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Old Testament Principles and New Testament Truths

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path."

PSALM 119:105



JOHN WEAVER

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE



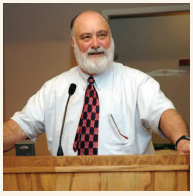
Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:11, EXCERPT

Understanding Scripture requires both diligent study and humble dependence on God. John Weaver traces the relationship between Old Testament examples and New Testament instruction, with attention to repentance, confession, judgment, and grace. These messages present the unity of biblical truth as a guide to both interpretation and practical obedience.

"You will never progress in your Christian faith, increase in knowledge, enlightenment, and understanding, unless you study the Word of God."

JOHN WEAVER



John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.

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CHAPTER 1

OT Principles and NT Truths

Part One

October 19, 2008

SCRIPTURE READING - Daniel 9:1-15 (KJV)

Introduction: One Bible, Not Two

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

I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments, we have sinned, and we have committed iniquity, and we 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, our fathers, and to all the people of the land.
>
> O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him; neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed 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.

Daniel confessed, "And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly."

Today I want to begin a message entitled "Old Testament Principles and New Testament Truths." There is so much hatred, misunderstanding, and outright denial of the Old Testament Scriptures that it needs to be demonstrated that we have one Bible, not two Bibles. The Old Testament is just as much the Word of God as the New Testament. All of God's Word is authoritative and applicable.

Has anyone ever heard of an Old Testament Baptist church? No. Everybody calls it a New Testament Baptist church. Why? The answer seems obvious: we are under the new covenant. I understand the new covenant, and I know that Christ fulfilled all the ceremonial law. Jesus Christ fulfilled all the Old Testament types, symbols, and emblems, and these have vanished away in the sense that we now have the reality and not the shadow. Yet, when we talk about the new covenant, the covenant has not changed.

The Law and the New Covenant

It has and it hasn't. It has not changed as to its content. The only thing that has changed has basically been the method of writing the covenant.

For instance, turn in your Bibles to Hebrews chapter 8. Notice, please, beginning with verse 7: “For if that first covenant,” speaking of the Old Testament, the Old Covenant, “had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.” It might seem that there must have been a fault with the first because there has to be a second. But let us read on: “For finding fault with”—what is the next word? Not “it,” but “them.” “For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.”

The fault was not with the covenant, but with the fallen sons of Adam. They could not keep that Old Testament covenant. By the way, it did absolutely no good to try to keep the covenant, or to keep only part of the covenant. How can I say that? Consider Galatians 3:10: “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” How much of God's law were they required to keep? All of it. Did they keep all of it? No. Could they keep all of it? No. What does James say? He that keepeth the law and yet offendeth in one point is guilty of how much? All. So the problem was not with the covenant; the problem was actually with the people.

God's law demands three things from every individual: personal obedience, perfect obedience, and perpetual obedience. No fallen son of Adam could ever keep the law in that way. He could not keep

it personally, perfectly, or perpetually. Whether we speak of an Old Testament saint or a New Testament saint, all have sinned. There is none righteous, no, not one: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Suppose someone in the Old Testament or the New Testament suddenly became absolutely perfect and, from that day forward, kept God's law personally, perfectly, and perpetually. Would that person have salvation? No. What about all the sins committed before becoming perfect? The sin has to be dealt with; the sin has to be paid for.

God has not changed His law, and He has not basically changed His covenant. What He has changed is the method of writing that covenant. As Hobie pointed out, and as 2 Corinthians 3 points out, the Old Testament covenant was written in stone, while the New Testament covenant is written in our hearts.

By the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, because of the work of Jesus Christ, we are now empowered and enabled to keep God's law. Someone may say, “Although we are in the New Testament and under the New Covenant, we still do not keep God's law personally, perfectly, and perpetually.” The answer is yes, we do—not necessarily in ourselves, but through our substitute and surety, the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the only individual who ever gave the law what it demanded: personal obedience, perfect obedience, and perpetual obedience. That is why He said in John 8:29, “And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” Always. Christ never displeased the Father at any time.

Galatians 4, verses 4 and 5, says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Why did God send forth his Son, Jesus Christ, made of a woman and made under the law? When Jesus Christ came into this world as the perfect man, the perfect Adam, and the second man, He was obligated and responsible to keep God's law personally, perfectly, and perpetually, just like anyone else. Jesus Christ is the only one who ever did that.

Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." We should understand it this way: "For he"—that is, God the Father—"hath made him"—that is, God the Son—"to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Here is my tube of chapstick. That represents our sins. Here is my little pocket knife. That represents the obedience of Jesus Christ under God's law. Jesus Christ worked out a perfect obedience and a perfect righteousness.

What did God do differently in the New Covenant? God took our sins and imputed them—that is, charged them—to the account of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was not a sinner, but He suffered and bled and died as a sinner, not because He sinned, but because our sins were charged to His account. Then that perfect righteousness that He earned and worked out, God took and imputed to us, charged it to us, so that we not only have forgiveness of sins, but also a perfect righteousness in Jesus Christ. When God sees us, He does not see us as sinners; God sees us in Jesus Christ. His obedience is our obedience. His righteousness is our righteousness.

Now, when God writes the law in our hearts, we understand that we are still sinners. But do we want to obey Him? Yes. Do we want to please Him? Yes. Do we want to keep His law? Yes. Are we capable in and of ourselves of keeping it perfectly? No. But in Christ and through Christ, we do keep it perfectly.

In the Old Testament, in the Old Covenant, if you wanted to worship God, you had to come to the tabernacle. You had to come to the altar, bring a sacrifice, and come to the high priest. No one could get to God except through that tabernacle, that altar, that sacrifice, and that high priest. Did you know it is exactly the same in the New Testament, in the New Covenant? You say, “I do not go to a tabernacle, I do not go to an altar, I do not bring a sacrifice, and I do not have a high priest.” Well, in that case, then you are not saved. The Bible tells us in Revelation 21 and verse 3 that Jesus Christ is our tabernacle, or our temple.

The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 5 and verse 7 that Jesus Christ is our sacrifice. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 13 and verse 10 that Jesus Christ is our altar. The Bible tells us in Hebrews chapter 4 that Jesus Christ is our great high priest. And then Jesus said in John 14 and verse 6, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” So unless you come to God’s true tabernacle, Jesus Christ, unless you come to God’s true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, unless you come to God’s true altar, Jesus Christ, unless you come to God’s true high priest, Jesus Christ, you are not saved.

