast, and that settles it. Pray to God, and ask God. Isaiah chapter 58, verse 6: *“Is not this the fast that I have chosen?”* (Isaiah 58:6). You pray about it, and ask God what He would have you to do. Prayerfully choose your fast. Avoid extremism. Don’t say, “Well, I’m going to fast for X number of days,” if you’re not used to fasting. Set aside a day. Set aside just one day to fast, and find a day when your activities are light. Plan ahead of time that you’re going to fast. A one-day fast is a good beginning. And if you’re sick, or if you’re under medication, or if

you are pregnant, then I would talk to the doctor before you fast. But don't strut; don't brag. But don't be ashamed of the fact that you are fasting.

What I'm trying to say is this: We are to pray with concentration—concentration. Say, "concentration." Get in your heart and in your mind. Too many of us have a take-it-or-leave-it attitude toward prayer. Many of us rattle off our prayers and could not, an hour later, tell you what we prayed for.

II. We Are to Pray with Steadfast Confidence

Now here's the second way that we're going to pray—we're going to learn from Daniel: Not only are we to pray with serious concentration, but we are to pray with steadfast confidence. Confidence in whom? In Almighty God. Face your problem, but focus on your God. Daniel set his face with sackcloth, and ashes, and fasting to pray. But he did it with a great confidence.

Look in Daniel chapter 9, verse 4: *"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"* (Daniel 9:4). Daniel knew that God was dreadful, but He was great and full of mercy.

Then, skip on down to Daniel chapter 9, verse 9: *"To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him"* (Daniel 9:9). Isn't that wonderful? Isn't that wonderful—that to God belong mercies and forgiveness? You see, Daniel prayed, and he prayed a prayer that he believed in God. The basis of our prayer is the greatness of God and the mercy of God. It is impossible to see the greatness of God and the mercies of God and not pray with confidence.

The basis of Daniel's prayer—listen—was the shed blood of Jesus Christ. You say, "Well, I don't see that there." Read verses 20 and 21: *"And whiles I was speaking, and 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; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly,"*—now, watch this—*"touched me about the time of the evening oblation"* (Daniel 9:20–21). Now underscore that—*"[he] touched me about the time of the evening oblation."* What was the evening oblation? It was when a sacrifice was made in the temple of God.

Now pay attention. When Daniel prayed this, there had been no temple for 70 years! The temple destroyed—and yet, Daniel is looking back to a sacrifice that was made 70 years ago in about the time of the evening oblation. When was this evening oblation, anyway? Well, the evening oblation was the same time that Jesus died upon the cross. Evening oblation was about from three to four p.m. In the New Testament, it's called the *ninth hour*.

Now here is Daniel. He's looking back to the time of the evening oblation. I remind you that he's looking backward to a sacrifice. When we pray today, we look backward to bloody Calvary, because when Daniel prayed, not only was he looking backward—he was looking forward. Every Old Testament sacrifice was a picture and a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, who would one day hang in agony and blood upon the cross. The plain message is this: that it is the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, that cleanseth us from all iniquity.

But we must pray with confidence. Do you have confidence that God can save us as a nation? Do you? Do you have confidence that God can change your life? Can you have confidence that we can have that victory in Jesus that we sang about, or is it just a song? All of the Old Testament offerings pointed to Jesus, and I don't stutter or stammer when I tell you that. Pray! Pray with concentration; pray with confidence.

III. We Are to Pray with Sincere Confession

Number three: Pray with sincere confession—sincere confession. Look in chapter 9, verses 4 through 7: *“And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession...”*—underscore that—*“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”* (Daniel 9:4–7). Sin brings judgment; confession brings forgiveness. Now we must confess.

And then, look, if you will, in Daniel chapter 9 and verse 20: *“And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin”*—now, watch this—*“and the sin of my people Israel...”* (Daniel 9:20). Daniel confessed his sin—personal sin; and, Daniel confessed national sin.

Now if you read the story of Daniel in the Bible, you'll not find one sin ever marked up against Daniel there. But because God didn't mark it up—it's not recorded in the Bible—doesn't mean that Daniel never sinned. The Bible says, *“if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”* (1 John 1:8). So there's not a mother's child that is in this building that doesn't need to pray and confess his or her sin, as we sin or while we sin. But thank God, *“if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9). Not

some; there is *no* sin—none, none, none—that is beyond God’s forgiveness: rape, murder, pillage, abortion, sodomy. “*He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*”

And Daniel prayed for forgiveness for personal sin. But now listen carefully—he also prayed for the forgiveness of national sin. Now these were not sins that Daniel had committed, per se, but this is what I call *identification prayer*. He identified himself with a nation, and he said, “O God, my nation has sinned. God have mercy.” You can identify with this nation and pray for this nation, because the sinful, wicked people of this nation are not going to pray for themselves.

What kind of a confession should we make concerning America?

A. We Need to Confess Our Greed

First of all, we need to confess our greed—our greed. We are a materialistic nation. We know more about Wall Street and Madison Avenue than we know about the prophet Daniel.

B. We Need to Confess Our Neglect of the Poor

And then, we need to pray and ask God to forgive us for the neglect of the poor. We have bread enough, and to spare, and we are spending money on all kinds of things and have forgotten the poor and the needy. May God have mercy upon us!

C. We Need to Confess Our Racism

We need to ask God to forgive us as a nation for our racism—for thinking that, because of the color of our skin, we are better than any other of God’s children. Racism has divided our country.

D. We Need to Confess Our Sexual Immorality

We need to repent of the sexual immorality of this nation. If Hollywood wants you to go see a film, they advertise it as sexy, as immoral, as triple X; and then, the people flock in to feed on garbage. Our modern movie stars have faces like angels and morals like alley cats. But the people today sit in their home and get their entertainment by watching sexual immorality.

E. We Need to Confess Our Merciless Killing of the Unborn

America needs to repent of the merciless killing of the unborn. We need to repent of that; say, “God have mercy upon us.”

F. We Need to Confess the Godless Humanism that Has Invaded Our Schools

We need to repent of the godless humanism that has invaded and pervaded our schools. Yes, personal confession—do yours. There’s no time for finger pointing; it’s time for repentance and national confession. Identify yourself with this nation. Understand that we are a God-ordained nation. No nation ever had such a Christian

beginning as America; but now, we're turning from our faith and our freedoms that are quickly receding over the horizon.

IV. We Are to Pray with Spiritual Concern

Number four—number four: We are to pray, brothers and sisters, with spiritual concern—with spiritual concern. What were Daniel's concerns, when he prayed? Number one: the removing of guilt. And number two: the restoration of glory.

A. The Removing of Guilt

It's very simple—he wanted the guilt removed. Look, if you will, in verse 16: *“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”* (Daniel 9:16).

Did you know that America is becoming one of the most hated nations on the face of the earth? Why is that? Because we have so much and have done so little with it. They look at America, and what they know about America is our movies that we present overseas. What they know about America is our military might. What they know about America is our materialism, and they call us “the Great Satan.” Now what we need to pray is, “God, cleanse us; restore us; revive us; renew us; refresh us. We need revival in America. Remove our guilt.”

B. The Restoration of Glory

But there is another thing that he prayed for. Listen. He was concerned not only about the removal of guilt, but the restoration of glory. Look in Daniel 9, verse 17: *“Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications,”*—now, watch—*“and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate,”*—now, underscore this phrase—*“for the Lord's sake”* (Daniel 9:17). And then, Daniel 9, verse 19: *“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not,”*—now listen—*“for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name”* (Daniel 9:19).

Do you pray for the glory of God? Do you know what most of us want? We want to have revival so we can return to our own ways, so we can go back again, one more time, once God gets us out of the difficulty we're in. Do you have a burning yearning in your heart for the glory of God? I do. I want to see God's glory spread over this land. I want to see God do something again that cannot be explained by the pundits on television and the news anchors. I want something that cannot be explained by technology, personality, propaganda, or persuasion. I want the glory of God—the removal of guilt and the glory of God. That ought to be the concern of our prayers for

America. That, ladies and gentlemen, is revival: not for Bellevue's sake, not for our denomination's sake, not for America's sake—but for the glory of God.

Conclusion

Now look up here, and let me tell you something. It is prayer time in America. Would you agree? It is prayer time in America. And I'm going to tell you something else: It is prayer time in Bellevue Baptist Church. We are facing a coming election, and we are seeking a new pastor. And this church needs to be a church of prayer and fasting. Now again, I want to ask you, are you on praying ground? James chapter 5 and verse 16 says, "*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*" (James 5:16). Thank God for that.

Bow your heads in prayer. Heads are bowed, and eyes are closed. And if you don't have a heart inclined to prayer, would you ask God to give you one? Would you ask God to work on your own heart? You've been caught up with the toys and the trivialities of this world—the pride and the pleasure. Would you ask God, "O God, speak to my heart; don't let me wonder about what God is saying to someone else, but speak, O God, to my heart this morning; O God, send revival; let it begin in me; then, Lord, let it move into my family, and into my class, into this dear church, into this city, and into this world"?

Now while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, if you're a patriot, the most patriotic thing you can do is not say, "My country, right or wrong," but it is to give your heart to Jesus Christ—to get saved, to have your sin forgiven. But there is a deeper reason than patriotism for doing that: There is a death to die; there is a judgment to face. Soon and very soon, you will stand face-to-face with Almighty God. You do not want to rise in the resurrection and face a God in the judgment that you do not know with sin unforgiven. You need to be saved.

Now while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, I want to explain to you, one more time, that salvation is on the basis of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. He is God's Son. He stepped out of Heaven. He suffered, bled, and died in your place, and with His blood He paid the full price for your sin. And therefore, God is willing and able to forgive your sin on the basis of what Jesus Christ did on the cross. But that has no application to you; it only increases your judgment, if you neglect it, refuse it, or reject it. Would you like to be saved? Would you? I mean, really saved. I'm not just talking about joining a church or getting religion. Would you like to be saved—twice born? Would you? The Bible says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31).

May I guide you in a prayer? Make this your prayer, if you can: "Dear God, I know that You love me. I know that You had rather forgive me than judge me. You're a God of mercy and a God of forgiveness. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die for me

on that cross. Jesus, thank You for Your shed blood for me. And now Lord Jesus, this morning, right where I am, in this seat, right now, I open my heart. I receive You into my life as my Lord and Savior, and I give my life back to You to serve You in any way that You call upon me. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Save me, Jesus.” Did you pray that prayer? Then, pray this prayer: “Thank You for doing it. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be; and, help me, Lord Jesus, never, never to be ashamed of You. Give me the courage to make this public. In Your name I pray. Amen.”

A Prayer for America

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: January 9, 1991

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:1–3

“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”

DANIEL 9:3

Outline

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I. The Prompting of the Prayer

II. The Pursuit of the Prayer

III. The Petition of the Prayer

Conclusion

Introduction

Now, I want you to take your Bibles tonight and turn, if you will please, to the book of Daniel, Daniel chapter 9. Daniel was up against Babylon, modern-day Iraq. Daniel was in a time of crisis. And Daniel did what our congregation is going to do tonight. He went to the Lord in prayer. And he prayed, primarily, for understanding. You see, an understanding man prays, and a praying man gets understanding.

Read with me Daniel 9, the first two verses. “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 years whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”

Now, Daniel is turning to God in prayer, and he says in verse 3: “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer....”

I. The Prompting of the Prayer

Let me give you a simple outline tonight. The first thing I want you to see is what I’m going to call the prompting of this prayer. What was it that caused Daniel to set his face to seek the Lord?

Verses 1 and 2 tell us he’d been reading the books. Well, what books has he, had he been reading? It’s obvious. He was reading the Old Testament prophets. He says, “I

was studying the book of Jeremiah.” And as Daniel was studying the book of Jeremiah, Daniel read where God had a plan for His people who were captive in Iraq. They were in Babylon. And God showed Daniel, through Jeremiah, that He had a seventy year program for the Jews, seventy years of captivity. And, by the way, you might want to put in your margin Jeremiah chapter 25, verses 11 and 12. And this is what God said through Jeremiah: “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 also 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.”

God said to Daniel through Jeremiah, “I’m going to judge Iraq.” Now He didn’t call it Iraq because today it’s called Iraq. Then it was called the land of the Chaldeans or Babylonia. The name has only been changed to protect the guilty. But, ah, it’s, it’s the same country.

Now, Daniel is in a crisis, and he’s praying. But why was he praying? What prompted his prayer? Well, what prompted his prayer was the Word of God. He was reading the Word of God and he saw where God had a blueprint, God had a program, God had an outline, God had a prophecy, and God had prophesied seventy years, and seventy years were almost up. That is, Daniel knew that he was living at the end of an age. And he was asking God for wisdom.

Now, what do I learn out of that? I learn this: That Bible study and prayer rise and fall together. I really don’t believe that your study life is much greater than your prayer life and vice versa. When you read the Word of God, God is speaking to you. And when you pray, you’re speaking with God. And it ought not to be a one-sided conversation from either side. A wise man learns how to turn prophecy into prayer. We are living on the threshold of Armageddon, I truly believe, and we need, therefore, to learn how to take Bible prophecy, just as Daniel did so long ago, and turn Bible prophecy into prayer.

Now, I can show you instances in the Bible where not only Daniel turned prophecy into prayer, but in many places.

For example, in, don’t turn to these, but in Matthew chapter 6 and verse 10 our Lord taught us to pray, “Thy kingdom come and Thy will be done.” Well, if God’s going to do something, why should we pray about it? God said to Daniel, “Daniel, I’m going to do this seventy years,” and yet Daniel prayed about it. Why, if I know that God’s kingdom is going to come, should I pray for God’s kingdom to come? Because He tells me to. I know that Jerusalem is going to have peace, no doubt about it, and yet the Bible says in Psalm 22, verse 6: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.” I know that, ah, there are certain things that God has prophesied that He’s going to do, and yet still God wants us to pray about those things. We know, for example, that Jesus is going to come, and yet the

apostle John prayed in Revelation chapter 22 and verse 20: “Amen, even so come, Lord Jesus.”

And so, the prompting of Daniel’s prayer was this: Daniel was reading the Word of God. It was a time of crisis. He knew that he was living at the end of an age and it caused him to pray.

II. The Pursuit of the Prayer

Now I want you to see not only the prompting of his prayer, but I want you to see the pursuit of that prayer. I want you to see how Daniel prayed.

For example, he prayed with resolve. Look in verse 3: “And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications—are you listening to this next word?—with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”

Somebody has called fasting “the weeping of the soul.” May I say that fasting is a lost art in America in most of our Baptist churches and churches of other denominations, but fasting is one of the clearest taught doctrines in all of the Word of God, and specially in time of crisis. Let me give you some verses just to jot in your margin.

Ezra chapter 8, verses 21 through 23. Ezra and his people were in a predicament. And he said, “Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way; because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this: and he was untreated of us.” I dare say that most of the people in this auditorium have never practiced fasting with consistency.

Nehemiah chapter 1 and verse 4. Nehemiah was facing a crisis. And Nehemiah said, “And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven.”

Jehoshaphat was faced with an enemy. Second Chronicles chapter 20 and verse 3: “And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast through all Judah.”

Well, you say, “Adrian, that was Old Testament.” Well, listen to Matthew chapter 6, verses 16 and 17, the words of Jesus who said, “Moreover when you fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest—it’s obvious that Jesus expected us to be fasting—anoint thine head and wash thy face...” Fasting is not just going hungry, and it’s not just a good way to lose weight

after we stuffed ourselves at Christmas. Fasting is the affliction of the soul for discipline and determination to humble ourselves before God and to seek His face. It's very obvious that when Daniel prayed he prayed with resolve.

Secondly, he prayed not only with resolve, but he prayed with reflection. That is, he thought about God when he prayed. You know what prayer really is? It's just, it's just a response to the character of God.

Look, if you will, in verse 4: "And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said—listen to it—O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments." Look, if you will, in verse 7: "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as it is this day; to the men of Judah, and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to 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."

Look, if you will in verse 9: "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him."

Look in verse 14: "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."

In all of these verses, verse 4, verse 7, verse 9, and verse 14, Daniel talks about his sin and their sin and God's righteousness, God's holiness, God's mercy, God's greatness. You see, Daniel's prayer was not a flippant prayer. It was one of resolve. It was one of reflection as he thought about who God is, what God does.

Not only was it a prayer of reflection; it was a prayer of repentance. Look again in verse 4: "And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession..." Look in verse 5: "We have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments." Look in verse 20: "And while I was speaking, and 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."

He was confessing personal sin and national sin. Why? So many times we think, and I don't know whether George Bush feels this way or not—I hope not. But we think if we can just pray that God will hear our prayer. My dear friend, it is not so. Prayers of a wicked people anger God. They make the matter worse. It's an affront to God. Prayer becomes an abomination to God. The Bible says in Psalm 66 and verse 18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." The Bible says in Proverbs 15, verse 29: "The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous." Again, God says, "He that turns away his ear from the hearing of the law, his prayer shall be an

abomination.” The psalmist said, “Lord, how long will you be angry at the prayers of your people?”

Have you ever thought about your prayer rather than getting God’s mercy, stirring up God’s anger? There’s nothing that angers God more than for a people stuffed full of sin and self to be imploring God to do for them something good when they stand in need of judgment. Confessed sin will be forgiven, but it must be confessed. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”

I’ve talked to you about the prompting of the prayer. Daniel had been reading the Word of God and he knew something of the urgency and the emergency of the times in which he was living. Most of the people in America don’t know what you know. They don’t have the background in the Word of God that you have.

III. The Petition of the Prayer

Now I want you to think not only about the prompting of this prayer, and I want you to think not only about the pursuit of this prayer, but I want you to think about the very petition itself. I want you to see what he prayed for.

Look, if you will, in verse 16: “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 what he’s praying for, first of all, here is for removal of guilt. “O God, O God, our sins have risen up in Your face. And O God, we’re praying, we’re praying. Turn Your anger and Your fury away.”

Our enemy is not Saddam Hussein; our enemy is God! I’m not afraid of Hussein. I’m afraid of God! I’m telling you that God is going to judge America. We can’t keep on selling dope, printing pornography, and killing babies and singing, “God Bless America” at the same time. God’s fury is turned against this nation.

And Daniel is standing in the gap. He’s saying, “O God, remove our guilt.” And then, he’s praying, “Lord, restore Your glory.” And I want you to see the, the two thrusts of this prayer.

In verse 16, he’s praying, “Lord, remove our guilt.” And in verse 17, listen to it. “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 (now watch it) for the Lord’s sake.” Not for America’s sake. Not for Israel’s sake. Not for the denomination’s sake. Not for Bellevue’s sake. Not for my sake, but for His sake. “O my God, incline Thine ear and hear me. 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 righteousnesses, 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.”

What a great man was Daniel. Most of us are asking God to get us out of the mess we're in so we can have big cars to drive and not have to cut back on our air conditioning and not see the Stock Market tumble like it did today. How many people in America are consumed for the glory of God? Very few. Daniel was. Daniel says, “God, for Your sake, for Your name, do it!” I have a burning in my heart for the name of our God to be exalted in this land. He's been stepped on, blasphemed, ridiculed. That's the petition.

I want you to think not only about the petition of this prayer, but the power of this prayer. Look, if you will, in verse 20. Oh, I love this part. “And while I was speaking and 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; Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning—Gabriel, you know, is the angel—being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth...” Said, “Daniel, you've been praying. But from the time you started praying your prayer was heard.” Don't you love that? Let me give you a verse to put in right there at the margin. Isaiah 65, verse 24: “And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.” I love that. I love that. Daniel's been praying this whole prayer. And before he ever gets finished the prayer, Gabriel comes and says, “Daniel, I just want you to know, son, the minute you started praying, God heard you. God saw your heart. God has answered your prayer.”

Do you know why God answered his prayer? He prayed on the basis of the shed blood. I'm talking to you now about the power of his prayer. Look, if you will, in verse 21. The Bible says, “He touched me about the time of the evening oblation.” Do you know what that means? What is the evening oblation? If you have a King James, that's what I have. The evening sacrifice, yours may say, or the evening offering. What is this? In the temple, there was a time for the offering of the sacrifice. It was the time called the evening oblation. It was between three and four pm in the afternoon. That's when the animals were slain. They also called it the ninth hour.

Now, there was no temple in Babylon. There was no altar in Babylon. There was no sacrifice made. As a matter of fact, it had been almost seventy years since a sacrifice had been made. And yet, Daniel says, “I was praying at the time of the evening sacrifice.” That is, “I was praying on the basis of a sacrifice made a long time ago. I'm linking my prayer with that sacrifice.” May I tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that Jesus died exactly the same hour!

You take your Bible and turn to Matthew 27, verse 46: “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is, to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” The same hour that old Daniel was praying, only Daniel was praying before the fact of Jesus’ death and after the time of those animal sacrifices.

The prayer of Daniel, like my prayer and your prayer and any prayer that has ever been offered, will only get to heaven on the basis of a blood sacrifice. Whether that sacrifice was made seventy years ago in Daniel’s case, or two thousand years ago in our case, we need to link our prayer with Calvary.

Conclusion

Do you know what real intercession is? Real intercession is the Holy Spirit of God taking a desire in the heart of the Father and putting that desire into our heart, and then sending it back to heaven in the power of a blood sacrifice. Let me give you a verse that spells that out. Hebrews chapter 10, verses 19 and following: “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, for by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.” That was the power of Daniel’s prayer, a bloody sacrifice.

Well, folks, Jim Baker has talked with the Iraqi representative. They had a stalemate. They may talk again in the morning. If war will bring this nation to her knees, maybe we’ll be blessed with a war. But what a price to pay!

I like the 4th of July, and I like to sing, “I’m Just a Flag-Waving American,” but I don’t feel like singing that tonight. Folks, this is not the land of the free and the home of the brave. This is a rotten, stinking, filthy nation that’s forgotten God! And we’re right for judgment. Forget Saddam. He’s just one of a thousand of the devil’s henchmen. It’s prayer time in America.

A Prayer for America

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: September 30, 2001

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:1–14, 17–19

“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.”

DANIEL 9:3

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Introduction

Take your Bibles and find the Book of Daniel chapter 9. As you're turning, may I tell you that our nation is in crisis. Prayer is our greatest resource. God is our sure defense and our hope. The prophet Daniel is our guide today, because Daniel prayed in a time of national calamity, and God heard his prayer. And we're going to be thinking, studying, about the prophet Daniel under the subject "A Prayer for America."

Notice the first two verses: *"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 years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."* Now here's the key verse: *"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 the 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, and to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee"* (Daniel 9:1–8).

Now we'll get into this later, but let me just set it up by telling you that Daniel had been reading the prophet Jeremiah, and the prophet Jeremiah had told how God was going to bring against His ancient people the Babylonians. Babylon, today, is known as *Iraq*, and they would go through an ordeal, but God would have a plan for them; and, that God would bring them back again into the land, and God would restore them. Right away, we learn that God does bring judgment upon sin. Right away, we learn that God has a plan, and His plan sometimes takes a long time to work out. As somebody said, "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceedingly fine." And God may seem to let evil succeed, but it is only temporary.

Now ladies and gentlemen, listen to me. The hour is desperate. It is time that the saints of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ wake up and be called to serious prayer, because only believing, repenting prayer can hold back the floodtides of judgment and sin, and release the cleansing power of the Lord Jesus Christ upon our personal lives and our nation. Now I want to help you today to pray, and I am calling our church to

prayer in a very special way—not ordinary prayer, but extraordinary prayer. And everything that I’m saying to you, I’m saying to myself. And I’ve labored over this message; I’ve prayed over it; I’ve thought about what it means to me. And I’m not saying anything to you that I will not say to myself; I’m not asking of you anything that I’m not willing to do, but I want to help you to learn how to pray—not just ordinary prayer, but prayer that can touch the heart of God.

I. We Are to Pray with Serious Concentration

I want to give you some principles. Principle number one is this: We are to pray—now listen—we are to pray with serious concentration. Now I’ve chosen my words carefully, so you might want to write them down. We are to pray with serious concentration. Look, if you will, in verse 3. Daniel said, *“And I set my face…”*—now listen to that; don’t let that slip by—*“I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes”* (Daniel 9:3).

Have you ever set your face in prayer? Have you ever desperately sought the Lord? Many of us could not even remember what we prayed for this morning or last night. We rattle off our little prayers, “Now I lay me down to sleep,” but have you really set your face to prayer? You see, friends, it’s not the arithmetic of your prayers—how many prayers you prayed; it’s not the rhetoric of your prayer—how eloquent or beautiful it may be; it’s not the geometry of your prayer—how long your prayer may be; it is not the emotion of your prayer—how sweet and juicy your prayer is; it’s not the logic of your prayer—how argumentative your prayer; it is the faith and fervency of your prayer—prayer that gets to God. We’re playing church, friend. We witness without tears. We can pray without fasting. Is it any wonder that we sow without reaping and we have so little power in our lives?

Prayer and fasting is the order of the day. Look again, if you will, in this passage of Scripture—verse 3: *“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting”* (Daniel 9:3). Now if you don’t mind writing in your Bible, just underscore that phrase, “with fasting.” “Now that’s Old Testament,” you say, but Jesus expects us, in New Testament times, to pray. Put in your margin, Matthew chapter 6 and verse 5: *“And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward”* (Matthew 6:5).

