

Daniel 7

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[0 : 00] Let us turn now to the chapter we read, the prophecy of Daniel, chapter 9, and we take us our connecting link in this chapter, 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, made confession and said. And so on. Now I thought that this week that I might have broken off our studies in the book of Daniel, but I decided against it.

So we continue our studies this evening. And as you can see, those of you who have been here since we began these studies at the beginning of December, you will note that I have skipped chapters 7 and 8.

The seventh chapter of the book of Daniel begins what has been referred to as the second part of the book.

[1 : 55] And chapters 7 and 8 contain visions which are very difficult indeed to interpret. And for those who are so inclined, probably a veritable goldmine for spiritualizing.

And as you know, that is certainly not my forte. The visions which we have in chapters 7 and 8, the visions of the four beasts and of the ram and the he-goat, refer to the future developments through which the kingdom of God, the church of God, was to pass.

And indeed, what we have at the end, the vision that we have at the end of this chapter, the vision of what is referred to as the 70 weeks, is an answer to Daniel's prayer, the prayer which will become the burden of our thoughts here this evening.

And that vision refers to the glories which were still to unfold of the more distant future, the glories of the messianic reign, and perhaps even the glory of Messiah's second coming.

Divisions in 7 and 8 are the same in principle, though different in form, to those in chapters 2 and 4.

[3 : 42] They are predictions concerning future world empires. They bring to our attention the rise and the nature and the destruction of these empires.

Now, of course, people get into awful fancies trying to interpret what these empires are, that were to follow the Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, the Roman Empire, and so on.

And I don't want to take up time unduly with trying to interpret these visions as I understand them.

What is the general theme that runs through 7 and 8 is that these kingdoms, these empires have the rise, their period of dominion, and their destruction.

During the period of dominion, people are tempted to think that this power will never be altered, this particular rule will never be destroyed.

[4 : 56] But as chapters 2 and chapters 3 bring before us, so does chapter 7, that there is only one kingdom which is indestructible and unchangeable.

One kingdom that has continuing glory, and that is the kingdom of God himself, the kingdom of our Christ, which as chapter 7 tells us in verse 14, is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom is that which shall not be destroyed.

And to him, at the head of this kingdom, all glory will ultimately be ascribed. And as the history of this world unfolds, as empires rise, as powers come to the fore and powers recede, as some powers seem to be indestructible then, and in our own day we've seen this with the breakup of the USSR, as some powers seem to be indestructible, so in the course of history, as history unfolds, we see that these powers are changeable.

We don't know what power will now come to the fore in the history of this world, but what we do know from Daniel and from the rest of the Bible is this, that no matter what world empire, no matter what world power dominates, it is only dominating for a period of time, and it's dominating only in the history, in the interests of, and this is what a lot of people forget, the vast majority don't realise this, that history is unfolding in the interests of Christ's kingdom, and that history is in the hand of God.

It's a great advantage to be able to study history from this perspective, and to recognise that God is sovereign, God is unfolding his own purpose behind the scaffolding of the world's history, and a history which you and I find, as it unfolds, so terribly difficult to understand.

[7 : 23] Yet, God has a purpose, and no weapon that is formed against him will thwart that purpose, and especially as it relates and refers to his own church.

Because, as Psalm 72 tells us, it is for his church that this world is in existence. As long as sun and moon endures, they will be in this world who will fear his name, and when God's purpose for them is accomplished, sun and moon will be no more, as you and I know it.

This world and its history will come to an end. And running throughout the visions of 2 and 4, 7 and 8, in the book of Daniel, is that recurring theme.

This empire rises and falls, and that empire which takes its place will fall, and so will the next, and so will the next.

But there is one kingdom which will endure forever. That is the kingdom of the Lord himself, the church for which Jesus died.

[8 : 42] And the church which is in the mind of God from all eternity, and all power, and all glory, will be ascribed ultimately to him for the purpose, for his bringing to its predetermined end, that purpose of his.

Now, as Daniel thought about these visions, so his mind was, as he tells himself, his mind was a bit upset.

He was a bit distressed, a bit depressed actually, as he thought about all the sufferings which this was going to involve his own people, and particularly the Jewish nation.

And the other thing that led him and drove him really to prayer at this time was this question which began to annoy him, began to invade his thoughts.

How long is this captivity itself to last? How long is this period itself in the history of this people to last? The period of the exile.

[10 : 06] Now, of course, you know that Daniel was taken as a very young man, probably a 17-year-old youth, from Jerusalem to Babylon when Jerusalem was overthrown by the Babylonian Empire.

