

# A Prayer for an Obedient Faith

Daniel 9:4-8, 5-19  
SS Lesson for 01/21/2018

**Devotional Scripture:** Ps 130:1-8

## OUTLINE

### INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW AND KEY VERSE OF THE LESSON

*Key Verse: Dan 9:19*

*Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary*

*Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary*

LESSON INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

*From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*

### MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

PRAYER STARTS WITH CONFESSION (DAN 9:4-7)

*Acknowledge God's faithfulness (4)*

God is faithful because God is eternally faithful regardless (Ps 146:6).

God is faithful because God's love and compassion motivates His faithfulness (Lam 3:22)

God is faithful because His faithfulness is known as great (Lam 3:23)

God is faithful because all God's actions are done in faithfulness (Ps 33:4)

God is faithful because God's faithfulness is our shield and fortress (Ps 91:4)

God is faithful because God's faithfulness endures forever (Ps 119:90)

God is faithful because nothing can nullify God's faithfulness (Rom 3:3)

*Acknowledge God's mercy (4)*

God is merciful because His mercy keeps God from putting an end to the wicked (Neh 9:29-31)

God is merciful because His mercy makes Christians a people of God (1 Peter 2:10)

God is merciful because His mercy is eternal (Ps 25:6)

God is merciful when we confess our sins (Prov 28:13)

God is merciful because He delights in showing it (Mic 7:18)

God is merciful because we can find it when we approach His throne (Heb 4:16)

*Confession of rebellion (5)*

Confession of rebellion because of not listening to God (Isa 30:9)

Confession of rebellion because to avoid rebellion is to live by faith (Heb 10:38)

Confession of rebellion because to avoid rebellion we must glorify, praise and be thankful to God (Rom 1:21-25);

Confession of rebellion of the deception of others (Titus 1:10)

Confession of rebellion of murder (1 Tim 1:9)

Confession of rebellion to receive God forgiveness (Lam 3:41-42)

*Confession of disobedience (6)*

Confession of disobedience because disobedience stores up God's wrath (Rom 2:5)

Confession of disobedience so that God can lead us in the way of everlasting life (Ps 139:23-24)

Confession of disobedience because disobedience is in conflict the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16-17)

Confession of disobedience to receive God's mercy (Rom 11:32)

Confession of disobedience because every act of disobedience requires punishment (Heb 2:2)

Confession of disobedience so that we can enter God's rest (Heb 4:6)

*Confession of unfaithfulness (7)*

Confession of unfaithfulness because God destroys the unfaithful (Ps 73:27)

Confession of unfaithfulness because the way of those who are unfaithful is hard (Prov 13:15)

Confession of unfaithfulness because God frustrates the words of the unfaithful (Prov 22:12)

Confession of unfaithfulness because the unfaithful are like a withered fig tree in God's eyes (Matthew 21:19)

Confession of unfaithfulness because God considers the unfaithful as worthless servants (Matt 25:24-30)

PRAYER FOR GOD'S FORGIVENESS (DAN 9:8-14)

*Forgiveness of sinful rebellion (8-9)*

Rebellion that comes from being evil (Prov 17:11)

Rebellion that comes from being stubborn (Ps 106:43)

Rebellion that comes from rejecting God's Word (1 Sam 15:23)

Rebellion that comes from despising God's counsel (Ps 107:10-12)

Rebellion that comes from being disloyal to God (Ps 78:8)

Rebellion that leads to destruction (Prov 24:21-22)

*Forgiveness of disobedience (10-11)*

- Disobedience that comes from the influence of Satan (Eph 2:1-3)
- Disobedience of being deceptive (Eph 5:6)
- Disobedience that should not even be mentioned (Eph 5:12)
- Disobedience through actions that display the denial of God (Titus 1:15-16)
- Disobedience that will receive just punishment (Heb 2:2)
- Disobedience that keeps one from entering God's rest (Heb 4:6)

*Forgiveness versus justice (12-14)*

- God forgives even though our sins require death (Ps 103:10)
- Only through God's mercy are we forgiven (Neh 9:31)
- God's forgiveness does not keep a record of our sins (Ps 130:3)
- Only through God's compassion are we not consumed (Lam 3:22)
- Jesus provided God's justice so that we have been justified (Rom 3:25-26)

