

DANIEL

Lesson 15: Daniel 9:1-19 Prayer That Works

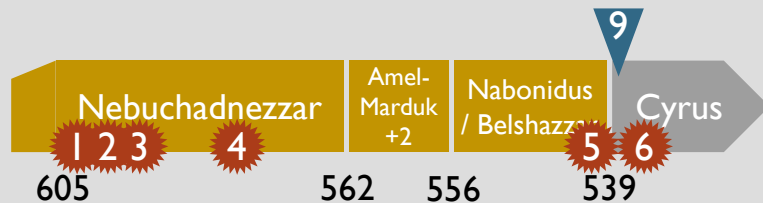
- Who does not want quick relief? I found a book called “Instant Relief” on Amazon that promises to relieve all manner of muscle pain.
- There are a ton of pills and medications out there that boast of providing rapid results.
- I even found a paint color from Glidden called “Instant Relief.”
- Wouldn’t you love some instant relief **prayer**?

- Imagine praying and then having an angel appear who says, “Request heard – Here let me help.”
- Yea, right! Like that could happen?
- I am happy to report that something **exactly** like that happened to a man of prayer named Daniel and he was kind enough to write down exactly how he prayed and what happened.
- Interested?

BACKGROUND

- First, let’s get some background.
- Daniel is at a key historical juncture that is going to profoundly affect his prayer life.
- To understand how his prayer is shaped by his circumstances, let’s review how the narrative and prophetic portions of Daniel fit together chronologically.

Note: Daniel's prayer is offered at a key moment when he has just witnessed confirmation of some prophetic sequence elements: The end of Gold (Chp. 2) / the Lion (Chp. 7) and the rise of the Ram (Chp 8) / Bear (Chp. 7) / Silver (Chp. 2).



FOUR PRAYER PRINCIPLES

- As we move through the first half of chapter 9, we can read Daniel's prayer journal.
- In the second half (9:20-27), we will explore (in three weeks) the answer to Daniel's prayer.
- Daniel is a prayer pro, and we can learn four principles from him about how to pray effectively.

PRAYER PREPARATION

- Daniel 9:1-3 – *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.*

PRAYER PREPARATION

- **Principle #1: Use prayer to connect Scripture and circumstances.**
- He is identifying things the Bible says that speak to his (and his people's) current situation.
- He was reading something that suggested the "Babylonian captivity" might be ending. What was it?

- Jeremiah 29:1 – *Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.*
- Jeremiah 29:10 – *“For thus says the LORD, ‘When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.’”*

PRAYER CONNECTED TO SCRIPTURE

- Daniel prays for the things God declares (in His Word) He intends to do!
- What “intentions” can Daniel discern?
- Take a cue from Daniel and peruse Scripture before petition – identify what God wants to give you in your specific situation before asking.
- **Example: Prayer cards!**

PRAYER CONNECTED TO SCRIPTURE

- Ecclesiastes 5:2 – *Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.*
- John 15:7 – *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you.”*
- **God answers Scripture driven prayer!**

DANIEL’S CONFESSION

- Daniel 9:4–6 – *I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed and said, “Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, **we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.**”*

DANIEL'S CONFESSION

- *Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land.”*
- **I find this remarkable! Daniel is a genuinely good man, but he is owning the sin of the people of whom he is a part.**
- He is truly broken by sin.

GENUINELY BROKEN BY SIN

- **Principle #2: Acknowledge how sin looks in God's eyes.**
- He is saying, “You deserve better from us.”
- He is truly broken over sin.
- He is serious: “*So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.*”

GENUINELY BROKEN BY SIN

- He does not find ways to justify the actions of himself and those around him. There is no justification!
- He does not blame God for their situation. God is perfectly justified!
- His prayer is NOT a declaration of disappointment with God!