And Daniel by now is well into his 80s and is beginning to wonder how long God is going to take to fulfil this period of captivity.

And he knew, as this book tells us, he knew from the prophecy of Jeremiah. He knew from what Jeremiah said that the period was going to last for 70 years.

And he recognised that they as a people were now nearing the end of this period. And indeed, by now, under the reign of Darius, some of the Jews were being allowed to return back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and to rebuild the city.

And he tells us, as he poured over the books, as he looked through what was available to him of the Bible, as he looked through it, wondering when the period was going to come to an end.

[11 : 28] So, he set his face towards the Lord in prayer and in supplication. And here we have, in this chapter, right through to verse 19, one of the great prayers in the Bible and one of the longest prayers in the Bible, Daniel's prayer of confession.

And it is to that prayer that I want to direct your attention for a very short time this evening. And in the first place, I want you to look and see the connection that exists between prayer and the Bible.

Now, we know that Daniel, who was this, who was a very godly and a great beloved man, highly respected, even by his enemies, we know that Daniel had a favorite practice and that was that of prayer.

And as he engaged in prayer, we know that he opened his windows towards Jerusalem. We looked at this last Sabbath evening. This was an attitude of his, a practice which was current amongst the Jews from the time of the dedication of the temple, when Solomon referred to Jews who prayed from any corner of the earth and prayed towards Jerusalem.

Well, you can readily understand why a youngster who loved God and who loved the word of God and the services of God which were observed in the sanctuary and the temple in Jerusalem, you can understand how a man like that in Babylonian exile and captivity would look toward Jerusalem as he prayed.

[13 : 15] It wasn't a superstitious attitude. It was just a practice that they developed. You know yourself, maybe, that there are some things that you do which help you to pray. I don't know whether you have a particular room or a particular place or a particular posture that you adopt.

It helps you in your prayer life. Well, why not think of that in this term? In these terms, here was a man who looked toward Jerusalem as he prayed.

But this chapter tells us something else. He had access to some Old Testament books or to parts of them. Now, as you know yourselves, the Old Testament, the Bible, wasn't in the form that you and I have it with a hardcover or even a paperback form.

The Old Testament was, say, in their possession in those days in scrolls. You have a reference to that in Psalm 40. It is written of me in the scroll, Behold, I come to do thy will.

And what we do know here is that whatever else he had, he had in his possession part of Jeremiah's prophecy. And there is no doubt that the life, the spiritual life of these captive Jews was kept, was given an impetus and encouragement from their study of the Word of God.

[14 : 50] Now, may I say that even for the Christian here tonight, you know yourself how important it is for you to read your Bible as a Christian.

It is terribly easy to neglect it. It is terribly easy to put it to one side and not to spend as much time with it as you used to. Very easy. to fall into a rut, to get into a rut, and perhaps even as a soft your conscience just to read it occasionally, either in the morning or in the evening.

But that's no way to study the Bible. And just as the Bible is important for the witness of a Christian for a spiritual nourishment and a spiritual development, so it is just as important in the prayer life of the believer.

Now, here's Daniel. He's got a copy of Jeremiah, at least, and he's reading it. And he knows from Jeremiah that this period is going to last for 70 years. and he wonders from what time he could get the beginning of the exile so that he might be able then to date the end of the exile.

And he knows that the period that it is, that the end of the exile is very imminent indeed. He knows that this is going to bring a sort of a crisis period into the life and the witness of his own people as thousands of them are going to make their way back to Jerusalem, going to start rebuilding the temple and the walls of the city.

[16 : 22] He wonders what the future holds for this people. How will they cope for this next crisis in their lives? So, he gives himself to prayer.

And I would suggest to you, first of all, this, that it isn't a bad practice if you're finding prayer difficult. it isn't a bad practice to read the Bible before you pray.

It's not a bad practice at all. I know that the general rule, I have no objection to that, is that we pray for God's blessing upon the Bible as we read it. And we must. But before you engage in prayer, if you're going to give some time to prayer, well, give some time to reading your Bible first.

and that might help you to get into the right frame of mind. It will certainly do you no harm, just to leave it at that.

So, the Bible is very necessary, I believe, for leading us and directing us in our prayer life. It feeds prayer. It is very necessary for the individual to do this.

[17 : 41] and it is very necessary for people as they gather to do this. That is why it is always perhaps better if you're gathering as a number of people and if you don't have time for formal worship as such.

