

Daniel's Prayer Of Confession On Behalf Of The People

Printed Text · Daniel 9:1-7, 17-19

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: EXPLORE principles of prayer as reflected in Daniel's prayer; REFLECT on times when our prayers have been answered; and IDENTIFY times when prayer should be our priority over action.

In Focus

Craig and Miriam had watched their friends, Tim and Karen, face what seemed like one crisis after another. Before Tim and Karen came to the Lord five years earlier, their lives had not been shining examples for their children, but since then, they have turned their lives around. However, their son T. J. had gotten involved with the wrong crowd, was arrested for his involvement in a crime, and given a year's probation. At that time, their home had just burned down, Tim's mother was gravely ill, and Karen lost her job – a job they needed to make ends meet.

Craig and Miriam saw these situations taking a toll on their friends. They realized that just telling Tim and Karen to pray was not enough. They believed they should do something. Craig and Miriam invited Tim and Karen for dinner. Miriam took the opportunity to slip a little money into Karen's hand. Although Karen tried to protest, she was appreciative. Craig gathered information about resources for Tim's mom. Still, the couple felt they could do more.

On Monday morning, Craig told Miriam, "I've asked the Lord about Tim and Karen's situation, and He told me to 'push back the plate.' I'm going to start a fast, confess on their behalf, and ask God to help them." Miriam answered, "Count me in, too."

The two fasted and prayed for their friends for three days. Within a month, God turned it around. T. J. had talked to the pastor about being baptized. One of the other boys arrested with T.J. confessed to the crime, so his conviction was overturned. Tim's mother had a great caregiver, and Karen found a new job. Craig and Miriam never told their friends they had fasted on their behalf. They just thanked God for answered prayers.

Sometimes, like Daniel, we need to confess and intercede in prayer for others. Who is on your prayer list?

Keep In Mind

"Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake" (Daniel 9:17, KJV).

Words You Should Know

- A. **Books** (Daniel 9:2) *cepher* (Heb.) – Scroll, letters of instruction, or written decrees; here referring to the writing of the prophet Jeremiah
- B. **Supplications** (vv. 3, 17-18) *tachanuwn* (Heb.) – Earnest prayer or entreaty for help.
- C. **Servant** (v. 17) *'ebed* (Heb.) – A slave or bond servant. Daniel describes himself as a servant of the Most High God

Say It Correctly

Ahasuerus. uh-haz-yoo-EER-uhs

Chaldean. kal-DEE-uhn

KJV

Daniel 9:1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

4 And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

7 O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

18 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

NLT

Daniel 9:1 It was the first year of the reign of Darius the Mede, the son of Ahasuerus, who became king of the Babylonians.

2 During the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, learned from reading the word of the Lord, as revealed to Jeremiah the prophet, that Jerusalem must lie desolate for seventy years.

3 So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and fasting. I also wore rough burlap and sprinkled myself with ashes.

4 I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: "O Lord, you are a great and awesome God! You always fulfill your covenant and keep your promises of unfailing love to those who love you and obey your commands.

5 But we have sinned and done wrong. We have rebelled against you and scorned your commands and regulations.

6 We have refused to listen to your servants the prophets, who spoke on your authority to our kings and princes and ancestors and to all the people of the land.

7 "Lord, you are in the right; but as you see, our faces are covered with shame. This is true of all of us, including the people of Judah and Jerusalem and all Israel, scattered near and far, wherever you have driven us because of our disloyalty to you.

17 "O our God, hear your servant's prayer! Listen as I plead. For your own sake, Lord, smile again on your desolate sanctuary.

18 "O my God, lean down and listen to me. Open your eyes and see our despair. See how your city—the

city that bears your name—lies in ruins. We make this plea, not because we deserve help, but because of your mercy.

19 “O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, listen and act! For your own sake, do not delay, O my God, for your people and your city bear your name.”