In the time of Jesus, the religious leaders would put on their long flowing robes and stand out on the street corners and pray, so people could see them pray, and say, “My, isn’t he a holy man?” Jesus said, “Don’t be like that. When you pray, enter into your closet to pray.” And then, in Matthew chapter 6, verse 16: *“Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they*

may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward” (Matthew 6:16). Jesus, in this passage of Scripture, assumed that we would fast, just as He assumed that we would pray. But we would fast and pray—not to be seen of men; we would fast and pray with the right motivation.

Now the modern church knows very little about fasting. One man said, “We have gone from the upper room with its fire to the supper room with its smoke.” Now I’m not against fellowship; I’m not against church suppers. Jesus had some of the sweetest times in fellowship around the table. But what do we know about fasting? What is fasting? Let me tell you what fasting is: Fasting is going without food and/or water and other pleasures for a spiritual purpose. Now fasting is not merely cutting down on food, or going without food, to lose weight, or for health purposes. Now it wouldn’t hurt us to do that. Somebody said, “We live off of half of what we eat; the doctor lives off the other half.” It wouldn’t hurt us at all to do without some food for physical reasons, but that’s not what fasting is. Fasting is not merely going hungry. The Bible always links fasting with spiritual purposes—for example: watching and fasting; prayer and fasting; worshiping and fasting.

A. **Motivations for Fasting to Avoid**

Why do you fast? The *why* is as important as the *what*. You know, it’s possible, as Jesus taught, to fast for the wrong motivation. I’m going to call you to fast; I’m calling myself to fast for America. But let’s check up on our motivation. Here are some things to avoid:

1. Avoid Exhibitionism

Avoid exhibitionism. Jesus said, “There were some who fasted to be seen of men” (Matthew 6:16). Now don’t be ashamed of the fact that you fast, but don’t fast for exhibitionism—to tell everybody how wonderful you are that you fast. Avoid exhibitionism.

2. Avoid Legalism

Number two: Avoid legalism. Don’t get the idea that you can buy a blessing from God. Don’t get the idea that, if you fast, somehow God is obligated to you, and you become a legalist, and sort of a have a slot-machine religion.

3. Avoid Ritualism

Number three: Avoid ritualism. Don’t fast as a ritual. Some people fast ritualistically. Jesus told about a tax collector, in the Bible, who boasted to the Lord that he fasted twice a week, but Jesus indicated that this man has not the foggiest notion about what real spiritual religion is.

4. Avoid Asceticism

Avoid asceticism. Now the devil would like to make you some sort of a religious recluse

or some sort of a person who constantly goes away often, in caves and mountains, to fast. That's not biblical New Testament Christianity—to make you some sort of a holy hermit somewhere in a monastery.

5. Avoid Egotism

Avoid egotism. Don't get all swelled up with pride because you fast. Again, that publican said, "Lord, what a great guy I am! I fast twice a week." Fasting must be done unto the Lord. Here's a verse—write it down in your margin. You can look these up later; I'm going to read them to you. Zechariah chapter 7 and verse 5: "*Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?*" (Zechariah 7:5). God said, "Now look, priests and people, you fasted, but did you fast unto Me? Were you really seeking Me?" Get your motive right. Your fast must be unto the Lord.

B. What Will Fasting Do?

What will fasting do? I want to mention six things that fasting will do, and I want you to jot them down. We're still under the first point of the message, but I want you... We're to seek the Lord with spiritual concentration; we're to set ourselves to prayer with fasting. Here are some things that fasting will do:

1. Fasting Will Strengthen Your Prayer

Number one: Fasting will strengthen your prayer. Put down these verses—Joel 2, verse 12: "*Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning*" (Joel 2:12). Now turn to God with all of your heart. You see, fasting shows that we have put our heart into it. Jeremiah 29, verse 13: "*And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart*" (Jeremiah 29:13). There's something about fasting that strengthens our prayer. Heaven seems to bend its ear down, when we pray with fasting. When we fast, we're giving Heaven notice that we mean business. Fasting brings faith into focus. It's like having a spiritual string tied around your finger, and every hunger pain reminds you that you're to seek the face of God.

2. Fasting Subdues Self

Secondly, fasting subdues self. Many of us would be amazed at how selfish we are, and how filled with self we are, and what a slave to the refrigerator we are. We don't know how to say *no* to ourselves, and the Bible links pride with fullness of bread. Ezekiel chapter 16, verse 49: "*Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness*" (Ezekiel 16:49)—pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness. Do we know how to say *no* to self? Do we know how to say *no* to our bodies, to our appetite? Do we know anything about discipline?

3. Fasting Will Stay the Judgment of God

Thirdly, fasting will stay the judgment of God. Fasting stays judgment. Sometimes, the wrath of God, and the anger of God, and the righteous judgment of God, is coming against a nation, but if that nation will fast and pray, God will withhold His judgment. Judgment will be stayed.

Here are the scriptures—Jonah chapter 3, verse 5: *“So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them”* (Jonah 3:5). Now you know the story. God had said to Jonah, “I am going to destroy Nineveh.” The Ninevites were living in such a way it was a stench in the nostrils of God. They were ripe for judgment. Jonah, after having that escapade in the belly of the whale, went and preached unto Nineveh; and, the entire city-state of Nineveh repented with fasting. And the Bible says, in Jonah chapter 3 and verse 10: *“And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not”* (Jonah 3:10). Why? Because, they fasted and they prayed. Nineveh was the capital city of the ancient empire of Assyria, but God wanted to forgive.

Let me tell you something about the great heart of our God: God is a God of righteousness, judgment, and justice, but God had rather show mercy than to send judgment. Put this verse down—Jeremiah 18, verses 7 and 8—God says, *“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them”* (Jeremiah 18:7–8). Now He’s not just talking about the nation Israel; He’s talking about nations in general. God says, “When I get ready to judge a nation, if that nation will repent, then I will turn from the judgment that I have determined to send upon that nation.” America is ripe for judgment. We are in the eleventh hour; the clock is about to strike midnight. And we need to say, “O God, hold back Your hand of judgment upon America.”

4. Fasting Will Stop the Enemies of God

Next, not only does it stay the judgment of God, but it stops the enemies of God. There’s a king in the Bible whose name was Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat had some ungodly enemies that came against him, and he was filled with fear. Second Chronicles chapter 20, verses 3 and 4: *“And Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the LORD, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the LORD: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the LORD”* (2 Chronicles 20:3–4). Did it do any good? Second Chronicles chapter 20, verse 29: *“And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries,”*—talking of those countries that came against Jehoshaphat—*“when they had heard that the LORD fought against the enemies of Israel”* (2 Chronicles 20:29).

We're in a cosmic battle. We're not in a battle against flesh and blood; we're in a battle against principalities and powers. But prayer is a missile, an inter-continental missile, that travels at the speed of light. There is no anti-missile that can shoot it down, and it can go anywhere. We can pray with fasting, and send that missile against the enemies of righteousness.

5. Fasting Seeks Guidance

Next, fasting seeks guidance. Do you want to know the will of God—not just for America—for your marriage, for your business? Before I came to Bellevue Baptist Church, when the pulpit committee had invited me to come almost 30 years ago, Joyce and I, wanting to know the will of God, were fasting and praying—fasting and praying. Acts chapter 13 and verse 2—the early Church, *“as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them”* (Acts 13:2). The great missionary movement of the early Church began with fasting and prayer. Have you ever wondered why the early Church grew as rapidly as it did? One of the reasons is, they were serious in prayer. They believed that God could do what they could not do; and, when they fasted and prayed, iron gates began to yield, and the gospel went across that Roman Empire.

6. Fasting Shatters Strongholds

Next, fasting shatters strongholds. People have strongholds in their lives of fear, and bitterness, and resentment, and habits. Fasting can demolish the stronghold that the enemy has put in our lives. Listen to Isaiah chapter 58 and verse 6: *“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?”* (Isaiah 58:6). Would you like to have every yoke that the devil's put upon you broken? Well, fasting and prayer.

C. How Should You Fast?

How should we fast?

1. Examine Your Motivation

Examine your motivation; ask God about it—not because Adrian asked you to do it, not out of legalism.

2. Prayerfully Choose Your Own Fast

Prayerfully choose your own fast. Some interesting things as you study the Bible about fasting: The Bible gives no rules—no rules. It doesn't say when to start, when to stop, what to do, what not to do—so pray about it.

3. Avoid Extremism

Avoid extremism. A one-day fast is a good start. Don't say, “Well, I'm going to fast for 40 days and 40 nights.” Why don't you just try one day—one day?

4. Choose a Day for Your Fast When You Can Give Yourself to Seeking the Lord

And choose your fast upon a day when you can give yourself to seeking the Lord. Remember that fasting is more than going hungry; it is to be linked with prayer, and worship, and spiritual exercise. A normal fast is doing without food but, normally, taking some water; for a short time, you may fast without food or water.

5. When You Break Your Fast, Do So by Eating Lightly

I would suggest to you that, when you break your fast, break it by eating lightly; don't just go out and gorge—perhaps a salad or something to break your fast.

6. If You Have a Medical Condition or are Pregnant, Talk to Your Doctor Before Fasting

And I can't find this in the Bible, but I'll give you a little common sense: If you're on medication, if you're pregnant, if you have particular problems, talk to your doctor about this, and get his advice and permission.

7. When You Fast, Avoid Bragging About Fasting

And then, when you fast, avoid bragging about fasting—then you become like a hypocrite, when you do that.

Now what I'm trying to say is this, friend—listen to me—all of this is under the heading “We are to Pray”—listen—“with Serious Concentration.” Daniel said, “*I set my face*” (Daniel 9:3). We had a staff meeting the other day, and we were saying, “Pastor”—the staff was saying—“do you believe that the interest that we've seen, the renewed interest, will last, or is it just a spasm?” Do you wonder about that? Do you wonder about the day after the attack, and then what goes on—we just go back to our normal ways? Set your face.

II. We Are to Pray with Steadfast Confidence

Now number two: Not only are we to pray with serious concentration; but, number two, we are to pray with steadfast confidence. Now if you don't pray with confidence, forget it. What we need to learn to do in serious times is to glance at our problems, to gaze at our God. Glance at your problems, gaze at your God.

As you listen to a prayer of Daniel the prophet, it is saturated with confidence in Almighty God. I'm going to race through a few of these verses; just scroll down with me. Look in verse 4: “*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*” (Daniel 9:4). What a mighty God we serve! Look in Daniel chapter 9, verse 7: “*O LORD, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces*” (Daniel 9:7). Chapter 9 and verse 9: “*To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him*” (Daniel

9:9). Oh, He's a God of mercy and forgiveness—isn't that wonderful? Isn't it great that we can have that confidence that God does not hold a grudge? Notice in Daniel 9 and verse 14: *"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"* (Daniel 9:14). In all of this, Daniel is talking about God's greatness, God's awe, God's power, God's righteousness, God's mercy. It is impossible to see who our great God is in a time of crisis and not want to pray. Aren't you glad that we have a God that you can pray to?

I was reading, recently, in Ringgold, Georgia—a little town in Georgia—the city council decided they were going to put up three plaques in the city square—I love it. They put one plaque up there, the Ten Commandments, in the city square. They put another plaque up there, the Lord's Prayer, from the New Testament. And then, they put up a frame with nothing in it for those who didn't believe anything. I like that. Friend, we have a great, great God. Say *amen!* We do.

Now do you know what Daniel's prayer was, the basis of his prayer to this great God? On the basis of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. You say, "Well, I don't see that in there." Well, go down to chapter 9 and verses 20 and 21; look at it, if you will—Daniel says, *"And whiles I was speaking, and 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; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly,"*—now, watch this—*"touched me about the time of the evening oblation"* (Daniel 9:20–21).

"Pastor, what is the evening oblation?" Well, the evening oblation is the time when the sacrifices were made in the temple. Now I want to remind you that the temple had been destroyed for almost 70 years, when Daniel made this prayer, but he had it in his memory. He remembered that the priests would go there with shed blood upon the altar—the evening oblation. When was the evening oblation? It was between 3 and 4 p.m. in the afternoon; it's what the Bible calls *the ninth hour*. Well, what is all of this about? It is a prophecy of Jesus Christ upon the cross, when Jesus Christ died upon the cross. Matthew 27, verse 46: *"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46).

Daniel was looking back to a bloody sacrifice. As we pray in the New Testament time, we look back to an even greater sacrifice—the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—and we pray with confidence. I don't have to come to God with my hands filled with the brass of my emotions or the pewter of my work, but with the gold of His glory and the incense of His mighty name. Oh, the confidence that we have when we pray! What a mighty God we have!

III. We Are to Pray with Sincere Confession

Thirdly, we are to pray with sincere confession—sincere confession. Look in chapter 9. I'm going to read an extended passage, and I think this really needs to be read, so I'm going to read verses 4 through 14. Don't check me out, but I want you to listen to the confession that he made:

“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,”—now listen—“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 it is 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 wither 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 forgiveness, 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 thy 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” (Daniel 9:4–14).

Now ladies and gentlemen, people in America need to read the passage I just read. We get all bent out of shape if somebody says that God is judging us because of our sin. Friend, there are several kinds of judgment. One judgment is just a general judgment, where God backs off and lets evil that we seem to embrace come upon us—that's what I talked about the other Sunday, when I said, “God lets down the hedge.” Oh yes, there's coming another day of judgment with far more precision. But here's what I want you to see about the prayer of Daniel—we're talking about a prayer that was sincere confession—Daniel confessed both personal and national sins.

A. Personal Confession

Now as you study the life of Daniel, you cannot find any sin mentioned that Daniel ever committed. Two men in the Bible—I cannot find any sin. I know they sinned, for the Bible says, “*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23). But you won’t find any sin listed—that I can find—against Joseph, or against Daniel. Daniel was a godly man; and yet, he confessed his sin. Now many of you—many of us—may sit in our church and think, “Well, I wonder if those old sinners in America are going to get right with God.” And we look around at the abortionists and the liquor dealers, we look around at the sexual perverts, and we say, “I wonder if they’re going to get right with God.”

You know what a church steeple is? A church steeple is something supposed to point us to God. Have you ever noticed that the closer the steeple gets to the top, the smaller it gets? The closer we get to God, the more we realize how insignificant and how sinful we are.

This is not a time for finger pointing, in America. This is a time for repentance of personal sin. I’m talking about the people in the pews. The Bible says, “The time has come that judgment begin at the house of God” (1 Peter 4:17).

B. National Confession

Personal confession. But secondly, also, national confession. Daniel confessed the sin of his people Israel, and he realized that Israel was in difficulty because of national sin. God had brought the Babylonians against them. Does that mean that God was on the side of the Babylonians? Of course not. God said that the Babylonians were the rod of His anger (Isaiah 10:5).

When I was a kid, my dad, sometimes, would get a rod—not a stick, but a rod—a limber limb off the tree. You ever have a dad that did that? Let me see your hands. Yeah. Used to call it *peach tree tea*, and get one of those limbs. Well, when he was finished with that limb, what did he want to do with it? He just took it and broke it. God said, “The Babylonian is the rod of My anger”—not that “I’m on his side.” “When I’ve finished, I’ll break the rod.” But God brought judgment against His ancient people because of their sin. It does not mean that a holy God doesn’t love His people. My dad used to say, “I do this because I love you.”

Now what are some of the national sins of America that we need to confess? Well, for example, our pride in materialism, our neglect of the poor and the needy, our racism, our sexual immorality, the merciless killing of the unborn, godless humanism that blushes to mention the name of God in public square.

Now I can confess my personal sin and be sure that God will forgive me. First John 1:9 says, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to*

cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). I cannot get forgiveness for national sins, but I can pray that others will do the same thing, when I confess national sin. When Jesus Christ was on the cross, when they were nailing Him up, He didn’t say, “I forgive you,” but He prayed for their forgiveness: *“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”* (Luke 23:34). We are to pray with confession—personal sin and national sin.

IV. We Are to Pray with Spiritual Concern

Number four: We are to pray with spiritual concern—we are to pray with spiritual concern. So many of us pray, but our prayer is a selfish prayer. Most of us just don’t like the difficulty; we don’t like the inconvenience; we don’t like the way that we have been slowed down, or perhaps our bank accounts have gone down, or because we have long lines at the airport, or because we’re afraid for our lives, and we say, “Now Lord, that’s not the way it’s supposed to be in America. We’re supposed to have it easy,” and so forth.

But what is our concern? What was Daniel’s concern? Look in Daniel chapter 9, verses 17 through 19: *“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.”* Would you underscore that—*“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 9:17–19). It’s obvious that Daniel is not merely trying to get out of difficulty; it is obvious that he is just not trying to get everything healed, so he can go back—or the people can go back—to their own careless and selfish lives.

Why do you want a revival? Do you want it for your sake? Do you want it for your family’s sake? Do you want it for your denomination’s sake? Do you want it for your church’s sake? Do you want to have it for your nation’s sake, or do you want it for God’s sake? I mean, is our prayer—is our prayer—as Jesus taught us to pray, “Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth?” It’s not that God is not concerned about our personal needs—we can pray for our bread, our daily bread; we can pray about our trespasses—but, first of all, for the glory of God. When you get your prayers to be a spiritual concern, for the glory of God—and, very frankly, most of us are not praying for the glory of God—but, when we begin to pray for the glory of God, God moves in. God has said, in His Bible, He will not share His glory with another (Isaiah 42:8; Isaiah 48:11).

Conclusion

Now I want to tell you something, friend: It is prayer time in America. It is time for Adrian, for Mark, and for Jim, and for David, and for deacons, and for teachers, and for Baptists, and for Methodists, and for Presbyterians, and Episcopalians, and people who know our God—whomever they may be—to seek the face of God in prayer. Do you agree? I believe that with all of my heart, and I believe we need to set ourselves in prayer. We're going to have prayer tonight. I've set aside the message tonight; we're going to have some other things tonight. We're going to have a baptismal service, but we're coming to God, tonight, in prayer—in serious prayer—and I want you to be here.

Now you might be back in your La-Z-Boy watching something, but I would suggest that you get up and come to the house of God, and that we seek God in prayer, and we pray for America, because I'm telling you—I'm telling you—these are desperate days in which we live. Don't get the idea, because we sit here in an air-conditioned, upholstered auditorium, that everything is just fine. It is not—it is not. We need to set ourselves to pray, and I'm saying, I'm not asking of you anything that I don't intend to do myself. And I want to say, also, that confession is good. I've been lax—it's been awhile since I've done any serious fasting, but I'm changing; and, what I'm asking you to do, I'm saying to my own self. We're to seek the face of God. Now I'm not talking about going around with a long face; I'm not talking about taking the joy out of life, because joy is a part of our strength. Jesus said, "When you fast, wash your face—wash your face and anoint it" (Matthew 6:17), but it is prayer time in America.

Now the Apostle James says, "*The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*" (James 5:16). Are you a righteous person? Were you to pray without a heart given to God, it would be a religious farce. The first thing you need to do is get on praying ground—to be saved by God's power divine. Are you saved? I didn't ask if you're a Baptist, or Methodist, or Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim. Are you saved? Has that burden of sin been lifted? Does God's Holy Spirit live in you? Have you been born again? Have you? If not, you can be saved today—I mean today; I mean now; and I mean instantaneously; and I mean eternally, because Jesus paid for your sin with His blood on the cross. And the Bible says clearly, plainly, sublimely, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). Every sin forgiven, Christ in your heart, heaven your home—if you'll believe on Jesus.

"Oh," you say, "well, I believe in Jesus; I've always believed that." No, no, no—believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; trust Him. The word *believe* doesn't mean "intellectual belief"; it means "commitment to trust." Turn your life over to Jesus Christ. The moment you do it, you become a new person. Oh, you won't be full-grown; you're not going to sprout wings and get a halo. There will be old habits that want to cling on; there will be an old vocabulary that has to go; there will be many things you will have to learn. But

friend, there will be a change. God is not finished with me yet, and I'm so glad. But when I asked Him to come into my heart, He changed me, many years ago. He's still working on me, but I'm heaven-born and heaven-bound.

You need Jesus; you need to be saved. Let's pray together. If you're not sure that you're saved, would you say, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart, right now. I invite You in; I trust You. Thank You for dying for me. Now help me to live for You. In Your name I pray. Amen"?

Praying for America

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: June 28, 1992

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:1–23

“And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:”

DANIEL 9:3

Outline

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- I. The Prompting of the Prayer
- II. The Pursuit of the Prayer
- III. The Petition of the Prayer
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Conclusion

Introduction

I'm grateful for Vacation Bible School if for nothing else than for the joy we've had to teach these young people patriotism. Now patriotism is a Bible virtue. Joyce and I have discussed the matter of patriotism, warning our own children to learn the values of patriotism. As I was speaking about this to Joyce, I'm reminded of something that she wrote in a book entitled *The Secret of a Woman's Influence*. And I've asked Joyce if she'll come tonight and just read to you this poetic prose that she's written and I think so well expresses the heart that every godly parent ought to have, every godly citizen ought to have, and would to God, that our children would have. Joyce, if you'll just share with us these words about patriotism.

Joyce Rogers: “I'm so very grateful to be privileged to have traveled around the world with my husband to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. And one of the most confirming factors of the validity of the gospel to me has been the oneness that I feel with believers all over the world and the love that I have developed for other countries and the peoples of the world. But this is my country, and in my mind I begin to think, where is the line of patriotism to my country and love for the peoples of the world and my obligation to the peoples in the other countries of the world? And a very unique experience helped me to come to write this piece. And let me just spend one minute telling you about it.

Some years back, we made a visit to see our son who was then on the missionary

ship the Doulos. It was docked in Naples, Italy, and I will never forget that first day we arrived. One reason: it was my birthday on January 28th. But that evening at supper, the captain of the ship, who was a United States citizen, sent word to our table that the Challenger had gone down and all the crew had been killed. And the next morning as we were eating breakfast on the ship, I will never forget glancing up and seeing through the porthole there in the ship the United States flag flying at half-mast. You see, Naples, Italy, is one of the largest naval bases in Europe of the United States. And there were many United States ships, battleships and so forth, that were docked there in the harbor that day. It was also during the Libyan crisis, and there were many marines and sailors coming and going. And I found myself, as I would go down the street and see our sailors and our Marines—and Adrian will remember this—I wanted to reach out and say, “You’re a part of me. You’re from my country.” And then I would get on that ship, that missionary ship that was an international ship. It had young people, 350 young people from around the world from thirty-five countries. Their mission was to take Christ all over the world. And when I would be on that ship, I would think to myself, I would be drawn to them, and I would say, “No, I’m a part of them. I belong to them. In Christ, I am one with them.” And that battle began to see where that line was. And these were the words that I wrote:

“This is my country – my country to love, to pray for, to work for. Other countries I love to visit to marvel at their beauty and to be astounded at their past, to wish them a blessing for their future. But this is my country, the land of my birth, the land of my family, the land of my freedom and opportunity. Other families are of great worth, but one family claims my highest devotion and love. Other lands and people have qualities I admire, but one land, one country, claims my greatest loyalty and respect. I know best the weaknesses of my family members, and yet I love them. I long to help them to pray, to strength them, because God uniquely gave them to me. Yes, I know the weaknesses of my country, but I will pray, I will be involved to help change to right the wrong, because God chose my country to be the place where I was born, to be the place where my influence could be felt. I love all the peoples of the world because God so loved the world. Yet God had a plan to set apart uniquely different people in uniquely different countries with different foods and different customs, different speech and different looks. This is God’s idea, not ours. He must have a reason, a purpose for mankind. And even though He loved the world, He chose one nation, one people, and one land to be uniquely His. He had a special purpose, a special love for them. I do not live in that country, and yet to me it’s special. I love to visit His land. I love its mountains and I love its valleys. I love its brooks and its streams. And I love the people who live in that land. They’re called His people, His chosen people. They have a special love for their land, a patriotism, a pride, in their country, this country called Israel. I am inspired by their love

for their land. And my visits to their country have blessed my life and have challenged me. And I long that the people of that land may know my Savior. And I have a special love for those who know and love my Lord. My heart is stirred when I visit other lands, most recently, Russia, at the oneness that I feel with these vastly different peoples. I know that in a sense in Christ I have a bond with them that transcends all others, my family and my country, because they are part of the body of Christ. But though we are one on this earth, we are different, and God planned it so. Different countries with different peoples are God's idea, not mine. But God has another plan for another time in a country called Heaven in the sweet by and by where all the saved will live together, where we'll know as we are known, for God Himself will rule, where the peoples of all the earth will gather round His throne. But until then, I'll be living out His plan for now, working with the people of my country to make this world a better place, a peaceful place, and sharing with them that peace will only come to our country, to all countries, through Jesus Christ, God's chosen Prince of Peace. Yes, this is my country."

Thank you, Joyce. The greatest thing we can do for America is to pray for America. And I want to talk to you tonight about how to pray for America. It's really going to be an addendum to the message I brought this morning. And I direct your attention to Daniel chapter 9. I want to talk to you tonight about praying for America. I am convinced if there were ever a need for prayer, this is the hour for prayer.