**PRAYER SEEKING GOD'S MERCY (DAN 9:15-19)**

*Mercy through God's deliverance (15-16)*

- Deliverance from deadly peril (2 Cor 1:10)
- Deliverance from troubles (Ps 34:19)
- Deliverance from trials (2 Peter 2:9)
- Deliverance from temptations (1 Cor 10:13)
- Deliverance from evil attacks (2 Tim 4:18)

*Mercy through God's attentiveness (17-19)*

- Attentive because of His covenant promises (Gen 26:4-5)
- Attentive because of compassionate actions and prayer (Isa 58:6-11)
- Attentive because of repentant people (2 Chron 7:14-15)
- Attentive because of obedience (Isa 1:19)
- Attentive because of prayer from the righteous offered in faith (James 5:15-18)

**CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS**

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM BOB DEFFINBAUGH**

*Daniel's Prayer of Confession (9:4-15)*

*Daniel's Prayer of Petition (9:16-19)*

**CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY**

**PRACTICAL POINTS FROM THE BIBLE EXPOSITOR AND ILLUMINATOR COMMENTARY**

# Introduction

## Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson teaches us how to understand the times in which Daniel lived, being aware of the chronological events as they unfolded and how he offered up **A Prayer for an Obedient Faith**. The **study's aim** is to experience the response and attitude of Daniel as he became aware of God's communication through the Word. The **study's application** is to lead believers to an understanding of godly faith and an awareness of the importance of a godly attitude as exhibited by Daniel. (*NOTE: the majority of the detail cross-references of the lesson came from a previous lesson dated 03/10/2013*).

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## Key Verse: Dan 9:19

*O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name*

## Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

**9:1-2.** It was now **the first year** of the reign of **Darius the Mede**. This was 539 B.C., 66 years after Daniel had been exiled. The overthrow of **the Babylonian Kingdom** by the Medo-Persians was indeed a momentous event. It had been revealed to Belshazzar through Daniel's interpretation of the writing on the wall (5:25-28, 30). The Babylonian overthrow prepared the way for liberation of the Jews who had been in exile since Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion of **Jerusalem** in 605 B.C. Besides predicting the overthrow of the people **Jeremiah** had also predicted that Israel's sojourn in Babylon was to **last 70 years** (Jer. 25:11-12). Evidently moved by Darius' victory **Daniel** searched **the Scriptures** to understand the events of which he was a vital part. He **understood** Darius' victory meant that the termination of the 70-year Captivity was near. Thus these significant events became even more momentous for Daniel.

**9:3-6.** Daniel's study of the Scriptures led him to turn to **God** and to pray a **prayer** of confession (vv. 3-14) and **petition** (vv. 15-19), with **fasting**. Wearing **sackcloth and/or ashes** was evidence of mourning in grief or repentance (cf. Gen. 37:34; Neh. 9:1; Es. 4:1, 3; Isa. 58:5; Jer. 49:3; Ezek. 7:18; Joel 1:8; Matt. 11:21). Moses revealed the principle on which God would deal with His covenant people: obedience would bring blessing, and disobedience would bring discipline. One form of discipline was that Israel would be subjugated to Gentile powers (Deut. 28:48-57, 64-68). Israel's experience in Babylon was the outworking of this principle. Then Moses revealed the basis on which the discipline would be lifted and the nation would be restored to blessing (Deut. 30). She would have to return to God and obey His voice; then **God** would turn back her Captivity and restore the people to the land from which they had been dispersed and shower blessings on them. Daniel evidently was fully aware that the years in Babylon were a divine discipline on Israel. Knowing that confession was one requisite to restoration, he **confessed** the sin of his people, identifying himself with their sin as though he were personally responsible for it. Daniel noted that blessing depends on obedience, for **God... keeps His covenant of love** (*hesed*, "loyal love") **with all who love Him and obey Him**. Even a covenant people cannot be blessed if they disobey. Four times Daniel acknowledged that his people had **sinned** (Dan. 9:5, 8, 11, 15). Their sin was a sin of rebellion (cf. v. 9) against God and in turning **away** (cf. v. 11) **from** the Word of God (His **laws**; cf. vv. 10-11) which they knew. God in grace had sent **prophets** (cf. v. 10) to exhort the people to return to Him but they had refused to heed their messages (**we have not listened**). **Kings** and **people** alike stood guilty before God.