The People, Places, and Times

Sackcloth and Ashes. In biblical times, the tradition for prayer and supplication before God was to don sackcloth and ashes. Sackcloth was worn for mourning; ashes were a symbol of shame. To wear sackcloth and ashes was to admit a need for God’s intervention on a dire matter (see Daniel 9:3)

Background

The time frame for today’s lesson is identified by events rather than dates, Daniel mentions the reign of several kings. It was in 605 B.C. that God used King Nebuchadnezzar to take Daniel, the three Hebrew assistants, and thousands of other Hebrews into captivity. God also allowed the complete destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Darius, the king mentioned in today’s lesson, came to leadership after Babylon fell to Persia.

Jeremiah was prophesying of the exile when Daniel was taken in the first deportation (605 B.C.). The second deportation (597 B.C), resulted in the deportation of the prophet Ezekiel and the final deportation of the Israelites in Judah resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (586 B.C.). It is the writings of Jeremiah that Daniel mentions in today’s text. In this lesson, Daniel mourns the plight of his people and nation, and he goes to God as a prophet and intercessor on their behalf.

At-A-Glance

1. Daniel Prepares to Pray (Daniel 9:1–3)
2. Daniel Confesses on Behalf of the People (vv. 4–7)
3. Daniel Makes His Request Known (vv. 17–19)

In Depth

1. Daniel Prepares to Pray (Daniel 9:1–3)

Judah sinned against God, and that sin would be punished. Prior to captivity, God in His mercy sent prophets with warnings that Israel and Judah should repent of their wicked ways and return to God. One such prophet was Jeremiah, who prophesied to the southern kingdom, Judah. He foretold the exile of Judah and prophesied that the nation would be captive in Babylon for 70 years. The people continued to be disobedient and, as God warned, Judah was defeated.

God punished the nation for their sin by sending Judah to a strange land. This also was meant to encourage them to turn to God. The punishment was severe, but God was merciful. Judah’s exile in Babylon was not to be permanent. God would end the exile, reunite the nation, and restore the temple. Still, they were a nation in crisis. They needed to learn to pray and to recommit their dependence on God.

Daniel prayed to God. God’s plan had been put in motion. God had allowed Judah to be exiled in Babylon and Babylon to be overthrown by Persia. The time prophesied by Jeremiah for the return from captivity was drawing near, and Daniel realized that he needed to pray and fast to know the

Lord's will for His people. He put himself into sackcloth and ashes because he wanted to be humbled before God as he asked God's mercy upon the people of Judah and the city of Jerusalem.

2. Daniel Confesses on Behalf of the People (vv. 4–7)

Daniel's first act was to acknowledge God's sovereignty. We cannot come to God properly unless we realize that He is righteous and right! In verse 4, Daniel confessed who God is. He called God Jehovah (Lord) and therefore recognized God as the eternal and self-existent One. He acknowledged that God did not need them; they needed God. He called God "my God" or "my Elohiym," the righteous Judge of all, the divine Ruler of all people. He called God Adonai saying, "O Lord." Using this national name of Lord, Daniel confessed that he knew God. In doing so, he admitted that he was unworthy to come before Him.

Daniel recognized God as "the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments" (v. 4). Again without even yet identifying Israel's specific sins, Daniel humbly confessed that God is mighty and to be feared because of His power. God is faithful and keeps His covenant with those who keep covenant with Him. God is merciful and lovingly bestows His mercy on those who love Him by following His commandments. Already Daniel saw and confessed that he and the nation were unworthy to even approach God.