Now, you know, we will criticize, and rightly so, the ruling of the Supreme Court, but I believe, as completely, totally, and antithetical not only to our heritage, not only to the will of God, but antithetical to logic. You say, "Well, you're not a Supreme Court justice." No, I'm not, but, friend, even some of the Supreme Court justices who voted the contrary opinion said that what was done was not right, not reasonable, not logical. And I believe that we need to pray more than ever.

You see, listen. It's one thing to criticize that our children cannot pray in school. We cannot mention God at a commencement exercise of a state school. But I think that it is unmitigated hypocrisy to carp and criticize about children not being able to pray in school unless we ourselves are prayer warriors, don't you? Unless we ourselves teach our children to pray in the home, we are just unvarnished hypocrites to criticize that and not to teach our children to pray and not to pray ourselves. And I am convinced that only prayer can hold back the floodtide of judgment and the floodtide of sin, and only prayer can release the cleansing and healing hand of God. And not just any prayer: It's not the arithmetic of our prayers; that is, how many they are. It's not the rhetoric of our prayer, how eloquent it may be. It's not the geometry of our prayer, how long it might be. It's not the music of our prayer, how sweet our voice. Not the logic of our prayer, how argumentative that we become. Not the method of our prayer, how methodical we are in our prayer, but the faith and the fervency of our prayer that counts with God.

I find here in Daniel chapter 9 a prayer of Daniel. And if you have never read this prayer, I want to challenge you to go home and read this prayer. Begin here in Daniel chapter 9, verse 1: “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 desolations of Jerusalem.” Now watch this in verse 3: “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...”

I. The Prompting of the Prayer

I want to stop right there, and we’re going to look at some other verses very quickly in this passage of Scripture. But, first of all, I want you to see what prompted Daniel to pray. What was it that encouraged him to pray? Look in verse 2: “In the first year of his reign Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet...”

Daniel had been reading the Word of God. Daniel had been reading the prophet Jeremiah. And as Daniel read the prophet Jeremiah, he read in the prophet Jeremiah God’s plan for His people, that they would be in captivity for seventy years. And Daniel had been counting the years. And Daniel knew that certain things were going to come to pass. And, you see, the Bible says that he had understanding. Now listen to me.

The man who reads the Bible gets understanding, and the man who has understanding prays. There is no way that you can separate Bible study from prayer. When you read the Bible, the Bible impels you to pray. And when you pray, your prayer life will urge you to read the Bible. Prayer and Bible reading go hand in hand. Bible reading is God speaking to you. Prayer is your talking back to God.

And the thing that prompted the prayer of Daniel very clearly and very plainly was the reading of the Word of God. When he saw the prophecies in the Word of God, when he saw the plans of the Word of God, then he put those things into prayer.

Now God had prophesied that He was going to do something and still Daniel prayed. Why didn’t Daniel just simply sit back and say, “Well, God, if you prophesied that you’re going to do it, then there’s no need for me to pray about it.” It’s a strange thing in the Bible. The Bible teaches us to pray about what God has already promised He would do.

For example, the Bible prophesies that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and yet Jesus taught us to pray what? “Thy kingdom come.” It is prophesied that it will happen, and yet we’re told to pray that it will happen. The Bible teaches there’s going to be peace in Jerusalem, and yet we’re commanded in Psalm 122, verse 6, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. The Bible

teaches that Jesus Christ is going to come again. Revelation 22, verse 20: “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly, amen.” Jesus said He’s coming. And then John prays, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

It’s an interesting thing. Even when God says He’s going to do something, God does what He’s going to do through the prayers of His people. So there was the prompting of that prayer.

II. The Pursuit of the Prayer

Then I want you to notice the very nature of that prayer, the pursuit of that prayer. Notice how he prayed. Look in verse 3. This is something that gripped my heart as I looked at this. First of all, he prayed with a resolute determination. Look at it. “I set my face...”

Have you ever set your face to prayer? So much of our prayer, I hate to say, and so much of my prayer, is casual prayer, prayer that comes with almost a take-it-or-leave-it attitude. When are we going to set our face before God with fasting and determination?

Not only did he pray with resolution, but he prayed with reflection. He kept talking to God and about God. Look in verse 4: “I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made confession, and said”—now listen the way he describes God—“O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments.”

Look in verse 7: “O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee...”

Look, if you will, in verse 9: “To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses...”

Look, if you will, in verse 14: “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.”

Now Daniel in this prayer keeps talking about the character of God. Now, friend, when you pray with resolve, you also need to pray with reflection. You need to see who God is. When you see the character of God and the nature of God, you can hardly keep from praying. We need to glance at our problems and gaze upon our God.

Daniel prayed with resolve. He set his face. He prayed with reflection. He looked upon God. And he prayed with repentance. Look in verses 4 and 5: “I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession....”

Look in verse 5: “We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and they judgments.”

You say, “Did Daniel do all that?” No, my friend. Daniel just simply included himself in the prayer of his nation. Does God hold me accountable for the abortion in America? Yes! Does God hold me accountable for the pornography in America? Yes! Does God

hold me accountable for the drug addiction in America and the alcoholism and the materialism and the humanism? Yes, He does. The Bible says, “Happy is the man that condemneth not himself in the thing which he allows.” Friend, we’re a part of it. And if the church had done what she ought to have done, and if we would do what we ought to do, then these problems would be healed and saved. And while we may not commit these sins, they are still our sins.

Look, if you will, in verse 20 that makes it so very clear here. And he says, “While I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel....”

Now, dear folks, these people who don’t know God, they’re not going to confess the sin of this nation. We, as believers, with Daniel, we must pray. We must pray with resolve. We must set our face. We must pray with reflection. We must understand just who God is and what kind of a God He is. And we must pray with repentance and confess our sin and the sin of America, because only sin that is confessed is forgiven. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked way, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

III. The Petition of the Prayer

Now I want you to notice also the very prayer that he prayed. I want you to notice not only the prompting of the prayer, my dear friend, and the pursuit of the prayer, but the very prayer itself, the petition of the prayer. Look, if you will, in verse 16 very quickly. Here’s the prayer, verses 16 through 19. In verse 16: “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, friend, could that not be said about America? And what he was saying, “O God,” is “please forgive us. Remove the guilt.” He’s praying for the removal of guilt, but he’s also praying for the restoration of glory. Look in verses 17, 18, and 19: “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.” Underscore that: “for the Lord’s sake.”

Do you know what so many of us are praying for? For America’s sake. That won’t get it done. We’re praying for our denomination’s sake. We’re praying for our church’s sake. We’re praying even for our family’s sake. But listen to what Daniel is praying for. Not only the removal of guilt, but the restoration of glory. Look in verse 18: “O my God, incline thine ear and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by the, thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, 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.”

When we get concerned for the glory of God, then we’re going to see our prayers answered. So many times we’re just simply trying to get out of difficulty.

I can remember this time a year ago. We were all exalting over Desert Storm. I remember when Desert Storm was happening in January. Our church was up 25% in attendance, and our people were praying, “O God, help us. O God, help us.” As soon as we got through that difficulty, Americans went right back to their same old ways. And when we prayed and said, “God, help us,” we saw victory, amazing victory, stunning victory. Then what did we do? “Boy, how about those patriot missiles. Really great, weren’t they? What about old Schwarzkopf? Really brilliant, isn’t he?” Rather than giving God the glory, rather than continuing, rather than going to God in, in praise and seeking the glory of God, we were saying, “God, we’re in a mess. Get us out of this mess so we can go right back on to our own sinful lifestyle.” My dear friend, we must pray for the glory of God. That’s the petition of the prayer.

IV. The Power of the Prayer

Now let me very quickly talk to you about the power of the prayer. Look in verse 20: “And while I was speaking, and 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.” Look in verse 21 if you will. “Yet, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.”

Now don’t miss that. Gabriel came and by some method touched the body, the heart, the mind, the vision, the soul of Daniel. And when did he do it? At the time of the evening oblation—that is, the time of the evening sacrifice. Now what’s he talking about here? Well, my dear friend, Daniel is praying. And even while he is speaking, even while he’s speaking, the angel Gabriel comes, because prayer travels to heaven faster than the speed of light. Isaiah 65, verse 24: “And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer. And while they are speaking, I will hear.” Now he prayed, and the basis of the prayer was the shed blood—verse 21: “at the time of the evening oblation.”

Now listen to me very carefully. The temple had been destroyed for seventy years when Daniel was praying. There was no more sacrifice being made, and yet Daniel is praying at the time of the evening offering, the evening oblation, when the blood was shed in the temple. At that time he’s praying. What he is praying is on the basis of a sacrifice that was made a long time ago. He was praying on the basis of a blood sacrifice that had been made in the past. And he was standing on it and praying about it in the future. And, as a matter of fact, the time of the evening oblation was exactly,

precisely the same hour that Jesus Christ died on the cross. And I believe what you have here is a prophecy and a picture of anybody praying in the power of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. And what prayer is, my dear friend, is the Holy Spirit finding a desire in the heart of the Father, putting that desire into our heart, and then sending it back to heaven in the power of the blood. That's what it is. He is praying now. This is the power of his prayer. He is praying in the power of the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Now, dear friend, I am calling you to prayer. I am calling you to set your face in prayer. I am calling you, my dear friend, just to see who God is. I am calling you to pray for the glory of God. I am calling upon you to confess your sins personally and our sins nationally. And I am calling on, upon you to pray for America as Daniel prayed for his people: in the power of the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is prayer time in America.

Let's bow our heads and our hearts before God. Father God, I thank you that you've said in your Word if we will confess our faults one to another and pray one for another, that we may be healed, for, Lord, you have said, "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." And, Father, as a congregation tonight, we pray for America. O God, help us not to have just a sentimental show of patriotism, but, Lord, to learn how to pray, even as the prophet Daniel prayed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Countdown in the Holy Land

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: August 5, 1990

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:24

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

DANIEL 9:24

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Introduction

Take your Bibles and turn to the prophet Daniel—Daniel chapter 9—and we’re going to be studying there, in just a moment. But may I tell you, now, the eyes of the world are on the Middle East. As you know, the Iraqis have made an incursion into Kuwait, and seem to be poised, at this moment, to go into Saudi Arabia. We get 7.5% of our oil from the Iraqis. Now if they hold the ground that they’ve taken in Kuwait, they will control 20% of the earth’s crude oil reserves. If they move on into Saudi Arabia, they will control 45% of the crude oil reserves in the world today.

And the interesting thing is that now the European Community—the Common Market, as it were—has said to the Iraqis: “You can’t do that. We’re going to place an embargo on you, and we’re going to do it in cooperation with the United States, and, of all people, the Soviets.” Things are changing, aren’t they? And they’re changing rapidly. Who would have ever thought that out of Europe would come such a unified voice, that they would say, “We are now going to be the strong arm to enforce peace in the Middle East”? Of course, we all know that, ultimately, Satan is superman, and is going to come out of a unified Europe. And through peace, he will destroy many; and the Israelis will see him as their friend and benefactor.

The chief players in this drama, however, are not the Iraqis, not the Kuwaiti, not the Saudi Arabians; but the chief players are those that we call the people Israel. It’s all wrapped up in one little nation, which is the focal point of it all: the tiny state of Israel.

Now what is happening in the world today? Well, we may not know every detail. But my dear friend, God has given us a broad outline. God has given us a blueprint. God has given us an indicator that we can take the newspapers in one hand, and the Bible in the other hand, and we can know, to a great degree, what is going on in the world today. And we may know more than the President’s security advisor. We may know more than Shevardnadze. We may know more than the intellectual top waters in the UN, because we know the Word of God. Now again, I say—and I’ve told you this before, when I preached on this particular passage—this is one of the most difficult to understand, and a little convoluted, but yet one of the most dramatic and incisive prophecies in all of the Bible—rightly understood, the prophecy that I’m going to share with you tonight.

I want you to begin reading with me, now, in the Book of *Daniel chapter 9 and verse 24*. Daniel has been praying, and he’s been saying, “Lord, I want to know. I want to know, Lord, what you’re up to. I want to know, Lord, what is the future of my people.” Now my friend, *an understanding man prays, and a praying man gets understanding*. So God spoke to Daniel, and this is what God said to him, in Daniel 9 verse 24: “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to*

bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy” (Daniel 9:24). I’m going to stop reading there, but I’m going to read more in a moment.

But right away, we say, “Pastor, it’s hard for me to get my mind on that. It’s hard for me to get my fingertips on the pulse beat of that. I read it. I heard the words; but I don’t know exactly what it means.” Well, we’re going to break it down a piece at a time. A long time ago somebody asked this question: “How do you eat an elephant?” “How do you eat an elephant?” And the answer, of course, is, “One bite at a time.” Now what we’re going to do with this *elephant* scripture here, this huge block of prophecy, we’re going to look at it, piece by piece, one bite at a time. Now we’re going to go down deep. We’re going to stay down long, but I hope we’ll not come up dry. If you’ll pay attention, and listen, you’re going to learn about what God is up to in the world today.

I. The Period

Now first of all, we’re going to illiterate this with pictures. First of all, I want you to notice what I’m going to call *the period*. God is speaking of a specific period of time. And He says, in verse 24, “*Seventy weeks are determined*” (Daniel 9:24)—70 weeks. Now what does that mean? Well, it means 490 years. You say, “Well, why doesn’t it say 490 years?” Well, actually, what it says is “seventy sevens”—“seventy heptads.” You and I get the idea that a week is seven days. But in Bible times, they had weeks of years, as well as weeks of days. And the word literally does not mean, “seven days”; it just means, “seventy sevens.” And it’s obvious, as you look at the Scripture here, that he’s not talking of 70 weeks of days, but 70 weeks of years, or 490 years. Here is a prophecy that spans 490 years. That is the period of time that God told Daniel He would begin and end his policy and his program with Israel.

II. The People

Second thing, second bite: Not only the period, but the people. Look again, in verse 24: “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city*” (Daniel 9:24). Now this is a prophecy, therefore, that involves and revolves around Israel. It’s very clear Daniel was a Hebrew. Daniel was a Jew. *The people* means, “the Jews.” Now learn this, friend: that you will never understand Bible prophecy, unless you understand God is dealing with the Jews. The Jews are the people of destiny. They are God’s outline, God’s plan, and God’s blueprint for what He’s going to do in the world.

III. The Place

Now you’ve seen the period: 490 years. The people: the Jews. Now the place. Look again: “*And upon thy holy city*” (Daniel 9:24). Now that holy city is Jerusalem. It is,

indeed, the Holy Land. Sometimes when we go to the Holy Land, they say, “Well, what’s any different from that piece of real estate than any other piece of real estate?” My dear friend, it is distinctly different, intrinsically different. God calls Jerusalem “the holy city.” There’s no more important city upon the face of the earth—not Washington, not Moscow, not Paris, not Tokyo, and not Madrid. My dear friend, the international hot spot in the last days is Jerusalem. And the tiny little nation Israel is the center of the world. It’s called the navel of the earth.

A. The Geographic Center

In Ezekiel chapter 5 and verse 5, God said, “*I have set it*”—talking of Israel—“*in the midst of the nations*” (Ezekiel 5:5). It is the confluence of three mighty continents: Africa, Asia, and Europe. It’s the hub of these continents. It’s a military and economic highway. It is the geographic center of the world.

B. The Revelation Center

It, my dear friend, is the revelation center of the world, because from that little nation we have Moses, the prophets, and the apostles.

C. The Spiritual Center

It’s the spiritual center of the world, because it is here that Jesus Christ the Messiah was born. It was here that He lived. It was here that He died, from this place that He ascended into Heaven. And one day, Jesus will come back again to Jerusalem, and His feet will stand upon the Mount of Olives, on the east of Jerusalem. It is the spiritual center of the world.

D. The Prophetic Center

Jerusalem, Israel is the prophetic center of the world. Now we Americans think everything revolves around America. But very little is said in the Bible, if anything, about America. But Israel is the only people and only country whose complete history is minutely foretold in the Scripture.

E. The Storm Center

Israel is the storm center of the world. The last great battle will be fought there, the battle of Armageddon. And what I have just described in the introduction of this message, and the incursion of the Iraqis into these other countries, are all the storm clouds that are beginning to gather for that great battle that the Bible calls Armageddon.

F. The Peace Center

But not only is Israel the storm center. Friend, it is the peace center. You say, “When will we have peace in the world?” When we have peace in Jerusalem. And that’s the reason we are told, as Christians, not only to pray, “*Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven*” (Matthew 6:10), but to “*Pray for the peace of*

Jerusalem” (Psalm 122:6). And *there will be no peace in Jerusalem until the Prince of Peace is recognized for who He is.*

G. The Glory Center

But may I tell you, dear friend, that this land and this people are the glory center. One of these days, the Lord Jesus is going to sit on the throne of His father, David. And Jesus is going to rule and to reign from Jerusalem, here upon the earth, for a thousand blessed years. And so here we see that the prophecy deals with the holy people and the holy city.

Now you’re in the book of Daniel; just go to Zechariah here, for just a moment. And look with me, in Zechariah chapter 12. Just turn to the right just a few pages, and you’ll find Zechariah chapter 12, verses 2 to 3. And listen to this scripture: *“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it”* (Zechariah 12:2–3). There’s coming a time when the opinion of the peoples of this world are going to turn against Jerusalem. And they’re going to gather against Jerusalem under the leadership of the Antichrist, who will come out of a reconstituted Roman Empire.

But notice again in Zechariah chapter 14, and look with me in verse 16. I love this wonderful promise: *“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles”* (Zechariah 14:16). One day, Jerusalem will be the capital city of the world. It is the glory center of all of the world. Jesus is going to rule and reign from Jerusalem.

IV. The Purpose

Well, go back, if you will, to Daniel chapter 9, now, and put your marker there. We have seen the period: 490 years. We have seen the people: Daniel’s people, the Jews, the people of destiny. And now, dear friend, we’ve seen the place. It all revolves around that city, that one piece of real estate that we call the holy city, that land that we call the Holy Land. Now what is the purpose? What is God going to do in these 490 years? Well, look in verse 24, and you’ll see that God has in mind six wonderful blessings.

A. To Finish the Transgression

Here is God’s plan. Here is the purpose. Notice the purpose, now: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city,”*—number one—*“to finish the transgression”* (Daniel 9:24). Now what is the transgression? Notice it doesn’t say *all* transgression, but *the* transgression. What is the great transgression? It is Israel’s

rejection of her Messiah. Israel has rejected her Messiah. One day, that rejection will be over. That's the first thing.

B. To Make an End of Sins

Now here's the second thing: to make an end of sins. Now sin cannot be dealt with, until Messiah is recognized. There is no way of forgiveness for Israel, or anyone else, apart from the Lamb of God. Turn with me to Romans chapter 11. Just keep your bookmark there, please, in Daniel 9, and turn with me to Romans chapter 11, and look with me in verses 26 and 27. And the Bible says, *"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins"* (Romans 11:26–27).

C. To Make Reconciliation for Iniquity

My dear friend, the nation Israel is going to come to the Lord. They're going to finish the transgression, the rejection of Messiah. And when they finish the transgression, my dear friend, that will make an end of sins. And when sins have been made an end of—go back, if you will, to verse 24—*"and to make reconciliation for iniquity"* (Daniel 9:24). Do you see, when you recognize Jesus as Messiah, sins are forgiven? And when sins are forgiven, God and man are reconciled. And the Bible says, "Jesus, by the death of his cross, hath reconciled both God and man" (2 Corinthians 5:18–19). Jesus' death has always been sufficient, but it will never be efficient, as long as He is rejected.

D. To Bring In Everlasting Righteousness

And then, when there's reconciliation, what is the next thing? Everlasting righteousness. That's the fourth blessing. Notice, it says here: *"And to bring in everlasting righteousness"* (Daniel 9:24). Now what does he mean by that? Well, the Bible teaches, in Romans chapter 10, verse 4: *"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth"* (Romans 10:4). And dear friend, not only does God forgive our sins when we receive Him, not only are we reconciled; but, my dear friend, God makes us perfectly righteous in His sight, and the righteousness of God is fulfilled in those who trust Him. What a day that will be, when God visits His ancient people with righteousness!

E. To Seal Up the Vision and Prophecy

And then, *"To seal up the vision and [the] prophecy"* (Daniel 9:24), in verse 24, what does that mean? It means, "This is what I've been going about all of these years; this is what God has been up to." One of these days, my dear friend, God is going to put the last period upon the last sentence, upon the last paragraph, upon the last page, upon the last chapter, upon the last book of history; and, God will say, "Its done, it's done."

Not one jot, nor one tittle, shall fail from the law till all be fulfilled (Matthew 5:18). You can rest in it, my dear friend. You can bank on it. *We used to say, “God said it, I believe it, and that settles it.” God said it; that settles it, whether you believe it or not, my dear friend.* God is going to do it.

F. To Anoint the Most Holy

And then, what? Well, He’s not finished yet: “*And to anoint the most holy*” (Daniel 9:24). Some say, “What does *the most holy* mean? Does that mean ‘the most holy place,’ or ‘the most holy person’?” Yes. Huh, huh. The most holy person in the most holy place. And,

*Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.*

—ISAAC WATTS

How many times have we prayed, “O Lord, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10)? Do you think Jesus Christ would have taught us to pray that prayer, had He not meant to fulfill it? No, my dear friend, He will be anointed as King of kings, and Lord of lords—the holy place, and the holy person, together. Now my dear friend, that’s the purpose.

V. The Program

Now let’s move on and talk about the program. How is He going to fulfill the purpose? Well, He’s going to fulfill the purpose with a program. Now we begin in Daniel 9, verse 25, and here is the program—on through verse 27: “*Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate*” (Daniel 9:25–27).

All of that is so clear I don’t even see any reason to comment on it. So let’s just go on to the next passage. I’m being facetious. All right, it looks like we’d never get anything out of that. But again, if we’ll break it down, a piece at a time, a bite at a time,

we will see the program.

A. The Commencement of the Count

Now notice God says that there are 490 years. All right, in order for this to make sense to us, we have to know, when does God's clock start ticking? And when does it stop ticking? When do we put the first mark on God's calendar? And when do we put the last period upon God's program?

Now the Bible says here that there is a starting time. What is the commencement of the count? Look in the first part of verse 25: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem..."* (Daniel 9:25). All right, God's clock started ticking, when God gave a command to restore and build Jerusalem.

Now when was this? Well, you remember that it was Nehemiah who restored and built Jerusalem. And you can find this in Nehemiah chapter 2, verse 1. And in verse 5, you'll find out that it was under Artaxerxes; Artaxerxes, the king, gave Nehemiah the command to restore and build Jerusalem. Now thankfully, we know exactly when that was, because it is dated for us. And even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, volume two, page 660, says it was in the year 445 B.C. And the Bible tells us, in Nehemiah chapter 2, it was in the month of Nisan. Now that's very important, because we know not only the year, but we know the month when it began. Nisan is the first month of the Jewish year. And remember that this is regulated by the paschal moon, so we can be very precise. On what we call the Julian calendar, the command to the restore and build Jerusalem was March the 14th, 445 B.C. That's the commencement of the count.

B. The Construction of the City

Now the second thing, here in the program, is going to be the construction of the city. Look again, in verse 25, if you will. He says, *"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times"* (Daniel 9:25). Now what he is saying is this: the city is going to be rebuilt in seven weeks. That's seven weeks of years. Forty-nine years and Jerusalem would be rebuilt. It happened exactly as God said it would happen. It literally happened, and, in 49 years, they rebuilt the city, and the wall, even in troublous times. If you read the Book of Nehemiah, you'll know that the devil did all he could do to stop it, but he could not stop it.

C. The Coming of the Christ

So you see the commencement of the count. You see the construction of the city. And then, you see the coming of the Christ. Look again, in verse 25: *"Know therefore and*

understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks”—that’s the period of time to build the city—“and threescore and two weeks” (Daniel 9:25).

Now what is the “*threescore and two weeks*”? Well, threescore is 60, plus two, is 62, plus the seven that it took to build the city. You add all of those together, and multiply by seven, and you have 483 years. Now this might sound a little convoluted, but 62 weeks is 434 years, seven weeks is 49 years. Add them together: 483 years. Four hundred and eighty-three years, meaning what? From the time that the commandment was given to restore and build Jerusalem under the Messiah the Prince will be 483 years.

Now a prophetic year is not 365 days. A year, in Bible prophecy, is 360 days. Incidentally, that’s the reason we have 360 degrees in a circle: 360 days. For example, we know this from the Book of Revelation: that 3 1/2 years is 1,260 days. Three hundred and sixty days is a prophetic year.

Now pay attention. We said, from the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, to the time that the Messiah would come, would be 483 years, and 483 years of 360 days. Now I hope I didn’t lose you. But if you multiply 483 times 360, that gives you 173,880 days. Keep that in mind. Stay with me. Jesus, the Messiah, began His public ministry in A.D. 29. You say, “How can you be so sure?” The Bible tells us, in Luke chapter 3 and verse 1: “*Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar*” (Luke 3:1). That date, my dear friend, is preserved in history. We know that’s when Jesus began His public ministry. And we know that, three Passovers later, Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Do you remember when Jesus came riding on a donkey? And the people threw the palm branches in His way? Three Passovers later. Again, we know exactly when that Passover was. We don’t have to guess. Because, dear friend, we get our date from the paschal moon. And the chronologists and astronomers tell us that the day was April the 6th, A.D. 32, when Jesus went into Jerusalem.