We do exactly the same as they did in the Old Covenant, except now we have reality. We do not have the types, the emblems, and the shadows.

Now look at Matthew 5:17. Jesus Christ said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” When He says, “Think not,” in verse 17, it literally means this: God forbid.

“God forbid.” The Apostle Paul uses that expression over and over in the Bible. In other words, don't even think about it. Don't even let it enter into your mind. Jesus says, “God forbid. Don't even begin to think that I've come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have not come to destroy, but to fulfil.” Then He says, “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

What did Jesus Christ do? He fulfilled all of those Old Testament, especially the ceremonial types, emblems, and shadows. So the type, the emblem, and the shadow are now done away with, and we now have the reality in Jesus Christ. That is why the Bible says in Ephesians 2:15, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”

Jesus Christ did not abolish the law. He abolished the ordinances that revolved around those tabernacle and temple types, emblems, and shadows. How did He abolish them? By fulfilling them. The only reason they are abolished is because He fulfilled them. Christ did not abolish the law. He did not abolish the moral law. He did not abolish

the judicial law. The law still stands, in fact. In Romans 7:12, in the New Covenant, the Bible says concerning the law that it is holy, and just, and good. Now, if the law is holy, just, and good, why would God abolish it?

Why would God destroy it? You don't destroy that which is holy and just and good. You destroy that which is unholy, unjust, and wicked.

Romans 3:20 provides an easy way to explain all the negative passages concerning the law in the New Testament. The Bible says, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” Was the law given for justification? What is the answer? No. Why?

I have already demonstrated that no one could keep the law personally, perfectly, and perpetually. Therefore, the law was never given for justification. When Romans 6 says, “we're not under the law, but we're under grace,” it is not saying that the law has been done away with. It is saying that we are not under the law as a means or standard of justification. Just because the law was not given for justification, and just because one cannot be saved by keeping the law, does not mean the law is good for nothing. God never designed His law to be an instrument of salvation. Scripture says, “For verily, if salvation had been by the law, then Christ would not have needed to have died.” You cannot give a law that saves. The law was never given for justification, but it is needed and necessary for a number of things.

Look in verse 20 again: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Have you ever stopped to think that we would never know what sin is except for the law? How do we know adultery is wrong? God says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” How do we know stealing is wrong? God says, “Thou shalt not steal.”

When people deny the law of God, they put it under a broad spectrum, push it aside, and say the law is not good for anything simply because you cannot be saved by the law. No. God never gave the law for someone to be saved by it. First of all, by the law is the knowledge of sin. What is sin? First John 3:4 explains it:

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”

In other words, I cannot sin unless I violate God's law. If I do something you do not like, but it is not a violation of God's law, have I sinned? No. If Congress has passed a law saying that something is wrong, but it is still not a violation of God's law, have I sinned? No. If a ruling king or monarch says, “Thou shalt not do such and such,” and I do it, but it is still not a violation of God's law, have I sinned? No. You can only sin by violating the law of God.

Every negative passage concerning the law in the New Testament can be explained in one of three ways. If you look in the context, you will always find that one of these three answers will explain the passage.

First, some passages, such as Romans 3, Romans 6, and Galatians 2, deny or state that the law was never given for justification: "For by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." That is very simple.

Second, some negative passages refer to the death-dealing nature of sin in relationship to the law. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Cursed is he who continueth not in all the works of the law to do them." In other words, God pronounces a death penalty. Therefore, when Paul says, in one instance, "We're not under the law," especially in Galatians, he means that we are not under the curse and penalty of the law. The penalty of the law has been exacted upon Jesus Christ; therefore, it will not be exacted upon us. We are not under the law as a means of justification, nor as a means or penalty of condemnation.

Third are those passages that refer to the ceremonial laws, where Christ has fulfilled all those types, emblems, and shadows.

The New Testament, or the New Covenant, has not destroyed, abrogated, or nullified the Old Testament, or the Old Covenant. As 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." When Paul wrote that, he had in mind particularly the Old Testament, because the New Testament had not been completed at that time.

I want you to go back to Daniel chapter 9 because I want to show you some principles from Daniel chapter 9 and other passages in the Old Testament, and compare them with passages in the New Testament. The Old Testament and the New Testament go hand in hand. They walk together. They agree. They complement each other; they do not contradict each other. There are five of these principles.

Consideration Precedes Enlightenment

Principle 1: Consideration Precedes Enlightenment

The principles I want to cover are these: consideration precedes enlightenment; confession precedes forgiveness; and disobedience precedes judgment. First, consideration precedes enlightenment.

Daniel 9:1–2 says, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem."

Many have a faulty understanding when it comes to enlightenment. They think that God moves mysteriously and reveals knowledge and enlightenment to a select few individuals. It is absolutely true that God is sovereign in His bestowment of enlightenment. But it is absolutely untrue that God bestows it willy-nilly upon certain individuals. Daniel was a man greatly beloved of the Lord, and yet Daniel did not have enlightenment just simply ducked into his head.

Let me put it like this. Many tend to believe that they can go to sleep ignorant, apathetic, and empty-headed, and wake up smart, brilliant, and understanding all things. It does not work like that. Was Daniel a brilliant man? Yes. Did Daniel have understanding concerning his times and the last days of the nation? Yes, he did. How in the world did Daniel get that understanding? How did Daniel get that enlightenment? How did he acquire all that knowledge?

Here is the answer: he studied, and he studied the Scripture. Daniel said, "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by"—what is that next word?—"books." He understood by books the number of the years concerning the word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem would be desolate for seventy years.

The books he refers to were the scrolls that contained Jeremiah's writings. In other words, Daniel began to study the Scriptures. As he read the prophet Jeremiah through those scrolls, he found out that God had determined that Judah and Jerusalem would be in captivity for seventy years. This was not a mysterious idea that suddenly entered his mind; it came through consideration of what God had already said in His Word.

"And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations." Note the seventy years. Jeremiah 29:10 says, "For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place."

If you were studying the Bible and were alive in Daniel's time, studying the prophet Jeremiah, what conclusion would you come to? At the end of seventy years, God was going to cause His people to return to the land—not at the end of sixty-nine years, forty years, or fifty years, but at the end of seventy years. Their trial and persecution were going to last seventy years.

