

Daniel, A Man of Prayer

Introduction: Daniel stands out as one of the greatest men in Jewish history. That he was a real person in history is proved by Ezek. 14:14 and 28:3, as well as Matt. 24:15 and Heb. 11:33. He was a teenager when Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem and began his conquest of Judah. Daniel was still active when the kingdom was taken by Cyrus. In fact, he lived through the reigns of four rulers (Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, Darius, and Cyrus) and three different kingdoms (Babylon, Media, Persia).

Daniel's name means "God is my judge." He held several important positions and was promoted greatly because of his character and wisdom, and because the blessing of God was upon him. Nebuchadnezzar named him to a position similar to a modern prime minister. Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, Belshazzar, called Daniel out of retirement and, because he explained the handwriting on the wall, made Daniel third ruler in the land (5:29). Darius named him leader over the whole realm (6:1-3). For at least 75 years, he was God's faithful witness in a wicked and idolatrous kingdom.

Daniel prayed:

As A Humble Subject Of Nebuchadnezzar By The Compulsion Of A Crisis Dan. 2. 18

As An Honored Statesman By The Custom Of A Consecrated Life Dan. 6. 10

As Heaven's Suppliant By The Constraint Of A Life Of Communion Dan. 9. 3

→ **There are four verses in Daniel that record his praying: Dan 6:10-11; Dan 9:4,20...In the record of Daniel praying, four words are used meaning:**

1 "Bend, bow down" - He prayed and gave thanks

Dan. 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and **prayed, and gave thanks** before his God, as he did aforetime.

2 "make petition" - praying and making supplication

Dan. 6:11 Then these men assembled, and found Daniel **praying and making supplication** before his God.

3 "to judge self" - praying and making confession

Dan. 9:4 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;

4 "speaking" - uttering words, discourse, talking

Dan. 9:20 And whiles I was **speaking, and praying**, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

Introduction: "Max Lucado tells of an extraordinary professional baseball pitcher who performed very few extraordinary feats.

- Though a veteran of 21 seasons, in only one did he win more than 20 games.
- He never pitched a no-hitter and only once in his career did he lead the league in any category. That was in 1980, when he led the National League with a 2.21 ERA.
- Yet on June 21, 1986, pitcher Don Sutton rubbed shoulders with the true legends of baseball pitchers when he became only the 30th pitcher in baseball to win 300 games.

His own analysis of his success is worth noting. '*I am a grinder and a mechanic. I never considered myself flamboyant or exceptional. But all my life I've found a way to get the job done.*' And get it done he did.

Through two decades, six presidential terms, four trades to other teams, he consistently did what pitchers are paid to do: win. With tunnel vision, he spent 21 seasons redefining greatness, yet most of you never heard of his name.

In September 1986, *Inside Sports Magazine* called him the '*family sedan*' of baseball's men on the mound. He certainly boasted none of the Ferrari style of the last thirty game winner, Denny McClain, who rose to stardom but faded quickly. He boasted none of the Mercedes sparkle of a Sandy Koufax, but after their types were parked in museums or junk piles, Don Sutton was still on the mound '*getting the job done.*'"

- The first time we meet Daniel is in ch. 1 when he is a young teen age boy who has been taken captive to Babylon. Even then, he is faithfully serving the Lord and taking his stand for that which is right.
- We meet him again a few years later in ch. 2, when as a young man he is called upon to interpret a dream to king Nebuchadnezzar. Again, we see Daniel simply serving the Lord and being faithful.
- He shows up again in ch. 4 as a middle aged man who again is called upon to interpret a dream for the troubled king. Once again, Daniel is found simply rolling along, being faithful.
- There he is again in ch. 5, standing for God and being faithful.
- In the text before us today, ch. 6, Daniel again rolls into view. Here, he is a man in his 80's. He has been in Babylon for about 70 years. Yet, he has not veered from the course he started on as a young man. He is still faithfully serving the God Who saved him by his grace.

