



PURPOSE IN YOUR HEART

- **SLIDE**

- Our last class was, **“There Was an Excellent Spirit in Him”**
- This statement literally means that in Daniel spirit dominated or was uppermost
- So, in other words, Verse 3 is saying, “The Spirit excelled in Daniel”...
- What we see in Daniel’s life is a man whose life was predominated by Spiritual things, not Material things

- **SLIDE**

- Like Daniel, we need to live lives not concerned about the things around us, but more concerned about the things within us
- Living lives like that will often make you a target of evil people

- **SLIDE**

- They knew they would never stop Daniel from his daily times of prayer
- If they could make a decree against prayer...he would be found guilty!
- What would you be found guilty of, if someone was watching you all alone in your house?
- Don’t back away from spiritual battles...
- Instead of backing away, Daniel approached his window and began to pray.

- **SLIDE**

- Daniel knew that his “True King” would protect him from any other King

- Daniel knew that they were preparing to throw him into a Den of Lions, but that God was preparing an Angel to protect him and watch over him

- **SLIDE**

- In your struggles, remember while it appears you are being overwhelmed...God has everything under His control!
- When you call on the Name of the Lord... He hears and answers your prayer.

- **SLIDE**

- Today's class is called, "**We Have Sinned**"
- Chapters 7 & 8 contain the record of two more dreams
- But, these are not like the ones before
- These are not the dreams of some Pagan King
- These are the dreams of Daniel himself
- Daniel 7:1

- 1) In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, *and* told the sum of the matters.

- Notice we are going back in time now...
- We are back at the first year of Belshazzar
- Remember Nebuchadnezzar had died an old man
- His son had taken over, the man with the best name ever... Evel-Merodach
- His Brother had killed him, and taken over
- In a conspiracy, Nabonidus gained the throne, and married Neb's daughter
- Years later Nabonidus and his wife moved to Arabia, and he retired by giving his son, Belshazzar the throne
- In the first year of Belshazzar, we have the first dream recorded of Daniel's
- But, is it his first dream
- Remember that he is early to mid-eighties by now

- It's hard to think that this would be the first time he has ever been moved to dream...
- Daniel's reaction to the dream is very unlike the King's before him
- What was their reaction typically? **TERROR**
- Look at Daniel's:

- Daniel 7:15

- 15) I Daniel was grieved in my spirit in the midst of *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me.
- 28) Hitherto *is* the end of the matter. As for me Daniel, my cogitations much troubled me, and my countenance changed in me: but I kept the matter in my heart.

- Look at what happens to him two year's later:

- Daniel 8:1

- 1) In the third year of the reign of king Belshazzar a vision appeared unto me, *even unto* me Daniel, after that which appeared unto me at the first.

- And the same kind of response:

- Daniel 8:27

- 27) And I Daniel fainted, and was sick *certain* days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision, but none understood *it*.

- Apparently having a dream was not a pleasant business
- Even faithful Daniel is brought to the point of illness and fainting by the vision
- He was troubled, and his countenance changed, and he was astonished by the vision
- But, he never really was TERRIFIED
- Daniel knew that this was God speaking to him...
- But, he didn't even know what it meant
- He didn't have a Daniel that he could call on to help him work it out
- As far as we know, he goes to his grave never understanding it...
- But, he just keeps it in his heart

- Often we find ourselves in similar positions
- We see God clearly working in our lives, so we aren't necessarily afraid of what is going on, but we just don't understand it
- We just keep the matter in our heart...
- Just like Daniel
- What I really would like to concentrate on today is Chapter 9
- Let's spend a moment and look at this amazing prayer of Daniel
- Now we are back up to the time period we left off in Chapter 5
- October 12, 539 BC was the night that Darius had overthrown Belshazzar
- This is the first year of Darius, so it must be somewhere in 538 BC
- Daniel is now 84 years old
- And what is Daniel doing?
- Bible Study
- Daniel 9:2

2) 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.