I think myself that I would rather have a passage of the Bible read than have someone engaged in prayer. I remember the way someone once put it, it is better for us to hear what God is saying to us than for God to hear what we have to say to Him.

Well, the Bible inspires prayer and encourages prayer. It challenges us to prayer. It is necessary for a prayer life to develop.

There is no substitute for the Word of God, no substitute for the Bible. That is why in Reformed theology and Reformed churches, the Bible is a central place.

A central place. Where the reading of the Bible and the exposition of the Bible has more time given to it than prayer and congregational involvement in singing and so on.

[18 : 57] The Bible must be central in our life as a church, as a community, and certainly as individuals. And if you neglect your Bible, you will soon find that having a detrimental effect upon your prayer life.

Prayer becomes stunted. Prayer becomes formal. And then something else. You begin to lose the language of the Bible in prayer.

And I think that this is vitally important. I've heard some people who come to this area from other places. They come to our prayer meetings and they're struck by the biblical tone which they hear in the public prayers of the church.

And the islands, the islands certainly, I don't know very much about the other islands but I know more about this island. This island certainly in days gone by was characterized by that.

That the Bible colored the prayer life of the church. And I just wonder, and I'm only asking the question in case people accuse me of finding fault again with the church, I'm just wondering if the prayer life of the church is colored today as much by the Bible as it used to be and I don't think it is.

[20 : 33] I'm not saying by that that prayer should be a repetition of texts from the Bible, a stringing together of passages from the Word of God.

That's not what I mean when I say that our prayer life should be characterized by the language of the Bible. I think you know what I mean. That the more people get to know the Bible the more that comes into their prayers and you're going to see this in Daniel's prayer as it unfolds.

You and I don't know as much about the history of God's dealings with his people in the Bible as our fathers and our forefathers knew it. You people in day school you don't have to memorize passages from the Bible like they used to in the old days.

We don't memorize a catechism which is full of biblical language and terminology the way we used to. We don't read books like the Convention of Faith and Boston's Fourfold State and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress like we used to.

We are not a reading age we are a looking age. We are dominated not by the Bible and by books but by television and video recorders and therefore the Bible is being pushed out of our thinking and out of our living more and more with consequent disasters if hex upon our prayer life.

[22 : 00] And if you don't agree with me well so be it. But why don't you discuss these things among yourselves and with me if you wish and I'd be very willing to discuss these things.

The Bible is a very important part to play even in the prayer life of an individual. Here's this man pouring over the books available to him. You think of Daniel if he had had the whole Old Testament.

He would have devoured it. Of course some people say in the old days they had far more time to read than we have. I agree with you.

But they made use of the time that they had. They didn't have as much light with which you read as you have. Literally didn't have electricity in this island until the late 40s in some areas of the island.

And you could far more time to read with your lamp and your bedside lamp than they ever had. but they do make use of it.

[23 : 08] I don't think we do. And the other thing is the interesting word that is used here for prayer as Daniel nailed and addressed the Almighty in prayer.

Now you know that the Bible uses various terms of prayer. Prayer, supplication, making a request known, thanksgiving, please and so on. But this is a general term for prayer, the attitude of worship and adoration and devotion as we consciously turn towards God.

Now how many of you here tonight, if I were going to ask you what is prayer, would say that prayer is purely and simply the addressing of our requests for things that we need to God in the name of Christ.

Just making up a list of our needs. You may have a prayer meeting. Seven or eight or nine or ten people may meet in that prayer.

I remember once in one of my previous congregations someone from my congregation had been away down in England on holiday. And they came back to the congregation and they spoke to me about the place where they had been to and said that they had been present in a prayer meeting that night which had gone on for three hours.

[24 : 42] And they wondered there was a wonderful meeting and I just couldn't help but think if I held a meeting there for an hour and a half I would have been pilloried. but seeing there was somewhere else and it was for three hours that was fine.

And I asked they said that about 20 people prayed in the cushion. Everyone got up and made reference to these specific needs. And I often think of that as though you're perhaps whirling round a supermarket or a shop and you're ticking off item after item after item and when you finish the list of 20 you're clear and that's the burden of the day gone.

Well my friend that is not prayer. That is not prayer. Rushing into the press of the almighty with lists 1 to 10 or needs 20 to 40 that's not prayer.

You've got to get into the right frame of mind first. You've got to get into a spirit of adoration a spirit of worship. You've got to recognise the greatness of the being in whose presence you are.

