

Life in the Lion's Den

"Daniel's Pleading Prayer"

(Daniel Chapter 9:1-19)

Lesson #10

Scripture: 1 John 1:9 *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

Introduction:

Prussian king Frederick the Great was once touring a Berlin prison. The prisoners fell on their knees before him to proclaim their innocence -- except for one man, who remained silent. Frederick called to him, "Why are you here?" "Armed robbery, Your Majesty," was the reply. "And are you guilty?" "Yes indeed, Your Majesty, I deserve my punishment." Frederick then summoned the jailer and ordered him, "Release this guilty wretch at once. I will not have him kept in this prison where he will corrupt all the fine innocent people who occupy it."

Today in the Word, December 4, 1992.

Transitional Statement:

Israel had been disobedient from its first steps out of Egypt. Sin didn't seem to be much of a concern for her or her leaders (Eze 33).

Church sin is serious and owning up to our sin is the first step in spiritual healing.

I. The time has come! (Verse 1-2)

Daniel 9:1

I In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans —

A. At the time of chapter 9 Babylon the Great has fallen.

1. Darius the Median King under Cyrus the Great now has rule over Babylon.

B. Daniel and Israel have been in captivity for 70 years.

1. The year is 539 BC

2. Daniel is now an old man

3. And the faithless of Israel that were carried from Jerusalem are now old too.

a. New kid's have been born to them...there are even grandkids on the scene who have never even seen Jerusalem.

- b. They have adapted... and many of them have even grown comfortable with their new homes.
 - 4. I don't know if anyone here has lived in the same place for 70 years, but we can certainly see the tendency to become accustomed to a place after that long.
- C. The point that can't be missed here is that God did not make or intend for Israel to be residents of Babylon... a point that many had forgotten.
 - 1. He had put them out to pasture to teach them a lesson.
- D. Church, is it possible that we have the tendency to grow accustomed to the judgments of God in our lives,...even to become fond of them, instead of learning from them and then returning to God's intention.

Daniel 9:2

2 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.

- A. Out of all Israel...one man was found to be reading and concerning himself with the word of God.
 - 1. Out of all the thousands of Israel...one man!
 - a. You know many times men of God, must make the decision to simply meander through life or stand alone on the principles of God.
 - 1) But the truth is, with God as your King...you never are alone, even if your number is limited.
 - 2) It might do us all well to remember that God purposefully limits our numbers to prove his power....See the story of Gideon for details. (Judges 7)
 - b. Often times a lone man is viewed as a zealot, someone overly concerned with pleasing God.
- B. Now it is important to note here that Daniel could have called all the wise of Israel together and sought to establish God's will through, logic, human wisdom....or even by majority vote.
 - 1. He could have secretly convened the fighting youth of Israel and declared war on their oppressors.
 - 2. But here it appears that Daniel had Jeremiah 10:23 in mind.

*23 I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself,
Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.*

C. So here in verse 2 we find Daniel trying to understand the will of God.

1. Daniel was reading the book of Jeremiah. Let's read with him:

Jeremiah 25:11-12

11 'This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

12 'Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,' declares the LORD, 'for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation.

Jeremiah 29:10

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.

II. So Daniel view of prayer. (Verse 3)

Daniel 9:3

3 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.

A. "seek" here means to search out.

1. It's hard not to stop and wonder how much more of the Lord's will could be accomplished if more of us truly searched Him out.
2. Here complete focus on God is in view.

B. The word "prayer" here is very specific...it describes a plea.

1. It's the picture of a needy person begging for help.
2. It points to the deepest desire of the heart.
 - a. And if anything should be clearly noted here ...it is the deep desire of Daniel for his God.
 - b. We should surely take note ourselves.

C. This seeking of God also takes the form of "supplication"

1. Supplication is a term of prayer that seeks God's favor.
 - a. Favor of men come and go.
 - b. But for Daniel, having God's favormeans everything.
 - c. A little application here might simply be....whose favor do we seek?

D. Daniel includes fasting in his preparation.

1. Fasting in practical terms is a directing of focus toward God.

- a. It takes into account the need of denying self (Matt 16:24)
- b. It encompasses the desire to elevate the spiritual, and to suppress that which is carnal.

E. And Last but certainly not least by any account, sackcloth and ash.

1. Sack cloth and ash points to the contrition of heart, which is sorry for sin.

Psalms 51:17

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

III. Daniel's prayer (Verses 4-19)

Daniel 9:4a

4 I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed..."

A. Confessed here is a verb of action.

1. It has to do with the primarily with the acknowledgment of sin

a. 1st of all confession is a command of God...James 5:16 says:

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

b. And in plain speech God tells us in 1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1) So forgiveness is contingent upon confession.

2) God didn't make us to be closet folks...and Daniel knew that!

2. When confession is absent:

a. The psalmist says in Psalms 32:3-5

*3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away
Through my groaning all day long.*

4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;

My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.