Now the prophet Daniel said, “We’ll tell you when we’re going to start; and 483 years later will be Messiah the Prince.” My dear friend, if you were to start it, and count it, it would be exactly 173,880 days from March the 14th, 445 B.C., when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that donkey.

It’s one of the most incredible things in all of the Bible. Exactly. That’s the reason, when Jesus was riding across that Kidron Valley, and up through that Golden Gate, He was weeping copious tears, and He said, “*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day*” (Luke 19:42). It had been prophesied, for centuries, down to the minutest hour. My dear friend, as I said in the introduction of this message, and at the close of the message this morning, Jesus came on time; He died on time; He was buried on time; He rose on time; and He is coming on time. You can just bank on it.

D. The Crucifixion of the Christ

Now there is the coming of the Messiah. But then, this prophecy goes on. In verse 26, there's the crucifixion of the Christ. Look in verse 26, and see what God told Daniel. He says then, "Messiah shall be cut off" (Daniel 9:26). Now It's hard for the Jews to believe in a crucified Messiah. They ought to read their prophet, Daniel: "The Messiah shall be cut off." What do you mean, "cut off"? Well, it refers to capital punishment. Read Isaiah 53, verse 8, when it speaks of the death of Christ, and it says, "*He was cut off out of the land of the living*" (Isaiah 53:8).

The prophet Daniel saw the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, as He presented Himself to Israel on that Palm Sunday. And He looked past that to the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. But notice how much God told Daniel. The Bible says that He the Messiah shall be cut off, "*but not for himself*" (Daniel 9:26). It was not because of His sins that He died, but for my sins and your sins. "*He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth*" (Isaiah 53:10). "*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*" (Isaiah 53:6)—Isaiah 53, verse 6. Daniel saw that hundreds of years before Jesus Christ came: the Messiah would die. He would be cut off out of the land of the living, Isaiah tells us. But not for Himself. It was my sin, your sin, that nailed Him to the tree.

E. The Conquest of the City

But now, the countdown continues. Not only do you see, dear friend, the construction of the city; and then, the coming of the Christ; and then, the crucifixion of the Christ; but you see the conquest of the city. Notice, again, what Daniel prophesied: And then, he said, Messiah shall "*be cut off, but not for himself:*"—verse 26 now, watch it—"and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city" (Daniel 9:26). "*The prince that shall come*" is not Jesus—he's the Antichrist. "*And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city.*" Who destroyed Jerusalem? The Romans. The Romans. And out of a revived Roman Empire, there is another prince that will come—the black prince—the Antichrist. Daniel prophesied that the Romans would destroy Jerusalem.

And incidentally, if you'll go home today, and read your paper, you'll see that the decree from the Common Market came from Rome, that said, "We're going to put an embargo on the Iraqis." Out of Rome. And the European Community is now being run from Rome. True, there is a revolving chairmanship, but you're seeing the predominance, now, of Rome here. And Daniel prophesied that Jerusalem would be destroyed. Jesus not only wept, because they didn't recognize Him; but Jesus, knowing this prophecy, and Himself being God, He wept, because He knew of that temple "*there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down*" (Luke 21:6)—

Luke chapter 21 and verse 6. And as Jesus prophesied, even those stones were pried apart by the looters seeking the gold of that temple.

And if you'd go today to the temple mount, and travel to Israel, as many of us have traveled in the Holy Land, you'll find a monument of this temple, and the ruins of that temple, and the ruins of this temple. But at the ruins of the greatest temple ever built, the temple of Jehovah, you'll find not one stone—not one—upon another. Exactly as Daniel prophesied, and Jesus confirmed, in verse 26: that a Roman would come, and he would destroy the city.

Now play close attention: "*After threescore and two weeks,*"—verse 26—"*shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;*"—that's the temple—"and the end thereof shall be with a flood,"—this does not speak of a flood of water. The Bible says, "*When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him*" (Isaiah 59:19)—"*and unto the end of the war desolations are determined*" (Daniel 9:26).

Now this may be rendered this way: "And unto the end, wars and desolations are determined." The people asked the Lord Jesus, "Jesus, what will be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?" And Jesus said that unto the end, wars and desolations are determined. There will be "*wars and rumors of wars...but the end is not yet*" (Matthew 24:3–6).

It's amazing what Jesus prophesied, and what Daniel prophesied. You would have thought of all of these years, after 2,000 years, that some way, somehow, somebody would've figured out a way that we could live in peace on this war-torn world. But Daniel said what Jesus said: that there will be "*wars and rumors of wars.*"

Now my dear friend, we said that there are 490 years. But when Messiah was cut off, when Jesus was crucified, the clock stopped ticking for Israel. God called a time out. And God stopped dealing with Israel as a nation. And He just simply said that there's going to be a period of time known as the times of the Gentiles. And so we got to 483 years, the Messiah came, they crucified the Messiah, and God said, "All right now, the clock stops ticking for Israel."

F. The Calling of the Church

Now we have an undetermined period of time known as *wars and desolations of wars*. When will that time end? When will the time of the Gentiles end? The Bible says, "*Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*" (Romans 11:25). What is "the fullness of the Gentiles"? Well, I believe it has reference, among other things, to the completion of the Body of Christ. I believe there's a number known to God alone that will make the bride complete. That will make the building called

the Church complete. And the last brick in the building will be put in place. The last member of the Body will be in place. The last part of the bride will be complete. And then, the trumpet will sound. Could it be that in this service tonight the last soul will be saved before Jesus comes?

And God looks down from Heaven, and sees a 14-year-old boy come down this aisle, and God says, "That's it. Uh huh, that's the one." I am waiting—we don't know what it will take, when it will be, when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. But I'm telling you, when Jesus comes, His church will be complete, His bride will be complete.

We're living in a time known as the Church Age, where God called *time out* for Israel. The Old Testament prophets didn't see the Church. They didn't understand the Church. Even Daniel doesn't mention the Church here. He just mentions wars and desolations. For the Bible tells us, in the book of Ephesians, that the Church was a mystery revealed in the last days. And so here we see, dear friend, the calling of the Church, in the last part of verse 26.

G. The Completion of the Count

And look in verse 27: you'll see the completion of the count. Notice, in verse 27: "*And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week*" (Daniel 9:27). That's the missing week. We've had 483 years. But now, 490 years are about to be completed. Who is going to confirm the covenant? Does it refer to Messiah the Prince?

Oh, no, not Messiah the Prince. It refers to Antichrist the prince—"*the prince that shall come.*" Read it: "*The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city*" (Daniel 9:26). But the prince that will come will "*confirm the covenant with many for one week*" (Daniel 9:27). What does that mean? In plain English, it means that, when the Antichrist comes, he is going to make a league, a seven-year treaty, with the nation Israel. This Antichrist is going to come out of a revived Roman Empire, and he's going to say to a beleaguered Israel, "I will protect you. I will make a covenant of peace with you." And do you know what the nation Israel will do? They will say "Hallelujah! Praise God! At last, we're at peace!"

But the Bible says, concerning the Antichrist, in Daniel chapter 8, verse 25: "*By peace shall destroy many*" (Daniel 8:25). He will make a covenant with many, but by peace, he will destroy many. He will come as the greatest benefactor that the Jews have ever known. Jesus Christ said, "*I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive*" (John 5:43). That was a prophecy of the Lord Jesus. They will believe this apostate; they will believe this beast; and, they will believe this pervert, this man of sin, who claims to be God on earth: the Antichrist. And when they do, dear friend, they make a covenant with the Antichrist. In the middle of that seven-year period, the Antichrist is going to move into the temple of

God, “showing himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

Notice, if you will, in verse 27: “*And he*”—the prince that shall come, the Antichrist—“*shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week*”—after 3 1/2 years—“*he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease*” (Daniel 9:27). Did you know that the little Jewish boys, Hasidic Jews, right now, are studying how to make sacrifices—animal sacrifices? Did you know that they have gotten the Leviticus tools to sacrifice with? They’re training these young Jewish boys how to wear the robes, and all of the Old Testament sacrifices. They want to begin to sacrifice again as they did in the Old Testament. And this ruler out of Europe is going to say, “That’s all right. If you want to do that, you may do that. And you will have my protection.” And he’ll make a seven-year treaty.

But in the middle of that seven years, in the midst of the week, after 3 1/2 years—the Bible calls it, in Revelation 12, verse 14: “*a time, and times, and half a time*” (Revelation 12:14), or 42 months, or 1,260 days, it’s all the same period of time—3 1/2 years, when the Jews are sacrificing, back in their Old Testament worship, then this devil in the flesh is going to come into the temple of God, and say, “Hold it. Put away that claptrap. If you want to worship something, if you’re looking for a God to worship, I’m the one.” And the Bible says, in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, verse 4, “*He as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*” (2 Thessalonians 2:4).

That’s what Jesus was talking about, when He said, “*When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation...in the holy place... flee into the mountains...*”—get out of there—“*...for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be*” (Matthew 24:15–16, 21). And this megalomaniac, this *Satan’s superman*, this devil in the human flesh, will “show himself that he is God” (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Satan has always said, “*I will be like the most High*” (Isaiah 14:14); “*I will exalt my throne above the stars of God*” (Isaiah 14:13). When Jesus Christ was here on Earth, He could say, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father*” (John 14:9). When Antichrist comes, he’ll be able to say the same thing: “He that hath seen me hath seen my father.” He will be Satan incarnate, the man of sin. And he will make a covenant with many (Daniel 9:27), and they’ll say, “Peace at last.” But through peace, he’ll destroy many (Daniel 8:25). And in the middle of that week—3 1/2 years—he himself will come into the temple of God, “*shewing himself that he is God*” (2 Thessalonians 2:4), “*and cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease*” (Daniel 9:27).

And the Bible says, “*And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*” (Daniel 9:27), in Daniel 9 verse 27. Did you read that? “*The overspreading of abominations.*” Now you understand what Jesus meant, in Matthew 24, when He spoke of “*the abomination of desolation*” (Matthew 24:15). That’s what He’s talking about. Jesus said, “When you see that, get out of Jerusalem...*For then shall be great*

tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matthew 24:15–21)—Matthew 24, verse 21. The Antichrist is going to double-cross Israel, and unleash his satanic fury on God’s chosen people. Daniel chapter 12 and verse 1 tells us about it: *“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book”* (Daniel 12:1). I wish I had more time to talk about that.

H. The Consummation of the Count

But let’s talk, last of all, and show you what else Daniel saw. Not only did he see the completion of the count, and the final seven years as the clock starts to tick again—and, by the way, we said that the clock started ticking, to begin, with the command to restore and build Jerusalem. And then, we said it stopped ticking after 483 years, with the crucifixion of Jesus. When will it start ticking again? With the rapture of the Church. When the Church is taken out, then it’s *time-in* again for Israel. We’re living in a parenthetical time called the Church age, the mystery that was hid from the prophets. And when the Church is taken out, at that moment, God’s prophetic clock begins to tick for those final seven years. And the great tribulation will be seven years in length. The last 3 1/2 years will be a time of unmentionable horror.

Well, how does it all end? Well, thank God, we know. Look in the last part of verse 27, Daniel 9—and the Bible says, *“Until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured out upon the desolate”* (Daniel 9:27)—or “the desolator.” Don’t think that Satan is going to win. The Bible says there’s coming a consummation. Jesus is going to consummate all things. He put everything into action, and He’s going to put everything into conclusion. He was there in the commencement. He will be there in the consummation. We call the Antichrist, 666. But dear friend, I want to tell you, 777’s going to take care of him, when Jesus comes, not for His saints, but this time, with His saints, after the tribulation period. And He shall come with the armies in Heaven. And He shall come with a sharp two-edged sword that goes out of His mouth, which is His Word (Revelation 1:16).

In the Garden of Gethsemane, when they came to take Jesus, they came with sticks, and staves, and swords, a great host, a great army, to take Jesus to crucify Him. Jesus turned, and said, *“Who seek ye?”* The Bible says, *“They went backward, and fell to the ground”* (John 18:4–6). Just His breath, His words. Then Jesus allowed them up, and allowed them to handcuff Him. Dear friend, there you have in miniature—Judas, who represents the Antichrist; all of those soldiers that represent the forces at Armageddon. This time, Jesus will come; and, the Bible says, *“And out of his mouth*

goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations” (Revelation 19:15).

You say, “What’s the battle of Armageddon going to be like? Is it going to be jets, and lasers, and napalm, and atomic bombs?” It may start that way. But friend, when Jesus comes, He’ll win that war with a word—just a word. He will speak—and the Lord that spoke them into existence, will speak them into oblivion. That’s the battle of Armageddon. And that consummation will be poured out upon the desolate.

Conclusion

Friend, I want to tell you something. We have a lot of Satanism in the world today. A lot of people, for whatever reason, are following Satan. But don’t follow a loser. He is a consummate loser.

*Have faith in God, He’s on His throne.
Have faith in God, He watches o’er His own.
He cannot fail, He must prevail.
Have faith in God, have faith in God.*

—B. B. McKinney

Friend, if it has been this way, thus far, and every scripture thus far has been minutely fulfilled, you can bank on the rest of it.

Outline of Things to Come

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: June 28, 1981

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:24–27

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

DANIEL 9:25

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Introduction

Now, I want you to be finding, not the Book of the Revelation, tonight, but I want you to turn to the ninth chapter of the Book of Daniel—because there’s no way to understand Revelation without understanding the Book of Daniel. And so we’ve talked about the coming of the Antichrist; we’ve talked about the mark of the beast; we’ve talked about the days of the Antichrist. But tonight, I want us to study a prophecy that hinges upon all

of these things, for so many people have asked me, “Brother Rogers, why do you say that the Great Tribulation is going to be a period of 3 1/2 years, and the General Tribulation period is going to be 7 years?” And they say, “I cannot find that in the Book of the Revelation.” Well, it is spelled out more clearly in the Book of Daniel. And to understand Daniel, you have to understand Revelation; and, to understand Revelation, you have to understand the Book of Daniel.

Now I want to read to you, tonight, one of the most amazing prophecies—in my estimation, perhaps the most amazing prophecy in the entire Bible. And I say that after thought—perhaps the most amazing, outstanding prophecy in all of the Bible. I want to entitle the message, “An Outline of Things to Come”—“An Outline of Things to Come.” And I want to read with you Daniel chapter 9 and verse 24—Daniel chapter 9 and verse 24. Now tonight, I want you to get a paper and pencil and take some notes. And I want you to pay strict attention, and I want you to keep your Bible open in your lap, because you may not understand the message, even if you do that. So just pay attention, because it is involved. But it’s going to be a great, great blessing to you—to me, to all of us—as we study the Word of God together.

Now Daniel has been praying for understanding. And I want you to know that *an understanding man prays, and a praying man gets understanding*. And Daniel has been praying for understanding. He wants to know what God is going to do with his people, the Jews. And God answered Daniel, in Daniel chapter 9 and verse 24—and God says this: “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate”* (Daniel 9:24–27).

Now no need for me to preach on that. We can just say *amen* and go home, huh? You understand it perfectly. All right—all right. Let’s see what God is saying here. We’re going to have to break it down in little pieces, because it is a tremendous prophecy. And remember that *prophecy is history, pre-written*. And fulfilled prophecy is a mighty,

mighty irrefutable proof of the inspiration of the Bible. One of the grandest truths of the inspiration, and infallibility, and inerrancy of the Word of God is fulfilled prophecy. And so in this short passage, God has given us an amazing outline of things to come.

I. The Period of Time: 490 Years

Now he's talking about a specific period of time, so notice the period that he's talking about here, in verse 24. He says, "*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people*" (Daniel 9:24).

Now what does he mean by "seventy weeks"? He means 490 years. Now you say, "Wait a minute. It says, '70 weeks,' not, '490 years.'" But the word *weeks* is a very interesting word. It literally says, "Seventy sevens." Now we think of a week as a week of days, but it does not necessarily mean a week of days. The Jews had weeks of days, but they also had weeks of years. Actually, the word *heptad* just means, "seven." "Seventy sevens"—it's translated here, in *The King James*, "weeks." But you could read it just as accurately, "Seventy sevens are determined."

For example, it's like the word *dozen*. If you're going through the grocery store and say, "I'll take a dozen"—a dozen what? It could mean a dozen donuts; or, it could mean a dozen eggs, or a dozen something else. And the word *seven* does not necessarily mean, "seven days." It could just as well mean, "seven years." And we're going to see that 70 sevens, or 490 years, are determined upon God's people.

Now let me just give you two references where you can see that the word *week* refers to years as well as days. Look, for example, in Leviticus chapter 25 and verse 8. And let's just turn to that; and, it's so fundamental, and we want to get right down into the heart of this thing. Turn to the Book of Leviticus with me—the Book of Leviticus—right there in the opening chapters of the Bible. In the Book of Leviticus, in chapter 29, you're going to see how God speaks of weeks of years as well of weeks of days. Leviticus chapter 25 and verse 8: "*And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years*" (Leviticus 25:8). So I want you to see here how God has weeks of years as well of weeks of days.

Let me give you another. While we're in the neighborhood, go back to Genesis chapter 29 for a moment. Here, I think it's even more clear—in Genesis chapter 29. Lick your fingers, and do it; it's good for you. All right. Genesis 29—look in verse 27. Here is Jacob, who has been serving Laban for Rachel. And look, if you will, in verse 20: "*And Jacob served seven years for Rachel*" (Genesis 29:20). And then, look, if you will, in verse 27: Laban says to Jacob, "*Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years*" (Genesis 29:27). Now the point I want you to see is that he calls seven years a *week*. "*And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week*" (Genesis 29:28). Now the week that it's referring to in verse 20 and

verse 27 is seven years.

And so now, let's go back to the prophecy of Daniel. I just wanted you to see, when the Bible says, "seven weeks," it doesn't necessarily mean, "seven days." In this instance, it means, "seven years." Now notice there is a specific period of time that Daniel is dealing with. He is dealing with 70 sevens, or 490 years. That's the period of time. God has said, "Daniel, I want you to see a prophecy that's going to encompass 490 years." Have you got that? The period of time: 490 years—70 sevens, or 70 sevens of years.

II. The People: The Jews

All right now, secondly, I want you to see not only the period, but I want you to see the people. What people are dealt with in this prophecy? Well, look again, in verse 24: "*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people*" (Daniel 9:24)—"*thy people.*"

Now whose people were Daniel's people? The Jews. This is the prophecy that deals with the Jews. Now we can look in on it; but remember, it deals with Daniel's people. I've told you before that the Jews are the people of destiny. They are God's outline, God's yardstick, God's blueprint. If you want to know what God is doing in the world, just keep your eye on Israel. When I read the newspaper, there's a lot of news that I skip over. But if it deals with Israel, I read it—I read it—because I know that I can keep my fingertips on the pulse beat of what is happening in the world, as I read what is happening to Israel. And so the people: the Jews.

III. The Place: Jerusalem

Now the third thing I want you to notice—now all of this is by way of introduction. The period: 490 years. The people: the Jews. The place: Jerusalem. This deals with Jerusalem. Look again, if you will, in verse 24: "*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city*" (Daniel 9:24).

Now the place is Jerusalem. There is no more important city upon the face of the earth; more important than Washington, Moscow, Tokyo, and Paris put together is Jerusalem. Jerusalem is going to be an international hotspot in the last days, Zechariah tells us, in Zechariah chapter 12, verses 2 and 3. And he tells us that all of the nations of the world are going to be burdened with Jerusalem (Zechariah 12:2–3). Ladies and gentlemen, we're living in that specific time right now.

Did you know that Jerusalem, one day, is going to be the capital city of the entire world? You're in the Book of Daniel. Just turn right a few pages and go to Zechariah chapter 14, and, look, if you will, in verse 16—and God says, "*And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of*

tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16). That is, from all over the world, people are going to come to Jerusalem during the millennium.

IV. The Purpose: Six Blessings Will Take Place

Now the next thing I want you to notice... Go back to Daniel 9. I want you to notice the period—490 years; the people—the Jews; the place—Jerusalem. Now I want you to notice the purpose. God says, “In 490 years, I am going to fulfill certain things.” And He mentions six wonderful blessings that are going to take place in 490 years.

A. To Finish the Transgression

Notice, if you will, in verse 24: “*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city,*”—number one—“*to finish the transgression*” (Daniel 9:24)—not a transgression, *the* transgression. What is the great transgression of Israel? It is the rejection of her Messiah. And she will continue, as a nation, to reject her Messiah until these 490 years have come to an end. That is the great transgression.

B. To Make an End of Sins

And then, secondly, “*to make an end of sins*” (Daniel 9:24). Well, you see, until you stop rejecting Messiah, there is no remission of sin—no way of forgiveness apart from God’s Lamb.

C. To Make Reconciliation for Iniquity

And so the third thing is, “*to make reconciliation for iniquity*” (Daniel 9:24). There can be no reconciliation until the sins are dealt with. And there can be no sin dealt with until Messiah is recognized. And so thank God, one of these days there is going to be a reconciliation between God and His ancient people.

D. To Bring in Everlasting Righteousness

And then, when there is a reconciliation, next, there is going to be everlasting righteousness. Now you know, the Bible says, in Romans chapter 10, that the Jews, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, have gone about to establish their own righteousness” (Romans 10:3). But one of these days they are going to know everlasting righteousness.

Incidentally, we’re in the neighborhood. Let’s just turn left, a minute, to Jeremiah. I want you to look, in Jeremiah chapter 23, talking about this righteousness—Jeremiah chapter 23 and verse 6. Well, let’s start in verse 5. Here’s a wonderful Old Testament prophecy to the Jew, concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: “*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*” Do you know who that King is? It is King Jesus, David’s greater son. And then, notice this prophecy, in verse 6:

“In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:5–6).

In that day when Israel is saved, they’re going to call Jesus, “*THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*.” They’re no longer going to go about to establish their own righteousness, but they’re going to understand that Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to those who believe (Romans 10:4). And so look again in Daniel 9, verse 24: He is going “*to bring in everlasting righteousness*” (Daniel 9:24). Jesus Christ is that everlasting righteousness.

E. To Seal up the Vision and Prophecy

And then, number five: He’s going “*to seal up the vision and prophecy*” (Daniel 9:24). Now what does that mean? It means God’s going to wind it up, friend. God—the great God, the God of glory, and the God of prophecy—is going to put the last period upon the last sentence upon the last paragraph upon the last chapter upon the last book of history. God is going to do it. He’s going to seal up the vision. He’s going to seal up the prophecy. It’s going to be finished with the seal of God on it.

F. To Anoint the Most Holy

And then, the sixth of these wonderful things that is going to take place in these 490 years—He is going to anoint the most holy. Now commentators—some commentators—say this speaks of the most holy place; that is, the inner sanctuary in the millennial Kingdom. Other people think the most Holy is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But friend, it really makes little difference, because when either one is anointed, we’ll know that it is the end of all things, when Jesus Christ is Himself enshrined, enthroned, in this world as Lord of lords and King of kings. And so that is the purpose—six wonderful purposes that are going to take place.

V. The Program

Now we’ve noticed the period; we’ve noticed the people; we’ve noticed the place; we’ve noticed the purpose. Now let’s notice the program. Let’s see how it’s going to take place. Let’s see how God breaks down these periods of time here within the 490 years of time of God’s dealing with His ancient people.

A. The Commencement of the Count

The very first thing is this: You’ve got to know when God starts counting. Look, if you will, in the first part of verse 25: “*Know therefore and understand,*”—now, ladies and gentlemen, Daniel didn’t have to guess about it, think about it, surmise about it. God said, “*Know and understand*”—“*know and understand.*” Know and understand what?—“*that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem*” (Daniel 9:25).

Now when does the 490 years start? When does God's clock start ticking? When is the commencement of the count? Well, God says that the count would commence with a commandment to restore and build Jerusalem (Daniel 9:25). Now Daniel, therefore, was looking forward to a time when a commandment would be given to restore and to build Jerusalem. When was this command given? The commandment was given in Nehemiah chapter 2. And you'll find it—don't turn to it now, because we won't have time if we look up every reference—so, just jot it down: Nehemiah chapter 2—the commandment was given.

What year was the commandment given to restore and build Jerusalem by Artaxerxes the king? It was in the year 445 B.C. Nehemiah tells us it was in the month of Nisan (Nehemiah 2:1). That's the first month of the Jewish year. And the Jewish year was always regulated by the paschal moon. And so therefore, we could put this on the Julian calendar, and we can date it. We know specifically when it was. We even know the day of the week when the commandment was given to restore and build Jerusalem—the starting point. It was March the 14th, 445 B.C—March the 14th, 445 B.C.

Now you're going to see, in a moment, why I say this is one of the most amazing prophecies in all of the Bible—because God said to Daniel, "Daniel, know it; understand it—that I'm going to start counting when a command is given to restore and build Jerusalem." And so as we think about the program, point number one is the commencement of the count.

