

**Praying When It's Not  
Your Fault  
Daniel 9:1-20**

## In Life We May Experience The Consequences Of Someone Else's Sins

- In a marriage you may be doing your best, but your spouse has rebelled against God and you suffer the consequences
- Maybe at work you work “as unto the Lord,” but you find yourself persecuted (jealousy, envy, hate)
- You get punished as part of a team because someone on the team acts selfishly
- The same can be true for a nation. When God brings judgment to a nation, the righteous often suffer along with the wicked

Proverbs 14:34, ***“Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people.”***

# Daniel Had To Deal With This Question

- Daniel was taken captive by King Nebuchadnezzar
- He had to live in Babylon through no fault of his own
- His prayer, in chapter 9, takes place in the first year of Darius, because now, the Medes and the Persians had taken over as the most powerful nation
- Somehow he had been given access to Jeremiah's prophecy indicating that the captivity would last 70 years (Daniel 9:2)
- The Jews, while in captivity, had largely taken a "business as usual" mentality and had begun to integrate with the pagan religious culture
- Daniel, in chapter 9, fervently prays on behalf of God's people

# Observations

- While Daniel was a sinner, like any other man, the Bible doesn't list anything negative about him
- Therefore even though the sins of the nation were “not his fault,” in verse 3, he prays for the people and begs God's mercies with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes (symbols of submission, mourning, and repentance)
- Reading Daniel's prayer gives an indication to the reader of Daniel's fervency (Sometimes with e-mails and texting, the emotions are missed)
- Daniel understands that prayer is not just a way we get God to do something for us but it is God's way of involving us in what He intends to do

# How to Pray When Its' Not My Fault

## #1 Pray In Response To God's Word To You

- Daniel didn't just wake up and pull out his prayer list and mechanically go down the list, item by item
- Before he begin praying, he spent time in God's word reading the writings of Jeremiah, understanding who God is, what His character was like, and what He had already done

# Observation

- God speaks to us through His revealed word; he reveals His character, His purposes and His promises, His past, present, and future blessings, and His forgiveness
- Don't gloss over all of that in prayer with a "child to Santa Claus mentality!"

No repentance, no confession of guilt, no acknowledgement of what we have already been granted (mountains and valleys already traversed)

# #2 Reflect On God's Character In Your Prayers, Verse 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,....."*

- Notice that not only here, but through the rest of the prayer, Daniel focuses on God's righteousness that requires Him to judge the sins of the people
- But he also speaks of God's mercy and forgiveness
- So Daniel has a healthy and balanced understanding of God's character(righteousness, mercy, and judgment)
- When we focus on God's traits when we pray, it can change our focus on what God can do for me, to what God wants to do in me to help me develop those same traits

# #3 Refuse To Blame Someone Else

- Though Daniel was a righteous man, he refuses the self-righteous posture when praying to God, like the Pharisee in Luke 18:11

***“God, I thank you that I am not like other men—  
extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this  
tax collector.....”***



- So approximately 32 times, in this prayer, Daniel associates himself with the people of Judah

Verse 5 “***We have sinned and committed iniquity***”

Verse 6 “***Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name....***”

He continues to use the pronouns “we,” “us,” and “our,” through the rest of the prayer

It reminds me of Abigail when she got on the road and blocked David from killing her husband, Nabal, because of his arrogant and disrespectful attitude toward him.

(1Samuel 25:24 “***On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be.***”)

- We have all done wrong, and forsaken God in our lives, so when we pray--even for our country--we shouldn't throw stones, but rather say like Daniel, “God, we have sinned.”

# #3 Request God's Mercy

- In verse 5, Daniel lists five actions that God's people had committed against Him
  - We have sinned
  - We have committed iniquity
  - We have done wickedly
  - We have rebelled
  - We have departed from your precepts and judgments
- With all of this disobedience, all Daniel could really ask for is God's mercy, and that is what he does

# In Verses 16-18 Daniel Pleads For Mercy

*“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.”*

# Verse 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.”*

- Our tendency when we think circumstances are “not our fault,” is to feel like God owes us something because we have been so righteous
- So we get mad at God because He doesn’t heal our disease, or remove us from difficult circumstances, or give us a higher pay grade at work, or what we think we deserve
- Believe me, none of us really want what we deserve, Romans 6:23
- Even though Daniel didn’t have a “sin trail” seen in scripture, he understood that everything that happened to him while in exile was strictly the operation of God providentially moving in his life

- According to verse 16, Daniel understood that the people of Israel had become the laughingstock of other nations (a disgrace, subject of ridicule)
- Their city, Jerusalem, no longer had the reputation God wanted as a testimony to other nations
- Was Israel's God too impotent to take care of His own people? Was He weak, or did He care?
- Daniel's prayer (verse 17) is that God would act in His own interest ("for your own sake") to get His glory, which He deserved--not Daniel's, nor Israel's, but His own

# The Plan of Salvation

Hear the Gospel

*Acts 15:7*

Believe the Gospel

*Acts 15:7*

Repent of Sins

*Acts 17:30*

Confess Christ

*Acts 8:37*

Be Baptized

*Acts 8:38*