

Intro- We are in Daniel 9, where some 65 years after Daniel came to Babylon as a mid-teen, now he is an 80 year old man, and the Medo Persian Empire has just conquered Babylon, and has placed Daniel in high leadership. (2nd in the nation)

- * At this same time, Daniel reviewed Isaiah's and Jeremiah's prophecies reminding him that the Persia's rulers would soon decree that the Jews could return to their land and rebuild.
- * So Daniel 9 begins with Daniel praying fervently to God on behalf of Israel, that God would intervene and stir the hearts of the Jews to repent, honor God, and return to their land.
- * As we've explored the content of Daniel's prayer, we saw first that

A. DANIEL ACKNOWLEDGED GOD'S CHARACTER.

- * Daniel knew prayer is only effective if we approach God honestly for who He really is.
- * And as he prayed, Daniel expressed several traits about God.
- * He acknowledged God's power and righteousness, that He is One with His Word, is to be respected and feared, and is offended by sin and the rightful judge of sinners,
- * But also that God is extremely patient, faithful to His promises, and merciful and forgiving to those who repent.

Next- we saw how-- DANIEL CONFESSED THE NATION'S SIN. (5-14)

In his prayer he demonstrates 6 main things about confession.

1. He knew confession is required for fellowship with God,
2. And that confession means letting go of sin,
3. He also demonstrated that confession should be detailed, as he described several different ways the nation had sinned against God-- as they rebelled against God's truth, Tolerated and followed corrupt leadership, and neglected their own personal responsibility to love and follow God, regardless what the leaders did.

Also, In v6, v8, and mainly in v16, Daniel spoke of - "the iniquities of our fathers" ... who failed to lead their families to follow God. (Asaph- Ps 78:1-8) downfall of any nation

@ This brings us to 3 final things Daniel shows us about confession --

4. Daniel confessed the sin of others. (5-14) (read v5)

- In vs 5-14, even though Daniel was a Godly man, he confessed Israel's sin by identifying with them, but using words like "we" and "us". This didn't automatically cleanse the nations sin.
- Daniel knew that each person had to confess their own sin to be forgiven by God.
- But Israel's prophets often confessed others sin, and there's **3 good reasons** Daniel did this.

a. Daniel cared about Israel's oneness as God's family.

, He understood what Jesus taught in the Lord's prayer, that God is "OUR Father", and our relationship with God is lived in fellowship with other believers.

, We're to care for, bear the burdens of, confess our faults to, and pray for "one another".

, Daniel wanted all Israel to repent, come together, and follow God, as God's family.

Q- Daniel could not feel completely content about his own righteousness, while God's people were in sin.

b. Daniel cared about God's feelings.

, God had been misunderstood, ignored, slandered, and disobeyed, and Daniel wanted God to know that at least someone was confessing Israel's sin, and grieving along with God.

c. Daniel cared about his own faults. (v20- while I was praying, confessing my sin..)

, Although Daniel was godly, he knew he wasn't perfect, so he humbly identified with the sinful Jews, knowing it was possible he may have played some small part in the nations' sin.

, He understood if it were not for God's grace, he could be in sin where the others were.

Sum- The question is, will God move to change others, if we confess their sin?

* As Daniel prayed this way, very soon Ezra 1:5 tells us that God moved the hearts of the family heads, and the priests and Levites, to go up to Jerusalem and rebuild.

* Later, once many Jews were back in the land, **Ezra** pleaded with God, confessing the sins of those who disobeyed by intermarrying with the nearby pagans. (ch.9)

- And Ezra 10 shows even as Ezra was praying, God moved those men and women who had sinned, to come to the Temple and confess their sin, along side Ezra. (homework)

* Much the same scenario happened with Nehemiah in Ch. 1, Ch. 9.

* As we pray for those we know are in sin, (individuals, nation, leaders), confessing their sin shows we grieve with God, and care about God's feelings and their faults. 2/3

5. Daniel confessed Israel's disgrace, for their sin. (7-8- read)

- Twice Daniel said the nation was covered with shame because they sinned against God.
- The word for "shame" refers to open dishonor and disgrace.
- Daniel sensed deeply the utter disgrace God's people had become before God and the world, and he grieved over their shame, and the fact they were not Ashamed of their sin.
- Not long before Judah was taken, Jeremiah wrote (6:15)- "Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush. So they will fall.... and be brought down when I punish them," says the LORD."
- Daniel fully knew how disgraced Israel was for their sin, and how ashamed they should be.
- This is true repentance. It Fully admits guilt for sin without making excuses, is ashamed of it, is grieved over it, all of which leads to sorrow of heart for sin, with a desire to escape it.
(Poor in spirit,, mourn, meek, hungry and thirsty)
- Ever notice how no one's guilty anymore? It's always someone or something else's fault.
- Adam and Eve played the blame game, and since then it's become the world's past-time.