B. The Construction of the City

Point number two is the construction of the city. Now notice he says that the city is going to be rebuilt. Notice—*"that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"* (Daniel 9:25). Now you have two time periods here. First of all, you have seven weeks. How long is seven weeks? Thank you—49 years. Remember, it's seven weeks of years. Seven sevens is 49. And what is God saying? God is saying the commandment is going to be given to restore and build Jerusalem. And God says it will be rebuilt in 49 years. Ladies and gentlemen, it was. The devil did all he could do to stop it; but, in 49 years, Jerusalem—the walls and the city—were rebuilt.

C. The Coming of the Christ

Now what is the next event in this wonderful countdown—in this amazing prophecy and outline of things to come? First of all, there was the commencement of the count. Secondly, there was the construction of the city. Thirdly, there was the coming of the Christ. Continue to read; and, look, if you will, in verse 25: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build*

Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks,”—now, in seven weeks the city was rebuilt—*“and threescore and two weeks”* (Daniel 9:25).

“Three score and two weeks” is how long? That’s 62 weeks. Sixty-two times seven is what he is talking about here—He’s talking about 62 times seven. And He’s talking about 483 years. Messiah the Prince will come—483 years—62 weeks plus seven weeks of years—483 years. God said to Daniel—I hope I’m not confusing you—but, God said to Daniel, “Now Daniel, I’m going to tell you when to start counting. And Daniel, when you start counting, in a specific period of time”—that is, “Daniel, in 483 years”—“Messiah the Prince will be here.” Now did the Lord fulfill that prophecy? I want to tell you that Jesus Christ arrived on the dot. Four hundred and eighty-three years later, Jesus Christ came.

Now let me tell you how you can figure that out for yourself, if you’re a mathematician. All right. A prophetic year is 360 days. Our year is 365 days. But in Bible prophecy, and in Jewish calculation, a year is 360 days. The Bible uses 360 as a year, and that makes you understand why 32 years is 1260 days in the Book of the Revelation, because a year is 360 days.

Now if you want to know when Jesus Christ was to appear on the scene, Daniel said, “Four hundred and eighty-three years, He’ll be here”—483 years of 360 days each. Now all you have to do is multiply 483 by 360, and you get 173,880. All right, 173,880 days later, Jesus Christ should be here for His first coming—the Messiah, the Prince. That’s what God told Daniel. Now keep this in mind. Jesus Christ began His public ministry in the year A.D. 29—A.D. 29. And we know exactly when He began His public ministry, because the Bible tells us, in Luke chapter 3, verse 1, *“In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar”* (Luke 3:1). You see, we have the record of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, and we know the time when Jesus began His ministry.

Now three Passovers later, after Jesus began His public ministry, He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Now again, we know the dates of that Passover. Why? Because the Passover was always dated by the paschal moon, and we can study, through a study of astronomy, and we know exactly when Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem was. Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem was on April the 6th, A.D. 32. That’s when Jesus came riding triumphantly into Jerusalem upon that Caesarean colt, “whereon never a man hath sat” (Luke 19:30).

Now listen. This date is exactly 173,880 days after the command to restore and to build Jerusalem, exactly to the day Jesus came riding into the city of Jerusalem, exactly to the day Jesus was presented as the Messiah to Jerusalem. After three years of public ministry, Jesus now comes and presents Himself as the Messiah to the city.

I want you to turn to Luke chapter 19. I want to show you a very, very interesting verse. Now keep that in mind—that Jesus is presenting Himself as the Messiah. Look,

in verse 30—Jesus said, *“Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither.”* I’d like to see you ride him, mister. No one had ever been on this donkey’s back before. *“And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;”*—now, notice this next verse—*“saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord:”*—that is, “God’s Messiah”—*“peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,”*—now, this is such an important event. Jesus said that, if the disciples had not shouted for joy, that even the very stones would have cried out. And then, Jesus begins to weep. Why is Jesus weeping? Well, look in verse 42—*“saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes”* (Luke 19:30–43).

Notice that phrase—here is Jesus weeping great salty tears. And Jesus says, “O Jerusalem, this is your day. Why, if you were quiet, even the stones would cry out.” It was the day, ladies and gentlemen, that the prophet Daniel had prophesied 483 years ago to the day. To the moment, Jesus, in a fulfillment of prophecy, rides right into the city of Jerusalem. I want to tell you, this is why I say this is one of the most amazing prophecies in all of the Bible. First of all, there is the commencement of the count; and then, there’s the construction of the city; and then, there is the coming of the Christ.

D. The Crucifixion of the Christ

Now go back to Daniel chapter 9. I want you to see something else. I want you to see not only the coming of the Christ, but Daniel also prophesied the crucifixion of the Christ. I want you to see it now; look again, in verse 25: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”* Now notice this: *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself”* (Daniel 9:25–26).

Here, Daniel prophesies not only the exact date that Messiah would come, but he says, “After 173,880 days—after that time—Messiah is going to be cut off.” And shortly after Jesus makes His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, they crucify Him. Daniel looked down through the tunnel of time, and Daniel, inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, knew that the same crowd saying, “Hail Him! Hail Him!” would before long be saying, “Nail Him! Nail Him!” And they would cut Him off; they would crucify Him. To be cut off is to be crucified. Isaiah chapter 53, verse 8, says, “*He was cut off from the land of the living*” (Isaiah 53:8). And Messiah being *cut off* refers to the crucifixion of Messiah.

And Daniel makes it plain that, when Messiah dies, He’ll not be dying for His own sin: He shall “*be cut off, but not for himself*” (Daniel 9:26). That is, He’s going to die; He’s going to be crucified; He’s going to be slain; He’s going to be cut off from the land of the living. But it will not be for Himself. And so Daniel prophesies not only the coming of the Christ; He prophesied the crucifixion of the Christ.

E. The Collapse of the City

But then, he goes on to prophesy the collapse of the city. He prophesied the construction of the city; and now, he’s prophesied the collapse of the city. Look again, in verse 26: “*And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself:*”—now, watch it—“*and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary*” (Daniel 9:26).

Daniel knew that the temple would be rebuilt, but Daniel also knew that the temple would be destroyed; that there was a people—and he doesn’t name the people, he just says there’s a coming prince—and the people of that prince that is going to come are going to destroy the city. And the city, of course, was destroyed. As a matter of fact, Jesus, in Luke 21, verse 6, looked upon that city, and Jesus also prophesied there would not one stone be left upon another of that temple (Luke 21:6).

And that was so literally fulfilled, because Titus, the Roman general, in 70 A.D., after Jesus was crucified—Titus, the Roman general—laid siege against Jerusalem; and, he had given command that the temple was not to be destroyed; but, inadvertently, it was set on fire, and it burned. And you know that it had a façade of gold, and the gold melted and ran down into the cracks of those great rocks. And also, they thought that perhaps there were labyrinthine passageways beneath the temple, where treasure might be hid; and so, those attacking armies of Rome took their great pry bars and saw to it that, of that temple proper, not one stone was left upon another. It sat there upon Mount Moriah, Josephus tells us, like a mountain of snow. Oh, how it glistened when the sun came up over the Mount of Olives and shown there upon that temple! But it fell, and great was the fall of it. Daniel prophesied it.

F. The Calling of the Church

But now—now—here’s a strange thing that’s going to happen. I want you to notice, after the collapse of the city, we’re going to see the calling of the Church. Look again, in verse 26: *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off,”*—and He was—*“not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;”*—and it was. Now watch this next phrase—*“and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined”* (Daniel 9:26).

Now let me tell you a better way to translate that: “Until the end, war and desolations are determined”—“unto the end.” Here, Daniel prophesies a period—a period of time—known as “wars and desolation,” a time that Jesus spoke of as “wars and rumors of wars.” And Daniel looked on down, and he saw the troubling of times of the Gentiles—a time known as “wars and desolation.” And it’s that period of time that we’re living in, and it is that period of time, now, where God is calling out the Church.

Now let me tell you what happened: Four hundred and eighty-three years have already been fulfilled, of the 490 years. And God now has called *timeout* for the Jews. With the crucifixion of the Messiah, and the destruction of the temple, God has stopped working with the Jews as a nation. Now He works with the Jews as individuals; and, any Jew today who wants to be saved can be saved.

Some people ask me, “Brother Rogers, do you believe that the Jews are lost?” No man is lost because he’s Jew, and no man is saved because he’s a Gentile. People are lost if they don’t have Jesus; they’re saved if they do. It’s not a matter of race, of face, or place—but grace. It’s a matter of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. If you know Christ, you’re saved; if you don’t, you’re not. It’s just that simple; it’s just that plain. It’s not a matter of what kind of blood you have flowing in your veins. *“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12), than the name of Jesus, who said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”* (John 14:6). But as a nation, God has called *timeout* for the Jews.

Now remember, he’s talking about 490 years that have been determined upon the Jewish people. Four hundred and eighty-three years were fulfilled. Messiah was crucified. The city, the temple, was destroyed. And God’s clock stopped ticking for the Jew. And we’re living in a period of time—the time of the Gentiles, a time known as “wars and desolation.” And God is calling out a people for His name.

Now Daniel does not say anything here about the Church. You would expect him, having known everything else, to say something about the Church Age; but he doesn’t. All he does is call it *a time of war and desolation*. Why? The Church Age was unknown to the Old Testament prophets—even the best of them. As a matter of fact, the Bible

says they prophesied some things they didn't even know what they were prophesying (1 Peter 1:10–12). “Huh?” they said. “Man, I wish I knew what that meant.” That's how heavy the Holy Spirit was upon them. They did not even understand all of the things they were prophesying. But Paul tells us, in the Book of Ephesians, that the Church was a mystery unknown to the Old Testament prophets and revealed to us in these last days (Ephesians 5:32). But during this period of time after God has called time out for the Jews, God is calling out a Church.

Now when is the Church Age going to end? I don't know; you don't know. But there is a number known to God alone that is going to make up the bride, the Church.

One of these days, that last soul is going to be saved. One of these days, that last person is going to come to Jesus Christ. That last person may be saved in this service tonight, or, let's say, over in North Carolina tonight, in a mountain church. There's a little mountain church up there, and let's say that it's kind of cool up there. And they're kind of huddled around a little stove there, and still up there on top of one of those old mountains up there, and there's a preacher up there. He's been preaching. He hasn't been to seminary; and, he's a little hoarse now, because he's been preaching about an hour-and-a-half. But he's standing on about six inches of his pant legs, because he's really been preaching. And about this time, he's giving the invitation.

Let's just imagine this is happening. It just very well could be. And let's just imagine that he's now giving the invitation in that little mountain church in North Carolina—I mean, right now. They started before we started, so they're about to get finished now; and, he's giving the invitation. Besides that, it's an hour later over there. And so he's giving the invitation. And here comes a man down here, and he gets on his knees. They have an altar down there. That man begins to weep and pray; he wants to be saved. He gets saved. And here comes a little boy; it's the man's son. And that little boy comes, and kneels, and gets saved. And Heaven is smiling, and Heaven is looking.

And now let's suppose back there, in the back, there's a little junior boy—what I used to call a *junior*—a little junior boy. Now I guess we call them, in the children's department, the *preschooler*. He's been sitting on the back row; he's been kind of fooling around. He hasn't been paying much attention. A lot of times, you think the kids are not really listening; but, you know, they listen in different ways. And he's been out there, you know, pulling someone's hair, leafing through the hymnal, and so forth. But the preacher's been preaching, and he's been listening. And suddenly, the finger of God touches the heart of that little boy. He's sitting back there in the back. He's wearing overalls. He hasn't got his hair combed very well, and his shirt's not exactly clean. But he's sitting back there on the back row. And suddenly, he feels the weight of his sin. Let's just say that's happening right now. I don't know that it is happening, but let's just say it's happening. He feels the weight of his sin. And he says, “You know, I need to be

saved. Jesus died for me. I want to be saved.” And he looks around, and he sees those people. And he’s afraid to go forward, but he says, “Oh, I must go forward.” And his mama doesn’t even know what he’s about to do. He’s sitting down here on this side of the church.

But I see the little fellow, as he gets up and looks around. One of his buddies pulls his coat and tries to get him to sit back down, but he won’t do it. And here comes that little guy, right down this aisle. And there he comes. The pastor says, “Charles, what do you want?” He says, preacher, “I want to get saved.” The preacher says, “Charles, do you believe that Jesus died for you?” “Yes, sir.” “Do you believe He’ll save you, if you trust Him?” “Yes, sir.” “Charles, are you willing to trust Him?” “Yes, sir.” “Charles, pray after me: Dear God...” He says, “Dear God...” “I’m a sinner...” “I’m a sinner...” “I’m lost...” “I’m lost...” “I need to be saved...” “I need to be saved...” “I want to be saved...” “I want to be saved...” “Jesus, save me.” And he starts to cry, and he says, “Jesus, save me.” And God’s dear Holy Spirit moves into his heart, and a divine transaction takes place; and, he is born again. And the great God of glory stands up from His throne, and He says, “That is it. The Church is complete. Gabriel, blow the trumpet. Lord Jesus, be sent for Your own.”

There’s nothing to keep that from happening tonight. I tell you, some little old junior boy, some little knot-headed boy in North Carolina, or here in this service, or somewhere else, may get saved, and that will be the last soul saved in this dispensation. We don’t know when that time is coming. Every time I preach the gospel and give an invitation, I may be hastening the coming of the day of the Lord. I don’t know; you don’t know. They don’t know when that number, the fullness of the Gentiles, will be come in. But there’s the calling of the Church.

G. The Completion of the Count

Now the next thing I want you to see is the completion of the count. As soon as the Church is taken out, as soon as the Church is raptured, as soon as the Church Age ends, then God calls *time back in* for Israel. Remember, 483 years have already been fulfilled, and God called *timeout*. And then, God is going to call *time back in* for seven more years—one more week, seven more years. That seven-year period is the period we’ve been studying here, in the Book of Revelation, called the *Tribulation*. That seven-year period is when God starts to deal nationally with the Jew again.

Look, if you will please, in verse 27—the Bible says, “*And he*”—who? “*The prince that shall come*,” in verse 26 (Daniel 9:26)—“*shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:*”—that is, for seven years—“*and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation*” (Daniel 9:27). And so the final

countdown is going to start again for the last seven years, on God's calendar, with national Israel. And the clock starts to tick with the rapture of the Church and the Jews back in the land. At this particular time, God is going to bring the Jew to Himself as a nation.

The Bible says, in Romans chapter 11 and verse 25: "*Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*" (Romans 11:25). When the Church Age is complete, then God gets ready to remove the scales nationally from Israel. But before that, they're going to make a horrible mistake. The mistake that they're going to make is to make a treaty with a Roman prince. Now that's what Daniel 9, verse 27, tells us: "He is going to confirm the covenant with many for one week" (Daniel 9:27). The word *covenant* means, "a treaty." Who is going to confirm the covenant with many for one week? "A prince that shall come," verse 26 tells us (Daniel 9:26). A prince is coming. It's not talking about King Jesus. It is talking not about the Prince of peace; it is talking about the prince of evil, the Antichrist. A coming Roman prince is going to make a seven-year treaty with Israel; and, when he does, they are going to say, "Our messiah has come." They're going to see this peace treaty, and they're going to think it's going to be the means of their deliverance. But Isaiah tells us, it is an agreement with Hell, because they are going to agree with the Roman prince (Isaiah 28:18).

Now the Roman prince is going to come out of a ten-nation confederacy—the Common Market, I believe. I believe the stage is set. The Common Market already is now making negotiations with Israel. The Common Market, the last three or four months, has been saying to Israel, "Now if you want to survive, you're going to have to play ball with us. We're the ones now holding the cards." And you read the newspaper, and you're going to see how the Common Market is speaking more and more to the nation Israel. The time is going to come when a leader will rise out of the Common Market, and he will say to Israel, "If you will make me the boss, if you will knuckle under to me, if you will turn your sovereignty over to me, if you will turn your security over to me, I'll take care of you." The time will come when they'll have little chance to do anything else, and they will do it. It will seem like the best move—yea, indeed, their only move.

And when they do, he is going to bless them tremendously. He is going to see to it that their agriculture will flourish. He's going to see to it that all of the nations of the world leave them alone. They're going to want to rebuild the temple. And incidentally, they are already now training little Jewish boys in Jerusalem to make temple sacrifices. They are, right now, learning how to go back to the Old Testament sacrifices. It is in their heart; it is in their psyche; it is in their mind to do so. And they're going to say, "We will need a temple." And this Roman prince will say, "You will have a temple." Some people

are saying that the stones for that temple are already prefabricated, already in place. And they're saying that it will not take long to reconstruct that temple. Oh, it may not have the splendor; it may not have the glory of that Old Testament temple; but, mister, it will have the significance.

And they're going to say, "At last, our messiah has come." Jesus said, "I have come in My Father's name, and you'll not receive Me: but if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5:43). They will believe this Roman prince. They will believe this one who is the beast. They will make a covenant with Hell. And the Bible says he's going to make a seven-year treaty with them. Look, in verse 27: "*And he*"—the coming prince—"*shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:*"—but now, watch it—"*and in the [middle] of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*" (Daniel 9:27).

Now two words I want you to see: *abominations* and *desolate*. Now here's what's going to happen: After 3 1/2 years of this 7-year treaty; after 42 months; after 1,260 days; after a time, and times, and half a time; right smack dab in the middle of this 7-year treaty, the Antichrist, who's allowed them to rebuild the temple—the Roman prince—is going to step forward, and say, "That's enough. No more oblation; no more sacrifices." He's going to set up headquarters in that very temple. And the Bible tells us, in 2 Thessalonians, the second chapter, that, "he, as god, will sit in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He will declare, "I am God." The devil has always wanted to do that. He's always wanted to be like the most High. And he is going to enthrone himself, in all of his over-weaning pride, right there, in the holy place.

Now remember the two words I said to remember—*desolate* and *abomination*. Look at it again, in verse 27: *For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*" (Daniel 9:27). Now do you remember what Jesus said, in Matthew chapter 24—"When you see the abomination of desolation in the holy place, then shall be great tribulation" (Matthew 24:14–15)? Remember what he said? That's what he's talking about—"When you see the abomination of desolation." Who is this abominable person who is going to bring unmitigated desolation?

And Jesus said, "Now listen—listen—to Daniel. Listen to Me. Listen, you Jewish people. Keep your eyes open. When you see this one move into the Holy Place, flee. Get out of the city. If you're on the rooftop, don't come down to pack your clothes. If you're in the field, don't go back for your things. Pray that you'll not be carrying a little baby. Pray that you'll not have those kinds of inconveniences. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world, even till this time" (Matthew 24:21). In the middle of this 3 1/2-year period, this Antichrist is going to come and show

himself that he is god (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He will double-cross Israel; and then, he is going to unleash his satanic fury against God's chosen people. *"In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease"*—that means he's going to break his treaty—*"and for the overspreading of abominations he will make it desolate even to the consummation."* That is, to the end of the 490 years—the last three and a half years. Brother, it's going to be tough; it is going to be tough.

H. **The Coronation of the King**

But notice, not only the completion of the count, but notice the coronation of the king. And notice the last thing that Daniel says. And here's the bright note in all of it: *"And that determined shall be poured out upon the desolate."* Now, the last part of verse 27 should read, and may read: *"And that determined shall be poured out upon the desolator."* That is, God is going to pour His wrath out upon Antichrist. And when is that going to take place? When Jesus comes, this time at the *end* of the seven-year period—not for His church, but with His church—at the battle of Armageddon. And the beast and the false prophet are cast alive into the lake of fire after the battle of Armageddon.

Conclusion

Now Ladies and Gentlemen, I don't know about you, but to me this is a fantastic prophecy—a fantastic prophecy that God gave the prophet Daniel so long ago. Such and amazing, such an infinitely articulate outline of things to come.

Now, what can we see in conclusion to all of these things? Number one: We'll have to admit that this book is the Word of God. Number two: We'll have to admit that the same God that prophesied the first coming of Jesus Christ down to a gnat's eyelash is the same God we'd better believe when He prophesies the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the third thing: We need to understand that we need to get ready because these things are coming to a climax. And dear friend, if you're not saved, you need to be saved; you can be saved by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ tonight.

Bible Prophecy

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: June 2, 1996

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:24–27

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

DANIEL 9:24

Outline

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- I. The Period of Time
- II. The People
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 - A. To Finish the Transgression
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Conclusion

Introduction

Take God’s Word and find in the Old Testament the Book of Daniel. And when you’ve found chapter 9, look up here—Daniel chapter 9. I know that if you are aware of the news, you are aware that something significant has happened in the land of Israel—that a new prime minister has been elected: Mr. Benjamin Nathan Jehu. And he is indeed in the news, as I watched the news this afternoon. The eyes of the world are focused upon Israel, and as well they ought to be. I want to talk to you, tonight, about the prophecy—

Bible prophecy: what we can look for, and what is going to happen. Now in the passage that I'm going to read to you—I'm going to give you—God's going to give to you an amazing outline of things to come, because prophecy is history written ahead of time. And incidentally, fulfilled prophecy is one of the great, magnificent, irrefutable proofs of the inspiration of the Word of God.

Now Daniel has been praying for understanding, and God gives him understanding. *An understanding man prays, and a praying man gets understanding.* So I want you to jump right in, in this passage of Scripture; and, incidentally, you're going to have to pay very much attention, because the message tonight is not going to be an easy one to understand. But if you understand it, you'll be blessed. So please give me your full attention tonight, as I begin to read in Daniel chapter 9, and I will begin reading in verse 24: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate”* (Daniel 9:24–27).

Well, as I read that, I thought, “That is so clear. There's no need even, really, to make explanation. We just close the Bible and say, ‘I understand all of that. What's next?’” As a matter of fact, that's a very convoluted passage of Scripture. It's hard to read. It's hard to understand. It's hard to follow. And you may say, “I will never, ever understand it.” But I believe you will—I believe you can—if we'll study it bit by bit. Somebody said, “How do you eat an elephant?” You do it one bite at a time. Now we've got an elephant here, so get your knife and fork; but, we're going to have to eat in a hurry, because there are some wonderful, wonderful truths that will bless your heart, as we study this passage of Scripture.

I. The Period of Time

We're going to alliterate the message tonight under the headings of *P*'s, and the first thing I want you to think about is the period of time that is being discussed. Look again,

if you will, in verse 24 of this wonderful passage of prophecy: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people”* (Daniel 9:24).

Now let’s just pause right there. What does “seventy weeks” mean? Well, it doesn’t mean seventy weeks of days; it means seventy weeks of years. And so if you had seventy weeks of years, that would be 490 years. Now let me help you understand this: that it literally says “seventy sevens”—not seventy *weeks*, but seventy *sevens*. They use the word *week* to mean “a category, a certain number,” just as we would use the word *dozen* today. It could be a dozen days, a dozen years, a dozen millenniums—it would make no difference. He’s saying “seventy sevens.” Well, actually, he’s talking, here, not about weeks of *days*, but weeks of *years*.

For example, let me give you an illustration of how the Bible uses weeks of years. Leviticus chapter 25—in verse 8: *“And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee”* (Leviticus 25:8). So they spoke of weeks of years, just as we speak of weeks of days. So the period of time—and I don’t want to slow down there—490 years.

II. The People

Now we’re going to slow down just a little bit more and talk not only about the period, but the people. Look again, in verse 24: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people”* (Daniel 9:24). Now God is speaking to Daniel, and Daniel was an Israelite. He was a Jew; he was a Hebrew. And God says, “This is a prophecy that deals with Israel.”

Now let me say something about the nation Israel. The nation Israel is like no other nation on the face of the earth. It is a God-ordained, God-decreed, God-conceived, God-protected nation. And these are a special people. Now please don’t try to turn to all of the scriptures I’m going to give you tonight, because I’m going to try to go very fast. But if you are interested in prophecy, get out a piece of paper, and jot all of these scriptures down. Israel is a special people. Deuteronomy chapter 7—in verse 6, God says to Israel: *“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself above all the people that are upon the face of the earth”* (Deuteronomy 7:6).

God has chosen the Jew, whether you believe it or not, whether you like it or not. God has chosen the Jew. And this nation, as I say, is a God-created, God-decreed, God-loved, God-called, God-elected, and God-protected nation. No other group of people has ever left their mark on history as the Jews have. And the Jew today stands beside the grave of his oppressors and his persecutors.

Did you know that less than 4/10 of 1% of the world’s population is Jewish? And yet, they have captured more than 12% of all of the honors in science, health, medicine, music, and public life. Did you know that, of the Nobel Prize winners in the last 25 years, 1/3 to 1/4 of them have been Jews? And yet, they represent 1/10 of the world’s

population. As a matter of fact, all of the history of the world revolves around the names of six Jews—Moses, Paul, Marx, Freud, Albert Einstein; and then, one who doesn't belong on any list: Jesus Christ—all sons of Abraham.

They're special people, and they were chosen for a special purpose—number one, to give glory to God. Isaiah chapter 43—in verse 7: *“Even every one that is called by name: for I have created him”*—He's talking about the Jew—*“for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him”* (Isaiah 43:7). The Jew is for God's glory. And the Jew was given for our good. Now you need to understand that if you want to be blessed, you cannot curse the Jewish nation, but rather you should bless the Jewish nation.

