

Daniel's Prayer of Confession

Daniel 9:4-14

Call to Worship

Psalm 32, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

In Jesus Christ, there is a new creation.

Everything old has passed away.

Everything has become new.

This newness is from God, who has reconciled us through Jesus Christ.

Rejoice and be glad!

Everything has become new.

Question for Thought

When have I felt that God was especially listening to my prayers?

As devout Christians, we would like to think that our lives are free of sin.

However, all of us at some point have found ourselves doing something against the will of God.

Once our sin-fractured relationships reach a point of despair, we finally realize that we have no choice but to turn to the Lord.

But what if we didn't wait until the situation reached the boiling point?

We always want to be in the position to hear and be led by the Holy Spirit so we can be a blessing to someone in need.

Sin can block our blessings.

If you have ever read a promise in the Bible concerning the future and then wondered how that relates to you in the present then you can identify with Daniel.

As Daniel 9 opens, Daniel, well educated, was reading "books" (Daniel 9:1-2). They were a collection of sacred "books," which included the Book of Jeremiah. Specifically, Daniel is reading from Jeremiah 29:10-14.

The context of Jeremiah 29:10-14 is the prophet Jeremiah's record of God's promise to limit the Babylonian captivity to 70 years.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NLT)

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

The importance of what Daniel is reading is the basis for this occasion for Daniel's prayer.

When Daniel read Jeremiah's prophecy it affected him so much that he fell on his knees and began to pray.

The basis of Daniel's prayer was the truth of God's Word he was reading from the prophet Jeremiah.

The burden of his prayer was that God would be gracious and forgiving.

Daniel 9:4 (NLT)

⁴ I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: “O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your covenant and keep your promises of unfailing love to those who love you and obey your commands.

In Daniel's prayer of confession he reveals to us one of the most tremendous yet forgotten principles about prayer. Prayer is not about us convincing God to change His plans or His will

It is about us adjusting our lives to
His will and seeking a better
understanding of His plans and
purpose.

It is in that attitude that Daniel
prays.

"And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said..."

With these words Daniel addressed the living God by His personal name "LORD," (all capital letters) or "Jehovah, the self-existing One."

In the book of Daniel, "LORD" is only used in this chapter but in this chapter alone it is used seven times (Daniel 9:2, 4, 9, 13, 14, 20).

The name depicts God as the gracious, covenant-keeping God of Israel, who is willing to reveal to man and hear man when he prays.

Daniel had learned much about himself and his nation through reading the "books" (Daniel 9:2).

"Confession" means "to cast or throw." Daniel was going to make his "confession" to God which clearly states his burden for prayer.

Daniel's prayer recorded in Daniel 9
is one of the longest prayers
recorded in the Bible.

The word for "Lord" (lower case) is
Adonay {ad-o-noy}
meaning, "Lord, Master."

From God's greatness in the middle part of verse 4 Daniel now focuses on God's faithfulness.

While God's greatness exalts Him high above men His faithfulness brings Him close to man.

By mentioning "love" and "keeping"
God's commandments Daniel
recognizes that the reason Israel was
in captivity was because she had not
fulfilled God's requirements.

Daniel 9:5 (NLT)

⁵ But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations.

"Committed iniquity" means "sins done that has left us twisted and bent."

When Daniel confessed that the nation had "done wickedly" he meant "the wrongs that had been done were known."

Daniel gives the reason for the sins Israel had committed. She committed the sins because she had "turned away from God."

Daniel 9:6 (NLT)

⁶ We have refused to listen to your servants the prophets, who spoke on your authority to our kings and princes and ancestors and to all the people of the land.

Israel had also failed to "hearken" to
God's "servants the prophets."

The kings, princes, fathers, and all
the people of the land" were guilty
of not listening.

Listening to God's Word and those called by God and commissioned by God to speak to His people is essential to living under the blessing of God.

Daniel 9:7 (NLT)

⁷ “Lord, you are in the right; but as you see, our faces are covered with shame. This is true of all of us, including the people of Judah and Jerusalem and all Israel, scattered near and far, wherever you have driven us because of our disloyalty to you.

As Daniel continues to pray he emphasizes the "righteousness" of God. In no way is God to be blamed for Israel's sinfulness.

God had not been overbearing in His requirements or inconsistent in His ways.