Moses, The Prayer of the Man of God

Psalm 90

Introduction: Since Moses was the author of this psalm, it makes it the oldest of all the psalms. It was probably written in connection with Israel's failure at Kadesh-barnea (Num. 13-14). The people (except for Joshua and Caleb) refused to follow Moses and to trust God. Instead of entering the land by faith, they turned back in unbelief, and God judged them. He made the nation wander for forty years in the wilderness until all the people who had been over twenty years of age at Kadesh-barnea died. Keep this in mind as you read Ps. 90 (especially vv. 7-11), and it will take on new meaning. This psalm is Moses' personal reaction to the crisis; he turned to God in prayer and sought an eternal abiding place in the Lord. Years later he would say to Israel, "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deut. 33:27). It was this kind of faith that sustained Moses during those trying years in the wilderness. Isaac Watts used Ps. 90 as the basis for his majestic hymn, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past." Read through the hymn with this psalm in mind.

1 GOD'S WAYS

- God as the Eternal Rest of the Redeemed v. 1
- God as the Ruler of the Universe v. 2
- God as the Refuge of the Human Soul v.3

2 MAN'S DAYS

Few and Feeble:

- "as with a flood" v. 5
- "as a sleep" v. 5
- "like grass" v. 5
- "as a tale that is told" v. 9

3 HOW HE PRAYS-

- For A Proper Approach To Life's Purpose Vs. 12, 13
- For A Prayerful Appreciation Of God's Mercy Vs. 14, 15
- For A Personal Appropriation Of God's Power-Vs. 16-17

Jeremiah's Prayer

Introduction: The name "Jeremiah" means "whom Jehovah appoints." Apart from this appointment by God, certainly the prophet could not have continued to minister faithfully. He was of the priestly line and lived in the priests' city of Anathoth. Apparently he had some personal wealth because he was able to purchase real estate and even hire a scribe. He was called to the ministry when but "a child" (1:4-6); this was in the year 627 B.C.

Jeremiah's task was not an easy one because he had to sound the death knell for his nation. The first part of his book records several of his sermons, given in Jerusalem, in which he denounces the people, priests, and princes for their sins, especially the sin of idolatry. In chapter 25 he announces that the nation will go into captivity for seventy years, and then return to reestablish the nation. In chapter 31 he prophesies a "new covenant" between Jehovah and His people, not a covenant of law and works written on stones, but a covenant of love and faith, written in the heart. In the final chapters, Jeremiah deals with Gentile nations around Judah and tells of God's plans for them.

I The Person Addressed

Jer. 14:7-8 O LORD, O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble,

Jer. 17:13 O LORD, the hope of Israel,

2 The Prayer Expressed

- Consciousness of what might have been Jer. 14. 19
- Confession of what was-sin and backsliding Jer. 14. 20
- Confidence in what could be,

3 The Plea Of Distress

On Three Grounds- Heb. 4. 12

- The Name Of The Lord
- The Throne Of The Lord
- The Covenant Of The Lord

10 Obstacles to Answered Prayer

Introduction: Evangelist John R. Rice simplified prayer by saying, “*Prayer is about two things: asking and receiving.*” There is power in prayer! Prayer works! You and I are the products of prayers prayed by us and for us. “Does God do anything that is not in answer to prayer?” There are, however, obstacles to asking and receiving. If the *arteries* of answers are not flowing, consider ten *blockages* that might be at work in our hearts and lives.

1 Praying without knowing Jesus Christ as your Savior

If a man is unsaved, he has not taken Christ as his mediator (I Tim. 2:5, John 14:6). Romans 5:2 says, *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* (Hebrews 4:16)

2 Praying with an unrepentant heart

The Psalmist said, “*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.*” Be right with God and let your family take refuge in your relationship with God. (Psalm 66:18)

3 Praying for show

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (Matt. 6:5)

4 Praying repetitive, empty words

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. (Matthew 6:6-7)

5 Prayers not prayed

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. (John 16:24)

6 Praying with a lustful heart

God is not fooled by prayers that are more about how we can fulfill our sinful or selfish desires than how we can honor Him and fulfill His purposes. *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.* (James 4:3)

7 Praying while mistreating your spouse

Someone said, “If you won’t listen to your spouse, then God will not listen to you.” *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.* (I Peter 3:7)

8 Praying while ignoring the poor

If we do not cultivate a generous and compassionate heart, we become spiritually impoverished and the Lord ignores us. *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.* (Proverbs 21:13)

9 Praying with bitterness toward another

Unforgiveness expresses a resistant heart in which God has not been allowed to work. *And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.* But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. (Mark 11:25-26)

10 Praying with a faithless heart

If we don’t really believe He can, then He won’t! *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.* (James 1:6-8)

Our families and our country need our prayers. May we not be hindered today as we approach the Father’s throne. **Selah!**