

DANIEL 9:3-21 – DANIEL’S PRAYER FOR THE PEOPLE!

8/15/15 Sat Morn Prayer – ptwente@gmail.com

Biblical Background: - The prayer of Daniel.

Verses (1-2) Daniel's reason for prayer.

- *In the first year (539 B.C. – 70 = 609B.C.) of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.*
- *Understood by the books:* Daniel 9 is one of the most amazing and significant prophetic passages in the Bible, and it begins with Daniel's understanding and application of prophecy.
- *The number of years specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah:* Daniel knew that effective prayer comes out of knowing and praying both God's word and our present circumstances. His study of prophecy showed him a *specific number* - the 70 years described in [Jeremiah 25:11-13](#) and [Jeremiah 29:10](#), and his knowledge of the times led him to know those passages applied to his time.
- *That He would accomplish seventy years:* Daniel believed that God would accomplish seventy years of captivity, yet he prayed passionately that God would do what He promised to do. Daniel knew that God's promises invite our prayers and participation. They do not exclude our prayers and participation.
- But a second important reason is that Daniel asked God, in His mercy, to take the earliest of all possible starting points (Daniel's abduction) for determining the beginning of the 70 years. There were three waves of captivity:
- 605 B.C. – Jerusalem was attacked and Daniel and other captives were taken to Babylon.
- 597 B.C. – Jerusalem was attacked and treasure was taken from the temple.
- 586-7 B.C. – Jerusalem falls and the nation was exiled.
- Daniel wanted to prevail in prayer, asking God to take the earliest possible starting point to determine the 70 years. He wanted God's mercy to come to Israel 18 years earlier rather than 18 years later.
- *In the first year of Darius:* This was still three or four years before 70 years had passed from 605 B.C. This was not too soon for Daniel to begin praying. Daniel has the foresight to look ahead three or four years and to begin praying.
- *The word of the LORD through Jeremiah:* Even in God's eternal decrees, God has an essential role for people to play. God's plan of the ages is declared, yet Jeremiah made a prophecy; Daniel made a prayer, and Cyrus made a proclamation

Verse (3) Daniel's preparation for prayer.

Dan 9:3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

- *I set my face:* This implies determination in prayer. Daniel had a goal to reach through prayer, and he approached God as a man who would not be denied. He did this because he was rightly convinced that his prayer was in the will of God, and knew it was not motivated by any selfish desire.
- *To make request by prayer and supplications:* Daniel wasn't passive as God's prophetic plan unfolded before him. In his approach to God he made a request, asking God to perform His promise in the way that Daniel thought would bring God most glory. "We ask but little, and God gives it." (Spurgeon)
- *With fasting, sackcloth, and ashes:* This reflected Daniel's humble heart in approaching God. Fasting, sackcloth, and ashes are emblems of humiliation and mourning. Daniel was determined to do whatever it took to get this job done in prayer. He "left nothing undone that might possibly make his prayer more effective or more persuasive." (Walvoord)

Verses (4-15) Daniel confesses the sin of his people, and glorifies the goodness and righteousness of God.

[4] And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, [5] we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. [6] Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. [7] O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You. [8] "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. [9] To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. [10] We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. [11] Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. [12] And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who

judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem. [13] "As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. [14] Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice. [15] And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!"

- **O Lord, great and awesome God:** Daniel began his prayer where we all should - by recognizing the greatness and goodness of God. Sometimes we approach God as if He were a stingy person who must be persuaded to give us anything. But Daniel knew the problem was not with God. God keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him.
- Daniel's prayer was remarkable for both its understanding and earnestness. Many pray with understanding but not earnestness; others are earnest but have no understanding in prayer. The two together are a powerful combination. "Oh! That our prayers could get beyond praying, till they got to agonizing." (Spurgeon)
- **We have sinned and committed iniquity:** As Daniel confessed Israel's sin he prayed as if he were as bad as the rest of Israel. This was a confession of we, not they. In this sense, their prayers never really reach God; genuine "we" prayers see self correctly and see our fellow saints with compassion.
- Daniel's confession of sin might seem phony until we realize how passionately and completely he is focused on God. Compared to God, even the most righteous among us falls far short.
- "I firmly believe that, the better a man's own character becomes, and the more joy in the Lord he has in his own heart, the more capable is he of sympathetic sorrow; and, probably, the more of it he will have. If thou hast room in thy soul for sacred joy, thou hast equal room for holy grief." (Spurgeon)
- **Righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face:** Daniel knew that Israel's sin was not God's fault; God was utterly righteous and blameless. Any shame of face belonged to Israel, not to God.
- It would be easy to complain to God about Israel's problems. Daniel didn't think for a moment that God was too hard on Israel; he knew God was completely righteous and any failure was on Israel's side.
- This is praying from a low place, and very effective. Football players try to hit their opponent low, because they gain leverage from coming in low. Our prayers are leveraged when we come to God humbly and lowly.
- **We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God:** Daniel did not make the slightest excuse for Israel's sin. He knew the fault belonged to Israel and Israel alone. We are prone to make excuses for our sin and often even make excuses in our "confessions."
- He has confirmed His words . . . As it is written in the Law of Moses: Daniel realized that even in His judgment against Israel, God was totally faithful to His Word. He promised that curses would come upon a disobedient Israel (in passages like *Leviticus 26* and *Deuteronomy 28*) and they did.
- **All this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God:** As Daniel confessed his sin and the sin of Israel, he remembered the sin of prayerlessness. Even when they faced great trial and calamity, Israel still did not make their prayer before the LORD. When we sense trial or difficulty, it should drive us immediately to prayer - when we are not so driven, it should be a wake-up call to the coldness of our heart.
- **Who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand:** Daniel remembered that the LORD delivered Israel from Egypt. He remembers the Old Testament standard of God's power, the deliverance from Egypt. The New Testament standard of God's power is the resurrection of Jesus. ([Eph.1:19-20](#)).