Daniel 9:8 (NLT)

**⁸ O LORD, we and our kings, princes,
and ancestors are covered with
shame because we have sinned
against you.**

While Daniel emphasizes the "righteousness" of God in the first part of verse 7, he now shines the spot light on the "shame" of man in the rest of verse 7 and 8.

Shame felt in the heart is normally reflected in the face. It is possible Daniel had picked up on this phrase "confusion of face or covered in shame" from Jeremiah 7:19.

Jeremiah 7:19 (NIV)

19 But am I the one they are provoking? declares the LORD. Are they not rather harming themselves, to their own shame?

"Trespassed" (v.8) is from the Hebrew word ma'al {maw-al} and carries the thought of "stealth or unfaithfulness." Because of their sneaky and unfaithful acts against God, He drove them into captivity.

Daniel is certain of these things and therefore his prayer and confession is legitimate and productive.

Daniel 9:9 (NIV)

⁹ The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him;

The word for "mercies" speaks about "grace and pity." It's the part of God that yearns to be merciful and show compassion to those who have sinned against Him.

The word for "forgiving" relates primarily to pardon.

Daniel's point in using these words magnifies the need of "mercies and forgiveness" for those who have "rebelled against" God.

Daniel 9:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ we have not obeyed the LORD our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants the prophets.

Once again Daniel employs the personal name "LORD" or "Jehovah." Daniel's thoughts in this verse are parallel to those in verse 6. God's "servants the prophets" were God's instruments in communicating to Israel and she should have heeded.

Daniel 9:11 (NIV)

¹¹ 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.

"Transgressed your law" means Israel had passed over or beyond the bounds of the Law. They had gone too far. Because of their "departing" God's "curse" was "poured" upon them.

"Curses" and "oaths" were used by God as incentives for obedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-20).

The words "poured upon us" presents a picture of God's "curses" being "poured out" like water.

The thought is it was no light thing.
"Poured" suggests "volume and great amount."

Daniel 9:12 (NIV)

¹² You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing upon us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem.

God's "curses and oaths" were against "us" the common people and "against our judges" or the leaders of the land.

Daniel viewed the "curses and oaths" that had come upon the nation to be worse than any poured out on any other nation.

Daniel 9:13 (NIV)

13 Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us, yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth.

Daniel 9:14 (NIV)

¹⁴ The LORD did not hesitate to bring the disaster upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in everything he does; yet we have not obeyed him.

Daniel continues to pray about the "evil" that had fallen upon the nation and the "iniquities" and disobedience that led to that fall.

Based on Daniel's words there was a time when Israel could have averted God's judgment. Sadly, that time had come and gone.

God had been watching over Israel
the entire time they were sinning
and refusing to repent.

None of the disaster and ruin of
Jerusalem was outside the watchful
eye of Jehovah God.

God was justified in sending the curses and calamities upon the nation of Israel. God was justified in sending Israel into captivity until His Word was fulfilled and their hearts were broken in repentance.

Daniel's language in his prayer of confession indicates that he believes God is the one who brought disaster upon Israel.

This is an act of faith on Daniel's part and a tribute to his spiritual maturity and insight into God's nature and Word.

Not all the Jews of Daniel's day believed that Jerusalem was leveled and that the people were in captivity because of sin. Their attitude was much like people today who refuse to accept any calamity as an act of God upon a nation or group of people because of sin.

Believers cannot and should not attribute all events in life as an act of God's judgment. However, when it is clear that it is His hand, believers should confess that it is God.

Daniel did not make his request to God for his own sake personally. Though Daniel prayed for the sake of sinners when he interceded for God's people, he prayed primarily for God's sake, for God's honor and reputation.

He prayed for God to be honored by His people and he prayed for God to restore His house, the devastated Temple in Jerusalem, so God's people could worship Him there once again.

By God delivering His people from exile, their neighbors would see that God was true to all of His promises.

Blessings

May you be confident you will never
be uprooted
*from your secure place with God,
because Jesus' saving
grace has made you righteous (Prov.
10:30a, TNIV).*

Behold, God is your salvation, may
you trust *in Him* and not be afraid;
for the Lord God is your strength
and song, and He has become your
salvation.

Therefore may you joyously draw
water from the springs of salvation
(Isa. 12:2-3, NASB).

*May you know and embrace this: if
you come back to
God and trust in Him, you will be
saved
(Isa. 30:15b, NCV).*