Daniel said, "I understood by books." He learned by studying the Word of God. You will never progress in your Christian faith, increase in knowledge, enlightenment, and understanding, unless you study the Word of God. That is how Daniel learned. Deuteronomy 29:29 says, "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God." There are some things we do not know and will never know until we get to glory. But it continues: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed

belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

God has revealed to us what He wants us to know and what He wants us to do and obey. We will never know that until we learn to study the Word of God.

Daniel did more than study the Word of God. He said, "And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God." Daniel had not only studied the Scriptures; he was also seeking the Lord. He sought wisdom, knowledge, and enlightenment from God as he studied the Word of God.

Studying alone is insufficient. Do you understand that? You can say, “I’m going to sit here until I understand the book of Daniel. I’m going to read it and reread it until I understand it.” You could sit there until you die and never understand the book of Daniel if God does not turn the lights on for you. You follow me? You not only have to study; God must give us enlightenment. Hold Daniel 9, and turn back in your Bibles to Proverbs chapter 2. Look, please, at verse 6. I think this passage will put these two things together for us. Proverbs 2, verse 6: look what the Bible says.

“For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” Now notice the word giveth. We have to understand, then, that knowledge and understanding are God's gifts. You do not get those things unless God gives them to you.

We have come to the conclusion that God must give us wisdom and that God must give us understanding. But does God simply dump wisdom and understanding upon us? We know that they are his gifts. Does God come along and say, “I'll give doctrine, I'll withhold doctrine; he won't have that knowledge. I'll give some to Hobie, but I won't give it to Ed”? Is that what God does? No. Let us go back to Proverbs 2, verse 1.

“My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then

shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly."

Notice again: "If thou seekest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of thy God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly."

Let me emphasize something. The gifts of God are given to those who seek him, who study, who cry, who search, and who want the truth more than anything else. Proverbs says, "If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of thy God. For the Lord giveth wisdom."

So let us put it this way: God normally bestows his gifts upon those who are using the means that he has ordained as they seek him to bestow those gifts.

Now I want you to note that the New Testament confirms exactly this same principle. Go over in your Bibles to Second Timothy chapter 2. Second Timothy chapter 2. And look what the Apostle Paul writes Timothy. In verse 7. Second Timothy chapter two, verse seven. This truth. It's not verse five, it's verse seven. Verse seven, look what he says, "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." What? "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." Now, what did Paul just get out of his mouth? He said, "Timothy, understanding is God's gift. You must get understanding from God. Consider what I say and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." Well, let me ask you, is God going to give Timothy understanding apart from him considering the scriptures? No, Paul said, "Consider what I say." Paul was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. He says, "You meditate, you study, you think about what I'm saying. What I've written is the Word of God. You consider what I say and the Lord gives you understanding in all things."

In other words, it's only as we consider God's truth and meditate upon God's truth and study God's truth and seek God for enlightenment that we actually have enlightenment. That's why in Daniel chapter 9, the text that we're using there, Daniel said, "I learned by books. I studied the scripture. I studied the prophet Jeremiah. And I prayed. And God opened my eyes."

Now, I want you to turn to the book of Mark. I'm still showing you this principle. Turn to Mark chapter 4. I want you to understand that you cannot study a little and learn a lot. You cannot study a little and learn a lot. Nor can you consider God's truth in a hit and miss fashion and expect to become a theologian and a scholar. Now, I want to tell you something. And I want to tell it to you just for your consideration.

I would say that our people here are probably far superior in their knowledge and their understanding of scripture than most congregations. Right. But I want you to think about this. Think about how little you actually study and how little you actually meditate and consider and seek truth. Now, there's no one in here that could not study more. You say, "I just don't have time." Yes, we do. It's priorities.

Look at Mark, chapter four, verse 23: “If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.” You cannot be a hit-and-miss student and expect to be a scholar and a theologian. In verse 24, He says, “Take heed what ye hear.” You had better make sure what you are hearing is the Word of God. “Take heed what ye hear.” Now, look at this principle: “With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you.”

Let me state it this way: “With what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you.” You cannot study Scripture for fifteen minutes and get two hours’ worth of knowledge. You are going to get fifteen minutes’ worth of knowledge. You cannot study the Scriptures for two hours and get forty hours’ worth of knowledge. You are going to get two hours’ worth of knowledge. With what measure you mete, or with what measure you measure in studying the Scripture, God says that is going to be measured right back to you.

There is a difference between studying and reading. Everybody reads the Scripture, but very few of us really study it, consider it, and

meditate on it. It is right here in the Bible. If you want to progress in the Christian faith, if you want enlightenment and the truth, look again at verse 24: “And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear”—“shall” what?—“more be given.” What if you do not hear? You are not going to get any more. Why would God give you truth if you are not going to obey it? Once you study, understand this principle: God will measure truth to you according to the amount you give in studying the truth. Once He reveals something to you and illuminates your mind, if you obey Him, He will give you more as you continue to study. But if you do not obey Him, you will not get any more. So it does not matter where you look in the Old Testament or the New Testament.

Here's the principle: consideration precedes enlightenment. God is not going to just dump into our minds what we need without study. We are living in perilous times—economically, politically, socially, every way you want to imagine. I've made it a point in my life to seek the Lord for wisdom to know what to do, and I got news for you folks: you better be thinking, meditating, praying, and searching the Scripture to find out what you need to do for your life, your family, your church, your friends, and your neighbors.

It's not that one day we're going to wake up and say, "I know exactly what to do." Without study, without consideration, without meditation, how can you? You've never thought about it. So how's it going to enter into your mind? I'm just saying, in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, the principle is this: consideration precedes enlightenment.

Principle 2: Confession Precedes Forgiveness

Now go back to Daniel 9, our text. I'm showing you a second principle. Look, if you would, please, beginning there with verse three. The second principle is confession precedes forgiveness. He says, "I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: and I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; we have

sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces."

Daniel is confessing. In verse 20, which we did not read earlier, Daniel says exactly that he is confessing: “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.” Daniel was confessing not only his sins, but the sins of the nation as well.

It is noteworthy that all the great intercessors in prayer not only confessed their sins, but the sins of their nation. Read Ezra, Nehemiah, or Daniel; all of them cried out to God because of the sins. When is the last time that you have confessed the sins of your country, of your people? When is the last time you confessed before God, “We’re murdering our babies, we are a nation provoking sodomy and wickedness, we are a people who are thieves”? We have a fraudulent economic system. When do we confess these things as a people?