You've got your mind filled with thoughts of his greatness and of his majesty as Daniel's was. This Lord, he said, this great and dreadful God, keeping covenant and mercy to them that love him and to them that keep his commandments.

[26 : 11] You know, in the old days some people used to stand in public prayer and they had such a consciousness of the greatness and the holiness of God that when they stood up in the act of standing up, their hands were uplifted to the almighty.

I never heard the late professor John Murray leading up in prayer without, as he stood up for the first few minutes, his hands being uplifted before this God before whom he stood in awe.

Oh, I think that we've relegated the almighty to our own love. We've made God so much a pile of our own. He's so close to us.

He's so much one of us. That prayer is just coming with a smile on your face and the presence of this wonderful friend of ours and telling him numbers one to ten, I need these.

Amen. Oh, no. Prayer is having an awareness of his greatness, of his glory, of his majesty, of his holiness, of his awesomeness, of his power, of his covenant relationship, of his faithfulness, of his unchangeableness, of the wonder of his being.

[27 : 30] Prayer is being filled with a sense of what God is as we come in the spirit of worship and adoration and humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.

A few weeks ago, many people in this nation were amazed that people should have the temerity to say that they were humbling themselves.

What a note did this mean? How well, my friend of you and I knew more of what God is. We wouldn't need to ask these questions. We wouldn't speak disparagingly and write jokingly about humiliation.

It is so much a part of the church's very being and a relationship to God. And I ask you tonight, as I ask myself, how great is this God in your estimation?

How do you think of him? How much does he fill your mind and your thought and your heart as you bow before him? Or are you and I just passing through the motions, making a mockery of worship and of prayer?

[28 : 44] That's all I ask. And what did Daniel specifically pray for? Well, he says, I made supplication before this God.

I addressed my requests to him. I cried to him for help. I was aware of my need. I had a deep sense of my own emptiness and my own unworthiness.

And into the presence of this great God I came and I made my requests. Is this the way you feel in prayer? Do you feel desperately empty and needy?

Well, that's the way you ought to feel. And it is right that you and I should have a great sense of our need. A corresponding sense of our need, just as we have a great sense of the being of God himself.

And there were aids that he used fasting and sacrament and ashes. Now, in this particular time, these were just auxiliary means to aid his devotional life.

[29 : 55] He stopped eating food for a period, and this helps prayer. Perhaps we could do well to get back into this kind of attitude from time to time, denying ourselves the necessities of life just for this particular purpose.

And the sackcloth and the ashes were just tokens, evidences of his humility and of his grief. But secondly, what were the features in this prayer?

Well, there were two particular confession, and this is the prayer right through to verse 19, and look at how often he confesses his own sins.

It has been said that when men and women come into the presence of God, this is nearly always the first thing that pours out from them, this confession confession of sin, a confession which arises from the conception they have of God himself.

The penitent sinner is impressed with the power and the majesty of God. He knows that God is great.

[31 : 18] He knows the awe-inspiring nature of this God. He knows the unchangeableness of this God. He also knows that God has loving kindness exercised toward him, and the evidence that he has of it is this, that he's able to cry to God himself, that he has been spared by God to lift his heart to him in prayer.

That's the evidence that he has of the loving kindness of God, and aware of God's nature, of God's greatness, and God's being.

He becomes aware of his own sin, which means that he's missed the mark. He has come short of the glory of God. He doesn't know this God.

He has committed sin against this God. He has been guilty, as Daniel tells of rebellion. He has turned away from God. He has turned aside from God.

He has refused to listen to God. God spoke to them as he spoke to them through the prophets year after year after year, but they refused to listen.

[32 : 33] That's the confession that he makes. We have sinned. We have sinned constantly. We've rebelled. We've gone away. We've gone astray. There's a distance between us and thee.

We failed to listen to what you were saying to us. We thought we were better. We thought we could manage without. God without his word and without his messengers.

There are many people like that. You're like that and I'm like that too. And this is a confession that we have to make. Together there is this absence of self righteousness.

Oh Lord, righteousness belong to thee. But to us. confusion of face as at this day.

What's he saying? Lord, thou art right and we are wrong. Thou art holy, we are guilty. Thou art pure light, we are filled with shame.

[33 : 41] And the evidence of our shame, he says, is that we are in this captivity. It has been said that a truly penitent man can praise God for his righteousness even under circumstances which remind him of his sin.

Let me give you a classic example of that in the Bible. Jesus was no sinner, but he bore the sins of this world. And on the cross he cried to God, why hast thou forsaken me?

he was in that position of alienation, of abandonment because of our sins. But look at this, he never ever thought differently of God than what he had always thought of him.