• SLIDE

- Daniel was a prophet who received some very impressive direct revelations from God
- Nevertheless, Daniel 9 shows that these spiritual privileges in no way diminished his dependence on the Scriptures
- He studied Jeremiah just like we study the Prophets
- He figured out the time scale of God's working with his people due to his persistence and intelligence, not by some divine revelation unavailable to us

• SLIDE

- But, the more impressive thing is Daniel's reaction once he does figure things out
- He didn't just study the Prophecies for some kind of Academic Pursuit, he changed his life by what he learned

- Daniel 9:3

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

- I see this as an immediate reaction
- You have to remember that Daniel is 84 years old
- He didn't just START reading the Bible lately
- He was captured as a young teenager, and he has spent the last 70 years reading the Scriptures
- I'm not smart enough to figure out the chronology of Daniel and Jeremiah
- We know that Jeremiah prophesied during the Exile also
- Somehow Daniel got a copy of the Prophecy and he had been reading it for a while
- He refers to the prophecy as "the Books", not some letter that he had just received
- It had been around long enough so that it was bound up and had some history to it
- Daniel had been studying this for a while
- You have to assume that Jeremiah didn't understand what he had written
- Just like Daniel had dreamed a dream that no one was able to understand, Jeremiah had written a prophecy that no one could interpret
- Daniel had set himself to the project for years, and finally saw his way through it
- He finally has this "**AH HAI!**" moment, and look what he does next:
- He takes immediate action:
- He gets right down on his knees!

- Daniel 9:4

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;

- This is a wonderful example of prayer

- Because of his dependence on the Word of God, Daniel was acutely aware of God's promises through Moses, Solomon and Jeremiah that Israel would be allowed to return from the Babylonian Captivity, but only on one condition.
- He knew that the people had to confess and repent from their sins
- And so he begins his prayer...
- Daniel 9:5
 - 5) ***We have sinned***, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

- **SLIDE**

- Did he have a mouse in his pocket?
- Who's this ***WE***?
- Daniel was a wonderful and faithful man
- But he wasn't perfect
- He realized that

- **SLIDE**

- He included himself in the acknowledgement of repentance before God
- You don't see any "I's" or "Me's" in this prayer do you?
- It's not about Daniel, it's about Daniel including himself with the others
- He doesn't say, "God, I know that the people have screwed up pretty badly, but can you find it your heart to forgive them?"
- He throws himself right in the mix

- **SLIDE**

- This is a good lesson, not only for our prayers, but for our relationship with each other
- Acknowledge your own fault in the problem, and others will accept it much better
- You may think that you haven't done anything, but look within you to find something that you can bring to the other person in a humble spirit of repentance
- You will open their heart and go a long way to healing any breach

- Notice also the format of Daniel's prayer

- **SLIDE**

- Have you ever heard of **ACTS** Prayers?

- **SLIDE**

- Adoration

- **SLIDE**

- Confession

- **SLIDE**

- Thanksgiving

- **SLIDE**

- Supplication

- There are many ways to approach God in prayer

- There are many helpful suggestions to remind you how to do it

- This is one that I find helpful

- Look how Daniel does much the same thing...

- He begins with Adoration: *O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments*

- He has plenty of Confession: *We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled*

- He doesn't forget the Thanksgiving: *O Lord our God, thou hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand* – Verse 15

- And of course, the purpose of the prayer was Supplication: *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.* – Verse 17

- **SLIDE**

- One thing you notice right away is that the driving passion of Daniel's prayer is for the glory of God and not his own

- Daniel is concerned for God's interests (and the interests of others), not his own

- **SLIDE**

- In fact, from a worldly perspective, Daniel had every reason to be happy and comfortable with his life in Babylon
- But, he knew that the Temple of God was empty
- This is a heartfelt prayer
- This is Daniel begging to God to remember his people...
- Daniel 9:18-19
 - 18) 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 righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.
 - 19) 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.
- And look what happens...
- Daniel 9:20-22
 - 20) 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;
 - 21) 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, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.
 - 22) And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding.

- **SLIDE**

- Just like we saw with the Fiery Furnace...
- Just like we saw with the Den of Lions...
- God isn't slow to respond!
- God is right there for Daniel

- **SLIDE**

- As soon as he starts speaking...

- Daniel 9:23

23) **At the beginning of thy supplications** the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

- **SLIDE**

- If we humble ourselves before God in Prayer, he will be there for us also...