Message 3: Restoring Hope.

*\*Note: Please leave time in the talk for interactive prayer walk at the end*

**Main Passage: Daniel 9**

**INTRODUCTION**

Watch this clip from the film, *The Birth of a Nation* -<https://youtu.be/70TDYKaOTuo>

Nat Turner was an enslaved African-American preacher hired out to slave masters hoping to keep their slaves obedient. Seeing the hopeless conditions of other slaves motivated him to lead a rebellion on August 21, 1831.

Nat Turner desired to restore hope to his generation by advocating on behalf of the other slaves.

**TRANSITION**

Israel is still in exile after 70 years, and are continuing to be oppressed. Who will advocate for Israel? Where will they find hope?

Today, God is going to teach us how to advocate for our generation even in a hopeless atmosphere.

**BACKGROUND**

Daniel began to restore hope by interceding on behalf of the other Israelites who were in captivity. In chapter 9 Daniel had been in captivity for about 70 years, remaining faithful to God.

Daniel maintained hope in hopeless situations as he remembered the promises God communicated through the prophet Jeremiah (**Jeremiah 25:1-14).**

**MAIN POINTS**

There are 2 things we must know in order to see hope restored in our generation.

1. Daniel keeps hope alive for his generation. (Read Daniel 9: 8, 13, 15-19)

Daniel recounts the sin of his people and repents on their behalf and then He asks God to do what He had promised to do so long ago.

Daniel’s expectation of God’s promises was so deeply rooted in God’s word and God’s nature, that not even 70 years in captivity could lower them. Daniel did not let his circumstances determine his expectation; he let his expectation change his perspective in the circumstance.

Let us continue to keep this eternal perspective like Daniel as we also begin to own the sin of our generation. What are those sins? [e.g. racism, hatred of each other, murder, unfaithfulness, promiscuity, abuse, idols…]

We have to know how to confess the sin of our generation. Daniel did not try to give an excuse for the sin. In the same way, we must be open and honest to God.

This posture of confession will begin to bring hope to our generation.

2. God meets us between hopelessness and hope. (Read Daniel 9:20-23)

The angel Gabriel responds to Daniel’s prayers by providing specific instructions to Daniel which restores his hope.

We don’t know how God is going to change history, but he promises that we are greatly beloved and that he hears our prayers.

As we think about the hopelessness of the marginalized communities in our society, we can be confident that God continues to hear our prayers because Jesus is interceding at the right hand of the Father on our behalf (Hebrews 8:1).

We have to believe that we are beloved and we have spiritual authority in the heavenlies. That is why we pray.

**ACTIVE RESPONSES**

We have spent the last three weeks observing Daniel’s excellence as he influenced both an oppressed nation (the exiles of Israel) and the oppressor nation (the Babylonians). Let us begin to have eyes to see how we can share that same excellence and influence for our nation, our city, and our campus.

We will spend the next 15-30 minutes specifically praying for our campus and our city. Using this passage as a guide, let’s go on a prayer walk. Like Right now. Together.

**PRAYER WALK INSTRUCTIONS**
Divide the large group into groups of 3-5 students with a student leader leading each group. Pass out **A Prayer Guide of Daniel 9:4-19** (attached below) to each student. Have them pray this prayer as a group as they walk around campus. When they interact with individuals on campus, invite the group to pray for those individuals. Set a time to gather the group back together and debrief.

**INTERACTIVE PRAYER WALK SCRIPT**

 “Hey, I’m [insert name here] with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. We are going around campus asking different people for prayer requests. Do you have anything you would like me to pray about?”

If they say no, just say thank you and move on. If they say yes, ask them permission to pray with them immediately. Then pray.

**INVITATION TO FAITH**

If they are responsive to your prayer, please invite them to take a next step. “Would you like to talk this week to connect further with InterVarsity?” If yes, schedule a time and location to follow up. Gather contact information.

A Prayer Guide of Daniel 9:4-19

***\*adjust the customized words to specifically fit your context***

 “Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants **the prophets in your Holy scripture**, who spoke in your name **to our presidents, our leaders and our ancestors**, and to all the people of the land.

“Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the people of **America** and the inhabitants of **Jackson** and all **Mississippi**, both near and far, in all the **campuses** where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. We and **our presidents, our leaders and our ancestors** are covered with shame, Lord, because we have sinned against you. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him; we have not obeyed the Lord our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the **prophets in his Holy scripture**. All Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.

“Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against you. You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to **African-Americans**. Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth. The Lord did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us, for the Lord our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

“Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of **slavery and Jim Crow** with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from **Jackson State University**, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made **Jackson** and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

“Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”

*\*developed by Sean Michael Watkins, Tamice Spencer, and Jason “Smiley” Abrams*