

Lesson Text

Daniel 9:4-8, 15-19 (NIV)

⁴ I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: “Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁵ we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. ⁶ We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

⁷ “Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame—the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you. ⁸ We and our kings, our princes and our ancestors are covered with shame, Lord, because we have sinned against you.”

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¹⁵ “Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. ¹⁶ Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

¹⁷ “Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. ¹⁸ Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. ¹⁹ Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”

Today's Lesson Aims

- **Learning Facts:** To know that it's never too late to repent and be redeemed by the Lord.
- **Biblical Principle:** To recognize your sins, repent and confess to God, and then allow God to use you.
- **Daily Application:** To walk in obedience to the Lord each day.

Power Hour
Lesson
Summary for
January 21,
2018

**“A Prayer for
an Obedient
Faith”**

Lesson Text:
Daniel 9:4-8,
15-19

Background
Scripture:
Daniel 9:1-19

Devotional
Reading:
Psalm 130

Introduction

When Direction Is Needed

We all go through crossroads moments—times we know that life will change because of decisions we have made or are making. Here are common bits of advice for those at crossroads moments.

- To newlyweds: Never go to bed angry.
- To parents of a newborn: Live to be the kind of person you will want your child to marry.
- To first-time homeowners: Don't ignore home maintenance.
- To new drivers: The car you drive can be one of the deadliest machines ever invented.
- To the teen leaving for college: Don't give up what you want most for what you want now.

These words of advice may seem trite, but they are important. At certain points of our lives, we must know who we are, what we have got ourselves into, and where to turn for help. We know what it is like to reach a crossroads moment. When such a moment comes, we know that life may change dramatically. Daniel's decision at a crossroads moment has much to teach us.

Lesson Background

Time: 539 B.C.

Place: Babylon

After the incident of the fiery furnace (last week's lesson), Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego no longer appear in the book of Daniel. The spotlight turns on Daniel himself to demonstrate unwavering faith and godly courage in pagan surroundings.

Much happens in the book of Daniel between last week's lesson from chapter 3 and this week's lesson from chapter 9. In Daniel 4, the book's namesake interpreted a dream for King Nebuchadnezzar, one with an ominous, alarming message of coming judgment on that ruler. In chapter 5, Daniel interpreted the famous "handwriting on the wall" for the terrified King Belshazzar. That message too was one of pending doom; indeed, Daniel's words came to pass that very night (5:30, 31).

Chapter 6 is the well-known account of Daniel in the lions' den. Daniel 7-12 records a series of dreams and visions granted to Daniel about things to come. Daniel's prayer of chapter 9, located among these, is the subject of today's lesson.

What Do You Think?

- How should remembering God's character shape how we talk to God about our sins?

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- What steps can we take to ensure that we thank God regularly for past rescues?
- What positive changes might result if Christians started to appeal to God to act for the sake of His reputation? Why?
- What should we do when God doesn't seem to be answering our prayers?

Conclusion

Priorities in Prayer

Daniel's prayer should prompt us to ask ourselves, "Do we pray like that today? Are our prayers that earnest, that sensitive to the sin and wrongdoing in our lives and to our dependence on the mercy of God?" We may be very keenly aware of the perversion in our culture, but Daniel's prayer says absolutely nothing about what is going on in Persian society. His focus is on his people's desperate need for the forgiveness that God alone can provide. But note carefully that Daniel spends much more time acknowledging than asking. Do we pray that way?

This is not to say that praying for physical or material needs should not be encouraged (see James 5:14, 15). Certainly, God cares about every aspect of our lives (compare Philippians 4:6). But if we are honest, we must admit our clear shortcomings in failing to address on a consistent basis the kinds of issues that formed the very core of the passionate prayers of Daniel.

Daniel was moved to prayer by reading and understanding the Word of God that had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah (Daniel 9:2). May reading the Scriptures today, specifically a prayer such as Daniel's, stir us to reexamine and revitalize our own priorities in prayer.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, when we read a prayer such as Daniel's, we recognize how our own prayer priorities can get mixed up. Help us remember that we are students continually enrolled in the school of prayer. Teach us to pray with the passion and priorities of Daniel! We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Thought to Remember

Take the first steps of important journeys on your knees.

Anticipating the Next Lesson

Next week's lesson is "**A Strong Faith,**" and reminds us that we are never alone on our personal journey, and that God strengthens us when we are weak. Study Daniel 10:10-19.

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