**9:7-11a.** Daniel then acknowledged that God is **righteous** (cf. vv. 14, 16) and just in disciplining Israel for her **unfaithfulness**, for which she was **covered with shame** (vv. 7-8) and dispersed (**scattered**) into foreign **countries**. God's discipline did not mean that He had withheld mercy (cf. v. 18) and forgiveness from His people, but it meant that He, being righteous, must punish people's rebellion and disobedience (v. 10). They refused to keep God's **laws** (v. 10; cf. v. 5) for they **transgressed His Law** (v. 11) and **turned** from God (cf. v. 5), being obstinate in their disobedience (**refusing to obey**).

**9:11b-14.** Because of her rebellion and disobedience Israel was experiencing **the curses and... judgments written** by **Moses** (cf. v. 13) in Deuteronomy 28:15-68. In spite of the severity of the discipline, including **great national disaster** (Dan. 9:12), the nation was not **turning from** her **sins** and submitting to the authority of **the Law, God's truth**. **This disaster**, the fall of Jerusalem, was because **God is righteous** (cf. vv. 7, 16) and Israel had **not obeyed Him** (cf. vv. 10-11).

**9:15-16.** Daniel began his petition (v. 15) by mentioning two of the same things with which he began his confession (vv. 4-5): God's greatness and the people's sin. Daniel spoke of God's delivering Israel **out of Egypt** by His great power (**with a mighty hand**). God was glorified through the deliverance of His people. But because the nation had **sinned** (Daniel's fourth time to state that his people had sinned; cf. vv. 5, 8, 11) she had become **an object of scorn** to those nations **around** her. In prayer that God, **in keeping with His righteous acts** (cf. vv. 7, 14), would **turn away His anger and... wrath from Jerusalem**, Daniel was asking that God's discipline might be lifted and the people freed from their present bondage. (Jerusalem is God's **city**; cf. v. 24, and His **holy hill**; cf. v. 20; Joel 2:1; 3:17; Zeph. 3:11.) Once again Daniel attributed the nation's present status to her past sin, the **sins and... iniquities of our fathers** (cf. Dan. 9:6, 8).

**9:17-19.** Having prayed for the negative, the removal of God's wrath (vv. 15-16), the prophet now prayed for the positive, God's favor, mercy, and forgiveness (vv. 17-19). Daniel asked that **God** would **hear his prayers** and restore (**look with favor on**) the **sanctuary** (the temple in Jerusalem) for His **sake** (cf. v. 19). And he wanted God to **hear** his request (**give ear**) and to **see** (**open Your eyes**) the city's **desolation**. Interestingly Daniel did not specify what God should do; he only asked that God "look" on the sanctuary and "see" the city, both in desolation for many years. Daniel based his requests on God's **great mercy** (cf. v. 9), not on the nation's righteousness for she had none. But because God is merciful and forgiving, he prayed, **O LORD, listen! O LORD, forgive!** Concerned for God's reputation, Daniel wanted the **LORD** to **act** quickly (**do not delay**) on behalf of the **city** and **people** that bore His **name**. All this would bring glory to God for it was **for His sake** (cf. v. 17).