GENUINELY BROKEN BY SIN

- Jeremiah 6:15 – “*Were they ashamed because of the abomination they have done? They were not even ashamed at all; They did not even know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; At the time that I punish them, They shall be cast down,*” says the Lord.
- Isaiah 66:2 – “*But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.*”

GENUINELY BROKEN BY SIN

- Isaiah 30:15 – *For thus the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has said, “In repentance and rest you will be saved, In quietness and trust is your strength.” But you were not willing.*
- I am still learning this – but I am trying to grow in my ability to confess the sin of the people of which I am a part.
- **Effective prayer sees sin through God’s eyes.**

OWNS CONSEQUENCES

- Daniel 9:13-14 – *“As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. Therefore the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.”*
- **To what from Moses does Daniel refer?**

OWNS CONSEQUENCES

- Almost 900 years earlier, when Israel had come out of Egypt and stood poised to move into the Land of Promise, Moses spelled it all out.
- Deuteronomy 28:15, 49-50 – *“But it shall come about, if you will not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. ...*

OWNS CONSEQUENCES

- *“The Lord will bring a nation against you from afar, from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand, a nation of fierce countenance who shall have no respect for the old, nor show favor to the young.”*
- Once again, Daniel’s prayer is word-driven (see principle #1)
- Daniel does not blame God.

OWNS CONSEQUENCES

- Israel is in a pickle of her own making!
- The justice of God is at work.
- Daniel knows that striking bargains or making promises has NO VALUE when the one in need of help is in trouble precisely because of being a world-class promise breaker!
- God's lovingkindness is Israel's only hope!

OWNS CONSEQUENCES

- Daniel 9:9 – *“To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him”*
- Daniel knows his only hope is in God's graces of compassion and forgiveness!
- **Principle #3: Ground your request on grace!**
- This is especially warranted when the occasion is consequential.

OWNS CONSEQUENCES

- Acknowledge ways in which you are asking God to take action IN SPITE OF what you have done.
- Recount “This is what I know about You” information.
- Find “character connections” to the situation.

DANIEL'S REQUEST

- Daniel 9:18-19 – *“O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! **For Your own sake**, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by **Your name**.”*

DANIEL'S REQUEST

- Daniel is making an appeal based on a desire for God to be viewed favorably by the nations.
- Do this for your sake and for your name's sake = in order to give people a more accurate understanding of who we know you to be.
- Daniel recounts how God had done this previously!

DANIEL'S REQUEST

- **You did it before:** Daniel 9:15 – “And now, O Lord our God, who hast brought Thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and hast **made a name for Thyself.**”
- **Do it again:** Daniel 9:17 – “So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and **for Your sake,** O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary.”

DANIEL'S REQUEST

- “The captivity of Judah and the non-existence of the Jerusalem sanctuary were interpreted by the nations to mean that Judah’s God was either powerless or a delusion. The fact that God’s name has been dishonoured by the disciplinary measures his people have forced him to take makes the appeal to him to vindicate his righteousness a powerful plea” – Baldwin, J. G.

DANIEL'S REQUEST

- **Principle #4: Pray from a passion for God to be well thought of.**
- Recognizes that God has done what is right toward Israel even though it has come at a price (to God) of being more easily misrepresented.
- Is saying, “I only want to receive your blessing in a way that makes you look good.”

DANIEL'S REQUEST

- We sing praises to express to God our adoration.
- An effective prayer life seeks to swell the ranks of those who praise Him.
- Ask yourself: If God were to answer my prayer request, in what way would it positively reflect on Him?
- Ask yourself: Would I use this answer to fuel praise!

ANSWER!

- So Daniel...used prayer to connect Scripture and circumstances.
- Acknowledged how sin looks in God's eyes.
- Grounded his request on grace!
- Prayed from a passion for God to be well thought of.
- **Then what happened?**

ANSWER!

- Daniel 9:23 – *“At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I [Gabriel] have come to tell you.”*
- Coincidence? Daniel 6:22 – *“My God sent His angel and shut the lions’ mouths and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime.”*

ANSWER!

- Daniel's prayer was based on Jeremiah 29:10,
- Jeremiah 29:10 – *“For thus says the LORD, ‘When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place.’”*
- This God did! But Jeremiah 29:11-14 takes it way further than what happened when the exiles returned.

Jeremiah 29:11-14 – *“For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.”*

ANSWER!

- Daniel’s prayer will be answered! But, as Gabriel will explain, what happens when some exiles return to Jerusalem in a few years (as promised in Jeremiah 29:10) is not the whole story.
- **Stay tuned!**