God told Abraham, in Genesis chapter 12, verse 3: *“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee”*—that is, in the Jew—*“shall all the families of the earth be blessed”* (Genesis 12:3). And very frankly, I am here tonight in this place, preaching this book, because of the Jew. Whether you believe that or not, understand it. You see, it is through divine inspiration and through the Jewish nation that we have the Old Testament. We talk about our Judeo-Christian heritage. That means it roots from these chosen people.

Listen to this verse—Deuteronomy chapter 4, verses 5 and 6. God is speaking to the Jew, and He says: *“Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people”* (Deuteronomy 4:5–6). God said, “I'm going to pour My information, My inspiration, into you, but not to make you a bucket into which I am pouring information, but to make you a pipeline through which I am dispersing information.”

And it is because of the Jew, and that God has chosen the Jew, that we have a Jewish Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. And that great prophet to Israel, Isaiah, said to the Jews, in Isaiah chapter 9, verses 6 and 7: *“For unto us a child is born, and unto us”*—to the Jew—*“a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace”* (Isaiah 9:6).

And God has a very wonderful future for the Jew. God is not finished with the Jew. God says that He is going to keep the Jew forever, He is going to preserve the Jew, and that the Jew will be there when the sun, moon, and the heavens—the sun, moon, and the stars—may have disappeared (Jeremiah 31:35–36).

Psalm 89, verse 27—God speaks of David, and says: *“Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed”*—that is, the descendants of King

David—*“also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children”—*that is, the Jewish descendance—*“forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statues, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.”* God says, “If they disobey Me, I will chastise them.” But notice the great *nevertheless* in Psalm 89, verse 33: *“Nevertheless...”*—I have a plaque in my home that just has that one word on it: *nevertheless*—*“Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed”—*the descendants of David—*“shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven”* (Psalm 89:27–37). Now the Jew, therefore, is indestructible.

And many of you have never met a Canaanite, a Hittite, a Jebusite. But many of you have met a Jew. These other nations have gone, but the Jew, today, exists just like the Gulf Stream flows through the Atlantic Ocean. It’s there, in that ocean; and yet, somehow, it keeps itself separate from the rest of that mighty ocean. And so the Jewish nation is a nation today. They have endured unspeakable atrocities under Pharaoh, under Nebuchadnezzar, under Alexander the Great, under Nero, the Turks, Hitler, Soviet Russia. They’re being persecuted today in their land; but yet, the Jew exists.

The King of Egypt could not diminish the Jew. The Red Sea could not drown the Jew. Jonah’s whale could not digest the Jew. The fiery furnace could not devour the Jew. The gallows of Haman could not hang the Jew. The nations of the world have not been able to assimilate nor annihilate the Jew. But God has a very special plan for Israel, and you need to understand that God has a future for this people.

III. The Plac

Now go back again to Daniel 9. The period: 490 years. The people: God’s chosen, God’s-ordained, God’s decreed people—the Jews, Thy people. Now wait a minute. Notice not only the period and the people, but notice the place: *“and upon thy holy city”* (Daniel 9:24). What is the holy city? It is Jerusalem. No other city like Jerusalem upon the face of the earth, and there will never be peace on Earth until there’s peace in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the international hot spot, and any peace treaty that does not settle the issue of Jerusalem is not a treaty that will bring peace. Nothing is settled until the matter of Jerusalem is settled.

Now I’m going to give you some more scriptures. Jot them down; don’t look them up. Zechariah chapter 12, verses 2 and 3: *“Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all*

people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it" (Zechariah 12:2–3). There's going to come, in the future, a move by the nations of this world to make Jerusalem an international city—a city sacred to Christians, Muslims, and Jews. But I can tell you it will never work. God says, "Jerusalem will be a burdensome stone. Though all the nations of the world gather together against Jerusalem, they will not make it work." Ezekiel 5—in verse 5: "*Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the nations and countries that are round about her*" (Ezekiel 5:5). Jerusalem is the capital city of the world. Jerusalem is mentioned in the Bible over 800 times. I don't know whether Washington has a future—or Paris, or London, or Tokyo. But I know that Jerusalem does. God says, "These 490 years are determined upon your people and upon this sacred place."

I spoke to you not long ago from Psalm chapter 2 about God's determination to have His Son to rule and to reign. And one of the favorite verses in all of the Bible to me is Psalm 2, verse 6, that says, "*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*" (Psalm 2:6). "My Son upon My holy hill." He calls *Jerusalem* "His holy hill." You think of the vastness of this universe. Many times—many times—while I go to sleep, I think of the vastness of the universe. I say, "How big is it? Where does it end? How could it end?" And I think how our God has piled galaxy, upon galaxy, upon galaxy with billions and billions of stars that stretch out over the velvety black space. God alone knows what's out there. But out of all of those galaxies, He's chosen one galaxy: the Milky Way. And out of the Milky Way, He's chosen one solar system: our solar system. And out of that solar system, He has chosen one small, insignificant planet: Earth. And out of Earth, He has chosen one section of that Earth: the section He calls *His land*, the Holy Land. And out of that section called the *Holy Land*, He's chosen one hill: the hill of Zion, Jerusalem. And He calls that *His holy hill*. And He says, "I'm going to put My Son right there, to rule and reign" (Psalm 2:6).

God has decreed it. God has ordained it. He speaks of a period 490 years. He speaks of a people; they're a chosen people. He speaks of a place; it is a sacred and a holy place. Will God do what He intends to do in Jerusalem? You'd better believe He will.

Isaiah 62, verse 1: "*For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth*" (Isaiah 62:1). God says, "I will not rest till My light and My righteousness goes forth from Jerusalem." Zechariah chapter 8—in verse 3: "*Thus saith the LORD, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain*" (Zechariah 8:3). That's a prophecy, folks. God says, "It's

coming to pass.” Jesus said, “When you speak, don’t swear.” He says, in Matthew chapter 5, verse 35: *“Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King”* (Matthew 5:35). He hadn’t said that about Memphis, but He said that about Jerusalem. Zechariah chapter 1, verse 17: *“Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem”* (Zechariah 1:17).

Zechariah 2, verse 12: *“And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again”* (Zechariah 2:12). That’s what the Bible says. No wonder the psalmist said, in Psalm 137, verses 5 and 6: *“If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy”* (Psalm 137:5–6). God’s plan deals with Jerusalem. The name *Jerusalem* means “city of peace.” And though it has known very little peace in the last 3,000 years, I’m telling you that, one of these days, the Word of the Lord is going to go forth from Jerusalem. Four hundred-and-ninety days—that’s the period. The chosen people—those are the people. Jerusalem—that is the place.

IV. The Purpose

Now go back to Daniel 9 with me, for a moment, and look again, as we try to study this scripture together. Let’s see the fourth thing. What is the purpose of this prophecy? We’ve talked about the period, the people, the place. Now let’s talk about the purpose. He mentions the purpose, in verse 24. Look at it.

A. To Finish the Transgression

Number one: *“to finish the transgression”* (Daniel 9:24). What is the transgression? What is the transgression of Israel? It is the rejection of Jesus Christ her King, her Lord, her Messiah. This is the great transgression. But one of these days, it will end. One of these days, it will be over. One of these days, they will turn to Him and say, “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.” To finish the transgression.

B. To Make an End of Sins

Number two: *“to make an end of sins”* (Daniel 9:24)—because there’s no end of sin without a Messiah, without a sinless sacrifice, without the Lamb of God. But then, that day, there’s going to be a fountain for sin, open to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

C. To Make Reconciliation for Iniquity

And then, *“to make reconciliation for iniquity”* (Daniel 9:24)—to bring these who’ve been separated back to the Lord, that they might be reconciled to Him.

D. To Bring in Everlasting Righteousness

And then, *“to bring in everlasting righteousness”* (Daniel 9:24). Now look, if you will, in Romans chapter 10. Speaking of righteousness, Paul says, *“Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”* (Romans 10:1–4). So God’s purpose, here, is to finish the transgression. God’s purpose is to make an end of sins. God’s purpose is to make reconciliation for iniquity. God’s purpose is to bring in everlasting righteousness.

E. To Seal Up the Vision and Prophecy

And then, God’s purpose is *“to seal up the vision and prophecy”* (Daniel 9:24). What does that mean? That means that God, one day, is going to put the last period upon the last sentence, upon the last paragraph, upon the last page, upon the last chapter, upon the last book of history; God’s going to bring it to a climax. And our Lord says, *“I’m going to seal it up. Not one jot, not one tittle, will pass from the law till all be fulfilled”* (Matthew 5:18).

F. To Anoint the Most Holy

And then, God says, *“and to anoint the most holy”* (Daniel 9:24). Exegetes say, *“Is this the holy place or a holy person?”* My answer is yes. It may be the holy person in the holy place, and Jesus will sit upon the holy hill of Zion. As Habakkuk chapter 2 says, *“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters that cover the sea”* (Habakkuk 2:14), when Jesus comes again. That’s the purpose.

V. The Program Being Discussed

Now the program. You see, we’re eating our elephant one bite at a time, okay? Now the program. How is this going to be done? Well, notice the first part of verse 25: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks”* (Daniel 9:25).

A. The Commencement of the Count

Well, let’s do this as a countdown to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. And he says, *“There’s a period of 490 years that must transpire before Jesus gets here.”* Well, when did the count begin? Verse 25: *“that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem”* (Daniel 9:25). God says, *“The prophetic clock for Israel began to tick upon a certain day when a command was given to restore and to build Jerusalem.”* Now when was that command given? Well, you’ll find it in the Bible, in the

Book of Nehemiah, chapter 2, verses 1 through 5, when, under Artaxerxes the king, the command was given to restore and to build Jerusalem. What day was this? It was the year 445 BC, according to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. It was in the month of Nisan, as you read the Bible there, in Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:1). The month of Nisan is the first month of the Jewish year. Now we know when that month comes in the Jewish year, because it's regulated by the Paschal moon, which never varies. If you were to do that on the Judean calendar, the day would be March the 14th, 445 BC. That's when the command was given to restore and build Jerusalem. And so that's the commencement of the count—verse 25a.

B. The Construction of the City

And then, the next thing that's going to take place is the construction of the city. Look again, in verse 25: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks"* (Daniel 9:25). Seven sevens is 49. In 49 years, Jerusalem was rebuilt, according, as God said, that it would be—right on time. And the devil did all he could do to stop Nehemiah and others from rebuilding the walls around Jerusalem. But Daniel prophesied it would be rebuilt, and it was rebuilt; or, he recounts the rebuilding of Jerusalem. So you have the commencement of the count; then, you have the construction of the city.

C. The Coming of Christ

And then, you have the coming of the Christ. Read again: *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks"* (Daniel 9:25). Well, how much is threescore and two weeks? That's 62 weeks. A score is 20. And so 62 weeks... How many years would 62 weeks be? It'd be 434 years. How many years would seven weeks be? It'd be 49 years. So if you add those together, you have 483 years. He's saying, in 483 years from the time that the commandment was given to restore and build Jerusalem will be Messiah the Prince.

Now in a prophetic year, there are not 365 days like we have, but 360 days. You remember that there are 360 degrees in a circle, because that's the way the ancients thought. That's why we have 360 degrees in a circle. To them, a year was 360 days. As a matter of fact, 3 1/2 years in the Book of Revelation are 1,260 days, which tells us very clearly and plainly that a prophetic day is 360 years. I told you it'd get deep. Just hang on. It'll make sense here, now, in a moment. From the command to restore and build Jerusalem under Messiah the Prince will give us 483 years times 360 days, which gives us 173,880 days.

Now get ready for a blessing. The Lord Jesus Christ began His public ministry in AD

29. “How do you know that, Adrian?” Well, the Bible tells us. Luke chapter 3, verse 1: *“In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar...”* (Luke 3:1). We’ve got the records. Three Passovers later, after He began His public ministry, He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We call that *Palm Sunday*. You remember that? Nod your heads. Are you still awake? Hello? Okay. Now how do we know when Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem? Again, we don’t have to guess, because they date that by the moon—the Paschal moon. That date was April the 6th, AD 32. Now how many days did we say it would be from the command to restore and build Jerusalem under Messiah the Prince? 173,880 days. Now folks, listen to me. April the 6th, AD 32 was exactly 173,880 days from the command to restore and build Jerusalem.

Daniel said, “Then will be Messiah the Prince.” Jesus made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem right on the dot. That’s the reason, as He came down those slopes of the Mount of Olives and was going through that eastern gate, He paused, and stopped, and great tears coursed down His cheeks. And He said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, if you’d only known the things that belong to you on this your day” (Luke 19:42). That day had been prophesied. It was in the Word of God. God told them exactly when it would come.

D. The Crucifixion of the Christ

The commencement of the count, the construction of the city, the coming of the King, and then, the crucifixion of the Christ. Look, if you will again, in verse 26: *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off”* (Daniel 9:26). A prophecy that Messiah, the Anointed One would be crucified—this refers to the death penalty, to be *cut off*. Isaiah chapter 53, in verse 8, says, *“[Jesus] was cut off out of the land of the living”* (Isaiah 53:8). And when it says, “Messiah will be cut off,” it speaks of His crucifixion (Daniel 9:26).

But notice: Why did He die? Look at it: *“After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself”* (Daniel 9:26). He did not die for His sins; He died for mine. My sin was upon Him; your sin was upon Him. He died as a substitute. He did not die for Himself. That’s in the Old Testament—speaking of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ for other people.

E. The Collapse of the City

So it speaks of the crucifixion of the Christ in verse 26. And then, it speaks of the collapse of the city—not only the construction of the city, but the conquest and collapse of the city. Notice again: *“After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come...”*—now, the prince that shall come is the Antichrist. The people of the prince that shall come are the Romans—*“and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood”* (Daniel 9:26). Daniel prophesied the

destruction of Jerusalem—the same thing that Jesus Christ prophesied when He wept over Jerusalem, when He told His disciples, “Not one stone will be left upon another of this temple”—Luke chapter 21, verse 6 (Luke 21:6). We know that Titus, in 70 AD, the Roman general, came and utterly desolated Jerusalem. Jewish blood ran down the streets of Jerusalem like water ran through the streets of Memphis yesterday after that downpour. It was a terrible, horrible thing. Titus came in like a flood. And then, notice the last part of verse 26: “*And the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined*” (Daniel 9:26). That may be translated this way: “And until the end, wars and desolations are determined.” What does that mean? It means there’s going to come, now, an indeterminate period of time. God is going to call *time out*. He’s going to put a stop on the count.

If you’ve ever watched, at Cape Kennedy—which I’ve seen many times, because I used to pastor down there—the count will begin. And then, they will count down, and the clock will tick, getting ready for launch; and then, there’s a hold. And that’s what God does. God has put a hold here, in these 490 years.

As a matter of fact, many of these years have already been completed, but not all of them. Out of 70 weeks, 69 weeks now have been completed. So there’s one week left. And God calls *time out*. Why? Because, Israel rejected her Messiah, her King. Messiah was cut off. The temple was destroyed. God says, “Time out,” and the clock has stopped ticking for Israel. And now God begins to call out a people for His name.

Notice the last part of verse 26 again: “And the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end will be wars and desolations” (Daniel 9:26). Now what is God doing, right now? This is the Church Age. God is calling out a people for His name. The Church was a mystery hid from the Jewish prophets revealed in these last days. And the Bible says that “*blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in*” (Romans 11:25). That’s us. There is a number known to God alone called the *fulness of the Gentiles*. One of these days, the Church of the Lord Jesus will be completed. Who knows when the last soul will be saved?

Perhaps... It’s an hour later in North Carolina than it is here—we know that for a fact; they’re on different time. So let’s say there’s a little mountain church in North Carolina up in the Smokies. I love the Smokies. Up there, on the Blue Ridge, there’s a little mountain church. Maybe it’s chilly there tonight. Maybe they built a little fire in that building in little pot-bellied stove there. Maybe there are 36 people in that building tonight. Maybe the pianist didn’t show up. So maybe a man is hoisting a tune. And now maybe a part-time preacher has come. He’s parked his Chevrolet. He’s come in. He’s greeted the folks. They’ve sung; and now, he’s opening the Word of God. And he’s preaching. And he’s not well educated, and his message is not well illustrated. But he’s opened the Book of God; and, in the Spirit of God and the power of God, he’s preaching

the Christ of God. And now he's giving an invitation, right now. And there's a little girl sitting out there. She's nine. She and her mother have just had a big fuss. And she knows that she's been disobedient to her mother. And she hears this preacher preach, and she realizes what is really wrong in her is sin. She knows that she's a sinner. And she hears this preacher, in his own ineloquent way, talk about Jesus. And her little heart is being convicted right now. And she understands how Christ died for her sins. And the preacher is now saying, "If there's anybody here who wants to be saved, I want you to leave your seat and come forward." And that little girl is biting her lip, and her heart is beating like a trip hammer. But there, in North Carolina, tonight, that little girl, nine years of age, burdened with sin, is stepping out and walking down the aisle in that little church in the Smoky Mountains. And God says, "See that? That's the one. The Church is complete. The bride is complete. Gabriel, blow your horn."

Hey, Jesus will come. How do you know that's not going to happen tonight? How do you know? How do you know that the last soul is not going to be saved tonight, here, there, or somewhere, and Jesus will come? And God's called a timeout. God has called a halt. The time, the clock, has stopped ticking.

F. The Completion of the Count

But now, after the calling of the Church, you're going to have the completion of the count, because God says that there are going to be 70 weeks—69 of them fulfilled. God called *time out*. And there's one week left. There are seven more years left. Notice verse 27: "*And he*"—the prince that shall come, the Antichrist—"*shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:*"—for seven years—"*and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate*" (Daniel 9:27). "Pastor, what does that mean?" It means that, after the Rapture of the Church, the clock is going to start ticking for Israel again. There are seven more years of Jewish history to complete this prophecy.

And when Jesus comes, and that last soul is saved, the trumpet sounds; the Rapture takes place; and the Church is taken out; then is coming a period of time known as the Great Tribulation. It will be seven years long. And there's coming a man that the Bible calls *the prince that shall come*. Jesus knew he was coming. He said to the Jews, "I've come in my Father's name. You won't receive Me; but, if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive" (John 5:43). This Roman prince is going to come. And why will the Jews receive him? Because, he'll make a covenant with them. He will be the leader of the world's nations, now. We will have a one-world government. The Antichrist will be ruling, but he will seem so benign, so loving, so kind, so wise. He

will be the great peacemaker. But the Bible says, “With peace he will destroy many” (Daniel 8:25). He’ll come in the name of peace. And he’ll say to Israel, “Enough. You have been beleaguered, persecuted, hounded, enough. Trust me. I’ll make a covenant with you. I will see to it that, with the power that is at my hand, you, as a nation, will be protected from your enemies; and, furthermore, you can rebuild your temple.”

And friend, that’s what they plan to do. They’re already making plans to rebuild the temple. I’ve been to the Temple Institute and seen them begin to weave the cloth for the priest. I’ve seen the instruments that they’re beginning to make to cause the sacrifices and oblations to take place. They have a desire. They’re on the mount to rebuild the temple. And Antichrist will say, “Yes, go ahead. Build your temple. I will help you. We’ll get help from all over the world. This temple will go up. Take 3 1/2 years, and it’ll be complete.” But the Bible says, “In the middle of that period of time, he’s going to cause the oblation and the sacrifice to cease. And he is going to break his covenant with these people.” Notice he’ll make the covenant for one week. And then, the Bible says, “*In the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate*” (Daniel 9:27).

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 24? “When you see the abomination of desolation, sit in the holy place; then, get out of town” (Matthew 24:15). Remember that? He’s telling the Jews today, “Listen. When that man comes, that Antichrist, when you see this happen, get out of Jerusalem, because it’s going to be terrible.” What is the *abomination of desolation*? The *abomination of desolation* is when this Antichrist will come into the holy temple, and he will say to those Jews, “Get that trash out of here. Take away your sacrifices. Take away your bloody animals. Take away your worship of God. You want to know who is God? You’re looking at him.” And Jesus said that, “*He as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*” (2 Thessalonians 2:4). And he, the devil’s messiah, the devil in the flesh—Satan—who has wanted to be worshiped, will have his day. And he will move into the holy temple, and say, “I am now God. Worship me.” And he will be the devil in the flesh, just as Jesus Christ was God in the flesh. And Jesus said that is that *abomination of desolation*—when that happens.

There will be a peace treaty of seven years, 1,260 days, a time and times and half the time, 36 months—however you want to look at it. In the middle of that period of time, the treaty will be broken. Satan will pull away his mask; and then, incredible persecution will begin for the Jews. And all of the nations of the world will come against Jerusalem. And the Antichrist will gather his armies and bulwark them there, at a place called Armageddon. And it will look so dark for Jerusalem. But at that time, just when it looks like the end is here, the Lord Jesus, this time, will not come for His saints; He’ll come with them, on a white horse, with a sword that goes out of His mouth. What is that sword? It’s His Word. “*The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any*

twoedged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). And the Lord that spoke them into existence will speak them into oblivion at the battle of Armageddon. And when they see Him come in power and great glory, they’ll say, “Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.” Scales will fall from their eyes, and there’ll be a fountain opened for Jerusalem, the inhabitants thereof, and a nation will be born in a day. And God’s plan will be over, and Jesus will rule and reign from Jerusalem.

Conclusion

You say, “Adrian, have you got it all exactly right?” Maybe not. That’s the way I understand it. The truth of the matter is, I’m not on the program committee; I’m on the welcome committee. But I know this: If I’ve got a jot or a tittle wrong here or there, I can tell you, my precious, sweet friend, Jesus Christ is coming. And I can tell you the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ (Revelation 11:15). And God Almighty says, “*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion*” (Psalm 2:6). And the same Messiah that came the first time is coming again. Praise His name! Hallelujah! Amen!

Let’s bow our heads in prayer. If you’re not saved, you need to be saved. Maybe you’ll be the last one saved. Maybe it won’t be the little girl in North Carolina. Maybe it’ll be you—the last one saved before Jesus comes for His bride. Would you like to pray tonight and ask Christ into your heart? Pray this prayer: “Lord Jesus, thank You for dying for me. I believe You are the Son of God. I believe You paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. Lord Jesus, I’m sorry for my sin. I repent of my sin. I open my heart. I receive You now as my Lord and Savior. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me, Lord Jesus.” Pray that prayer: “Save me, Lord Jesus.” Did you ask Him? Then, pray this: “Lord Jesus, I just trust You now, by an act of faith. Thank You for saving me. Now Lord, help me to settle it and seal it by making it public. Help me not to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray. Amen.”

When Time Runs Out

By Adrian Rogers

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Main Scripture Text: Daniel 9:24–27

“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

DANIEL 9:24

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Introduction

Would you take God’s Word and turn to Daniel chapter 9? And if you have been in Bellevue these 27 years that I have been pastor, you will note that, from time to time, we have looked into this passage of Scripture, because this passage of Scripture is one of those key passages of Scripture. If you’re going to understand prophecy, you cannot bypass Daniel chapter 9, because, in Daniel chapter 9, we have an outline of things to come that is put down so beautifully that it encourages faith and gives understanding at the same time.

The passage is difficult as you look at it on the surface, so you have to take time and

break it down bit by bit. You'll understand why I said it's difficult, when you look at it on the surface, because we're going to begin reading now, in verse 24. Daniel has been praying for understanding. And I want to say, by way of introduction, that *an understanding man prays, and a praying man gets understanding*. And so Daniel has been praying, and God, now, is going to speak one great prophetic passage to the servant Daniel.

Now *prophecy is history, prewritten*. Only God can give true prophecy. Listen to this passage—beginning in verse 24, here's what God said to Daniel: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined should be poured upon the desolate”* (Daniel 9:24–27).

Well, I just feel like saying *amen*, because that's so abundantly clear that there's no need to spend much time talking about something that is so crystal clear. Actually, it does seem very convoluted, enigmatic; but, as we look at it a little bit at a time, it's going to break open before us and be an incredible blessing, as we think of this outline of things to come.

I. The Period Designated: 490 Years

First point: the period designated. Look, if you will, in verse 24: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people”* (Daniel 9:24). Now right away, if you're using the *King James*, as I'm using, you may be thrown off track just a little bit, because this does not mean 70 weeks, as we know a week. It literally means 70 groups of seven years. Actually, it means 490 years.

Now you need to understand that the Jews had weeks of years, just as they had weeks of days. When we say, “a week,” we think of seven days. They may just as well have thought of seven years. For example, Leviticus chapter 25 and verse 8: *“Thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years”* (Leviticus

25:8). And so don't assume that, when it says, "70 weeks," it is talking about 70 days. Actually, it is talking about 490 years. So we're talking about a period of time that spans 490 years. And we'll just leave that point very quickly; that's the period designated.

II. The People Described: The Jews

Number two: Let's think a little bit about the people described. To whom does this prophecy apply? Look again, in verse 24: "*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city*" (Daniel 9:24). Now to whom was God speaking? ? To Daniel. Who was Daniel? He was a Hebrew. What was his city? Jerusalem. So this is a prophecy that deals primarily with the Jewish people.