#### **Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary**

This week's lesson shows Daniel pleading that God would show mercy to Judah. He is basically begging God to save them from calamity, to restore them to their land, and not to forget the promises He made. Why is mercy necessary? When we think about Daniel, we think about a faithful prophet. However, Daniel is not asking simply on his own behalf. When we look at the greater context, we get to the crux of the matter: Israel's disobedience. Israel had strayed far away from God and His law. Sadly, their choices had consequences. And they were not the consequences they had hoped for! They were in dire straits. One of God's first and foremost requirements is obedience. From the beginning, He has asked those who follow Him to listen to and follow His commands. A good parent, He establishes boundaries for His children. There are times when these commands seem strange. After all, He told Noah to build a huge boat when there was no sign of rain in sight (Gen. 6-8). Abraham was called to leave his hometown and set out for an unknown destination (12:1-5). Ananias was told to go speak to a notorious hater of the believers (Acts 9:10-19). It would have been very easy for Noah to say, "God, this is stupid! Why am I doing this?" In equal fashion, Abraham could have said, "God, I have a comfortable life. Why should I uproot myself and just leave? How do I know everything will work out?" What if Ananias had said, "No, God. I will not go. This man is just going to kill me too?" But in each case, obedience became a legacy of faith that changed history. On the other hand, let us not forget the consequences of disobedience. For instance, think about what happened when Sarah disobeyed. She used Hagar to try to force God's promise (Gen. 16). When God's promised child finally appeared, there was enmity between the two boys. So what do we do when God's plan does not make sense? We obey, with the understanding that His plan for our lives is always for good (Jer. 29:11). We view things dimly and imperfectly now (1 Cor. 13:12), unlike God's perfect, unmarred view. There will be times when obedience is not easy, and it may even seem foolish. During those times, we need to remind ourselves that God knows best. Following God's plan looks different for every person. Because God created us unique, what He has planned for one person may not be what He plans for another. That is where faith comes into play. He has created each of us with a unique purpose, and we cannot discover it primarily through others. It is unveiled only as we obey what God has for us, in both big and small things, if we love Him, we will choose to practice it (John 14:15). What does obedience look like for you at this time? Does it look strange, even foolish? Maybe He is asking you to be faithful to what you are already doing, or maybe He wants you to renounce something harmful in your life. Do you struggle with what He is calling you to? If you find yourself uncertain in this area, ask God to strengthen you.

## **Lesson Introduction and Background**

### **From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary**

We all go through crossroads moments—times we know that life will change because of decisions we have made or are making. 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.

After the incident of the fiery furnace, 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.

## **Major Theme Analysis**

*(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)*

### **Prayer Starts with Confession (Dan 9:4-7)**

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.  
7 "O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day-- to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

### **Acknowledge God's faithfulness (4)**

*God is faithful because God is eternally faithful regardless (Ps 146:6).*

6 the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them — the Lord, who remains faithful forever.

*God is faithful because God's love and compassion motivates His faithfulness (Lam 3:22)*

22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

*God is faithful because His faithfulness is known as great (Lam 3:23)*

23 They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

*God is faithful because all God's actions are done in faithfulness (Ps 33:4)*

4 For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.

*God is faithful because God's faithfulness is our shield and fortress (Ps 91:4)*

4 He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

*God is faithful because God's faithfulness endures forever (Ps 119:90)*

90 Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures.

*God is faithful because nothing can nullify God's faithfulness (Rom 3:3)*

3 What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness?

#### **Acknowledge God's mercy (4)**

*God is merciful because His mercy keeps God from putting an end to the wicked (Neh 9:29-31)*

29 "You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. 30 For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you admonished them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you handed them over to the neighboring peoples. 31 But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

*God is merciful because His mercy makes Christians a people of God (1 Peter 2:10)*

10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

*God is merciful because His mercy is eternal (Ps 25:6)*

6 Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old.

*God is merciful when we confess our sins (Prov 28:13)*

13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

*God is merciful because He delights in showing it (Mic 7:18)*

18 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.

*God is merciful because we can find it when we approach His throne (Heb 4:16)*

16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

#### **Confession of rebellion (5)**

*Confession of rebellion because of not listening to God (Isa 30:9)*

9 These are rebellious people, deceitful children, children unwilling to listen to the Lord's instruction.

*Confession of rebellion because to avoid rebellion is to live by faith (Heb 10:38)*

38 But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him."

*Confession of rebellion because to avoid rebellion we must glorify, praise and be thankful to God (Rom 1:21-25);*

21 For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. 24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen.

*Confession of rebellion of the deception of others (Titus 1:10)*

10 For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group.

*Confession of rebellion of murder (1 Tim 1:9)*

9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,

*Confession of rebellion to receive God forgiveness (Lam 3:41-42)*

41 Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven, and say: 42 "We have sinned and rebelled and you have not forgiven.

## **Confession of disobedience (6)**

*Confession of disobedience because disobedience stores up God's wrath (Rom 2:5)*

5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

*Confession of disobedience so that God can lead us in the way of everlasting life (Ps 139:23-24)*

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

*Confession of disobedience because disobedience is in conflict the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:16-17)*

16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. 17 For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.