5 I acknowledged my sin to You,

And my iniquity I did not hide;

I said, " I will confess my transgressions to the LORD";

And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.

- b. Un-confessed sin makes the soul weary with anxiety...Psalms 38:18
- c. So the old adage stands true "we can't fix what we won't admit"
- 3. Confession within its own definition includes both praise and thankfulness.
 - a. Can it be true that confession is included in the idea of worship?
 - b. You see no matter how you cut the cabbage, confession stands as a platform for honor toward God.
- 4. Now this might be ruff at first,... but confession is to be embraced and valued.
 - a. Because it brings glory and honor to God.

Daniel 9:4b

"...and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and loving kindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,

- A. It's not hard to understand why approaching God should include a declaration of what God means to us....He is truly great and awesome!
- B. And to understand that God is always faithful to His covenant with unending love.
 - 1. With those who continue in loving Him
 - 2. And with those who are obedient to His will.

Now, we get down to the meat and tators of some serious confession.....

Daniel 9:5

5 we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.

- A. Daniel gets quite direct with his confession.
 - 1. "sinned" We have missed your intention
 - 2. "iniquity" we have twisted and made crooked what is true and straight.
 - 3. Our actions have been wicked
 - 4. Rebellion is the choice we made
 - 5. i.e. we turned our back on your will.
- B. Daniel offers no excuses here
 - 1. It wasn't by mistake....but choice, that Israel departed from God's will.
 - a. And so it is today....sin is a choice!

- C. You know another very serious point here would be that seeing such faithfulness time and time again from Daniel, it seems hard to think he was much involved with most of this sin, but he lumps himself in collectively as part of Israel. In some ways he is collateral damage. You know sin collateral effects even the innocent. See the story of Achan (Josh 7)

Daniel 9:6

6 "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.

- A. Daniel goes on to say that we (Israel) have rejected your messengers...prophets
1. At the very root of this statement is the idea that we have rejected your word.
- B. It seems that the top brass of Israel rejected God's message first and trickle down economics took over, until pretty much the whole lot was spoiled.

So Daniel compares the Lord's actions with how His people respond

Daniel 9:7-10

7 " Righteousness belongs to You, 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 You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You. 8 " Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 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.

- A. To you God belong righteousness
1. You have blameless conduct and integrity
 2. Your ways are just
 3. Your actions are right
 4. Even your attitude maintains righteousness
- B. But, us (Israel).....belongs open shame.
1. The word here points to humiliation and disgrace
 2. Israel's condition is do to her unfaithful deeds
 3. We have been against you
 - a. From the top (kings, princes, etc) down.
- C. But you God
1. Your actions have been compassionate and forgiving.

D. But our (Israel's) choice

1. Have rebelled
2. We haven't obeyed
3. Haven't walked in your teachings.
4. We have rejected your messengers.

Next, Daniel admits to God that Israel has got what she deserves.

Daniel 9:11

11 "Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your 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.

A. All Israel has sinned

1. And turned aside from You
 - a. There are no excuses !

B. Because of this transgression, You poured a curse upon us.

1. You warned us in advance that You would do it.
 - a. Deut 27 (Covenant of Blessings and Cursing)

Now Daniel embraces a vital part of prayer....understanding how God sees things.

Daniel 9:12-14

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 Your 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.

A. God raised up His word, which is suppose to be for us, and He turned it against Israel

1. He used His word to cause calamity upon us....not destruction.
 - a. Because discipline and shaping was His goal.
 - b. Let it be noted that God's justice could have wiped them off the face of the map and He would have been just, but His great love propelled Him.
2. Under heaven nothing had been seen like the shameful humiliation of Israel

B. But, Israel rebelled.

1. Israel didn't repent.
2. They didn't seek the favor of the Lord.
3. They didn't turn from their, bent, twisted, crooked ways.
4. And they certainly didn't focus on your truth.

C. Therefore, God stored up calamity

1. He went out of His way to round it up.
2. He brought it upon us
3. And God was right in doing so because of our disobedience.

Now Daniel makes a plea to God.

Daniel 9:15-19

15 "And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day — we have sinned, we have been wicked. 16 "O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. 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. 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 are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.

A. Daniel begins by calling God "ours"

1. This is more than "the" God it is possessive
 - a. It is dear and personal...the very thing that Israel had lost touch with.
2. He calls attention to the delivering nature of God...because it's what Israel needs.
3. Daniel also points out that Jerusalem represents the name God made for Himself....see verse 18

B. Daniel pleads for God's righteousness to turn wrath and anger away from Jerusalem

C. God....listen to our prayers....

1. For your sake...not ours.

2. The true essence of prayer is to seek God's will not our own.

a. See Matt 26:39

D. Lord...incline your ear....open your eyes

1. Turn back and face Jerusalem

E. Daniel acknowledges that answered prayers come only because of God's compassions and great mercy...no merit of men could warrant anything from God.

Conclusion:

Daniel 9:19

19 "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! ...