The Jews are the people of destiny. They're God's outline; they're God's yardstick; they're God's blueprint. If you want to know what God is doing in the world, study the Jew. And this tells us that God has a plan for the Jew, and God is not finished with the Jew. As I told you in our overview of prophecy, Sunday morning, a week ago, the Jew is indestructible. Put down this verse—Jeremiah chapter 31, verses 35 through 36: "*Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me,*"—what ordinances? The sun, the moon, and the stars—"saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever" (Jeremiah 31:35–36). In order to destroy Israel, you'd have to reach up into the sky and pull down the stars, the moon, and the sun. God says, "I am going to watch over this nation."

Now right away, we're getting a blessing, because we're finding out that God has not turned history loose upon itself and that God is keeping His promise. And prophecy has a way of settling the soul and giving you a great, great assurance.

III. The Place Destined: Jerusalem

Now here's the third thing. We've talked about the period and the people; let's talk about the place destined. He's talking about a place, also. Look again, in verse 24: "*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city*" (Daniel 9:24). Now the holy city is what? Jerusalem. There is no more important city upon the face of this earth than Jerusalem—not Washington, not Moscow, not Paris, not Tokyo, but Jerusalem. And the Bible prophesies, exactly as is happening today, that Jerusalem will be the international hotspot in the last days. And anybody who can read a newspaper, anybody who knows the political situation, anybody who has a modicum of understanding, knows that that is true.

But the Bible has prophesied that for centuries. Put down Zechariah 12, verses 2 and 3—God says, "*Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people*

round about, when they shall be in siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it” (Zechariah 12:2–3). There is coming a time when Antichrist is going to bring the nations of the world against Jerusalem. But Jerusalem is destined to be the capital city of the world during the reign of Christ.

Now when you study history, it helps you to put the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other. And when Madeline Albright, and Mr. Barak in Israel, and Yasser Arafat, are talking about Jerusalem, you perk up your ears, because you know that the stage is being set for the end times. Zechariah 14 and verse 16: *“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles”* (Zechariah 14:16). One of these days, folks, you’ll take a Holy Land tour, and you’ll go to Jerusalem, and the King will be on the throne there in Jerusalem.

IV. The Purpose Determined

So what have we talked about? A period—490 years. What have we talked about? A people—God’s chosen people. What have we talked about? A place—the holy city. Now think about the purpose determined. Here, God delineates His purpose in this prophecy, beginning in verse 24. And read with me: *“Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy”* (Daniel 9:24). Now let’s just take these purposes one at a time. Here’s what God is going to do:

A. He is Going to Finish the Transgression

Number one: He is going to finish the transgression—not a transgression, but *the* transgression. Now to whom is he speaking? Israel. What is the transgression of Israel? Their forsaking—their turning their back on—their Messiah, the rejection of Israel’s Messiah. But one day, thank God, that rejection will be over. Their transgression will be in the past.

B. He is Going to Make an End of Sins

Number two: He’s going to make an end of sins, because there can be no end of sins without Messiah. There is no forgiveness of sin apart from the Lamb of God that *“taketh away the sin of the world”* (John 1:29). And so there’s coming a time when the Jews shall turn, in faith, to Jesus Christ and trust Him. Romans 11, verses 26 and 27: *“And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and*

shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Romans 11:26).

Now ever so often an amillennialist... And if you don't know what that means, we'll give it to you later in our study of prophecy. But these are people who believe, basically, that God is through with the Jew. And they take the promises that have been given to Israel, and they try to make those promises apply to the Church. They leave Israel with the curses and take the blessings to the Church. But listen to what this scripture says: *“And so all Israel shall be saved:”*—now, that's the spiritual name for the Jews—*“as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer,”*—of course, that's talking about Messiah—*“and shall turn away ungodliness from”*—now listen to this—*“Jacob:”*—Jacob is the name, always, for fleshly Jews. There's no way you can spiritualize this—*“for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins”* (Romans 11:26–27).

C. **He is Going to Make Reconciliation for Iniquity**

Now Daniel also says He's coming to make an end of sins, and then, also, to make reconciliation for iniquity. Those who were enemies are now going to be reconciled. The great need for all of us to understand, both Jew and Gentile, is that, without Christ, we are alienated from God. Romans 5:10: *“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”* So Jesus is going, in this prophecy, to make reconciliation for iniquity. Thank God for that.

D. **He is Going to Bring in Everlasting Righteousness**

And then, to bring in everlasting righteousness. Now there is no righteousness either, without Messiah—without the Lord Jesus Christ. Daniel says, “There's coming a time when He's going to bring in this everlasting righteousness.” Now remember, he's talking about Israel. Put down, Romans 10, verses 1 through 4—Paul says, *“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved...”* By the way, some people believe everybody's going to be saved automatically, who's going to be saved, and it's already cut and dried. “Oh no,” Paul says—*“my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ”*—Messiah—*“is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”* (Romans 10:1–4). And so He's going to bring in this everlasting righteousness.

And even the great prophet Jeremiah prophesied this. Jeremiah 23, verses 5 and 6: *“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch...”*—that's just a description of Jesus, of the house and lineage of David—*“a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper,”*—that's King Jesus—*“and shall*

execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:5–6). The Jews are going to say, “Messiah now is our righteousness.”

E. He is Going to Seal up the Vision and the Prophecy

Now the next of these purposes is to seal up the vision and the prophecy. That means that God has a plan. And in 490 years, He’s going to finish that plan. He’s going to put the last period upon the last paragraph upon the last page upon the last chapter upon the last book of history. He’s going to seal it up; He’s going to finish it. Nothing has gotten out of hand—“not a jot or a tittle will fail from the law, till all has been fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18). *People say, “God said it. I believe it. And that settles it.” No, God said it. That settles it. I hope you believe it.* Friend, it is there—it is there. He’s going to finish—to seal up—the vision and the prophecy.

F. He is Going to Anoint the Most Holy

And then, the last of all of these purposes is to anoint the Most Holy. Now there is a debate among theologians whether this means the holy place in the temple, the millennial temple that will be built; or, whether that means the Most Holy One, the Lord Jesus Himself. I prefer the latter. I believe He will be anointed as Israel’s King, and I think that’s what this refers to. Either way, it’s going to be a blessing. And “Jesus shall reign where’er the sun doth his successive journeys run” (Isaac Watts).

And so that is the purpose now delineated.

V. The Program Deployed

Now here is the program deployed. Beginning now in verses 25 through 27, you’re going to see how this program works out. And so God is telling Daniel to know and understand; and now, I am trying to share with you, so you can know and understand—know and understand. We’re in verse 25: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times”* (Daniel 9:25).

A. The Commencement of the Count

Now 490 years it’s going to take. Well, you have to understand when the countdown begins and when it ends, and God tells us when this count will begin—when you can start counting off these 490 years. It begins with the command to restore and build Jerusalem. That’s the commencement of the count.

Now when was the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem? Well, that command

was given in the Book of Nehemiah, chapter 2, and verse 1. And here's what the Bible describes—and, of course, Daniel was familiar with this: *“And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine,”*—that is, Nehemiah did—*“and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence”* (Nehemiah 2:1). *“And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchers, that I may build it”* (Nehemiah 2:5). Nehemiah said, “King Artaxerxes, please don't be angry with me. If I look sad, it's only because I'm heartbroken for my city. The walls are in ruins; the city is in disgrace. Please give me what it takes to go back and restore—rebuild—Jerusalem.” And Artaxerxes told him to do that.

Now when was that? What was the date? It was 445 BC. Now the Encyclopedia Britannica, volume 2, page 660, tells us that also. Now it was done in the month of Nisan—that's what Nehemiah 2:1 tells us. Now the month of Nisan is the first month of the Jewish year, and the first month of the Jewish year is always determined not by a calendar, as such, but by the paschal moon. So if you are an astronomer and a student of Scripture, you can find out when this date was exactly. You don't have to guess about it; it was March the 14th, 445 BC. March the 14th, 445 BC—the command was given to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. That's when God's clock started ticking, according to this marvelous prophecy in Daniel 9. And so that is the commencement of the count.

Now notice—notice—what he says here, if you will, in this verse: *“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks”* (Daniel 9:25). That's 49 years. It took 49 years to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. It happened just as God said it would. God gave the command through Artaxerxes—or, God gave the ability through Artaxerxes—and God used Nehemiah to do it. And in these 49 years, it was done exactly, and this first section now is completed.

B. The Continuation of the Count

But now, that's the commencement of the count. Let's look at the continuation of the count, in verse 25: And he says, *“Unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks”* (Daniel 9:25). Now He's saying, “I'm going to expand the prophecy just a little bit. You have 49 years; and now, you're going to have, after that 49, 434 years. And put all of these together, and you have 483 years from the time the command was given to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah was come—Messiah the Prince. Messiah came right on time.

How do you figure this? Sir Robert Anderson has done a wonderful study on this, and I am indebted to him for this wonderful study. But what a blessing it is to me! You

need to understand that a year in Bible prophecy is 360 days. Our years are 365 days, but they would add just a few days to make up for the missing days. They had 360 days. Three-and-a-half-years is 1,260 days in the Book of the Revelation, which is one-half of 360. And they put their years just like we do a circle, with 360 degrees in a circle.

Now here's the point: From the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince is going to be 49 years, and then 434 years, which is going to make a total of 483 years. Don't check out on me. Listen to me right now. The point that you need to understand is this: that Daniel pinpointed the coming of Messiah down to the very day. Take 360 days in a prophetic year, and remember that Jesus began His public ministry in AD 29. Well, how do you know that Jesus began His public ministry in AD 29? Well, the Bible tells us. Luke 3, verse 1: "*Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene*" (Luke 3:1). God says, "Just go to the history books, and find out exactly when the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar was." Those dates are written, and the record is clear. So we know exactly when Jesus began His public ministry. The Bible makes it very clear.

Then, the Bible teaches us that, three Passovers later, Jesus, as Messiah, made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, after three years of public ministry. Well, when did He make His triumphant entry into Jerusalem? Three years later. Well, we don't have to guess at that, because we know it was the week of the Passover. And we don't have to guess when Passover was, because Passover is set by the paschal moon. And so we could just put those things together. And people who study these things—they can tell us exactly when Jesus Christ got on that donkey and rode into Jerusalem through that Eastern Gate. The date was April the 6th, AD 32.

Now here's the interesting thing: If you put this together, you're going to find out that Jesus Christ, Messiah the Prince, came exactly, precisely on time, because, if you multiply this together, if you take these years and put them together—the 434 years plus the 49 years—you have 483 years. Multiply that by 360—you have 173,880 days from March the 14th, 445 BC. Now don't skip out on me. That's exactly the day when Jesus was riding into Jerusalem. That's a good place for an *amen*—173,880 days from March the 14th, 445 BC, Jesus was riding into Jerusalem.

Now remember when I preached three or four weeks ago about the tears of Jesus? Jesus on the Mount of Olives wept, and I preached from Luke 19. Do you know why Jesus wept? Listen to it again—Luke 19, beginning in verse 41: "*And when he was come near,*"—that is, when He was come near to the city—"*he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes*" (Luke 19:41–42). No

wonder Jesus wept. The precise day was given by Daniel the prophet. He said, “If you’d only known the things that belong to you on this your day.”

C. The Cessation of the Count

And so there was the commencement of the count. We see where the commencement of the count began—with the building of Jerusalem. There’s the continuation of the count, from the building of Jerusalem—rebuilding of Jerusalem—unto Messiah the Prince. Now there is the cessation of the count. The count is stopped. God puts on hold the count. Look now, in verse 26: *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off,”*—that is, “After this period of time, after Messiah has come in, threescore and two weeks, plus the seven weeks of the building—rebuilding—of the city, Messiah is going to be cut off.” That is, “You’re going to crucify Messiah. Messiah should be cut off”—*“but not for himself”* (Daniel 9:26).

That’s very interesting. What does it mean that, “Messiah should be cut off”? It speaks of the crucifixion of Jesus. Daniel prophesied the crucifixion of the Son of God, as did Isaiah. Isaiah 53, verse 8: *“He was taken from prison and judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living...”*—that’s what His crucifixion was. His life was cut off. It actually means, “to be cut short.” He died as a young man—*“he was cut off from the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken”* (Isaiah 53:8). And that’s what Isaiah said: He was stricken for the sins of the Jewish people. And Daniel says, “Messiah will be cut off, but not for himself”—that is, not because of any sin that He had done (Daniel 9:26). He did not die for His own sin; He had no sin. He died for us.

And then, Daniel saw—not only would Messiah come exactly on time, not only would Messiah be rejected and crucified—but Daniel also saw that the city would be destroyed, and it would be destroyed by a Roman. I want you to see what he goes on to say here, in this passage of Scripture: *“And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city...”*—not the prince that shall come—who’s the Antichrist—but the people of the prince that shall come—*“shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood,”*—that is, “You’ll be inundated with trouble and difficulty”—*“and unto the end of the war desolations are determined”* (Daniel 9:26).

What’s he talking about here? Daniel, looking down through the corridor of time, saw Messiah coming exactly, precisely on time. Daniel, looking down through the corridor of time, through divine inspiration, saw Messiah rejected that Passover week and nailed to a cross. He saw him being cut off from the land of the living.

And then, Daniel saw Jerusalem being destroyed. Jesus also wept over Jerusalem. And Jesus said, *“Not one stone will be left upon another.”* Luke 21 and verse 6: *“As for*

these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left not one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Luke 21:6). If you go sometime with me to Israel, you’ll be able to see the ruins of that temple. Not one stone was left on that temple mount that was there in the time of Christ, but you can look down into the valley and see these massive stones that have been tumbled down, thrown down, down off that temple mount, exactly, precisely as the Bible said that it would happen.

Now at this point, God puts a hold in the countdown. God stops the clock from running, because God is dealing with Israel. And when Israel rejected and turned her back on Messiah the Prince, then the clock stopped ticking for Israel. And there is an undetermined period of time that will be marked by wars and desolations—and that’s the time we’re living in. You’ll find that in the last part of verse 26 (Daniel 9:26). And this *now* is what we call *the times of the Gentiles*. God’s clock has stopped ticking for the Jew, and it’s called *the time for the Gentiles*.

The key verse—Romans 11, verse 25: Paul says, *“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”* (Romans 11:25). There are a number of folks that are going to be saved, that the Bible calls, *“the fulness of the Gentiles”* (Romans 11:25). We don’t know when that’s going to be.

But what is going to determine the time that Jesus is going to come and take the Church out? It is when His Bride is complete. It is when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

And somewhere, perhaps tonight, that last soul will be saved. Perhaps there’s a service tonight in the mountains of North Carolina. Perhaps it’s a little country church there. And it’s already darker there than it is here, and maybe it’s a little chilly in the mountains tonight. And they’ve lit the stove for the first time, and there is a lay preacher there, because their regular preacher was ill and didn’t come. So there’s a lay preacher, and he’s got the Word of God. He’s doing what a lot of lay preachers would do—he’s just trying to explain how to be saved, and he’s using John 3:16. And in that little North Carolina church tonight, it’s kind of chilly in the air; that stove is burning; there’s a new family there that has come to visit for the first time—a mother, a father, and a nine-year-old girl. And they are sitting there on the back row, just kind of listening to this man stumble through the message.

Not more than 40 people there in that little church building—and this layman is trying to share Jesus Christ, to share what Christ has done for him. And he’s trying to explain John 3:16. And as he does, just—tears pop out of his eyes. With a trembling voice and no homiletical beauty at all, he just tells how God loved, and how He loved the world, and when He gave His Son. And he’s telling them, “If anyone would repent of their sin

and trust Jesus, they'll be saved." And that little girl, right now, this moment, in my imagination, she's stepping out and coming forward to give her hand to that lay preacher and to give her heart to Jesus. And do you know, that may be the last soul that will ever get saved before Jesus comes? I mean, tonight—that could happen tonight. I mean, that little girl coming—she's the last one. And the Lord says, "Gabriel, that's it! Marshal the troops. Lord Jesus, it's time! My Son, go and claim Your Bride. The Bride is complete."

"Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans 11:25). So when Israel turned her back on the Messiah, the clock stopped ticking. And there are seven years left; 483 years have been completed, but the 490 years need to be completed. And so "Blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in" (Romans 11:25).

D. The Completion of the Count

Now we have talked about the commencement of the count; we've talked about the continuation of the count. We're talking now about the cessation of the count—it has stopped for a while. When will the clock start ticking again? With—for Israel—with the Rapture of the Church, you're going to have the completion of the count. Now notice in verse 27: *"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week"* (Daniel 9:27). Well, who is this he that will confirm the covenant with many for one week? And remember, one week is seven years. Who is this? Well, verse 26 tells us that, *"The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary"* (Daniel 9:26). Who destroyed the city and the sanctuary? The Romans. When did they do it? In 70 AD.

And then, he says there's a prince that's going to come. Now he's not talking about Messiah the Prince. There are two princes that are mentioned here. In verse 25, Messiah the Prince is mentioned (Daniel 9:25). In verse 26, there is a Roman prince that is coming (Daniel 9:26). The Romans destroyed the temple and destroyed Jerusalem. And this prince that is going to come, Daniel says, is going to make a covenant with Israel. And he's going to come out of Europe. There's going to be a re-federation of the old Roman Empire, which, by the way, has taken place. And out of that Roman Empire is going to come a prince, a leader. He is called *the man of sin*; he's called *the beast*; he's called *the wicked one*; he's called *the Antichrist*. But he's going to come, and he's going to make a covenant with Israel. He will make a peace treaty with Israel for seven years. Israel, by this time, will be very beleaguered; they'll be looking for a Messiah. You see, they did not accept the true Prince, the Prince of peace, but they will accept the false prince. Jesus said, "I've come in My Father's name, and you won't receive Me. If another shall come in his own name, him ye shall receive" (John 5:43).

Now this prince that will come will make a peace treaty with Israel in this final seven years, after the Church has been taken out. And God's clock will start to tick again for Israel, and you will see seven more years. Now in the middle—in the middle of this peace treaty—this beast, this Antichrist, this prince that shall come, will double-cross Israel. He will break his covenant. Look, in verse 27: *“And he”—the prince that shall come; that's the false prince, now—“shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:”—that's seven years—“and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease”* (Daniel 9:27). That tells me that the temple is going to be rebuilt, and they're going to be making sacrifices in that temple.

Now you say, “Is that going to happen?” Well, if you travel to Israel, you'll believe it will happen. You can go to the Temple Institute and see them now teaching these young priests how to make animal sacrifices. You can see them there, as they're getting the vessels for the temple, as they're weaving the clothes for the priests to wear, as they're taking their computers and studying the lineage of those to find out who is of the lineage of Levi, in order to make these sacrifices. They're making plans to rebuild the temple on the temple mount, and it will be rebuilt.

And this prince that will come, he's going to say, “Look, that's all right. We'll make a covenant; we'll work this thing out. That temple can be rebuilt.” And once it's rebuilt, in the midst—in the midst of this seven-year period—he is going to come into that temple. He's going to say, “Enough of this foolishness. Enough of this terrible fiasco of your so-called religion. Get all of that out of here. You want to worship God? I'm God. Look at me; worship me.” And the Bible says that he is going to come to the temple of God, showing himself that he is God (2 Thessalonians 2:4). And at that time, the Jews are going to recognize that they've been double-crossed, and they're going to refuse this false prince. And he's going to unleash his satanic fury on God's ancient people.

And you're in Daniel 9; just turn to Daniel 12, and look in verse 1 of this chapter: *“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people”—again, “the Jews”—“shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book”* (Daniel 12:1).

Now Jesus also told about this. Jesus was a student of the Book of Daniel. Matthew chapter 24, verse 15: *“When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,”—the holy place is the temple—“(whoso readeth, let him understand:)”* (Matthew 24:15). I hope you understand me. Jesus said, “Then there's going to be great tribulation.” And He says, in Matthew 24, verse 21: *“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be*

shortened” (Matthew 24:21–22). If God did not step in, it would be truly a holocaust like the world has never known. But thank God, He will step in.

How will He step in? Well, He came for the Church, and took the Church out; and, when He did, the clock started ticking again. It will tick seven more years until 490 years are complete; and then, when it looks like it’s the darkest day ever for Israel and for Jerusalem, then Heaven’s King will come—the Lord Jesus, this time, not coming for His Church, but, this time, coming with His Church, in power and great glory. And the Roman prince will meet Messiah the Prince, and 777 will take care of 666. That’s what’s going to happen right there.

And so what do we do? Well, we praise the Lord. I don’t know what all of this does for you, but when I study this, it helps me, when I read the newspaper, to see it through the lens of God’s Word. It helps me when I see how God so meticulously, so wonderfully, pinpointed the exact, precise time when Messiah would come—how Daniel—so long before Jesus ever came to this earth—how Daniel prophesied the crucifixion of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem. Is not the Bible a wonderful book? And it tells me that God is in control, and it gives me hope for the Jewish nation that I love. And I love the Jewish people. I have a special affinity in my heart for the Jewish people. Sometimes when you preach a message like this, some people think that you’re anti-Semitic. This is one of the most pro-Israel messages that I could possibly preach, because God has a great and a glorious future for His people, and God has not forgotten His people.

Now when—when—is Jesus going to come? We’re living in that period of time that is *time-out* for the Jews, so far as prophecy is concerned. That doesn’t mean that the Jews can’t be saved. *“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in”* (Romans 11:25). When is Jesus coming? Well, when the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. Maybe you’ll be the last soul saved tonight before the Rapture. And when will that be? Well,

*It may be at morn, when the day is awakening,
When sunlight through darkness and shadow is breaking
That Jesus will come in the fullness of glory
To receive from the world ‘His own.’*

*It may be at midday, It may be at twilight,
It may be, perchance, that the blackness of midnight
Will burst into light in the blaze of His glory,
When Jesus receives ‘His own.’*

And then, the songwriter says,

Oh, joy! Oh, delight! Should we go without dying,

*No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying.
Caught up through clouds with our Lord into Glory,
When Jesus receives 'His own.'*

—H. L. TURNER

Well, I hope that you'll look at this passage of Scripture and that you will savor it and delve into it. And whenever anybody ever preaches on prophecy, they always need to do it with humility, because I don't believe there's a pastor, or a preacher, or a Bible student ever, who's got it all just right. But when Jesus comes, we'll say, "Now Lord, I understand." So it's always better, friend, to be on the welcome committee than on the program committee, and to be ready when Jesus comes.

Conclusion

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Heads are bowed, and eyes are closed. How many of you tonight would say, "Pastor Rogers, I know that I know, if Jesus Christ were to come tonight for the Rapture, if the trumpet would sound, if the voice of the archangel would echo through this place, and if Jesus were to step from Glory tonight, I know that I'm saved; I'm ready for Him to come. If I should die tonight, I know that my spirit will go straight to Heaven. I am ready to go to Heaven through death, or through the Rapture and resurrection. But I am ready; I'm saved, and I know I'm saved—not because of my own goodness, but because I believe that Jesus Christ died for me; I have repented of my sin; I have trusted Him as my personal Lord and Savior; God's Spirit bears witness with my spirit that I'm a child of God; and I have a changed life that ratifies and give credence to the fact that I am saved"? How many of you can give a testimony? Would you just lift your hand, if that is true about you? Thank you. Now take your hand down.

Now if you could not lift your hand tonight, I know that you would not even be here if you were not interested in spiritual things, so I know that you would like to have that assurance. I'm just virtually certain of that. Perhaps you're saying, "Well, Pastor Rogers, if a person can know it, I want to know it." Well, you can know it, friend, because salvation is a gift. There's nothing to earn; there are no qualifications except your sin. And the Bible says, "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*" (Romans 10:13).

So would you, right now, just pray and say, "Lord Jesus, please come into my heart. Come in now; forgive my sin; cleanse me. Take control of my life. Begin now to make me the person You want me to be. I need You, Jesus. Thank You for dying for me. Thank You for paying for my sin with Your blood on the cross. Thank You for doing it. I believe You were raised from the dead; and now, I just trust You—and You only—to save me"?

Did you ask Him? I mean, did you really ask Him? Did you say from your heart,

“Lord Jesus, save me”? Did you? Then, pray this way: “Thank You for doing it, Lord. I stand on Your Word. Thank You for doing it. And now Lord Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. You died for me; let me live for You. And I know You will, if I just trust You—and I do trust You. Tonight, I’ll make it public, if You’ll just give me the strength. In Your name I pray. Amen.”

The War in the Middle East

By Adrian Rogers

Date Preached: January 20, 1991

Main Scripture Text: Daniel 12:4

“But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.”

DANIEL 12:4

Outline

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Introduction

I want to share with you a verse that’s meant much to me in these years that God has allowed me to preach the Word of God. It’s a verse that deals with prophesy. God has told Daniel so many things that are so enigmatic and difficult to understand. And as you read the prophecies of Daniel and the book of the Revelation, the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and other prophecies, sometimes you just simply have to say, “I don’t understand it.” And I don’t think that we have to feel incriminated because we don’t understand it. I don’t think we were meant to understand it until the time for the understanding arrives. For example, Daniel chapter 12:4—God said this to Daniel: “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end...”