*Confession of disobedience to receive God's mercy (Rom 11:32)*

32 For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.

*Confession of disobedience because every act of disobedience requires punishment (Heb 2:2)*

2 For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment

*Confession of disobedience so that we can enter God's rest (Heb 4:6)*

6 It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience .

## **Confession of unfaithfulness (7)**

*Confession of unfaithfulness because God destroys the unfaithful (Ps 73:27)*

27 Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

*Confession of unfaithfulness because the way of those who are unfaithful is hard (Prov 13:15)*

15 Good understanding wins favor, but the way of the unfaithful is hard.

*Confession of unfaithfulness because God frustrates the words of the unfaithful (Prov 22:12)*

12 The eyes of the Lord keep watch over knowledge, but he frustrates the words of the unfaithful

*Confession of unfaithfulness because the unfaithful are like a withered fig tree in God's eyes (Matthew 21:19)*

19 Seeing a fig tree by the road, he went up to it but found nothing on it except leaves. Then he said to it, "May you never bear fruit again!" Immediately the tree withered.

*Confession of unfaithfulness because God considers the unfaithful as worthless servants (Matt 25:24-30)*

24 "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' 26 "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. 28 "'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. 29 For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

## **Prayer for God's Forgiveness (Dan 9:8-14)**

8 "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.

9 To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.

10 We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets.

11 Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.

12 And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.

13 "As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.

14 Therefore the Lord has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.

### **Forgiveness of sinful rebellion (8-9)**

*Rebellion that comes from being evil (Prov 17:11)*

11 An evil man is bent only on rebellion; a merciless official will be sent against him.

*Rebellion that comes from being stubborn (Ps 106:43)*

43 Many times he delivered them, but they were bent on rebellion and they wasted away in their sin.

*Rebellion that comes from rejecting God's Word (1 Sam 15:23)*

23 For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king."

*Rebellion that comes from despising God's counsel (Ps 107:10-12)*

10 Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains, 11 for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High. 12 So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.

*Rebellion that comes from being disloyal to God (Ps 78:8)*

8 They would not be like their forefathers — a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.

*Rebellion that leads to destruction (Prov 24:21-22)*

21 Fear the Lord and the king, my son, and do not join with the rebellious, 22 for those two will send sudden destruction upon them, and who knows what calamities they can bring?

### **Forgiveness of disobedience (10-11)**

*Disobedience that comes from the influence of Satan (Eph 2:1-3)*

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

*Disobedience of being deceptive (Eph 5:6)*

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.



*Disobedience that should not even be mentioned (Eph 5:12)*

12 For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.

*Disobedience through actions that display the denial of God (Titus 1:15-16)*

15 To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. 16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

*Disobedience that will receive just punishment (Heb 2:2)*

2 For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment,

*Disobedience that keeps one from entering God's rest (Heb 4:6)*

6 It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience.

### **Forgiveness versus justice (12-14)**

*God forgives even though our sins require death (Ps 103:10)*

10 He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

*Only through God's mercy are we forgiven (Neh 9:31)*

31 But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

*God's forgiveness does not keep a record of our sins (Ps 130:3)*

3 If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

*Only through God's compassion are we not consumed (Lam 3:22)*

22 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.

*Jesus provided God's justice so that we have been justified (Rom 3:25-26)*

25 God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

### **Prayer Seeking God's Mercy (Dan 9:15-19)**

15 And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day--we have sinned, we have done wickedly!

16 "O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.

17 Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.

18 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 do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies.

19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

## **Mercy through God's deliverance (15-16)**

### *Deliverance from deadly peril (2 Cor 1:10)*

10 He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

### *Deliverance from troubles (Ps 34:19)*

19 A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all;

### *Deliverance from trials (2 Peter 2:9)*

9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

### *Deliverance from temptations (1 Cor 10:13)*

13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

### *Deliverance from evil attacks (2 Tim 4:18)*

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Mercy through God's attentiveness (17-19)**

### *Attentive because of His covenant promises (Gen 26:4-5)*

4 I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and will give them all these lands, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, 5 because Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws."

### *Attentive because of compassionate actions and prayer (Isa 58:6-11)*

6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? 8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. 9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. "If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, 10 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. 11 The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

### *Attentive because of repentant people (2 Chron 7:14-15)*

14 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 will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. 15 Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place.