6. Last- Daniel confessed the consequences of Israel's sin. (11-14)

- In these 3 verses Daniel said that because of Israel's sin - 'the curses and judgments written in the law, and the great disaster that had come, is because God judged their sin'.
- Jeremiah shows that much of Judah **rejected** the idea that their captivity was God's judgment, thinking-- this is just what happens (Nations come and go, you can't be great forever)
- Others admitted God was judging them, but were angry because they thought He was being too severe. Either way, they rejected God's consequences for their sin.
- * But Daniel didn't believe captivity came because Assyria and Babylon were so strong,
- * Daniel didn't argue that God had been too harsh, or that He should restore the nation regardless their unrepentance. He confessed that His consequences were righteous.
- David confessed - "You are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge."
- Fully accepting the consequences for sin shows a person understands how severe the sin is.

NOW THE FINAL EMPHASIS OF DANIEL'S PRAYER APPEARS MAINLY IN VS 15-19.

C. DANIEL PRAYED TO GOD-- WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVES. (16-19)

* This is where Daniel finally gets around to asking God for what he desires.

Q- After all Daniel has said, he ends his prayer where most people start,,,, by asking for things.

- In v17 the word for "**petition**" literally refers to **a plea**.

- These were no non-chalant times of prayer- Literally, Daniel was **pleading** with God.

- Notice- v16- "O Lord", v17- "now our God", and "O Lord", v18- "Give ear, O God",
v19- 3 times- "O Lord", and once- "O my God".

- In his prayer overall, Daniel called out God's name 12 times. (He is pleading).

- And then notice, his requests are not based on selfishly wants.

- Daniel revealed the truth of Ps. 37:4-

"Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart".

- This doesn't mean- 'pay some attention to God, and you get what you selfishly want'.

- It means- when your life is centered on, and delighting in, God and His will, he will give you the desires of your heart, because the desires of your heart will be His desires.

* **As Daniel pleads with God, he reveals 3 motives of his heart for why he prayed.**

1. Daniel's requests focused on God's righteousness. (16a- read) (7, 14)

- Earlier we saw where Daniel declared that God is righteous in character, and in all He does.
- Now in v16a, he asks God for things that are-- "In keeping with all *His* righteous acts".
- God promised that if Israel sinned, He would judge, but if they repented, He would restore.
- So as Daniel prayed for Israel's repentance, he prayed for God to act according to His righteous character, keep His promise, and restore His people, city, and sanctuary.

Q- Daniel shows that in prayer, we should never be more concerned about ours or others needs or desires, above God's righteous will and purpose in someone's life or situation. We should never want God to violate His righteousness to do what we think should be done.

- In Jer. 14:10-12 The Lord said - "They greatly love to wander, so I will not accept them;
- Then God told Jeremiah- "**Do not pray for the well-being of this people.** Although they fast and offer burnt offerings..., I will not listen to them or accept them".
- The Lord's prayer starts - Hallowed be Your Name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done, which shows that correct prayer makes God's righteous name kingdom and will, a priority.
- In some ways, society often seems to be much concerned about people, but how often do you hear people desire for God to act righteously, regardless how it affects them?

App- Do we ask for things that might promote unrighteousness in ours or other's lives?

- * Do we understand that often God uses what we think is bad to further His righteousness in some way in people's lives and the world?

2. Daniel's requests focused on God's honor and glory. (15-17, 19)

- In this prayer, and mainly in this last section, Daniel spoke of God's honor 8 times, and he rehearsed 3 ways God had been honored by the nation.

a. God was honored by the nation's creation. (15a- read) (Jeremiah wrote of this- 32:20)

- God's honor and glory was His purpose for creating Israel.

- He saved a pagan man, made a family, then a nation, blessed them above all nations, so He would be glorified by their holiness and greatness, to show the world their holy God.

- V15 shows how God used Moses to do miracles in Egypt, to show His 'mighty hand and **make Himself a name**'.

- Isaiah also recounted God's previous works so He could-- "**gain for Himself everlasting renown**", and that God guided them **to make for Himself a glorious name**". (63:11-14)

b. God was also honored by the nation's home. (16-18a read)

- God miraculously led them from Egypt, gave them victory over their formidable enemies, and gave them a land, and a city, and finally a permanent sanctuary that was to draw all people to see God's glory and greatness.