Verses (16-19) Daniel asks God to forgive and to restore Jerusalem.

[16] "O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us. [17] Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. [18] O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. [19] O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

- **Let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem:** After his confession of Israel's sin and God's great righteousness, Daniel simply asked God to mercifully turn His kind attention to Jerusalem and the temple (cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary). He also asked that God would do this without delay (do not delay for your own sake).
- Daniel prayed as a patriot - but a patriot more of the Kingdom of God than the Kingdom of Israel. We should pray with similar patriotism for the Kingdom of God. "Let it never be said that the Church of God has no feeling of patriotism for the Holy City, for the Heavenly Land and for her glorious King enthroned above. To us, Christian patriotism means love to the Church of God." (Spurgeon)

- Daniel asked for all this ***according to all Your righteousness***. It was as if Daniel prayed, "LORD, I'm not asking You to do anything against Your righteousness. I'm praying this to advance Your righteous glory."
- ***Cause your face to shine***: This was the heart of Daniel's plea. He knew that God's people needed much, but all their need could be summed up in this: They (and we) need God's face to shine upon them.
- "Oh, that we might learn how to pray so that God should be the subject as well as the object of our supplications! O God, Your Church needs You above everything else! A poor, little, sick, neglected child needs fifty things; but you can put all those needs into one if you say that the child needs its mother. So, the Church, of God needs a thousand things, but you can put them all into one if you say, 'The Church of God needs her God.'" (Spurgeon)
- ***For the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate . . . Do not delay for Your own sake***: Daniel's prayer was consumed with the glory of God, not primarily with the benefit of man. His purpose in prayer was to see God's work accomplished and His cause glorified.
- It isn't wrong to pray for our own needs. Jesus invited us to ask, give us this day our daily bread. At the same time, we need to have an even greater passion for the glory and benefit of God than for our own needs.
- This also speaks to purity of motive in Daniel's prayer. Sometimes we pray for God to do a great work so we can be known as great workers for God. We need to pray for the sake of the LORD'S cause, both in our words and heart.
- ***We do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies***: Even before the time of the New Testament, Daniel prayed on firm New Testament ground. His confidence wasn't in his own goodness, but in God's goodness.
- This is what it means to pray in the name of Jesus. Those aren't words we tack on to the end of a prayer, but they should express the fact we are praying in merits and righteousness of Jesus, not our own.
- Daniel was not great because he prayed. He was great because his prayer was the necessary expression of great trust and dependence on God. Many religious people spend countless hours in prayer but it achieves nothing because it is not rooted in the goodness and righteousness of God. Self-righteous or self-trusting prayer is of no power before God. "One of Satan's most subtle delusions is that he succeeds in getting hundreds of thousands of men to trust in prayer, apart from faith in the shed blood of Jesus." (Talbot)
- ***O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act!*** Daniel prayed like a great wrestler, eager to gain an advantage. He sensed God's openness to each request and he responded with many rapid requests.
- "Follow up your advantage; build another prayer or the answer that you have. If you have received a great blessing, say, 'Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him; because he has heard me once, therefore will I call again.' " (Spurgeon)
- "Cold prayers ask God to deny them: only importunate prayers will be replied to. When the Church of God cannot take 'No' for an answer, she shall not have 'No' for an answer. When a pleading soul must have it; when the Spirit of God works mightily in him so that he cannot let the angel go without a blessing, the angel shall not go till he has given the blessing to such a pleading one. Brethren, if there be only one among us that can pray as Daniel did, with intensity, the blessing will come." (Spurgeon)

Verses (20-21) Gabriel brings the answer to Daniel's prayer. Daniel's prayer is interrupted by an angelic visit.