You say, “I don’t do those things.” I understand that. But we live amongst a people who do those things. Daniel was confessing.

It should be obvious that confession precedes forgiveness. How can anyone be forgiven unless he confesses and asks forgiveness? Daniel explicitly says he was confessing sin. Confession is the same in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament. Let me show you pointedly how confession always precedes forgiveness.

Proverbs 28:13 says, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” What is going to happen if you try to cover your sins? You are not going to prosper. But whosoever confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy. In other words, your confession precedes forgiveness.

In Psalm 32:5, David says, “I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” David

acknowledged his sin, did not hide his iniquity, and confessed his transgressions. What did God do? God forgave. Confession precedes forgiveness.

Now the Hebrew word in both passages for confess is the word yada. It means to confess and to give praise and thanksgiving. Sometimes it has the impact of casting out, throwing out, or shooting out. In other words, this confession, this acknowledgement, comes spontaneously and forcefully, especially when we are convicted by the Holy Spirit of God. Have there ever been times in your life when you just could not hide your sin any longer, when it bothered you and all of a sudden you began blurting out everything that was in your mind and in your life to God? That is exactly what this means.

Now, in James 5:16, we see this in the New Testament: “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” He said, “Confess your faults one to another.” The word confess there is exomologeo. I am going to explain that word in just a moment, but it literally means to confess out, or to withdraw—to get it outside. When we confess our faults one to another, we are asking each other for prayer and encouragement.

That does not mean I have to come over and whisper all of my sins to Tom. But it does mean I can come over to him and say, “Look, I need your prayers. I need your prayers in this area. I am having a very difficult time. Please pray with me. Please help me.” Now look in your Bibles to 1 John 1:9. This verse will kind of tie everything together for you. Look what he says. I am going to show you now how confession precedes forgiveness: “If we confess our sins.”

"He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us. Confession precedes forgiveness, the same way in the Old Testament as in the New Testament.

The word confess in Greek is homologeo. It is made up of two words: homo, meaning one or the same—one and the same, as in homogenized milk and homosexual—and lego, the Greek word "I say." Homologeo means "I say the same thing."

Real confession is saying the same thing about your sin that God does. It is taking God's attitude toward your sin. Suppose I had stolen fifty dollars from Doc and came to the Lord saying, "Oh, Lord, I stole fifty bucks from Doc. Forgive me," then stole another fifty dollars from Dr. Bowen—I have already gotten fifty more from him—and now went after Roy to steal fifty dollars. Am I confessing my sins? I am verbally saying that I have stolen, but I have not taken the same attitude that God takes about my sin.

I have not said that my sin is wicked, vile, wrong, deserving of death, and something from which I need to turn. If I confess my sins, I take the same attitude that God has; therefore, I repent of my sins. Confession and repentance are basically synonymous. No one truly confesses his sins until he turns from his sins.

Remember when David sinned against God in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah? God sent Nathan to confront David. When Nathan got through with him, David said, "I have sinned against the Lord." He was acknowledging that everything he had done violated God's law and God's word; he was saying, "I now agree with God." Nathan understood this and said, "The Lord hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die." In other words, it took a special pardon from God so that David would not die. His sins were worthy of death.

If we truly confess and acknowledge our sins, we seek God's forgiveness by turning from them. We freely acknowledge our sins, confess them, come to God upon his terms, turn from our sins, and conform our lives to his word. In other words, we take God's thoughts and God's attitude toward our sins.

This is true whether we are confessing vertically or horizontally. Suppose that I have stolen from Henry. I come to God and say, "Lord, I've stolen from Henry; it's wicked, wrong, and foul, deserving of death. Lord, please forgive me." I have confessed my sins. What evidences that I have truly repented? I must go to Henry, confess to him, ask his forgiveness, and restore what I stole from him.

The Bible says, "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him." And if he repent, forgive him. If Hobie steals from me, perhaps I do not even know it; he could be very sly. Am I obligated to forgive him if he does not repent? No. I am always

to be ready and willing to forgive, but I am not obligated to forgive unless he confesses and repents. If he has stolen from me and I do not know it, how can I forgive him until he confesses?

Psalm 86:5 says of God, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." Is God ready to forgive? Yes. Is God willing to forgive? Yes. Will God forgive anyone who does not confess and repent? No. Confession precedes forgiveness. If we want forgiveness, we must learn to confess our sins as God demands.

Principle 3: Disobedience Precedes Judgment

In confessing our sins, we take the same attitude God takes. We turn from them and do whatever is necessary to bring our lives into conformity with the Word of God. Thus, consideration precedes enlightenment, and confession precedes forgiveness. Thirdly, disobedience precedes judgment. Daniel 9:10 says, "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." Whenever God's judgment is upon an individual, a family, a church, or a nation, it is because of rebellion, disobedience, and sin.

Just like night follows day, judgment follows disobedience. It constantly amazes me that many professing Christians have not realized that their sins have consequences. Somehow people have gotten the idea that it is possible to sin against God and escape the penalties for their sins. They cannot figure out why everything is going wrong in their lives. Think about this: we are in turmoil, in trouble, plagued, defeated, and judged. Why? The answer is because of the sins in our lives.

If we were biblical and scriptural, we would take the Word of God, like David in Psalm 32, when he said, “For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me.” Using biblical terminology, we would understand that it is God’s hand judging us. Why is God’s hand heavy upon us? Why do things go wrong in our lives? Numbers

32:23 gives the answer: “But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord: and be sure your sin will find you out.” You cannot escape God’s judgment.

If you are disobedient and sinful, I am sure there have been, and still are, many preachers who have perverted the gospel and turned the grace of God into disgrace by implying that God will not judge or avenge Himself. Many people have taken that pernicious doctrine hook, line, and sinker and have tried to say, “Well, God will let us get by.” The truth is, God will not let us get by.

It is true that God is love, merciful, and gracious, but it is equally true that God is just. Exodus 34:7 says, “Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.” He will by no means clear the guilty.

Deuteronomy 28:15–25 says, “But if thou wilt not obey the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.” They will chase you down and throw you down, and there is not one thing you can do about it. Read all the prophets—Amos, Hosea; read whoever you will.

You're going to find that God's judgment always follows disobedience. It is a principle of Scripture in the Old Testament and the New Testament. Read Leviticus 26; you will find the same thing.

Ephesians 5:5-6 says, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." What follows disobedience? Judgment.

Colossians 3:5-6 says, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." What follows disobedience? Judgment.