Then Daniel confessed the sins of the people before this righteous God. In verse 5 he says, "We have sinned." Daniel was not flippant and knew that just lumping together everything under the banner of "sin" was not actually and sincerely confessing the wrong they had done to God. Therefore Daniel identified the sin. The nation had (1) committed iniquity, (2) done wickedly, (3) rebelled, (4) departed from God's precepts, (5) disregarded the Lord's judgments, and (6) ignored the servants, God's prophets. This was among the worst of the errors, because these men had brought warnings that could have offset the punishment they were due for the other things they had done. The sin was more than just individual sin, because the prophets had gone in God's name to the leaders of the nation as well as to the populace with warnings from God. To speak in God's name means this was done with God's full power and authority behind it. When a police officer issues a ticket, it is not on behalf of that individual officer but in the full authority of the government. Such was the case when the Hebrew nation ignored the warnings of God's prophets.

Daniel honestly acknowledged that God's punishment was just because the Hebrew people were at fault and brought their own punishment on themselves. They had broken their covenant commitment to a holy God, thereby drinking from His cup of wrath the full 70 years of captivity to the Babylonians and Persians. It did not matter where they were; the people could not escape what had been done to offend God, and Daniel included all of the people in his prayer. He expressed the shame they carried in direct contrast to the righteousness that belonged to God.

Like disobedient children who deserved the punishment in the first place, Judah and Israel had remained defiant and brought the full wrath of God upon themselves.

3. Daniel Makes His Request Known (vv. 17–19)

Daniel repented for himself and on behalf of the people, and asked God’s forgiveness. He knew the power of prayer and was confident that God would respond to his cry as he asked God about His will for the future of the nation. Prayer reflects our dependence on God and our need for God’s direction. Daniel went to God in sincerity, humility, and respect for God’s will and righteousness.

Daniel knew that the time of punishment and banishment was ending, but he also knew that the only way the people could return to Jerusalem was by God’s mercy. Daniel prayed for God to “incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations” (Daniel 9:18). Judah needed God.

Daniel’s plea was not just for the people or even for the sake of the nation. Daniel pleaded with God so that God could be glorified by all nations as the mighty God who delivered His people and restored His temple. God’s name was most important. God would receive the glory, and God’s people would lead the praise of His name as they returned to the temple and showed the nations the power of the great and terrible God they served. Daniel sought God’s forgiveness and restoration. Daniel did not give into the crisis; he turned to God. So should we.

Search the Scriptures

1. How did Daniel physically humble himself before God (v. 3)?
2. In addition to confessing the wrong Judah had committed, what else did Daniel confess (vv. 4, 7)?
3. What did Daniel want God to do in forgiving His people (vv. 17–19)?

Discuss the Meaning

1. What benefit was there to Daniel’s fasting and wearing the clothes of shame and mourning?
2. How would you describe Daniel’s plea for forgiveness?
3. What can we learn about the spiritual disciplines of prayer and fasting from this lesson?

Liberating Lesson

In today’s lesson, Daniel interceded for the nation and asked God’s forgiveness. As you prayerfully consider the sins of our nation, how have we been disobedient as a nation before God? What biblical warnings have we ignored? How do our communities reflect our neglect of God’s mandate to glorify Him before everyone?

Like Daniel, we must recognize sin and then move to ask God’s forgiveness and direction. What can we, as faithful Bible students, do to intervene on behalf of our country and our communities?

Application For Activation

Create a group that makes a commitment to God to intercede for others. Remember that the fellowship of believers provides strength and encouragement.

Follow the Spirit

What God wants me to do:

Remember Your Thoughts

Special insights I have learned:

More Light on the Text

Daniel 9:1–7, 17–19

1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans; 2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

In ancient cultures, time was reckoned by events rather than dates. Daniel established the time of the events in this chapter by identifying the king he served. It was during the first year of King Darius's reign over the kingdom of the Chaldeans (522 B.C.) that Daniel began a study of the writings of the prophet Jeremiah, which revealed stirring information about the plight of the Hebrew people. King Darius was the son of Ahasuerus and a Mede, meaning that he was descended from the lineage of people from Madai in central Asia. This group of people claimed a heritage dating from Japheth, Noah's third son. As the ruler of the Chaldeans, Darius's kingdom included the area that bordered Persia near the lower Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Mesopotamia.

