

Daniel 9:12-14

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/dan/dan-9/daniel-912-14/>

While praying, Daniel meditates on the scale and intensity of God's punishment toward His people. Daniel admits that God is right in all He does and the Jews have disobeyed Him.

Daniel is praying to God. He is in the midst of confessing sin and asking God if the punishment toward the Jewish people will end soon. Jeremiah the prophet prophesied that the land of Judah would be empty for seventy years and its people would live in exile (Jeremiah 25:11). Daniel is one of these exiles, and after reading Jeremiah's prophecy, he prays to God in hopes that the time of exile will end soon.

He has worshipped God with his words and confessed the sin of Israel and Judah. The Lord spent many years speaking through the prophets, urging His people to obey Him. They had many chances to repent and follow God. If they refused to obey Him, God would pour out a curse on them, according to the covenant between Him and His people, as set forth in Deuteronomy. Daniel, in his prayer, correctly declares that because of the nation's sin, God *confirmed His words which He had spoken against* Israel and Judah, and its rulers. God was true to His word; He dealt punishment in response to disobedience. God brought *great calamity* upon Judah.

Daniel explains the severe nature of this retribution from God, for there had never been anything like it at that point in Jewish history, *for under the whole heaven there had not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem*. God handed Jerusalem over to a foreign invader who destroyed the temple and the wall, and allowed His people to be taken captive. This was according to the *law of Moses* that *all this calamity* came on God's people. The people violated the Mosaic covenant and disobeyed the law, and despite God's patience for them to turn back to Him, they persisted to disobey.

Daniel repetitively affirms that God was right in His punishment, and that Israel and Judah were entirely at fault. God, the Suzerain, honors his part of the treaty He made with Israel. Now Judah is a successor to the agreement, as two of the tribes of Israel. Now Judah, the vassal, violated the terms of the treaty, so has received its just due. Daniel states that *we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning away from our iniquity and giving attention to God's truth*. Instead, the Jewish people ignored God's command and indulged in their iniquity, which is another word for sin. For centuries, the kingdoms of Israel and Judah practiced idolatry, which led to many other terrible sins. In the days of King Manasseh, the king built altars to idols in the temple, sacrificed his own son, and dealt in sorcery (2 Kings 21:2-6). At its root, idolatry is an excuse to follow our own passions rather than walk in obedience to God.

Manasseh's sins are identified as some the main reasons God punished the Kingdom of Judah, "Now the Lord spoke through His servants the prophets, saying, 'Because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations, having done wickedly more than all the Amorites did who were before him, and has also made Judah sin with his idols; therefore thus says the Lord, the

God of Israel, ‘Behold, I am bringing such calamity on Jerusalem and Judah, that whoever hears of it, both his ears will tingle’” (2 Kings 21:10-12).

Had the Jewish people turned from their sins and heeded God’s truth, His favor on them would have been restored and the calamity could have been avoided. But none of that happened. Instead, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was sent by God to humble the Jewish people by conquering them, for a time. God *kept the calamity in store*; the discipline was prepared and waiting to be enforced, if the Jewish people did not repent.

When the time came, God *brought it on* His people—Daniel affirms, again, the reason why: because *the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice*. It is a tragically simple matter. God acts rightly all the time, every time. Everything He does is good and true. His chosen people, however, did not obey His voice. They rebelled against the goodness and truth of God, and like a loving Father, God disciplined them.

Biblical Text

12 Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. 13 As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. 14 Therefore the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.