It does not matter whether you are an individual, a family, a church, or a nation. It is a principle in the Old Testament and the New Testament that judgment follows disobedience, or that

disobedience precedes judgment. I have heard people say, "Well, I'm afraid America is in for some judgment." Folks, we are not only in for some judgment; we are already under judgment, have been under judgment, and I've got news for you.

Unless we repent, you ain't seen nothing yet. That may not be good English, but based upon the good Word of God, it is truth. It is truth. Disobedience precedes judgment.

Conclusion: The Unity and Authority of Scripture

Let me make one application today. I want you to think with me. We have looked in the Old Testament and in the New Testament on every one of these points, and we're going to do the same thing next week. Please understand this: we have one Bible, not two. The Old Testament is just as much the Word of God as the New Testament. The New Testament has not abrogated, nullified, or outlawed the Old Testament.

God's law has not been repudiated. If you believe that God's law has been done away with, I would invite you to jump off the Empire State Building. The law of gravity is not Newton's law; that is God's law. God's law is still in effect, and He will judge those who violate His word.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for your blessing and help. We pray that you'll give us understanding, admiration and respect for the word of God, and greater discernment, Lord, that your word does not contradict itself; that your word is truth and that we can lean upon, depend upon, and trust in your word. For forever, O Lord, is thy word settled in the heavens. We give thee praise in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

OT Principles and NT Truths

Part Two

October 26, 2008

Introduction and Review

I began a message last week entitled Old Testament Principles and New Testament Truths. Lord willing, I want to continue that message today and hopefully bring it to a close.

In Daniel chapter 9, beginning with verse 20, we read: “Daniel said, And whilst 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 a 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. 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 supplication the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee. For thou art greatly beloved, therefore understand the matter and consider the vision.”

Now, it is my intention, like last week, to demonstrate that there are absolutely no grounds for despising the Old Testament. The Old Testament is just as much the Word of God as the New Testament. Let me make this statement again. I made it last week. All of God's Word is authoritative and it is applicable.

One of the most common objections you hear today from people when you quote a Scripture or say, “The Bible teaches such and such,” is, “But that is in the Old Testament.” And my answer is, So? Is not the Old Testament the Word of God? When a person says, “But that’s in the Old Testament,” they are either demonstrating their ignorance or showing their hostility to the Word of God.

Now, certainly, there are a lot of things in the Bible, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, that you and I do not understand and probably will never understand until we get to glory. But let me tell you, you may not be able to understand everything.

You may not be able to comprehend everything or explain everything. But at least you can bow to the authoritative Word of God and say, Yes, that is what the Bible says. I do not know how to apply it, and I do not know how to understand it; but still, it is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God, and I bow to it. At least you could take that attitude.

There are three ways to explain every negative passage in the New Covenant concerning the law. First, there are passages that denounce the law as a means of justification. Over and over in Scripture, the Bible teaches, “For by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified.” When the Apostle Paul said, “For we’re not under the law, but under grace,” he was not saying that the law had been done away with. He was simply saying that we are not under the law as a standard for justification, and we are not.

Secondly, there are passages that refer to the death-dealing nature of sin in relation to the law. The Bible places a curse upon anyone who does not continue to do all the things written in the law of God. The wages of sin is death. Jesus Christ has delivered His people from the curse and penalty of that broken law.

Thirdly, there are passages that refer to the ceremonial law, and the ceremonial law has not been done away with. It has not been

abrogated, nullified, or set aside; it has been fulfilled. We still come to the temple. The Bible tells us our temple is Christ. In Revelation chapter 21, we still come to the altar. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 13 and verse 10 that our altar is Christ. We still bring a sacrifice. First Corinthians 5:7 tells us that Jesus Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. He is our sacrifice. We still come to the High Priest. Hebrews chapter 4 tells us that Jesus Christ is our High Priest.

The ceremonial law was not done away with; it was filled full by Jesus Christ. We no longer have the emblem, symbol, or shadow. We now have reality.

When I came to Daniel chapter 9, I tried to show you that a number of truths more fully developed in the New Testament are plainly illustrated and taught in the Old Testament. The Old Testament and the New Testament go hand in hand. They go together and complement each other. We looked at three principles last week from Daniel 9, verses 1–15. Let me give you these principles.

In Daniel 9, the principle of consideration precedes enlightenment. In verse 2, Daniel says, “In the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood by books the number of the years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolation of Jerusalem.” Daniel was studying the scrolls of Jeremiah. He found that God would accomplish seventy years and then restore the people to the land. Consideration precedes enlightenment, and Daniel also prayed and sought the Lord for enlightenment.

The second principle is that confession precedes forgiveness. That is exactly what Daniel does. Beginning in verse 3, he confesses, acknowledging not only his own sins, but also the sins of the people. How can you be forgiven if you do not confess and acknowledge your sin? Scripture says, “whosoever confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy: but he that covereth his sin shall not prosper.” In 1 John 1, he says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

The third principle is that disobedience precedes judgment. Daniel admits that everything that had happened had come upon

them because of their disobedience. Just as surely as we disobey and sin against God, His judgment will come. The Bible says, “Be sure your sin will find you out.”

Repentance Precedes Understanding

Today I want to deal with two more principles plainly and clearly taught in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The first, which is point four, is this: repentance precedes understanding. If you look back at verse 20, Daniel says, “And whilst 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.” Daniel is confessing, acknowledging, and repenting of his sins. Naturally, he could not repent for the people of the land, but he was acknowledging their sins as well. One of the most common complaints I have heard concerning the Word of God is this complaint. Listen carefully.

The Bible is so hard to understand and so difficult to comprehend. I cannot count all the people I have heard in forty-three years of preaching who say, “I just cannot understand the Bible.” Let me tell you, there is a reason why most people cannot receive or understand the Word of God: they might want knowledge, but at the same time they want their sin, rebellion, and disobedience against God.

You are not going to have understanding without repentance. Repentance precedes understanding. Why in the world would an unrepentant man want understanding of the Word of God to begin with? The only reason I could think of is that he would like to add the sin of pride to his other sins and vault his knowledge of the Word of God. I have seen people who were just as lost as the day is long, yet arrogant because they read their Bible and could quote some Scripture. The Bible clearly teaches that repentance precedes understanding.

Consider Isaiah chapter 1, a passage most people have heard repeatedly as preachers have taught it. In verse 18, God says: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be like wool.”