### *Attentive because of obedience (Isa 1:19)*

19 If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land;

### *Attentive because of prayer from the righteous offered in faith (James 5:15-18)*

15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. 17 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

## Conclusion and Other Thoughts

### Concluding Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

#### Daniel's Prayer of Confession (9:4-15)

4 And 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, 5 we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly, and rebelled, even turning aside from Thy commandments and ordinances. 6 "Moreover, we have not listened to Thy servants the prophets, who spoke in Thy name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land. 7 "*Righteousness belongs to Thee*, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which *Thou hast driven them*, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee. 8 "Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee. 9 "*To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness*, for we have rebelled against Him; 10 nor have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His teachings which He set before us through His servants the prophets. 11 "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Thy law and turned aside, not obeying Thy voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. 12 "Thus He has confirmed His words which He had spoken against us and against our rulers who ruled us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. 13 "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 Thy truth. 14 "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. 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, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked (emphasis mine).

While a fuller exposition of the riches of this text is not possible here, we shall seek to highlight the main features of this portion of Daniel's prayer.

**(1) These verses are the expression of Daniel's repentance and confession of sin, for himself and for his fellow-Jews.** Daniel minimizes neither his sin nor the sin of his fellow-Jews. He uses a wide variety of expressions to describe sin in its various manifestations. In verse 5, Daniel says they have "sinned," "committed iniquity," "acted wickedly," "rebelled," and "turned aside from God's commandments and ordinances." In verse 6, he adds that "we have not listened ... to the prophets." In verse 7, Daniel refers to Israel's "unfaithful deeds." Israel's bondage in Babylon is the consequence of her sin. Daniel's confession mirrors the words of 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 (see above).

**(2) The Word of God, as spoken by the prophets and recorded in the Holy Scriptures, is the standard by which Daniel's sins, and those of his fellow-Israelites, are identified.** Just as many terms were employed to describe Israel's sins, many different terms are used in reference to divine revelation. God gave Israel His "commandments" (verse 4), His "commandments and ordinances" (verse 5), He spoke through the "prophets" (verse 6), "His teachings" (verse 10), His "Law" (verse 11), and the "Law of Moses" (verses 11, 13). God's revelation was His "truth" (verse 13).

**(3) Daniel understands Israel's Babylonian captivity as the curse which has come upon the Jews because they broke God's covenant made with them at Mount Sinai** (verse 11).

**(4) Israel's sins are seen in contrast to the character of God. Daniel's consciousness of his own sins, and those of his fellow-Israelites, was the result of his deep sense of the majesty of God as seen by His divine attributes.** Consider his prayer: God is "great and awesome," who "keeps His covenant and lovingkindness" (verse 4). God is not just "righteous in all He has done" (verse 14); "righteousness," "compassion," and "forgiveness" "*belong* to Him" (verses 7, 9). It is one thing to be righteous, forgiving, and compassionate; it is quite another to own these qualities. Owning them means they can only be obtained from God. These qualities are under His control.

**(5) Daniel's confession of sin is precisely what is required of Israel in order to be forgiven and restored.**

40 “If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me— 41 I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies— or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, 42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land” (Leviticus 26:40-42; see also 1 Kings 8:46-48).

### **Daniel’s Prayer of Petition (9:16-19)**

16 “O Lord, in accordance with all Thy righteous acts, let now Thine anger and Thy wrath turn away from Thy city Jerusalem, Thy holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Thy people have become a reproach to all those around us. 17 “So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Thy servant and to his supplications, and for Thy sake, O Lord, let Thy face shine on Thy desolate sanctuary. 18 “O my God, incline Thine ear and hear! Open Thine eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Thy name; for we are not presenting our supplications before Thee on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Thy great compassion. 19 “O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Thine own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Thy city and Thy people are called by Thy name.”

Beginning at verse 16, a change is evident in Daniel’s prayer. Consider the following observations which summarize this change and its implications.

**(1) Daniel’s prayer in verses 16-19 moves from the confession of verses 4-15 to petition.** In the earlier verses of Daniel’s prayer, Daniel asked for nothing. He acknowledged his sins and those of his people. He was agreeing with God’s Word and the righteousness of the judgment He had brought upon the Jews through the instrument of the nation of Babylon.

