

OUR GOD REIGNS – p. 11
“The Praying Prophet”
Daniel 9:1-19

The Praying Prophet

There are many things we associate with Daniel –

But the most prolific aspect of his life that we see from his book is his prayer life!

- In chapter 2, when his back was up against the wall, what did he do?
 - He prayed and asked his friends to pray!
 - Daniel 2:18 – “...*(he) told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven...*”
- Then, in chapter 6, we know the story well, that Daniel prayed three times a day.
 - Daniel 6:10 – “*When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house...He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.*”
- Now, most all of chapter 9 is the prayer Daniel actually prayed!

Prayer and Bible Meditation

The context of Daniel’s prayer is of huge significance –

- He is reading His Bible –
 - Notice he says in verse 2 – “...*I, Daniel, perceived in the books...*”
 - The is clearly a reference to the books of Scripture –
- Being a man of means he had a copy of the Scriptures –
 - While the OT wasn’t complete, he had the Books of Moses, the History Books, the Literature Books, and some of the prophets like Jeremiah.
- And He says that he “perceived in the books” which means he was lingering in the Word –

Two observations we need to make –

- One – The standard of canonization –
 - Daniel refers specifically to “the” books – so he is not talking about any books but the books that were already considered the holy books of Scripture.
 - This tells us that there was a standard that recognized whether or not a book was consider to be Scripture.
- Two – The Inspiration of the Books –
 - What Daniel was reading he considered to be the Word of God –
 - He says, “*according to the Word of the LORD to Jeremiah...*”
 - This means Daniel assumed its authority and that it was true!
 - This is why he is lingering in this Word because it is God’s Word.

It is because of what he sees in the Word that he begins to pray – What did he see?

- He is reading Jeremiah’s prophecy concerning Judah’s deportation or exile to Babylon.
- Jeremiah 25 –
 - At the time Daniel and his friends are being taken to Babylon, Jeremiah the prophet is prophesying in Judah.
 - He says that because the people have been unfaithful to their God that they were going to be disciplined (not destroyed) by God for 70 years.
(Read Jer. 25:11-14)
- Jeremiah 29:10-14
 - See two things –
 - God promised 70 years of captivity.
 - But the causation of rescue would be the people turning to God in prayer.

-So, see it clearly –

-God said, through Jeremiah, “When you call upon me...I will hear you. You will seek me and find me...”

-Daniel 9:3 – *“Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer...”*

We need to see the relationship between the promises of God and prayer –

-Promises motivate prayer – Why we pray; Promises shape prayer – What we pray

-A few examples –

-Christ has promised to be with us, so what do we pray? “Be with us”

-Christ has promised to come again, so what do we pray? “Come”

-God has promised to save people from all nations, languages and ethnicities, so what do we pray? “Save”

J. Calvin – *“It is normal for Christians to plead with God to do what He has promised to do.”*

One more thing about praying before we look at the prayer –

-Daniel said that he “turned his face to the Lord” and that he prayed “with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.”

-There are not rules and regulations that dictate physical behavior in prayer.

-Give consideration to appropriate physical expression to what you are praying

Daniel’s Prayer

1 – He Acknowledges the Shame of Sinning

-Consider the language he uses –

-v. 5 – *“We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.”*

-v. 6 – *“We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.”*

-v. 7 – *“To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame...because of the treachery that they have committed against you.”*

-v. 8 – *“To us, O Lord, belongs open shame...”*

-v. 9 – *“...we have rebelled against Him.”*

-v. 10 – *“And have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God...”*

-v. 11 – *“All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey...”*

-There’s no excuse making – No blame-shifting

-Just straight forth and honest – *“We have deliberately rebelled and pushed God away.”*

2 – He Acknowledges God’s Righteous Judgment

-v. 12 – *“He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us...by bringing upon us a great calamity...”*

-God is being faithful to His Word!

-Daniel lingers on these two points –

-He makes the case over and over than the people have done wrong but God is just and righteous.

-If we don’t get our minds around the problem then we don’t fully embrace or appreciate the solution.

-Do you see the shame of your sin and the righteousness of God’s discipline?

3 – He Calls on the Lord to Forgive

-v. 19 – *“O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.”*