Notice what God says: “Come now, let us reason together.” Probably every commentator you read will interpret this as God simply giving an invitation to sit down and reason—to present the things of God so that men may understand them. Albert Barnes says, “This is addressed to the nation of Israel and the same exhortation is made to all sinners. It is a solemn act on the part of God, submitting the claims and principles of His government to reason, or the supposition that men may see the propriety of His service and of His plan.” No doubt that is exactly what verse 18 says: “Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord.”

When most people quote Isaiah 1:18, they overlook the preceding verses 16 and 17. Look what God says in verse 16: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.” Do you see what God gives as the prerequisite for reasoning with Him? It is repentance. He says you need to cease from your evil doings, cease from evil, learn to do well—that is, learn to obey Him—seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow.

All of these things are plainly commanded in the Scripture. Then He says, “Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord.” One is never going to reason with God, submit to God’s rationality, or receive God’s understanding until he repents. Repentance precedes understanding. You are never going to understand the Scripture until you repent of your sin.

John Trapp, one of the old Puritans, said this in his commentary: “In the Greek church, the Grecian church, in the beginning of divine services, the deacon cried out, sacrosacros. That is, Holy souls to holy service.” Then John Trapp says this: “God will not treat with his people till purified, till resolved upon better practices as when he is content by wonderful condescension to make them even as judges in their own cause.” Sacrosacros—that is, holy souls to holy service. If you want to reason with God, if you want to understand God, you have to repent of your sins and bring your life into conformity to His Word.

All of the prophets taught this same principle. Jeremiah 31:19 says, “Surely after that I was turned, I repented, and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh. I was ashamed, yet even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.” Notice closely what the verse says: “Surely after that I was turned”—that is, turned by God—“I repented.” What happened after repentance? “And after that I was instructed.” After he was instructed, what did he do? He said, “I smote upon my thigh. I was ashamed, yet even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.” In other words, after God turned him, he repented; after he repented, he was instructed; and after he was instructed, he smote upon his thigh and was ashamed. What in the world is Jeremiah teaching us? Jeremiah is teaching us that no man repents until, first of all, God turns him.

God has to turn him, give him grace and mercy. Scripture plainly teaches in the New Testament that even repentance is a gift of God. Acts 5, Acts 11, 2 Timothy chapter 2. So God turns and gives repentance; then he says, “After that, I was instructed.” Then he says, “I smote myself upon the thigh.”

I can illustrate clearly from my own conversion experience. I remember when God converted me. I was convicted of certain sins, which were very prominent in my life. I repented of them by God's grace and turned from them. After God saved me, I had a real hunger for the Word of God, and I began to study and read the Scripture. As I read the Scripture, I discovered an amazing thing: I had a lot more sins in my life than I ever thought or imagined. In fact, I found things in my life that were wrong, though I did not even know they were wrong.

I have done far more repenting since I have been saved than when I got saved. When I got saved, I repented specifically of those sins that God convicted me concerning. After He convicted me, after I turned, and after I repented by His grace, I was instructed. After I was instructed, guess what? Just like the Scripture says, I smote upon my thigh. I not only bore the reproach of my youth; I found out there were things in my life that needed correcting and repenting of, and constantly and continually being brought in conformity to the Word of God.

So Scripture is teaching us, folks, before understanding is repentance. It is God who must turn us, and God who must give us repentance. Therefore, when we repent, when we turn from our sins, yes, now we can learn to do well, sit down and reason with God, and find out exactly what God is teaching us.

New Testament Confirmation of Repentance and Understanding

Does the New Testament teach the same principle? The answer is yes. Romans 3 and verse 11 says, “There is none that understandeth. There is none that seeketh after God.” How many people understand by nature? None. How many seek God by nature? None. In Ephesians 2 and verse 18, speaking about fallen man, the Bible says, “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them.” How many of us are ignorant of the things of God by nature? All of us. How many have our understanding darkened, alienated from God by nature? All of us. When God came to us, He found us ignorant, alienated from Himself.

In Matthew 13, our Lord teaches what is known as the parable of the sower. In verse 3, “He spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow.” When he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up. Some seed fell in stony places, some among the thorns, and some on the good ground.

Once our Lord gives us a parable, we do not have to wonder about its interpretation, because He interprets it for us. He said, “Behold, a sower went forth to sow.”

In verse 4, our Lord says, “And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up.” All of us who live in a farming community understand what this wayside is. In order for the seed to be received in the ground, the ground has to be prepared. As you go into any field, there is a road. You have to have a road to get your tractor and equipment in, or, in the old times, to get your mule and donkey in. That wayside, or road, is always packed very firmly. It is packed very hard. Consequently, any seed

that falls on that hard-packed ground is not taken into the soil. It simply lies there on top of the ground.

Notice how our Lord interprets this in verse 19. In verse 18 He says, “Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower,” explaining it. “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.”

Who is the wayside hearer? He is the hard-hearted individual. But he hears the Word of God. What happens when he hears the Word of God? He understands it not. Consequently, the evil one comes and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. The Greek word for “catcheth away” is harpazo, referring to a forceful or violent taking away. Those who hear the Word of God without repentance do not understand the Word of God; immediately, the evil one comes and, with violence and forcefulness, takes that word from them.

They are also willing, eager, and ready to give up that word because they do not want it. They do not understand it; it is of no value to them. Moreover, it probably conflicts with their plans and desires. They do not want it anyhow. Thus our Lord says that when someone hears the Word of God and does not understand it, immediately the evil one takes it from him. Now, I want you to compare.

The wayside hearer and the good-ground hearer—skip down to verse 23. Our Lord tells you about the good ground: “But he that receives seed into the good ground”—notice, it went into the ground—“is he that heareth the word and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.” What is the difference between the good-ground hearer and the wayside hearer? The difference is between night and day. The good-ground hearer hears it. He absorbs it. He applies it. He understands it. It brings forth fruit in his life.

Repentance has to precede understanding. The good-ground hearer had already repented. That is why he received it; that is why he understood it. Do you know that when our Lord began His ministry, in Mark 1 and verse 15, He began by saying, “The time is at hand, repent ye and believe the gospel”? Notice what He said: “The

time is at hand, repent ye and believe the gospel." What does that mean? It means repentance precedes faith. If you have real biblical repentance, you repent and believe, because faith immediately follows biblical repentance.