**(2) Daniel’s request is according to God’s promises in Scripture.** Daniel understood that the 70 years of captivity prophesied by Jeremiah had been fulfilled and that now Israel could be restored. Just as Daniel’s confession fulfilled the Old Testament requirements for restoration, so did Daniel’s petition. He asked for that which God had promised through the Law and the Prophets.<sup>101</sup>

**(3) Daniel’s petition is God-centered.** At least 19 times, reference is made to God, while man is referenced approximately 11 times. Somehow, whether in confession or in petition, we always seem to find a way to make our prayers man-centered. In confession, we focus on *our* sins, while *Daniel focuses on God’s righteousness*. In petition, we focus on *our* needs, while *Daniel focuses on God’s purposes and His glory*.

**(4) Daniel’s petitions are made in accordance with God’s character.** Daniel has already acknowledged that God acted consistently with His character when He disciplined Israel by giving them over to the Babylonians. Now, Daniel appeals to God to act in accordance with His mercy and compassion, and His love for His people and His chosen place.

**(5) Daniel’s request is for God to act in His own best interest and glory.** An alarming tendency exists in Christian circles (often in contemporary Christian music) of thinking of God as being “there for me.” The fact is we are “here for Him.” He is using all creation, all mankind, for His glory. This includes both the salvation of His elect and the condemnation of the rest. Daniel’s petition is not for God to act in the way that best “meets man’s needs” (as perceived by man), but rather for God to act in His own best interest. When we act in our own best interest, it is almost always at the expense of others. But *when God acts in His own best interest, it is always for the good of His own* (see Romans 8:28). Daniel therefore petitions God to act for His sake (verses 17, 19). I wonder how radical would be the change in our prayer life if we petitioned God as Daniel has done.

**(6) Daniel’s request is for grace, mercy, and compassion.** Daniel realizes that Israel’s return, restoration, and future blessings are contingent upon God’s forgiveness. In this prayer, as it must have been in all of Daniel’s prayers and should be in all our prayers, sinful men cannot ask for anything but grace and mercy. Daniel’s petition is not on the basis of any merit of their own that he beseeches God to answer (verse 18). Some today would think this particular situation surely justifies a “name it and claim it” approach to God’s promises. Daniel did not think so. He did not *claim* anything. He *pleaded* for mercy, as any sinner should and must do.

**(7) Daniel’s request is for more than what God is going to accomplish in the Jewish Babylonian captives’ return to their land.** In the Old Testament Law and in the prophets, God promised to establish His eternal kingdom, a kingdom in which men would be perfectly restored, and in which righteousness would dwell. The promise of Israel’s return to the land of Canaan and the assurance that the temple would be rebuilt must have raised Daniel’s hopes that the end of this 70 year period of divine judgment meant the soon coming of the

kingdom of God to the earth. This was not to be the case, and the appearance and announcement of Gabriel was meant to make this clear.

*(Adapted from URL:<https://bible.org/seriespage/10-daniel-s-prayer-and-gabriel-s-proclamation-daniel-91-27>)*

### **Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary**

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? Much insight can also be gained by examining the prayer life of Paul. We are not given in Scripture the specific contents of his prayers, but we can sense what his priorities in prayer were by reading the references to prayer. As we do, we find a heavy emphasis on spiritual matters, very similar to the matters that comprised the prayer of Daniel. There was a fervent desire for the recipients of a given epistle to grow in their knowledge of Jesus and to be more aware of the spiritual blessings that accompany that knowledge. Illustrations of this may be seen in Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-14; and 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 12. There is really very little in these Scriptures about physical or material concerns, which usually make up the primary topic of prayer times or prayer lists in most churches. 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 passionate prayers like Daniel and Paul. We have noted that 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.

### **Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary**

1. Obedient faith begins with an acknowledgment of who God is (Dan. 9:4)
2. Believers should bring regrets and guilt to God rather than allow those emotions to keep them away from Him (vss. 5-6)
3. Obedient faith requires us to accept the truth about ourselves (vss. 7-8)
4. God demonstrates His power and character to the world as He cares for His own (vs. 15)
5. We can never approach God based on our own merit—we come on the basis of His mercy (vss. 16-18)
6. Believe that you can take any burden to God at any time (vs. 19)