Daniel's phrase "by books" refers to the writing of Jeremiah, who had prophesized that the Israelites would be in captivity for 70 years and then they would return to their homeland. In fact, Jeremiah declared, "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (Jeremiah 25:1, KJV; see also 29:10). The word "accomplish" in Hebrew is *male'* (maw-LAY) and means "to fulfill or complete." In this light, from the prophecy of Jeremiah, Daniel understood that the time of captivity as appointed by God was nearing an end. He had no doubt that the length of their Babylonian captivity and the period of time that Jerusalem would be in "desolation" (Heb. *chor- bah, khor-BAW*) or ruin because of the sin of God's people were in the hands of the almighty God.

3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

It was as a prophet that Daniel interceded in prayer for the Hebrew people. By "setting his face unto the Lord," Daniel was determined to go to the only source of help. Despite his work in the powerful government of King Darius and his history of service to the thrones of the Babylonian and Persian Empires, Daniel knew that only God could deliver his people.

Daniel was totally dependent upon "the Lord God." The term "Lord" or 'Adonay (ad-o-NAI) was a term of reverence spoken in place of the name Yahweh. Because the Hebrews would not write or pronounce the entire name of Yahweh, the people of Israel used this term instead. "God" or 'Elohiym (el-oh-HEEM) is written as "Elohim" in English and is a reference to the Lord as the Supreme Ruler. Daniel esteemed, respected, and honored God and had an intimate relationship with Him. Because Daniel knew God as a deliverer in his life, he felt he could ask Him to deliver God's chosen people.

Daniel had been faithful in serving God, and God had delivered him during life-threatening circumstances; yet Daniel did not approach God with haughtiness or even familiarity. He sought God through prayer and supplication as he donned humility by placing himself in sackcloth and ashes as he prayed. "Sackcloth" (Heb. saq, sak) was a mesh fabric worn in times of mourning. The wearer would then cover himself in "ashes" (Heb. epher, AY-fer) as a sign of his own unworthiness. This self-humiliation was a confession that people recognized their need for God's intervention in their situation. Daniel, whose heart was broken because of the sin and captivity of his people, humbly sought God's intervention and mercy.

Daniel knew that it was only through prayer and supplication that God could be asked to intervene. The word used here for "prayer" is tephillah (Heb. tef-il-LAH). It means "to ask for intercession." "Supplications" (Heb. tachanuwn, tahkh-ahnOON) means "to seek favor." Collectively, then, this phrase means that Daniel earnestly sought God's intervention and mercy. He begged God to deliver the people and to turn aside His anger.

4 And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

On the outside, Daniel was covered in sackcloth and ashes, symbols of his sorrowful spirit. On the inside, he was truly repentant and sought God's mercy as one of those who had transgressed God's Law. Daniel called upon Jehovah Elohim. The word used for "Lord" in this case is the Hebrew Yehovah. This is the national name for God and declares Jehovah to be the self-existent and eternal God. This word recognizes that God is the Creator of all things and that by Him all things exist. Jehovah is self-existent. He does not depend on others and is all-powerful.

Daniel's prayer was not a simple statement of, "Sorry, Lord. I did it." Daniel poured out his heart before God. He first acknowledged the right of God to exact punishment for the sins committed against Him. Then he confessed for himself and his people. This righteous man acknowledged his own need for God's forgiveness for his transgressions of God's laws. The Hebrew term for "confession," yadah (yah-DAH), means "to cast down or give up that which is yours." Yadah is most often translated as "to praise," but in rare instances, it can mean "to confess." Daniel acknowledged that the sin of his people was his sin. He did not attempt to say that the deeds prophesied by Jeremiah were committed by a previous generation. He did not put himself above other Hebrews by reminding God of how he personally had been faithful all the days of his captivity. He had refused the king's food, denied the unjust laws forbidding prayer, and faced the lions' den; but Daniel knew that those things showed God's power, not his own determination. God had delivered, and Daniel was humbled by God's mercy.