You could say they are the two sides of one coin. You could also say, he that believes savingly repents, and he that repents savingly believes. It is impossible to understand without repentance. Repentance precedes understanding. How can you believe that which you are unable to understand or comprehend? You cannot. So, just as in Daniel 9, Isaiah 1, Jeremiah 31, and Matthew 13, you must repent and believe the gospel. Repentance precedes understanding.

Humility Precedes Exaltation

Humility precedes exaltation. The whole of Daniel 9 illustrates this point. The reason Daniel was exalted and given understanding is that Daniel humbled himself, made his confession and repentance, and sought the mind and will of God. Humility precedes exaltation. It is impossible to be exalted unless you are humble. Humility precedes exaltation, just as pride and arrogance precede a downfall.

Everyone can quote Proverbs 16 and verse 18: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. If you have a haughty spirit, you are going to fall. That is all there is to it. Proverbs 29 and verse 23 says, "A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit." Note it: a man's pride shall bring him low. And you remember what the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 10 and verse 12: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

SCRIPTURE READING - Daniel 4:24-33 (KJV)

> When you and I become so self-confident in ourselves and our abilities, we had better look out, because we are being set up for a fall. It is only the grace of God that holds us up.
>
> Let me give you what I am going to call the two classic illustrations of this simple truth: humility precedes exaltation. Look in your Bibles, if you would please, to Daniel chapter 4, and let us begin reading there.

Nebuchadnezzar's Pride and Humiliation

King Nebuchadnezzar was a proud, arrogant, haughty monarch. God showed him some dreams, and Daniel interpreted those dreams for Nebuchadnezzar. Beginning with verse 24, where Daniel is interpreting the dream, he says:

"This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the most High, which is come upon my lord the king: That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots; thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the heavens do rule.

"Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity."

All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. In twelve months he walked in the palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee, and they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field; they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. He was driven from men to eat grass as oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.

At the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I have blessed the Most High, and I have praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can say or say unto him, What doest thou?

At the same time my reason returneth to me. And for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned in me, and my counselors and my lords sought unto me, and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me.

Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and its ways judgment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

Nebuchadnezzar, the proud, arrogant, haughty monarch, was brought low. Daniel, in telling the king the interpretation of his dream, preached to him. In verse 27, Daniel admonishes the king: "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thy sight, and break off thy sins by righteousness, that is, repent and do what is right, and thine iniquities stop them by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility."

In other words, the only hope that you have is repentance and faith. The only hope that you have is repentance and obedience to the Word of God. God is determined to bring you down and to teach you a lesson. You are going to find out that you are not God and that you are not in control. You are going to find out that your plans, purposes, and programs can be made null and void instantaneously.

For seven years, he was driven insane. The condition is known as boanthropy, for a man lives like an animal. His hair grew like eagle's feathers, the Bible says, and his fingernails grew like bird's claws. He ate grass like an ox. For seven years he was literally driven insane until he came to one conclusion, and God had to show him this: God is in charge.

In verse 37 he says, "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways of

judgment, and those that walk in pride, he's able to abase." Do you think that our God, the sovereign God of heaven and earth, can take care of the one worlders, the Bilderbergers, the CFR, the Trilateralists?

I guarantee you, he can bring them down in a heartbeat. Nebuchadnezzar learned the truth of Daniel 2:21: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever for wisdom and might are His and He, God, changes the times and the seasons. He, God, removeth kings and setteth up kings. He, God, giveth wisdom to the wise and knowledge to them that know understanding." It is God who does this. Daniel had tried to warn Nebuchadnezzar, but he would not listen. God removes kings and sets up kings, gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to those who know understanding.

He removes them and He sets them up. The same truth appears in Psalm 75. The psalmist gives a great admonishment: "Lift not up your horn on high," your power, your position. In other words, do not become proud and arrogant. "Lift not up your horn high, speak not with a stiff neck." Do not be rebellious. Why? Here is why: "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, but God is the judge. He putteth down one and setteth up another." Who is in control? It is God.

Nebuchadnezzar, that proud, arrogant, haughty monarch, refused to humble himself. He was told who was in control. He was admonished to break off his sins. He was told to repent and do what was right, but he refused. What did God do? God brought him to his knees. He lost his understanding and his reasoning ability. He lived like a dumb animal for seven years, until he decided, "You know, I'm not God; I'm man. I can't do a thing. God is in control." Then God restored him and brought him back to his kingdom.

Christ's Humility and Exaltation

I read Daniel 4 so that you might compare that passage with Philippians 2 and see the contrast between the proud, arrogant monarchs of this world and the Lord Jesus Christ. What is God saying? He wants us to act like Christ: "Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus." What kind of mind was in Christ Jesus? "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery or a

thing to be seized at, to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death on the cross. Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, of things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Jesus Christ is mightier, more powerful, more glorious, more majestic than Nebuchadnezzar could ever dream of being. Jesus Christ is God incarnate, the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Savior, the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the God of Glory, the Great I Am, the Lily of the Valley, and the Bright and Morning Star.

Jesus Christ, in all of His royal splendor and glorious majesty in the eternal Godhead, thought it not something to be seized after; rather, He willingly laid aside His glory, splendor, and majesty in order to become His Father's servant. He humbled Himself and became obedient. What did He say throughout Scripture? "I came not to do my will, but the will of Him that sent me." Over and over, He referred to Himself as the sent One. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, with all of its horror, indignities, and pain. He willingly laid aside all of His splendor and majesty and humbled Himself that He might honor His Father and save His people.

What was the result of that willing humiliation? "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

New Testament Illustrations of Humility and Exaltation

If God the Father required His Son, Jesus Christ, to humble Himself before He was exalted, do you think any fallen son of Adam will be exempted from this requirement? The answer is no. Humility

precedes exaltation. If we are unwilling to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, submit to His will, and obey His commands, we will not be exalted. Before honor is humility. If we try to exalt ourselves, we will be knocked down and abased. Our Lord says, “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” If you lift yourself up, God says you are going to be knocked down. If you humble yourself, you will be exalted.

