



Midweek Study

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STANDING STRONG IN A HOSTILE CULTURE

THE BOOK OF DANIEL



PRAYING FOR OUR NATION

Daniel 9:1-19

Daniel's Prayer Included These Principles:

1. **INSPIRATION** from the Scriptures (Daniel 9:1-2)

- **Jeremiah 25:8-11 and Jeremiah 29:10** (Jeremiah prophesied these words 597BC)
- Warren Wiersbe writes, "When Daniel made this discovery about the seventy years, the period of captivity was about to end! If Daniel was taken to Babylon in 605, and he discovered Jeremiah's prophecy in 539, then he had been in Babylon sixty-six or sixty-seven years. The next year (538), Cyrus would make his decree permitting the Jews to return to their land. The prophet was probably eighty-one years old at this time. He himself would not be able to return to the land, but he rejoiced that others could return."
- Illustration: Have you ever put your child in timeout? You set the timer for 5 minutes. If the child can see the timer, they are anticipating freedom "3 more minutes...2 more minutes... 1 more minute!" They are thinking. Daniel has read Jeremiah and he's thinking: "It's been 67 years since the captivity! Our time of captivity is almost complete!"
- Application: What do we do when we read a promise from God's Word? Do the promises of God just fall on us like ripened apples from an apple tree? No. There is a God-side to a promise and there is a man-side to that promise. **Jeremiah 29:11-14** explains how God's people were to seek Him. **Jeremiah 1:12** says He is actively watching over His word to perform it in our lives.
- Daniel knows why his nation is in captivity. He allows the Word of God to lead him to pray.

2. **INTENSITY** of Soul (Daniel 9:3)

- **James 5:16 – The effectual fervent (white-heated) prayers of a righteous man avails much.**
- David Jeremiah writes, "[I]n this passage from Daniel, he put on sackcloth, the garments of mourning. In the Book of Job, it says that he prayed fervently while sitting in an ash pile and putting ashes on his head. It also says that praying fervently was accompanied by shaving off the hair of his head. In other places in the Bible we are told that praying was so agonizingly fervent that it was accompanied by crying, tearing clothes, fasting, sighing, groaning, and sweating blood. In our culture today, that sort of fervency would seem fanatical." [David Jeremiah, *The Handwriting on the Wall* (Dallas: Word Pub., 1992), 177.]
- **Luke 18:13-14 - But the tax collector stood at a distance, unwilling even to lift up his eyes to heaven. Instead, he beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man, rather than the Pharisee, went**

home justified. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

- Dr. Bill Bennett once said the greatest prayer he ever heard someone pray was *broken words and broken sentences from a broken man*.

3. **IDENTIFICATION** with Sinful Humanity (Daniel 9:4-16)

- Isaiah 6:5 - “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips”
- Illustration: Oftentimes when we watch our favorite sports team win, we will tell others “We won the game,” though we did not actually play in the game. We are identifying with our team.
- Though Daniel did not disobey God’s laws directly, and lived most of his life in Babylon, he identified with the sin of his people.
- I have seen this at the Southern Baptist Convention in 2015 as we spent almost an hour in prayer and repentance for the racist roots of our convention in 1825. Though we weren’t there, we were repenting on behalf of the 15 million Southern Baptists worldwide.
- **2 Peter 2:7-9** - ⁷ and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked ⁸ (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)-- ⁹ then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly...

4. **INTERCESSION** for God’s People (Daniel 9:17-19)

- 2 Chronicles 7:14 - if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

5. **INTEREST** in God’s Glory (Daniel 9:19b)

- “Do not delay **FOR YOUR OWN SAKE, MY GOD, FOR YOUR CITY and Your people are called by YOUR NAME.**”

Pastor Joe Wright of Kansas was asked to lead the Kansas State Senate in prayer in 1996. He stood up and prayed this prayer originally written by Bob Russell and prayed at a Prayer Breakfast in Kentucky. Some senators walked out in protest. In the first month, over 6500 people reached out to his church office to either criticize or commend. Paul Harvey also read it on his radio program, which garnered national attention. Wright prayed thus:

“Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask Your forgiveness and to seek Your direction and guidance. We know Your Word says, Woe unto those that call evil good, but that’s exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values. We confess that we have ridiculed the absolute Truth of Your Word and called in pluralism. We have worshiped other gods and call it multiculturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it alternative lifestyle. We have exploited the poor and called it the lottery. We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. We have killed the unborn and called it choice. We have shot abortionists and called it justifiable. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building self-esteem. We have abused power and called it political savvy. We have coveted our neighbors’ possessions and called it ambition. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment. Search us, O God, and know our hearts today. Cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of Kansas and who have been ordained by You to govern this great state. Grant them the wisdom to rule and may their decisions direct us to the center of Your will. I ask in the name of Your Son, the living Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.”