Daniel addressed God as "Adonay" and said, "the great and dreadful." In Hebrew "great" is gadowl (gah-DOHL), which means "large in magnitude and extent." With this word Daniel admitted that the God of Judah is larger than Judah. God's power and majesty extend far beyond the boundaries of the holy city, Jerusalem. There in Persia, in the capital city of a foreign land, the power of God was felt. Furthermore, Daniel called God "dreadful" (Heb. yare', yah-RAY). God is to be feared and revered by all people. His might is so great that He must be given the honor due His name.

In addition, Daniel confessed God as a covenant keeper and a giver of mercy. Through their entire period of sin and judgment, God had never failed His people. Despite their so often forgetting God, He had never forgotten them. God had interceded on behalf of those who kept His commandments.

Daniel's own life had shown that God was faithful. As Daniel tried to serve God faithfully in a strange land, he found that God was present. And Daniel was not alone in this. The Hebrew young men who had been thrown into the furnace were witnesses as well. But Daniel's confession of God's merciful

grace goes beyond even those few. God's faithfulness had been demonstrated to their fathers—from Adam to Noah, from Abraham to Jacob, through the judges and the prophets, God had been faithful.

5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: 6 Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

Daniel surrendered completely as he spoke to Jehovah. He knew that God was a covenant keeper, despite the fact that the children of Israel were covenant breakers. The Israelites had openly rebelled against God and incurred His wrath. It was their own fault that God had punished them by allowing them to go into bondage to the Babylonians. It was because of their sin that the punishment had continued upon their children for multiple generations. In all of this, God was not only blameless, but had been merciful toward them. The Hebrew people could blame no one but themselves and could turn to no one but the Lord.

In addition, they had committed "iniquity" (Heb. 'avah, aw-VAW). They had perverted God's Law and done wrong before Him. They had twisted His edicts and failed to follow His will in His way. To further show how they did not follow God's directives, Daniel said that the people "have done wickedly." This phrase in Hebrew is rasha' (raw-SHAH) and means "to be guilty and condemned" because of wicked ethical and religious acts. There was no doubt in Daniel's mind that God was just in condemning the idolatry and unfaithfulness of His people.

The Hebrew word shama' (shaw-MAH) means "hearkened", to say that the people had not heard and been obedient to God's Word. To shama' means to listen with the intention of obeying, to pay strict attention to what is said and then to yield to the will of the one who gives direction. Daniel knew that as the people and nation walked in sin, they broke their covenant relationship with a Holy God. They had refused to listen and obey. They had willfully refused to yield to God's servants, the prophets who had spoken on God's behalf. These spokesmen had warned them again and again that departing from God's precepts and judgments would kindle the hot anger of Almighty God, and He would punish them. There was no excuse for their disobedience, because the prophets spoke to their kings, princes, forefathers, and all the people of the land.

But the people and their leaders failed to listen; they would not hear. They would not heed. Consequently, they had to suffer the consequences of their disobedience—captivity again! Their history had revealed God's deliverance from Egypt, but their actions had caused them to again be placed under the thumb of oppressors as their places of worship and their homes were destroyed and their children were led away to other lands.

7 O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

Daniel again acknowledged God as his Lord. He recognized the righteous attributes of the God he served. Daniel admitted to God that God was right in His punishment of Israel. He had dealt righteously with His people. They, on the other hand, were the possessors of "confusion" (Heb. bosheth, BO-sheth) or "shame." Because of Israel's disobedience, their faces were covered with shame, while God's glory is righteous. Daniel also confessed that the people of Judah, Jerusalem, and all Israel, scattered far and near, were to bear the shame of being in captivity. Daniel knew they were scattered because of their own disobedience—their own breaking of God's covenant. God would not tolerate their disloyalty. Neither did God merit their unfaithfulness to Him; He had been

too good to the Israelites.