The same principles are illustrated beautifully in the New Testament. In Luke chapter 18, beginning with verse 10, our Lord says, “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.” The publican, of course, was the hated tax collector. “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon the breast, saying, God, be merciful to me a sinner.” And our Lord says, “I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

Probably this Pharisee was punctilious in everything that he said. He probably gave tithes of all that he possessed. He probably fasted twice in a week. He probably lived what you and I would call a good, clean life. But he was still a proud, arrogant, rebellious sinner. He refused to humble himself. In fact, he was so proud that he was thankful he was not like other men, even as that publican. But the publican smote himself upon the breast and simply said, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

The Scripture teaches us that God resists the proud. James 4, verse 6, says, “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace unto the humble.” First Peter 5, verses 5 and 6, says, “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder, yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand

of God, that he may exalt you in due time." The word resist means to fight against whoever is proud and arrogant. God fights against him. Pride is one of the grosser sins listed in Romans 1 and 2 Timothy 3.

When we think of gross sins, we think of fornication, adultery, murder, and drunkenness. God includes pride. In Psalm 94:2, David prays, "Lift up thyself, thou judge of the earth: render a reward to the proud." God will render a reward to the proud. Proverbs 16:5 says, "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished." Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination. Remember, the word abomination means a stench in God's nostrils. Everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to God, though hand join in hand.

You can say, "We're not going to do this." God says, "Oh, yes, you will." You can say, "Hand joined in hand, we will do this." God says, "Oh, no, you're not." All of the proud, arrogant, rebellious people in this world could unite in rebellion against God. In occasions, God, no uneasiness. God is still capable of punishing them. Listen to Isaiah 13:11: "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible."

The arrogant, rebellious rulers of this country and the countries of the world are in for a hard time. God is going to lay them low. Since God is obviously opposed to the sins of pride, arrogance, and haughtiness, He will judge and destroy them. Since God is so opposed to all of this, do you think that God is going to allow a proud, arrogant, haughty individual into His kingdom? The answer is no.

What does God do when He saves? God brings us to the end of ourselves. Everyone who has ever been savingly converted has been brought to the end of himself. He sees his helplessness, his hopelessness, and his worthlessness. We understand that our so-called righteousnesses are as nothing but filthy rags. When we are brought to the end of ourselves, we are found weighed and wanting, not only in God's sight, but in our own sights as well. We have been convicted, condemned, and pronounced guilty in the sight of God and His law, in the sight of man, and, I might add, in our own sight.

The man brought to the end of himself realizes that he has nothing in and of himself: no righteousness and no work.

The sinner has no good deeds, nothing to offer God, and is absolutely, totally helpless and hopeless, able to do nothing. When you get to the end of yourself, that is where you will find the Lord in His grace. But as long as we think we can, we cannot. People have told me, "I'm trying to be saved." You might as well stop your trying, because you cannot save yourself. Salvation is not by trying; salvation is by trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Salvation has already been accomplished. Before God exalts us even in salvation, He humbles us.

He lets us see exactly what we are: sinners who can do nothing and have nothing. In Mark 10:15 and Luke 18:17, our Lord says, "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." What can a little child do? Nothing. What does a little child have? Nothing. If the parents did not support, sustain, nourish, and take care of a little child, he would die.

If our Lord said that we cannot even enter the kingdom of God unless we become as a little child, what does that mean? We have to realize that we are nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing. He must do it for us. We are humbled before we are exalted.

Applications

All Scripture is the inspired, infallible, inerrant Word of God, and all of it is equally authoritative and applicable today. We must never divide our Bibles in the sense that we become judges of what is authoritative and applicable and what is not. We must never divide Scripture so as to deny any portion of the Bible as applicable to our lives.

If you read 1 Corinthians 10, you will see that the apostle Paul took what happened to Old Testament Israel and applied it to the Corinthian church. Scripture says, "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning and our admonition." There is nothing in the Bible that we can do away with. All of God's Word is authoritative and applicable.

Secondly, as we humble ourselves to enter into the kingdom of God, likewise, we must continue in humility in order to please our Heavenly Father.

Think about this statement: Greatness is not in accomplishments. Greatness is not in successes. Greatness is not in self-promotion. Greatness is not in doing wonderful things. Greatness is in humility. Listen to the words of our Lord in Matthew 18, verse 4. When the disciples were fighting as to who would be greatest in the kingdom of God, our Lord took a little child, put him on his knee, and said, “Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Greatness does not have anything to do with buildings. It does not have anything to do with programs. It does not have anything to do with followings. It does not have anything to do with numbers. Well, we had 480 in Sunday school this morning. How many do you have? Doesn't mean a thing.

We've got a multi-million-dollar building. What do you have? It doesn't mean a thing. Well, I have this vast following. It doesn't mean a thing. Greatness is not in things; it's in humility.

Humility is not being a foot mat. Humility is not walking around with your head down. That's just poor posture; that's not humility. Humility is when you take your proper position and proper place before God. When you realize that He's the Father and you're the child; He's the King and you're the servant; He's the master, you're the slave; He's the Creator, you're the creature. Your position before God is to do what He says. That's humility.

Humility is disciplined strength under God. Humility is not being a coward, being afraid, or being fearful. You move when God tells you to move, and you do what God tells you to do. When you fight, you fight according to God's grace and God's mercy, God's power and God's Word. The Bible says in Micah 6 and verse 8, “He has showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.” To walk humbly with thy God.

Thirdly, there's a third application. If we humble ourselves, He will exalt us in due time. What did the Bible say in 1 Peter 5 and

verse 6? “Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” If you humble yourself and obey God and do what God commands, inevitably, invariably, you're going to be exalted in His time—not in your time, but in His time. When it's time for you to be exalted, God will exalt you.

The Fourth Application

The opposite is true as well. If you exalt yourself, God will humble you in due time. He will bring you down. No one steals promotion from God. You try it, and He will bring you low. He said, “Humble yourselves unto the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”

If we desire to understand more of God's Word, we must continually turn from our sins. We must examine our lives and find anything and everything in them that is contrary to God and His Word, and turn from it. The more we turn from our sins, the more understanding God gives us, because the more pleasing we are in His sight. When He realizes that we want His will, He shows us His will.

God wants us to do His will and obey Him far more than we want to do His will and obey Him. When He sees even an inkling of a desire to please Him, He will encourage that. God will give us more truth if we use the truth He has already given us. If we apply the Scriptures in our lives, He will continue to give us more truth. Repentance precedes understanding. If we want understanding, we must turn from our ways to His ways.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask for Your grace and Your mercy to us. We pray that You would lift us up, build us up in the most holy faith, and give us a biblical humility, that we may understand Thee and Thy Word and apply Thy Word to our lives. May we praise Thee, honor Thee, and glorify Thee. In the name of Jesus Christ we ask and pray. Amen.

Source Notes

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