



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

Prayer that Moves God and History

JANUARY 16, 2025

Pastor David Andersen / 804-683-2285 / PO Box 2020, Chesterfield, VA 23832 / David.Andersen@capitolcom.org

Daniel 9:1-6 *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—2) in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. 3) Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. 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. (NKJV)*

AND WHEN THEY RETURN TO YOU WITH ALL THEIR HEART AND WITH ALL THEIR SOUL IN THE LAND OF THEIR ENEMIES WHO LED THEM AWAY CAPTIVE, AND PRAY TO YOU TOWARD THEIR LAND WHICH YOU GAVE TO THEIR FATHERS, THE CITY WHICH YOU HAVE CHOSEN AND THE TEMPLE WHICH I HAVE BUILT FOR YOUR NAME: THEN HEAR IN HEAVEN YOUR DWELLING PLACE THEIR PRAYER AND THEIR SUPPLICATION, AND MAINTAIN THEIR CAUSE, AND FORGIVE YOUR PEOPLE WHO HAVE SINNED AGAINST YOU, AND ALL THEIR TRANSGRESSIONS ... AND GRANT THEM COMPASSION BEFORE THOSE THAT TOOK THEM CAPTIVE.
1 KINGS 8:48-50

Why the double emphasis on the first year of Darius? How many years have transpired since Daniel was taken into captivity? Was Daniel’s motivation to pray taken from the Scriptures? Is this about the time Daniel was thrown in the lion’s den for praying? Was there anything more Daniel could have done to show his earnestness in prayer? Are his first words in worship to God? Does he include himself in this repentance? How is leadership emphasized?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- > JANUARY 16: DANIEL 9:7-12 **LEADERSHIP MATTERS IN PRAYER**
- > JANUARY 23: DANIEL 9:13-19 **DESPERATE PRAYER THAT GOD ANSWERS!**

This Darius is sixty-two years old (Daniel 5:31) and had received the kingdom the night Belshazzar was killed. King Darius, as he was setting up his kingdom his first year, had signed the decree for his deceitful leaders, weaponizing the law to kill Daniel, “*that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions*” (Dan. 6:7). Thus, it is possible that Daniel may have even prayed this prayer in the lions’ den.

TO FULFILL THE WORD OF THE LORD BY THE MOUTH OF JEREMIAH, UNTIL THE LAND HAD ENJOYED HER SABBATHS. AS LONG AS SHE LAY DESOLATE SHE KEPT SABBATH, TO FULFILL SEVENTY YEARS. 2 CHRONICLES 36:21

I. THE MOTIVE FOR PRAYER

DANIEL 9:1-2

Daniel’s captivity began in 605 BC but the fall of Babylon and the first year of Darius is 538 BC, so Daniel has been in captivity for 67 years and he is in his 80’s. Daniel was studying the book of Jeremiah and discovered a path of prayer in the words, “*and these nations (especially Israel) shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for*

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30 AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 14TH FLOOR SPEAKER’S CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 14TH FLOOR SPEAKER’S CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

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their iniquity,' says the LORD; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation'" (Jer. 25:11-12). Since the king of Babylon had been punished and killed and the kingdom was given to the Medes and Persians, as Daniel had already predicted previously, then there was nothing keeping God from bringing the seventy year prediction to a close early, except intense, obedient prayer (Jeremiah 29:10-14).

CALL UNTO ME, AND I WILL ANSWER THEE, AND SHOW THEE GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS, WHICH THOU KNOWEST NOT. JEREMIAH 33:3

II. THE MIGHT OF PRAYER

DANIEL 9:3-4

In addition to Daniel's normal prayer three times a day, he says literally, "*I (continually) turned my face to the Lord God to plead a prayer and supplications.*" This was clearly a greater commitment to intensity in prayer beyond his three times a day. Every possible means of physically intensifying his prayer is added: fasting, sackcloth and ashes. The fasting sharpened his focus as a continual reminder to pray. At times of prayer, he humbly laid aside his regal robes for sackcloth, irritating his skin with this rough material. Ashes were a sign of deep mourning, intensifying his repentance of sin. Notice his emphasis of continuance is threefold in verse four, literally, "*I (continually) prayed to Yahweh my God and I (continually) made confession and I (continually) said,*" pointing to his probable memorization of this prayer. Though not found elsewhere in the book of Daniel, the name Yahweh appears here for the second time and will be repeated seven times in this chapter because it points to God's covenant relationship to His people. Daniel can appeal to this covenant name knowing that God will never forsake his people. Appropriately, Daniel's first words in prayer are worship. The first name used in his prayer is Adonai, which means Master or Lord, and thus Daniel is addressing God as His servant. The second name is El, meaning "The Strong and Mighty God." Daniel can

expect his prayer to be answered because his God has all might and all power to fulfill his request. With the words "*great and awesome,*" Daniel is pointing to God's majesty over all and that He is to be feared for His invincible and infinite power. Finally, he rejoices in God's faithfulness to His covenant and infinite love, particularly to His own who love Him and keep his commandments.

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. 2 CHRONICLES 7:14

III. THE MERCY OF PRAYER

DANIEL 9:5-6

Daniel knows from the Scriptures that mercy is found in repentance before God. Just as Israel had sinned in many abominable and diverse ways, so Daniel's repentance seeks to match the horrific depth of sin causing God to give them up to their greatest judgment, captivity and slavery. Daniel repents with his people using staccato verbs to punctuate their iniquity. "*We have sinned,*" pointing to a serious offense of criminal behavior before God. "*And we have done wrong,*" sin requiring punishment. "*And we have acted wickedly,*" violence and crime against the civil and moral law. "*And we have rebelled,*" having strenuously attacked and revolted against authority both human and divine. "*And we have turned away from Your commands and Your laws,*" to apostatize or lie to oneself and others, blatantly attacking what one knows to be true and right. God had repeatedly warned them through His servants the prophets of His judgments upon such evil crimes and offenses. But to add insult to injury, they were either ignored or silenced. Notice the emphasis on leadership which the prophets proclaimed the truth to first, "*our kings, our princes, and our fathers and all the people of the land.*" Now, there is repentance from the top and God will graciously answer, changing history by prayer!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Is God worshipped through your life and words, in all things seeking His glory?
- 2) Have you received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, the only one who can forgive your sin?
- 3) Do you pray like you believe, based on God's promise, one person's obedient prayer can move God and history?