9:17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

Here Daniel cried out to the Lord because of his deep concern for the nation and the city of Jerusalem where God had placed His sanctuary. Daniel reminded Elohim that Israel was His special possession. The nation was God's chosen people, elected by Him to be representatives of His power and glory to the rest of the world. God had ordained them to be examples to other nations of the power of the Holy God.

Daniel also pleaded with God to hear his prayer, the prayer of God's servant. The phrase "of thy servant" means bondsman or slave in Hebrew. Daniel acknowledged again that he was a servant who served as a prophet or spokesman of the Most High God. It was in his service to God that he appealed to God to hear his petition and supplications.

Daniel then asked that the Lord, for the Lord's own sake, to smile again on His temple. The temple at Jerusalem had been foreshadowed by the tabernacle in the wilderness; it had been promised to David, then built by Solomon. It was destroyed in the destruction of Jerusalem and then sat desolate, a mockery to the power of God. The word used for "sanctuary" is the Hebrew word miqdash (mik-DAWSH) and refers to the sacred or holy place of worship. In essence, Daniel asked God to restore His holy temple in Jerusalem, God's "sacred place," so that all people would know His name and His power.

18 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

Daniel asked God to do three things: to "incline" (Heb. natah, naw-TAW) His ear, to "open" (Heb. paqach, paw-KAKH) His eyes, and to "behold" (Heb. ra'ah, raw-AW), or see, the desolation. Daniel asked Almighty God to extend or stretch forth His ear to hear Daniel's petitions for the people and the nation. He begged God to look intently on the pressing situation of His chosen people. He wanted God to open His eyes and see their wretchedness, to see Jerusalem in ruin.

Since Daniel was the intercessor for the Israelites, he told God that he and the people were not asking because they deserved God's help. In fact, Daniel and the nation knew they deserved God's wrath and punishment. But Daniel asked God for help because He is merciful. Daniel acknowledged that God is a God of great compassion. Even though God judges sin, He still shows mercy to those who love Him and are faithful to Him.

19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

Finally Daniel, in making intercession for the Israelites and the nation, begged God to forgive the people and the nation. The Hebrew word for "forgive" is calach (saw-LAKH). Daniel asked God to pardon the people individually and the nation collectively for their sin. Daniel came in prayer to his God with a broken and contrite heart, a repentant spirit. He did not come before God trying to make excuses or to place blame. Daniel knew that the omniscient and omnipresent God knew the full extent of their transgressions and disobedience; therefore, Daniel wanted God to hear his pleas and to act on their behalf.

Daniel wanted God to make things right, to put things back together again. He wanted God to put Jerusalem and the temple back in order. The urgency of Daniel's prayer is that he asked God not to

defer (Heb. 'achar, aw-KHAR) or delay this work. Daniel wanted God to answer his prayer quickly. He realized that the 70 years prophesied by Jeremiah was almost up, and he knew that the sins of the people were still counted against them.

It was not, however, for selfish reasons that Daniel wanted God's swift reconciliation. He wanted God to set things right "for thine own sake, O my God." In other words, since the Children of Israel were God's own special possessions, Daniel reminded God that His mercy was needed for His own glory, for the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, for the return of the city and the people called by God's name. Once more Daniel reminded God that the Israelites were elected by God; they were His chosen people.

Daniel's prayers and supplications are marvelous examples of how we are to take our petitions to God. We must not go blaming God or others. We must come before God acknowledging our own sins and asking Him for forgiveness, because the failure is not in God, but in us!

Daily Bible Readings

Monday

Daniel 1:8-15

Tuesday

Daniel 1:16-21

Wednesday

Daniel 2:1-11

Thursday

Daniel 2:12-16

Friday

Daniel 2:36-49

Saturday

Daniel 9:15-19

Sunday

Daniel 9:1-14