Now I take that to mean that when these events begin to transpire, then many prophecies that have been a riddle and a puzzle to us will begin to come together. And, you know, Jesus, when He was here, told His disciples, “I have many things to tell you, but you’re not able to bear them.” And I think that same principle is true in prophecy, and I think that things that perhaps we have not understood in the past we begin to understand as they transpire. And so, with that in mind, I want us to think tonight about the war in the Middle East. I told you last Sunday that one of the most remarkable quotations that I’ve heard in a long time is this one, as we think of the man who has brought the world to the brink of Armageddon; a man who is murderous in his ways, demonic in his wisdom; this man that has made the world to tremble, I think of that quote by Paul Harvey, “When little men cast long shadows, you know the sun is about

to set.” And I think, dear friend, that proverb is being fulfilled in our eyes. Now I want to talk to you about Iraq and Kuwait, and what I want to do is to talk to you from three references.

First of all, I want to give you an historical study. I want us to see Iraq in history. Then I want to give you a prophetic study. I want you to see Iraq in prophecy. And then I want to give you a practical study, and I want you to see what you and I ought to do, and by God’s grace, will do in the light of these tremendous times in which we live.

I. The Historical Background

Now if you were to try to find out where Iraq came from, why we have the situation that we have today, you would have to go all the way back to the seedbed of all truth, all history, all theology – the book of Genesis – and turn to Genesis 10. And so, would you do that tonight. Genesis chapter 10 with me for just a moment. And I want you to see how Iraq, which is the modern name for ancient Babylon, had its beginning. You’re going to find out, my dear friend, that it had a bad beginning and it’s going to have a more horrible ending.

Genesis 10. I begin reading in verse 8. And it speaks of a man named Nimrod, and the Bible says, “And Cush begat Nimrod: and he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: whereof it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD, and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel...” And, of course, you know extrapolated on out is Babylon. This is the beginning of Babel, the beginning of Babylon. Now the name Babel means – it’s like a play on words – it means “the gate to God” or it means “confusion.” They’re saying this will be the gate to God, and God says it will be the source of utter confusion.

Now the first Babylonian bully, the first leader of this land was a man named Nimrod. And I want you very quickly to see some things about Nimrod because his counterpart is there in Iraq tonight. First of all, I want you to see his arrogance, his arrogance. Notice, if you will, in verse 8: “And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. And he was a mighty hunter before the LORD...” Now the word, before the LORD, may also be translated “against the LORD.” That is, he is standing against God, against the LORD. Wittingly or unwittingly, he is standing before or against the LORD. His very name, Nimrod, means “let us rebel.” His arrogance, verses 8 and 9. His abilities, verses 8 and 9. In verse 8 he is called a mighty one. In verse 9 he is called a mighty hunter. And in verse 9 again, a mighty hunter. Three times he’s called mighty. Mighty, mighty, mighty. It speaks of a man who’s going to have incredible, or who has incredible power. He is a hunter. He is a hunter of not animals, but he is a hunter of the souls of men and of human beings. You see his arrogance, his abilities. His ambition. You notice here, the Bible says, “He is a mighty hunter before the LORD...And the

beginning of his kingdom was Babel..." Here was a man who had a two-fold ambition. Number one: to gather souls. He's a hunter of men, a hunter of souls to subjugate humans. And, number two: to build a kingdom.

Now let's rush right on and see not only his arrogance and his abilities and his ambitions, but I want you to notice his apostasy. I'm skipping to chapter 11 and I want to read the first four verses. "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Six times they used the personal pronouns we or they or us. Six is the number of a man. It is as if they said, "Our brothers, which are upon the earth, our kingdom come; our will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Now when they said, "We're going to build a tower unto heaven," what they meant was not that the tower would reach heaven, but that it would be dedicated to heaven. This was the first astrology. This was the seedbed, the cradle, and the grave of all false worship. Now that's all I want to say about that because I can get bogged down right there if I don't stop, but simply to show you the inception, the beginning of the place that we see in the news today as Iraq, ancient Babel, ancient Babylon. Well, this area became the great city-state of Babylon, which was the first world empire under Nebuchadnezzar. Babylon ruled the world, the known world for that time, and then Babylon was conquered and subjugated by Persia under Cyrus the Great, and the Persians ruled the world. And then under Alexander the Great, the Persians fell and the Greeks ruled the world. And then under the Caesars, Rome ruled the world. That's the history.

But Mohammed came on the scene, and Mohammed began his own religion called Islam. And it was a religion that is an apostate form of Christianity, and it is a religion that believes in spreading its force and spreading its influence not by love, but through the sword. And so, Mohammed led his armies and Mohammed conquered the Arabian Peninsula, and he made Islam the religion of that entire area. And Mohammed died in 632 AD. By that time he had made Islam the religion of the Arabian Peninsula. And then he died.

But the movement began because it was meant to be a worldwide movement. So they moved on to the world. They moved on to Syria. And in 635, Syria fell to Islam, and Damascus became the world center of Islam. There in Damascus the Caliphs, who are the successor to Mohammed, ruled there. And then they continued to spread east and Islam spread all the way up to India and to the borders of China. And then they began to

move on to the west to take Africa, North Africa and Egypt. And then on to Spain. And the Moors moving in to Spain to take Spain with the Islamic religion. They were moving to take Europe, to make all of Europe an Islamic nation until the year 711 AD, the Battle of Tours. Islamic forces were turned back and Europe was saved from being an Islamic province. Then the capital of Islam was moved to Baghdad that you've heard so much about today. And in 750 AD, the Abbasid Kingdom was set up there in Baghdad, and the Arabic world and the Islamic world has always had the dream of world-wide Islamic religion, and they have always had the dream of Islamic unity.

Now, remember, this is their dream. And one of the methods of spreading that is something known as Jihad or holy war. And that something, that's one part of the equation. If you don't understand that, you don't understand what is going on this very moment in the Middle East. Now, in our history, we had the Shah of Iran, who was looked on as an American ally by some, as an American puppet by others. And he came into Iran and Iran with American help and cooperation and oil money, became incredibly wealthy and incredibly influential. But, you know, that there were fundamentalists Islamists who did not like the Shah of Iran. They felt that he was an American puppet, that he was friendly with the American devils and the infidels, and so they overthrew him. But before they overthrew the Shah of Iran, the Shah of Iran had gone into to Iraq and had taken a piece of Iraq. He said, "We want that," and he took it.

Now, when Saddam Hussein came into power in Iraq, he said, "I'm going to take it back." And we had that war between Iraq and Iran where thousands and thousands and thousands of lives were wasted as Islamic brother went to war against Islamic brother. Now something very strange is happening. Iraq is fighting Iran. And because of that, the more conservative Arabs who felt that if Iran won that they would lose some of their oil holdings and other things, began to support Iraq. And the Russians began to arm Iraq, and billions of dollars came into Iraq. And the United States, because she was so upset the perturbed with Tehran and the hostages that had been taken, the American hostages thought, well, perhaps we can neutralize this Iranian power, and we began ourselves to arm and to help Iraq. And Saddam Hussein was there, and billions and billions of dollars are poured into Iraq, not only money, but arms, and he raised the largest army in Arabic history—over one million in his army. And we're building up this man who has turned out to be the mad man that he is. He himself began to see visions of grandeur. He called himself Nebuchadnezzar, and he began to build an atomic bomb and began to build chemical and biological weapons to destroy others because he has the dream now of being the man that will unify the Arabic world, that will spread Islam worldwide, and he figures that he will do it with the age-old method of Islam; that is, by the sword.

So he had two reasons when he attacked Kuwait. One was for the glory and the

spread of Islam. The other is for the riches of Kuwait. He blamed Kuwait. Why did he blame Kuwait? What was his excuse for going into Kuwait? He said the Kuwaitis had lowered the price of crude and, therefore, he, as a seller of crude, had lost two billion dollars. Besides that, he wanted that shoreline. With that as a pretense or as an excuse, on August 2, 1990 he invaded defenseless Kuwait.

II. The Prophetic Background

Now that's the historical background. Now I want you to see something with me very interesting. I want you to see the prophetic background, and I want you to turn with me please to Jeremiah chapter 49. Now, as we look at the Scripture here, may I tell you that I'm looking at these Scriptures in a different light than I ever have. And may I also put this proviso there. I am giving you something to look at. I am giving you something to study. I am giving you something to pray over. And I am not speaking tonight with exegetical exactitude. I am not speaking tonight as a pompous know-it-all. But I am speaking tonight as one who is looking into the Scriptures and saying, "O God, what are you saying to those of us in these last days?" And as I look at this Scripture and other Scripture, I feel like perhaps that Daniel said, "Seal up the prophecy until the time of the end, and then some things will become clear to you." And I believe, dear friend, that we're going to find here the invasion of Kuwait prophesied in the Holy Scripture.

Jeremiah chapter 49 and I begin to read in verse 28: "Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of the east. Their tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take to themselves their curtains (that is, their dwelling places), and all their vessels, and their camels (put in there, parenthesis, Cadillacs and Mercedes): and they shall cry unto them, Fear is on every side. Flee, get you far off, dwell deep, O ye inhabitants of Hazor, saith the LORD; for Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon hath taken counsel against you, and hath conceived a purpose against you. Arise, get you up unto the wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone. And their camels shall be a booty, and the multitude of their cattle a spoil: and I will scatter unto all winds them that are in the utmost corners; and I will bring their calamity from all sides thereof, saith the LORD."

Now, God prophesied that this area would be conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. But I see through that to a later fulfillment also. Many Scriptures have what we call a former and a latter fulfillment. As I look at this, there are certain circumstances that make me believe that it has both. And as I see Nebuchadnezzar spoken of here, I think I see another Nebuchadnezzar standing in the shadows whose name is Saddam Hussein. Just as in the Bible we saw the king of Tyre spoken of, but beyond the king of Tyre is

the devil himself. Just as in the Psalms when David is spoken of. Many times it is David, but other times it is David's greater son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember again that Saddam himself fancies himself as Nebuchadnezzar and has even had himself photographed in a replica of the war chariot of Nebuchadnezzar. So let's look at this.

First of all, let's look at the place that is involved in verse 28. It is called Kedar. And Bible students tell us that that is the wilderness that is east of Palestine that is east of Israel. It is part of the desert north of Saudi Arabia. And the area that is going to be looted is east of that. Notice in verse 28: "...Arise, go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of the east." Now if you look at a map, there's only one place that could be, and that is Kuwait. And then I want you to notice not only the place, but I want you to notice the prosperity of that place. Look in verse 31: "Arise, get you up into the wealthy nation, that dwelleth without care (I mean, absolutely carefree. That is, they don't want anything), saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone." Here is a nation, that little nation east of this sandy desert, and the Bible calls it a very wealthy nation.

Now in the original Nebuchadnezzar's time, there was no wealthy nation there. But may I tell you that never before in history has there been a nation that has such a per capita wealth as Kuwait had. Now I believe that this is a prophecy, one of those remarkable things about the Bible because when Jeremiah wrote this, there was a place that had really no water. It had no fertile soil. It had very few people. It certainly didn't have any wealth. There's no wealth in the burning desert. And yet the Bible calls it the wealthy nation. Why? Well, I think, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God knew that that little speck of land is floating in oil.

May I remind you, dear friend, that they did not have just the highest per capita of the existing nations in that part of the world; they had the highest per capita income of any nation in all of history. Kuwait! If you were a Kuwaiti, you got to be eighteen, you wanted to go off to college, don't worry about it. The Kuwaiti government would pay for it. If you wanted to get married and didn't have the money to get married, don't worry about it. The Kuwaiti government would give you a handsome sum of money, a gift of money. Then they would give you a regular income just for getting married and set you up in a beautiful apartment. Pretty good for young people wanting to get married. They had an incredible welfare system, almost...there is no income tax, and free medicine. The money was just pouring into Kuwait, a wealthy nation. Four hundred thousand people lived in Kuwait, Kuwaitis. They needed helpers to spend all of their money and to run the nation, and so 2.5 million outsiders came in, people from other nations, just simply to wait on and serve Kuwaitis. They were fortune seekers. They were job hunters. They set up businesses. But the Kuwaitis were smart. They said, "You can't set up a business in our land unless you have a Kuwaiti for a partner." And so someone would say to a Kuwaitian, "I have the money. Would you just loan me your name?" And

so he becomes a partner without any money. And the money just flows into Kuwait. One of the biggest problems those in Kuwait had was, “How do we spend our money? How are we going to get rid of it? We’ve already got enough Mercedes Benzes. We already have enough yachts. We already have enough villas in Spain. We already have enough chalets in Switzerland. We’ve already been on these vacations. We have enough art. We have enough jewelry. We have enough furniture.” They were extremely wealthy.

Now the Bible calls them in verse 31 “a wealthy nation.” But here is the fly in the ointment. We have seen their position. There they are in this place that I think signifies Kuwait. We have seen their prosperity. But now I want you to see their peril, their danger. Look, if you will, in verse 31. God is saying to this modern Nebuchadnezzar, “Arise, get you up to the wealthy nation, that dwells without care, saith the LORD, which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone.” When Saddam went into Kuwait, it was a cake walk. He just walked in there. There was no defense whatever. And I believe this verse speaks of the Iraqi incursion and invasion into Kuwait.

Now, what is going to happen as a result of that? God has always had warfare with Babylon. God says in Revelation chapter 18:5 that, “Her sins have mounted up to the heavens...” She is the fountainhead of all wicked worship. It is the seat and the cradle of false religion. And so, see what is going to happen according to Jeremiah chapter 50:9: “For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations (do you see that?), an assembly of great nations...” Now what has George Bush done? He has put together something that people thought could not be done. He has assembled the nations of the world to come against Iraq. “...an assembly of great nations from the north country...” What is that? Soviet Russia. Who would have ever thought that the soviets would be in league with the other nations against Iraq? But here, I believe, the Bible is prophesying it. “...from the north country: they shall set themselves in array against her...” And that’s what we’ve been doing, setting ourselves in array. When you set yourself in array, that means that you’re putting your armaments in place – this armament and that armament, and this contingent and that weapon. All of these things now are being set in array against her. “...from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain.” That is, these weapons of warfare are going to be very swift, very strong in their exactitude.

You say, “Adrian, we’re not fighting with arrows today. Those people over there, those Kuwaitis, have Mercedes, not camels.” Well, my dear friend, there’s one thing that you have to learn, I believe, about Bible prophecy. Bible prophecy was written for the people in those days so that they could understand it. They understand camels. They don’t understand Mercedes Benz. We understand both. And so you have to make the transfer. You have to ask what it meant then. And then you have to ask what does the counterpart mean today? For example, we use this term – men are going to beat their

swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Now we don't think that means literal swords and literal plowshares. We do know that it is an emblem of the fact that men are going to come from a time of war to a time of peace. And so, here we find that these weapons of war are going to be laid out and they're going to be in place. But who is behind all of that?

Well, let's go on to verse 10: "And Chaldea (which is another name for Iraq or Babylon) shall be a spoil: and all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD." Now I want you to look in verse 25 of this same chapter. "The LORD hath opened his armory, and brought forth the weapons of his indignation; for this is the work of the Lord GOD of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans." Now here's a very strange thing that has happened. When Iraq made the incursion into Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, which is the seat and the cradle of Islam, did a very strange thing. The sheiks of Saudi Arabia asked the United States, what they consider to be an infidel nation, to come over and help protect. Who would have ever dreamed it?

Well, I believe it's been prophesied right here in the Bible that the United States would come, and I want to show you why I believe that it is prophesied that the United States would come. Look, if you will, in chapter 50 and begin in verse 41 if you will. "Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth." And verse 42: "And they shall hold the bow and the lance: they are cruel, and will not show mercy: they shall roar like the sea, and they shall ride upon horses, every one put, in array, like a man to the battle, against thee, O daughter of Babylon" And then I want you to look, if you will, in verse 26: "Come against her from the utmost border..." Now, not from the next-door neighbor, but come against her from the furthest place away. On the map, the furthest nation that would have the power to inflict this kind of danger would be the United States of America. And I believe that verse 26 that speaks of one coming against modern Iraq from the utmost border, one that's going to "open her storehouses: cast her up as heaps, and destroy her utterly" is the United States of America.

Now, what's going to happen when all of this begins to transpire? Now, again, I want to put this caveat in here and to say to you that I am not saying I know this is exactly per say what it's going to be like. I know what Jeremiah says is right. I'm not always sure what Adrian says about what Jeremiah is right, okay? I am just telling you, dear friend; I'm giving you something to pray over. I'm giving you something to look at. I'm giving you something to listen to. I am telling you that there are things in the last days that are going to begin to make sense to us that never made sense to us before. And so let's see if this is indeed the scenario.

What's going to happen? Saddam is going to be like a wounded animal squeezed into a corner, and I believe he will become even more of a mad man. Look, if you will, in

chapter 50 and verse 43: “The king of Babylon hath heard the report of them...” That is, he’s getting the information right now. “...and his hands waxed feeble...” That is, he does not have the power that he thought he had. “...anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a woman in travail. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan...” That is, he’s going to be like a cornered, wounded animal. “...unto the habitation of the strong: But I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? For who is like me? And who will appoint me the time? And who is that shepherd that will stand before me?”

Now, my dear friend, God is going to have His way in that land. Here was a very interesting verse to me as I look at this chapter. It seems like that all of the world is going to know what is taking place at the same time, something that heretofore would have seemed impossible. But look, if you will, in verse 46. The Bible says, “At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.”

I could not believe my ears when I sat there and listened to television, and I saw those men in that hotel, as you did, and hearing those bombs explode and seeing those tracers go out into the air, and that being televised by CNN to all of the world. “At the noise of the taking of Babylon, the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.” I mean, all of the people are going to hear it when it happens at that time.

Well, you say, “Pastor, that may be so or it may not be so. You may have it right; you may have it wrong.” You’re exactly right. But, friend, I’m getting ready. I am getting ready. I believe, dear friend, that we are living in the closing shadows of this age.

Now, leave Jeremiah and go back again to the book of the Revelation chapter 16. I want to show you something. And then I’m going to move to the next, final, more brief point if I might—Revelation chapter 16. Here again God speaks of that city and that nation built on the Euphrates. Revelation 16:12: “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates: and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” Now I’m going to resist the temptation to talk to you about how the river will be dried up, who the kings of the east are, and all of the rest of it for two reasons. Number one: I don’t know. And number two: I’m running out of time. I have some ideas. But the point that I want to make is this: that here is a prophecy that deals with the Euphrates. And you know that ancient Babylon with her hanging gardens was built on the Euphrates, which is not too many miles from Baghdad today.

Now verse 13: “And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” My dear friend, that is the unholy trinity. There’s a Holy Trinity – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. There is an unholy trinity that has a counterpart for each of the Holy Trinity. The dragon is the anti-god, the beast is the Antichrist, and the false

prophet is the sinister minister of propaganda who causes men to worship the beast and, therefore, he is the anti-spirit. Now notice what it says. “For they are the spirits of demons, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

Now you say, “Adrian, what is driving these people?” Demons. Demons. What we’re seeing is demonic activity that is bringing the world to that great day, that great battle. Now our Lord gives a warning here, and it is for you in verse 15. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” That is, you’d better be careful. You’d better be ready. You’d better be dressed in white, because when our Lord comes, you’d better have a robe of righteousness or else you’re going to be mightily ashamed. And notice verse 16: “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Do you believe, Adrian Rogers, that what is happening now is the fore gleam of Armageddon? With all of my heart I do. With all of my heart. Do you think that the alliance, the western alliance, America and the others, will prevail? I don’t think it’s going to be easy as some think it’s going to be, but I think we will temporarily prevail, only to find a worse scenario very, very soon. I am not optimistic. Not one scintilla of an iota of optimism do I have outside of Jesus in that situation. It, my friend, is like a Shakespearian tragedy. And in a Shakespearian tragedy you just see the situation coming and you know there’s nothing that can stop it and nothing that can avert it. And that, my dear friend, is what is happening there as demonic forces are moving our world toward that last, great battle called Armageddon.

But thank God, Jesus Christ, our King, is on His way. I am not a pessimist. I am not an optimist. I am a realist, and I am a Christian. But as I look at all of this, it just makes me feel good, dear friend, that I have a book written so long ago that just fits into the sockets of history: the prophecy of God’s Word.

Aren’t you glad for that? Isn’t the Bible a wonderful book? The Bible is an amazing book. Now let me move very quickly to the third and final thing. I said I wanted to talk to you some about history. And I said I wanted to talk to you prophetically and, and show you some things that I think that the Bible has to say about this land.

III. The Practical Background

But now let me talk to you practically. What should we do? Many of those of you who are sitting here have boys and loved ones, fathers, husbands who have gone or will go. There will hardly be a family in America that’s not touched with this. And on my knees last night I literally wept as I thought of little Iraqi children who are having bombs fall in their neighborhood. And even though the Americans are trying and the other allies are trying with precision bombing just to neutralize the nervous system of that war machine

over there, you know what terror and what heartache it must be for this nation and for these who have brothers and sons and fathers who are at war.

My dear friend, may I tell you that our battle is not primarily with flesh and blood. It grieves me that there must be war. Our battle is with Satan. Our battle is with demonic forces. And God loves those people as much as He loves Americans, as much as He loves Chinese, as much as He love Russians, as much as He loves Filipinos as much as He loves Memphians, He loves those people. Listen, my dear friend, don't ever get the idea that those people are less precious in the sight of God than you are. God loves them, and we must love them, and we must pray.

So here's the practical thing. Turn, if you will, to 1 Timothy chapter 2 for just a moment. Let me show you what God has told us to do and the reason that I'm calling our church to prayer. First Timothy chapter 2 and I begin in verse 1: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all..." Do you see that where it says first of all? "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, first of all, first of all, prayers, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority: that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Now, my dear friend, the first order of the day is not war. The first order of the day is prayer. First of all, before anything else. We can do more than pray after we've prayed, but we cannot do more than pray until we have prayed. And we need to pray for our national leaders. I have been crying out to God for my President, George Bush, whom I love and I thank God for. I believe that he has a heart for God. And the Bible says we're to pray, first of all, for kings and for all that are in authority. Not merely the President, but, my dear friend, the Congress, the military, our local authorities here. We need to lift them up. And we need to criticize them less and to pray more. I'm not saying that there's not a time for criticism. They need our criticism. They need our ideas. We need to speak against people who vote for such things as abortion or who cause us to err in any way. But, oh, my dear friend, we should not speak until we have prayed, until we speak with respect and reverence. The Bible says this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Savior. Listen, dear friend. If you want to please God, and if you want God to, to bless America, you'd better pray, you'd better pray.

Now you say, "Adrian, can we have peace in our time?" Well, look at verse 2: "Pray for kings and all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Now there may not be peace, but, my friend, you will have peace in the midst of the storm. You will lead a quiet and a peaceable life. Oh, you need peace. You need peace. And I believe that God can give places of peace and periods of peace and people of peace right in the midst of the storm if we'll simply learn how to

pray.

Conclusion

Let me tell you what our secret weapon is, and I'm finished. It's prayer. Prayer is the Christian's missile. Let me tell you why it's so neat. Dear friend, it can be fired from any spot. Secondly, it travels undetected. Thirdly, it travels at the speed of thought. Fourthly, it hits the target every time. Fifthly, it can be fired with a delayed detonation. Two thousand years ago Jesus prayed for me that great high priestly prayer and that missile is exploding in my heart tonight. Last of all, there is no anti-prayer missile. The devil can't shoot it down.

We need to pray. I'm calling you as a church, therefore, to prayer, solemn prayer. I'm calling you to make this Wednesday a day of special prayer for our nation, for our President, and I want you to pray, as you pray, a prayer of humiliation and repentance. I want you to repent for your personal sins and then I want you to repent for national sins. I want you to repent for the sin of abortion that we as Christians have allowed. I want you to repent for the racism. I want you to repent for the hatred. I want you to repent for the dope and the pornography. I want you to repent for the materialism and the blasphemy in America. You say, "I'm not doing it." No, but the Bible says, "Happy is the man that condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth."

You read the prayer of Daniel, and Daniel repented for the wicked sins of his nation. And we need to humiliate ourselves before God. I'm asking you that all day Wednesday that you abstain from food. Drink some water if you will, but abstain from food. You might want to start your fast on Tuesday night and break it at sundown Wednesday. I'm not commanding you to do it. I couldn't if I would and wouldn't if I could. Wednesday may not be a good day for you. You may have a business luncheon Wednesday. Then pick another day this week. But when we come to church this Wednesday night, we're coming to pray as we've never prayed before for America. The thing that frightens me is this: that we, as Americans, may temporarily prevail because of our strategic superiority, and if we prevail without prayer, we will be in a bigger mess than we have ever been. I, my dear friend, believe that it is time for us to humiliate ourselves before God that He might lift us up. We need to put our face in the dust, and I'm calling you to prayer.

Father God, take, dear Lord, your Word tonight from your servant, the things that I've tried to share, and O our God, help us to live with the sense of sensitivity. Lord, You said that surely the Lord God will do nothing but what He showeth His secret to His servants, the prophets. We thank you, Lord, that you have given us a more sure word of prophecy. And, Lord, for those details that we don't understand, we wait humbly for you. But, Lord, we do know that this is your world, and we do know that Jesus will reign. I thank you for that. And in Jesus' holy name I pray. Amen.