- The large outer court that surrounded the temple was huge, and was called "the court of the Gentiles".

- God designed it to be an evangelistic center for the priests and Levites and Jews to show and explain God's glory to visiting pagans, and to give them the gospel.....

--- So they could learn that there's only 1 God, and He's holy, and humans are sinners, and the only way to God is through the death of God's own innocent sacrifice, which was to come. (which all their sacrifices pointed to)

Sum- Daniel understood that Israel's sin had made God's city Jerusalem, His Sanctuary, and God's people-- an object of scorn,

--- and he prayed God would turn from the anger He poured out on these things, and return them to their former greatness, so God would regain His honor and glory. (16)

c. God was also honored by the nation's punishment . (12- read)

- In vs 12-14 Daniel recounted God's judgment on Israel for forsaking Him.
- Earlier, Moses told the Israelites in Deut. 29, and God told Solomon in 1 Kings 9,
And God told Jeremiah in Jer 22:8-9, -----
---- that when the pagans passed by and saw Jerusalem and its Temple destroyed
by God's judgment, they would know it happened because Israel disobeyed Him.
- Most vividly, Ezekiel spoke of this in **36:18-21**.
- At times Israel glorified God by their obedience,
but God was also glorified as a holy God, when He judged them for their sin.

Sum- The point is, above Daniel's desires, and the wellbeing of Israel, he asked God to act,
so that God's holy name would be honored and glorified. **(19- read)**

- * This is the meaning of the request- "Hallowed (Holy) be Your Name". Our first motive
in prayer should be that God will do what displays His holy character---
--- And our sin ought to grieve us, because it dishonors His holy name before others.

Finally, Daniel's 3rd motive for praying was---

3. Daniel's requests focused on God's mercy. (18- read)

- The word is defined as - goodness given to those in misery, who don't deserve it.
- Here are 5 general truths to help us understand God's mercy. (merci- ology)

a. Mercy is the only basis by which humans can approach God.

- , God is completely holy and demands that of humanity, but humans have violated that standard, both in our birth (sinners by nature) and by our choices. (sinners by choice).
- , We can't earn His favor based on any human goodness or good works we have, because all of us have wronged God by our sin.
- , And God cannot allow our human goodness to offset our sin, anymore than an honest fair judge can let a criminal off, because he's done other good things.
- , Therefore, we can only receive anything from God, based on His mercy and grace.

b. God's mercy can be both temporary and eternal.

- , God is merciful to a world of sinners, as He is patient to withhold judgment from them.
- , And in that realm of mercy, God gives humanity many common graces to enjoy.
- , But in the eternal realm, His mercy only comes to those who repent and yield to Him to receive His forgiveness of their sin, and become His eternal child.

Q- The Psalms teach that God's eternal mercy is to those who are---

"His servants", who "keep His covenant and testimonies", "trust in God",
"call on His name", and "fear and hope in Him".

((NKJV- Ps. 143:12, 18:50, 21:7, 25:10, 32:10, 33:18, 86:5, 13-16))

c. God's eternal mercy has a price.

- , Christ had to bear the awful penalty of our sin which is death- both physical and spiritual, so our holy and just God could extend His mercy and grace to us.
- , In that sense, God's mercy is free to us, but it cost God the death of His Son.
- , And it cost Christ having to bear our physical punishment in the worst physical death that the ancients could devise-----
- , And more than that, Christ had to bear the sin of the world on His eternal soul, as He became sin for us, and His Father had to forsake Him.

d. Everything we receive as believers is from God's mercy and grace.

- Even though we've been forgiven, and are IN CHRIST as His equal heir, our spiritual strength, His leadership, our giftedness for service, the blessing of God's family, and being glorified for heaven, all come from God's mercy and grace.

e. Desiring mercy is the result of understanding the distance between God's holiness and our sin.

, David wrote much of God's mercy because at various times, he sinned terribly and suffered much for it.

, In Ps 51 he confessed his sin regarding Bathsheba and her husband Uriah, saying this-

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions."

(David grasped the seriousness of his sin)

Sum- In v18 Daniel stated they had no righteousness to offer God to deserve His help, but the only way they could rightly ask Him to bless, was because of His **mercy**.

Jer. 3:22-23- "Through the LORD'S mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness."

Conclusion Daniel prayed because he was concerned that **God's righteousness** be done, that **God's honor and glory** be protected,

And that He would demonstrate His greatness by exercising His **unfailing Mercy**.