[20] Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, [21] yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

- ***While I was speaking in prayer***: This dramatic answer to prayer came even as Daniel prayed. Jesus said, your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him ([Matthew 6:8](#)). Whenever there seems to be a delay in answer to prayer, there is reason for the delay. When it is right to do it, God can answer prayer immediately.
- Sometimes God answers prayer even before we pray. *It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear* ([Isaiah 65:24](#)).
- ***Being caused to fly swiftly***: This is one of the few places in the Bible where we are told that angels fly. Gabriel came quickly because there is no great distance between heaven and earth.
- ***The time of the evening offering***: This was a special time of day, when Moses offered the Passover lamb ([Exodus 12:6](#)) and when Jesus was crucified ([Matthew 27:45](#)).
- As a young man in Jerusalem, Daniel often saw the smoke rising from the temple at the time of the evening sacrifice

Verses (22-23) Gabriel announces that he has come to bring Daniel an answer to his prayer.

[22] *And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. [23] At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:*

- *I have now come forth to give you skill to understand:* In his prayer, Daniel didn't ask for understanding. His prayer demonstrated that his heart was close to God's heart, so as a friend, God revealed many things to Daniel (John 15:15).
- Daniel studied the passage in Jeremiah, but still didn't understand much. In this case, understanding came more through prayer. "All students of the word will tell you that when the hammers of learning and biblical criticism have failed to break open a flinty text, oftentimes prayer has done it, and nuggets of gold have been found concealed therein. To every student of the word of God who would become a well-instructed scribe we would say, with all the means which you employ, with all your searching of the commentaries, with all your diggings into the original, with all your researches among learned divines, mingle much fervent prayer." (Spurgeon)
- *For you are greatly beloved:* Both Daniel and the Apostle John ([John 13:23](#)) were noted for their love-relationship with God. Both Daniel and John were also noted for receiving amazing prophetic messages.
- Daniel had just considered a set of "sevens" upon the nation of Israel - the 70 years of promised captivity prophesied by Jeremiah. It was as if God said through Gabriel, "Now I will show you some 'sevens' that will really amaze you."
- Daniel illustrated the principle that when we seek God diligently, we often receive even more than we ask for.

SUMMARY:

- **God's promises invite, not exclude, our prayers and participation. Daniel prayed as a patriot - more of the Kingdom of God than the Kingdom of Israel. Response to the Promise of God - Captivity would be 70 years**
- **Set face, request, supplication, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes**
- **Prayed and made confession - Confession of sin ("we") - Interchange of Perfect God and sinful man**
- **Perfect and proper address**
- **Lack of self centeredness in Daniel's prayer - "Your/Yourself" = 18 times; "I" = 1 time (what is our ratio?)**
- **God is not only the object but the subject as well - For Your sake... "Cause Your face to shine...!!!**
- **Pray not because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. Focus on His glory, not man's.**
- **Are your prayers? Fervent, serious, with expectancy?**
- **Are you often praying for His church, His bride? The church needs her God-YOU!**
- **Do you pray - Hear! Forgive! Listen! Act! Do not delay -- for Your sake?**

PASS ME NOT O GENTLE SAVIOR! - Fanny Crosby

*Pass me not, O gentle Savior, Hear my humble cry;
While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.*

Refrain:

*Savior, Savior, Hear my humble cry,
While on others Thou art calling, Do not pass me by.*

*Thou the spring of all my comfort, More than life to me,
Whom have I on earth beside Thee, Whom in Heav'n but Thee.*

Refrain:

SAT MORN PRAYER GUIDELINES:

We all want to receive **instruction from the teaching in Biblical prayers and for the prayer time be effective, being led by the Holy Spirit.** To that end:

- Please be on time at 6:30am to receive the blessings of the weekly prayers in the Bible.
- If you are late, **simply agree in prayer and refrain from praying** in group prayer and **wait until the small group** prayer time.
- Those who pray aloud during the prayer meeting portion, **please keep the prayers short (2-3 minutes)** praying as led by the Holy Spirit. There is only about a 30 minute period for 15 or so to pray.
- **Intercessory prayer** (church, country, leaders) **during group time; personal** prayer during small group time.
- **Welcome times of silence** during the group prayer time as we wait on the Holy Spirit.