

The Book of Daniel: Answered Prayer

Daniel 9:1-23

October 6, 2019

1. The Preparation for Prayer (1-2)

a. We should prepare for prayer by studying the Word of God (1-2).

- i. The first year of Darius was almost 70 years after Daniel was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar in 605 BC (1).
- ii. As Daniel studied the book of Jeremiah, he discovered that God had promised to punish Babylon after a period of 70 years.
 1. Jeremiah 25:11-12 "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."
 2. From this passage Daniel would have determined that the 70 years was complete, and it was time for God to fulfill his promise.
 - a. God had revealed to Jeremiah that the people of Israel would be taken to Babylon and be exiled from their land for 70 years because they had disobeyed God's commands. For every year that they had forsaken God's sabbath rest, they would have to spend year in captivity.
 - b. It is interesting to note God's judgment upon those who forsake His command to rest.
 3. Daniel may have also been aware of Isaiah's prophecy which was made 150 years prior.
 4. Isaiah 44:26, 27 "That saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof...That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid."

b. We should prepare for prayer by humbling ourselves before God (3).

- i. God had promised to restore His people, but that restoration was conditioned upon the people of God humbling themselves before Him (2 Chronicles 6:36-39).
- ii. The restoration was not to come until there was weeping and repentance (Jeremiah 50:4-5).
- iii. Therefore, Daniel set himself to seek God with fierce determination.
 1. Daniel's tenacity of purpose was the result of real appreciation of a desperate situation.
 2. Daniel knew that the captivity had not greatly affected the nation of Israel. Rather than pray prayers of repentance, they prayed that God would judge the Babylonians.
 3. Rather than pray against the Jews, Daniel humbled himself with sackcloth and ashes.
- iv. Daniel's focus was on God, not himself.
 1. "Lord God" means essential "master-lord" emphasizing the sovereign rights of God.
 2. Nine times throughout this prayer, Daniel uses the term "Lord", acknowledging God's sovereign right to do as he pleases.

2. The Example of Prayer (3-19)

a. Worship the Lord (4).

- i. Daniel begins his prayer by addressing God as "the LORD my God," recognizing God as the self-existent source of all being (I Am that I AM), the One Who keeps His covenant with Abraham (Exodus 3:13-14; 6:1-8).
 1. When we focus on the character of God, it helps to put our own burdens and needs in proper perspective.
 2. By focusing on the covenant keeping nature of God, Daniel was worshipping God and strengthening his own faith in the process.
- ii. Daniel recognized the greatness and holiness of God just as Isaiah (6:1).
- iii. Daniel recognized the mercy of God.

- b. Confess sin (5-15).
 - i. Confession is saying the same thing as God about your sin (5; 1 John 1:9).
 - 1. Sin is falling short of God's perfect standard and thus incurring guilt (5; cf. Romans 3:23).
 - 2. Iniquity indicates a conscious decision (Micah 2:1).
 - 3. Wickedness is a mental disregard for justice, righteousness, truth, honor, and virtue.
 - 4. Rebellion
 - a. Deviating from God's precepts and judgments (5).
 - b. Refusing to listen to the messengers God sends us (6).
 - ii. Confession exposes all the guilty parties (6)
 - 1. In this case, the entire nation was guilty.
 - 2. Jeremiah 5:30-31 "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?"
 - iii. Confession acknowledges guilt and shame (7-8).
 - iv. Intercessors associate themselves with their people.
 - 1. "we have sinned" (5)
 - 2. "neither have we hearkened" (6)
 - 3. "unto us confusion of faces" (7)
 - 4. "neither have we obeyed" (10)
 - 5. "therefore the curse is poured upon us" (11)
 - 6. "he spake against us" (12)
 - 7. "yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth" (13)
 - 8. The pastor or missionary who would help his people must truly associate himself with them. Daniel was such a missionary.
- c. Pray in submission to the will of God (14).
 - i. Sometimes when we pray it is out of desperation due to dissatisfaction with what life has given us.
 - ii. We are prone to complain that our rights have been overrun or we have received less than we have deserved.
 - iii. Full of self-pity and self-interest we run to God and complain against Him.
 - iv. Sometimes, the evil we are experiencing is the result of our own doing.
- d. Ask for mercy (16-19).
 - i. Daniel's purpose was to make petition and intercession for the nation of Israel (16-21).
 - ii. Daniel prayed upon the foundation of God's mercy and righteousness and not his own (18).
 - iii. Daniel prayed for the sake of God's name and not his own (19).

3. The Answer to Prayer (20-23)

- a. When we pray according to God's will, we can be assured that the answer is on its way.
 - i. Matthew 7:7 "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:"
 - ii. 2 Chronicles 7:14 "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."
- b. Prayer honors God and allows us to have more intimate, loving fellowship with God (23).

Conclusion:

1. What do you do to prepare yourself for prayer? Do you let the Scriptures direct your requests? Do you take time to humble yourself before God?
2. Which area of your prayer life needs the most growth (worship, confession, submission to God's will, praying on the basis of God's mercy rather than your own righteousness)?
3. When you pray according to the Word of God, do you have the faith to believe that God has already begun to answer and that He loves you?