But he says, thou art holy, thou art righteous, thou art right, and thou doest right. And very often that's the case with the condemned, with the convicted sinner, I should say.

That's the case with the convicted sinner. He feels dreadful. He cries for help. But whatever else he would say of God, he would say that God is right.

[34 : 59] There is nothing wrong with God in himself. And there are some people who have made this confession that when they were under conviction of sin, this is what they said.

God was right. And God would have been just in condemning me to hell.

That's what they said. Some of us can't follow that kind of experience. Others can, and others have said it often, that under this awful sense of sin, aware of the holiness and the righteousness of God, God was right.

And if he had condemned them to hell at the time, they would have said their amen to the rightness of his action.

Well, you have the same principle in Daniel's prayer here, Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but shame and confusion of face unto us.

[36 : 05] And the other thing is this, that this prayer embraces not only Daniel's attitude individually, but the whole nation collectively. As it begins with himself, so the prayer widens out, and it becomes we and us to the very end of the prayer.

And this is something else that the Bible makes abundantly clear. All we like sheep have gone astray. There isn't a person who's church tonight, but a person is a sinner. We are all under this blanket.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But every single one of us has sought out his own way of sinning. We have turned everyone to his own way.

You are as much an individual in the way and in the life of sin as you are in every other aspect of your life. You sin in your own way.

You've got your own weaknesses. You've got your own hankerings. You've got your own avenues along which you want to go. No doubt you take people with you into these avenues.

[37 : 17] But these are huge. And everyone in them with you is a sinner like you. And so the person under conviction of sin like Daniel here comes to recognize as Isaiah said in chapter 6 confronted with the holiness of God I am a man of unclean lips but so is everybody else amongst whom I dwell.

I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell amongst the people of unclean lips. And so as he confesses his sin secondly he makes this supplication.

And I sought God by prayer and supplication. To the Lord he cried for what? He cried for forgiveness.

He cried for deliverance. He cried for the blessing of his favour let thy face or thy countenance shine upon us. He embraced himself and all his family and all his contemporaries the whole nation in this prayer of his.

And this is how prayer works. When you begin to pray for the first time you pray for yourself. You pray for yourself. I quoted last week I think it was what we heard in this pulpit last year that a man never begins to pray till he prays for himself.

[38 : 49] Till he comes face to face with the reality concerning himself. He realises that he's a sinner. Oh yes everybody else is a sinner in the community of course but there isn't a sinner like him.

Remember what John Bunyan said when he was speaking about conviction of sin. When God convicted John Bunyan of sin it wasn't just that he convicted Bunyan that he was a sinner but that he was sin itself.

And so the convicted sinner realises I'm the worst as Paul put it Christ came to save sinners of whom I am chief.

And as he prays for himself so he begins to pray for others. And he embraces others. And the longer he goes on praying in this world the wider the circle becomes the more people he prays for.

But he has particular reference here to Jerusalem. He prays for the restoration of the broken down temple services. He prays for the restoration of the city.

[40 : 04] He prays for the restoration of the altar. And anyone who prays to God in truth will pray for the prosperity of his cause in this world. Isn't it a wonder of grace my friend that here you are tonight there was a day in your life when you wouldn't have bothered praying for God's blessing upon the preaching of the word at any time here or anywhere else.

Wasn't a time when you would pray that as you go to church that God would meet you in the depth of your need. There was a time when you could not care less about the cause of Christ in Lewis or in Britain or in Southern Africa or anywhere else.

But now you pray for these things. Your heart goes out to other people in prayer and you pray for them as you pray for yourself.

You're praying for and you've got help. You remember as Daniel remembered. He remembered, he recollected God's mighty hand in delivering Israel from Egypt and that encouraged him to pray.

Perhaps you're afraid tonight that God would answer your prayer. You're bowing down, you're crying for help, you're crying for deliverance, crying for forgiveness.

[41 : 22] But will the Lord forgive you? What is it that encourages you to pray and to pray on for forgiveness? Well, I'll tell you, as a shorter catechism puts it, the view that you have of the mercy of God and Christ, you may not be aware of it.

You may say, well, I wish I did know that. But you do, my friend. You're encouraged to pray because you know that God has heard others. God has forgiven others.

God has blessed others. Know the words of the hymn? what he's done for others. He can do for you. And perhaps you've been aware of it at the back of your mind.

It's his encouragement, the evidence and the record that you have and the record that Daniel had of God's delivering power in the history of this people before.

And so he prays, Lord, thou hast delivered and the inference being thou art able to deliver now. And then there is this also, the ground of his appeal.

[42 : 33] That day, the ground of his appeal, O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away, according to thy righteousness.

You know, my friend, you need forgiveness here tonight. You need deliverance. you need help from the Almighty. There is only one ground on which you can plead for that deliverance.

It's the ground of the finished work of Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God. God. I was told the other day of a statement made in a pulpit in this island some years ago by the man who was my own predecessor in Inverness, where he was speaking about the forgiveness of God through faith in Christ's blood.

And he said this seemingly, I think he was quoting someone else, actually, I don't know who it was. That the person who has been forgiven received forgiveness steeped in blood.

And the forgiveness that he received steeped in blood became more precious to him than himself who had received it. but the person who has received that forgiveness esteemed the source of the forgiveness greater than the forgiveness itself and himself who had been forgiven.

[44 : 07] And he went on to say this, if you esteemed the source of forgiveness greater than the forgiveness itself and yourself who have been forgiven, then he said, I believe that you have received forgiveness through faith in Christ.

Now I'm sure that there are older Christians here tonight who can understand and appreciate the force of that statement. Perhaps you young Christians and those of you who are seeking the forgiveness of God through faith in Christ can't understand it because what you want above all else is forgiveness.

Nothing matters but forgiveness for the penitent. but for the forgiven sinner, what becomes important is the God who forgave him through faith in Christ.

And that is at the heart of Daniel's prayer as well. Lord, to thee, to thee belongs for righteousness, to thee be the glory.

Restore thy temple service, cause thy face to shine upon us. Great biblical statement, great biblical teaching here.

[45 : 22] He wants the approval of God upon himself and upon his people. You know that the face shining upon you, that's just what it means. You meet someone, perhaps you don't know how that person is going to react maybe to something that you said or something that you did.

And when you meet, the first thing you look for is what are they looking like? What's the expression on their face? If they're going to face like thunder, you know that you're under their disapproval.

But if there's a smile, if there's the look of benevolence, you know that you've got their approval. And that's what it means here.

Lord, cause thy face to shine upon us and upon thy sanctuary. Let thy favor rest upon us. Let us know that according to the abundance of your mercy that you forgive.

And look at, and as I close, look at the great intensity of this prayer. Oh Lord, look, Lord, incline thine ear, open thine eyes, and behold our desolation.

[46 : 37] Look at the intensity of that desire in the presence of God. You know, someone would say to him, how dare you? Do you not realize that God's ear is open anyway?

Do you not realize that God is seeing? Yes, I realize it, but I want him to assure me that he's hearing my crying.

There's nothing wrong with that, my friend. When someone says, oh, don't dishonor God by saying that, you say to that person, look, I need God so much.

I plead with him to look down. I know that he's seeing me, but I want him to assure me that he's seeing me. I know that he's hearing, but I want the assurance of the open ear to my cry.

And ever I cry to him, Lord, hear. Oh, Lord, forgive. Lord, listen. Undo. Don't delay. Don't defer. Don't wait.

[47 : 36] Come to my help and come to my aid. Great biblical terminology again, Psalm 70. Oh, Lord, make no delay.

Do you really like that? Are you praying day and night? Are you longing for God's answer to your prayer? Well, if you're a penitent here tonight, my friend, that's the way that you are.

That's what you're praying for, and that's a God that you're praying to. And you would give anything in all the world for God to answer your prayer.

prayer. Well, let me encourage you. No one ever prayed like that to God, for God to turn his ear away from him.

There was only one person in the history of this world who cried, and from his cry the Lord turned away, and that was Jesus Christ.

[48 : 37] And he did it because that's what you deserved. he did it so that God would hear your cry and answer your prayer.

And that's what he did with Daniel. He sent Gabriel the angel to him, and he touched him, and he gave him this insight into the glories of the Messianic reign, and the glories, we believe, also of the Messiah, second coming.

You know, when God answers prayer, you say to yourself tonight, well, I don't really, all I want is forgiveness, all I want is deliverance, all I want is help, all I want is light, strength, if only I got just a little of what I want.

My friend, when God comes, he will give you exceeding abundantly above all that you asked or think, and that's the glory, of the gospel that we proclaim, that in it there is a God who hears, and a God who answers, beyond our ask.

And let us pray. Have mercy upon us, bless to us thy word, and part us this night with thy blessing, forgiving sin, for Jesus' sake.

[50 : 04] Amen. May future